

THE N I H R E C O R D

Still The Second Best Thing About Payday

NIMH Holds Dialogue Meeting in Desert Southwest

"Dialogue Four Corners: Mental Health," a public outreach meeting sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health, was held on Apr. 24 in Albuquerque, N.M., to

focus on mental health issues in the Four Corners region of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah.



Dr. Thomas Insel

NIMH teamed with other NIH

components, federal agencies and state partners to provide information and resources to about 350 people. Participants also attended workshops and a consumer

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Memory, Inspiration Live On

Symposium Honors NIDA's Brown

By Patrick Zickler

Sometimes, advice that offers just the right encouragement or shift in direction can launch a whole career of scientific research. For more than two decades, Dr. Roger Brown provided insight and support to scientists exploring the ways that drugs act on the brain; the work he initiated and encouraged laid the groundwork for the neuroscience of addiction. On May 14-15, more than 300 researchers met in Natcher auditorium to honor Brown's life and legacy at a NIDA-sponsored symposium, "Foundations and Innovations in the Neuroscience of Addiction." Brown, who was associate director for neuroscience at NIDA, died last June.

NIDA director Dr. Nora Volkow welcomed

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NIH Responds to SARS

NIAID Holds International SARS Workshop, Draws Large Crowd

By Rich McManus

Key players in the global response to the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) jammed the Natcher auditorium May 30 as NIAID—NIH's lead component in addressing the emerging infectious disease—hosted an international research colloquium on "SARS: Developing a Research Response." Authorities from government, academia, public health and industry joined for a daylong workshop; the morning was devoted to plenary sessions defining the scope of the problem, while afternoon sessions addressed specific strategies in vaccine and antiviral development, as well as clinical research and epidemiology.

HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson, appearing by live video, launched the

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Dr. Klaus Stöhr of the WHO addresses meeting.

NIGMS Book Club Promotes Diversity Discourse

By Jilliene Mitchell

When Martha Pine, associate director for administration and operations at NIGMS, decided to start an institute book club, she had in



NIGMS book club members meet informally.

mind a place where staff members could talk about the dynamics of diversity. The idea came to her after reading an article in the *Washington Post* about a diversity institute book club in Prince George's

County. Pine said she shared her idea with Dr. Anthony René, NIGMS assistant director for referral and liaison, and soon after,

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health fair, which included the National Library of Medicine's online demonstration of how to use the computer to locate health information.

Traditional American Indian and Hispanic welcomes and songs opened the meeting; greetings were given by Dr. Samuel Keith, chair of the department of psychiatry, University of New Mexico, which cosponsored the meeting; Surgeon General Richard



Dr. Tassy Parker (l) of the University of New Mexico and Kevin Shendo (c) of the Pueblo of Jemez talk with a participant.

Carmona saluted the participants via video. The agenda, developed with input from health care professionals, advocates and consumers in each of the Four Corners states, provided participants with an overview of cutting-edge research relevant to the region. Reports on the

importance of studying how mental illnesses occur with alcohol and substance abuse and other physical disorders included a talk by Dr. Patrick Lustman from Washington University, who discussed his research on the relationship between depression and diabetes.

Other topics presented by NIH-supported grantees included suicide, cultural relevance in conducting research with American Indian and Hispanic populations, barriers to seeking and receiving treatment, and the benefits of research. Topics for small discussion groups focused on special concerns of the aging population, child and adolescent mental health, traditional healing and careers in mental health research in the Four Corners region. The career breakout group, led by Dr. Ernest Marquez, director, Office for Special Populations, NIMH, offered high school and college students and faculty information on opportunities for young people, women and under-represented minorities to pursue careers in mental health research.

Recommendations from all the breakout groups will help NIMH fulfill its research mission. Breakout topics and questions can be found at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/events/fourcornersgroup.pdf>.

On Apr. 23, additional activities included a grant information workshop designed to give researchers and those interested in pursuing research an opportunity to hear from and meet with representatives from all of the participating federal agencies: NIDA, NIAAA, NLM, NIDDK, NIGMS, NIA, the Indian Health Service, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Social Security Administration. In addition to networking opportunities, participants learned about the grants application process.

Concurrent with the workshop were field visits to several locations—Española, N.M., Gila River Reser-



Audience participants and NIH staff listen to speakers.

vation, Ariz.; and Gallup, N.M. and Window Rock, Ariz., the capital of Navajo Nation—where major challenges and opportunities for research were discussed with community members. The field visits allowed small groups of researchers, presenters and NIH scientists to see firsthand the unique problems faced by people in these communities, tour facilities, talk to providers and consumers and begin to establish longer-term networks. These communities represent the diversity of the region and demonstrate issues affecting the Hispanic and American Indian communities including alcohol and substance abuse, poverty, lack of behavioral health services and suicide.

NIMH has been conducting a series of dialogue meetings to share information; since 1999, the institute has organized four other dialogues in Alaska, Texas, Pittsburgh and Chicago, described at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/events/townmeetings.cfm>. The email address set up for the Four Corners conference (nimhfourcorners@mail.nih.gov) will continue to receive comments until June 30. ■

N I H R E C O R D

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The Record is recyclable as office white paper.

'QuickHire' To Debut at NIH

E-government, e-business, e-forms and emails,—“E” combined with anything has instant recognition and association. E is changing the American lexicon.

As NIH and HHS introduce a new recruitment enterprise system, there is another E word coming into parlance—“e-hire.” A new automated staffing system known as QuickHire is in the developmental stage at NIH and promises to make recruitment electronic, efficient, effective and easy.

QuickHire is the innovation of a former federal employee, Bryan Hochstein, and a former Navy officer, Don Bauer. Their vision was to automate and standardize staffing and classification. QuickHire is the resulting web-based product that uses the Internet to automate the hiring process and maximize resources.

QuickHire is the leading provider of automated staffing solutions to the federal government and currently services 40 federal agencies, state and local governments, educational institutions and corporate customers. These organizations report an improvement of 85 percent in the time-to-hire cycle. QuickHire customers hire people in days instead of the typical months associated with the complex federal employment process.

QuickHire uses job-specific questions to evaluate candidates. NIH has several task teams composed of human resources (HR) professionals and institute/center subject matter experts who are working to develop standardized questions and position descriptions that are unique to NIH. Upon implementation of QuickHire in October 2003, applicants will review NIH vacancy announcements online and answer NIH position-specific questions that are automatically rated, ranked and sorted for HR professionals and hiring officials. Using QuickHire, highly qualified candidates are ready to be hired quickly, which will be a competitive advantage for NIH. In today's environment, the best applicants for scientific, technical and professional jobs don't always wait 3-6 months for employment offers.

The implementation of QuickHire at NIH will shift the paradigm of NIH employees. Interested applicants will no longer focus on writing good KSAs (knowledge, skills and abilities) as is required with the current CareerHere site. With QuickHire, applicants will respond to questions that demonstrate the KSAs required to perform the job successfully. QuickHire will streamline the hiring process and build on the CareerHere database that is synonymous with NIH recruitment.

NIH's Office of Human Resources and QuickHire agree that effective recruitment is about time spent evaluating people and not paper. For more information on e-hiring, visit QuickHire at www.hr.od.nih.gov/quickhire/default.htm.—Lenora Adams ■

NIGMS Minority Program Participant Becomes University President

Firsts are definitely cause for celebration—first birthday, first job, first home. At NIGMS, there's another “first” to observe—for the first time, a former participant in one of the institute's minority programs has become a university president.

Dr. LaVerne Ragster, who participated in NIGMS' Minority Biomedical Research Support (MBRS) program as a graduate student at San Diego State University, was inaugurated president of the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) in March.

Ragster's inauguration capped a week-long celebration at UVI that included receptions for students, alumni, faculty and staff; displays of Virgin Islands artwork; a public forum; and a faculty colloquium. In her inaugural address, Ragster stressed the importance of partnerships and their role in developing UVI's academic and research programs.

“Every success story at UVI involves people working together and being positive about what can be gained...through our academic programs, research, and community outreach efforts,” Ragster said.

MBRS has been a staple of UVI's research program since Ragster directed the first grant there in 1985. The program assists underrepresented minority students pursuing biomedical science careers by providing them with research opportunities and mentors. The program also supports faculty research and helps institutions strengthen their biomedical research capacities.

A native of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Ragster started her college education at the University of Miami, where she earned a bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry in 1973. She went on to earn a master's degree in biology at San Diego State University in 1975 and a Ph.D. in biology at the University of California, San Diego, in 1980. She then joined the teaching faculty at UVI, where she rose to the rank of professor of marine biology and chair of the division of science and mathematics. Her most recent post before her selection as president was that of senior vice president and provost.

“Dr. Ragster is a great success story for the MBRS program,” said Dr. Clifton Poodry, director of the NIGMS Division of Minority Opportunities in Research, home of the MBRS program.

“She is a notable example of how NIGMS's programs to increase the number and capabilities of minority biomedical scientists are bearing fruit. Like so many former program participants, Dr. Ragster is fulfilling her own promise while continuing to serve the minority community.”—Susan Athey ■



Dr. LaVerne Ragster delivers her inaugural address to a crowd of students, alumni, faculty and staff. Thousands more throughout the Virgin Islands watched the inauguration live on public television.

BROWN SYMPOSIUM, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

participants to the symposium by noting the broad impact of Brown's influence. "These meetings, and all the science that we will hear about over the next 2 days, are products of Roger's insight," she said. "Some of the earliest work in neuroscience, and much of the work that formed the foundation of our knowledge in the field, are the results of Roger's effort."

Volkow also shared a more personal recollection from early in her research career. "In 1988, I was submitting my first grant applications to conduct brain imaging studies. Not everyone recognized the technology's promise," she recalled. "Roger was my program officer. He understood how imaging studies could be applied to very basic science and said, 'Nora, don't give up.' Of course, I



On hand at the symposium were (from l) Dr. Ann Graybiel of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; NIDA director Dr. Nora Volkow; and Dr. Patricia Goldman-Rakic of Yale University School of Medicine.

didn't, and thanks to Roger's encouragement we were able to establish the brain imaging program at Brookhaven National Laboratory."

In her keynote presentation, Dr. Patricia Goldman-Rakic of Yale University School of Medicine described Brown's contributions when he joined her intramural research team at NIMH. "Roger was a wonderful colleague," she said. "Inquisitive, energetic, and generous. And he made important contributions to the very first steps in understanding how dopamine and other neurotransmitters work in the brain—that they are part of chemical systems that act like electrical circuits to send and receive signals."

Throughout the symposium, speakers described how Brown had ignited similar sparks. Dr. Gerald Gebhart of the University of Iowa and Dr. Conan Kornetsky of Boston University School of Medicine recalled how Brown had encouraged their research into the mechanisms that transmit pain signals throughout the central nervous system and the effects in the brain of pain-killing—and addictive—drugs.

Dr. Frank Vocci, director of NIDA's Division of Treatment Research and Development, described the role of neuroscience in development of medications to treat drug addiction. "Without the basic neuroscience foundation that Roger helped develop, these treatments just wouldn't be possible," Vocci said. "And listening to the rest of the speakers makes me even more impressed by the incredible contribution Roger made. I'm glad to have known him, to have worked with him, and to be here to say what none of us ever said often enough: Thanks, Roger." ■

Olden Receives Honorary Doctorate

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences director Dr. Kenneth Olden was presented the honorary degree of doctor of science by the University of Rochester on May 18 at commencement ceremonies in Rochester, N.Y.

In a letter to Olden, university President Thomas H. Jackson said, "Your career at the National Institutes of Health and your dedication to cancer research are an inspiration to our graduates and the entire university community."

Born in poverty on an eastern Tennessee farm, Olden was the first African American to direct an NIH institute. He is also director of the National Toxicology Program, which coordinates toxicology studies within the Department of Health and Human Services and is headquartered at NIEHS in Research Triangle Park, N.C.

Olden is also an internationally recognized researcher in cancer biology as well as an innovator in environmental health sciences who has pressed for action on the health disparities faced by the poor and racial minorities, and for the more active participation of the American people in the priority-setting process in medical research.

In conferring the degree, university officials said, "There is no stronger advocate for funding genetic research than Olden." He oversaw the development of the Environmental Genome Project, which studies mankind's varying genetic susceptibility to the environment, as well as the National Center for Toxicogenomics, which applies genetic technology to the testing of toxic chemicals and to the study of environmentally related disease.

Jackson called the honorary doctorate from the University of Rochester especially appropriate because, although Olden earned his doctorate in 1970 at Temple University in Philadelphia, he actually "did much of the research at the University of Rochester."

Olden and his wife, Dr. Sandra L. White, and daughter, Heather, live in Durham, N.C., and he has three grown children. ■

Class on Managing Priorities

The Training and Development Branch is offering a course on working smarter and more effectively. Managing Multiple Priorities will teach you how to identify four things that influence how people manage work, describing how each relates to your own ability to manage multiple priorities; acquire effective tools for establishing priorities when you're in control, and know how to respond when you aren't and many other strategies. Sign up now for this time-saving course to be held on Thursday, Sept. 4 and get your priorities under control. ■

BOOK CLUB, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a plan to launch a book club was in the works.

"Tony and I talked about the possibility of having NIGMS start a book club as a way to encourage NIGMS staff to talk about important but delicate topics that we might otherwise not discuss with one another—issues of race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability and the like," Pine said.

"Discussing these topics around the stories and messages presented in works of literature or film is a relatively comfortable way to conduct this important discourse. It allows us to discuss various dimensions of and challenges to diversity that we might otherwise not talk about," she added.

The book club is a part of NIGMS' workplace diversity initiative, which is a component of the NIH diversity initiative plan.

"This kind of an activity supports the belief that the better we know and understand each other and our racial and ethnic backgrounds, the better we appreciate our differences. I think reading books about different racial and ethnic groups has had a very positive influence on how we relate to each other," René said.

Tina Lancaster, NIGMS equal employment specialist, is the institute's diversity catalyst, a position originally held by former NIGMS employee Lynn Pupkar. Lancaster starts the book selection process by soliciting staff input on books to read. The books under consideration focus on topics such as cultural and world issues, personal challenges and discovery and social concerns. Choices have included fiction and non-fiction. Employees vote on books of interest, and the top vote-getter is selected. Book club members have about a month to read the books before participating in an hour-long discus-

sion led by a volunteer.

So far, the club has read *A Gathering of Old Men* by Ernest J. Gaines, *Breath, Eyes, Memory* by Edwidge Danticat, *The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother* by James McBride, *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson, *Fighting Fire* by Caroline Paul, *Pigs in Heaven* by Barbara Kingsolver and *Waist-High in the World: A Life Among the Nondisabled* by Nancy Mairs.

Stacy Charland, chief information officer at NIGMS, said that among the books the club has read, her favorite was *Pigs in Heaven*, a novel about a young Cherokee girl who is illegally adopted by a Caucasian woman and is later sought out by her Cherokee people who want to return her to the tribe. "I was fascinated by the descriptions of the extended family life of the Cherokee. It really made me appreciate what [the girl] was losing by being adopted into a 'typical' modern family, rather than being a part of her tribe," Charland said.

The book club has been meeting since February 1998. It includes a number of members who have participated since the beginning as well as members who have joined more recently. The group represents a diverse mix of scientific, professional, administrative, technical and clerical staff.

According to Dr. Judith Greenberg, acting director of NIGMS, "The book discussions bring together men and women, younger and older staff and people from all backgrounds. The books are enjoyable to read and the discussions are stimulating and fun. Everyone has important ideas to share, which has given us all a new appreciation for our coworkers." ■



Dr. Mark Rubert has joined the Center for Scientific Review to be the scientific review administrator of the AIDS and related research 8 study section. He comes from the University of Miami School of Medicine, Florida, where he conducted social and behavioral research focused on caregivers through grants from NINR, NIA and NICHD. He also directed the medical school's undergraduate course in geriatrics and gerontology for many years. Rubert received a master's degree and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Florida State University in Tallahassee, studying how depression affects interpersonal relationships. He completed his psychology internship at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle, and he continued his depression research there before going to the University of Miami.

NCI Intern Competes in Biology Olympiad

A National Cancer Institute high school intern was one of 20 students nationwide selected to compete in the first-ever USA Biology Olympiad.

Maureen Murphy-Ryan, 17, of Frederick, attended an intensive, 10-day training course in biology and biological laboratory research at George Mason University beginning May 28. A series of written tests then determined which four students were to go on to represent the U.S. in the International Biology Olympiad this summer in Minsk, Belarus. She placed in the top eight and is an alternate to the IBO.

Murphy-Ryan said her experience working as a Werner Kirsten Student Intern in NCI's Biological Mechanisms Laboratory in Frederick prepared her to take on the scientific challenge of the competition.

"I competed in a series of written tests against 5,000 students for the spot," she said. "I think my experience here in the lab last summer and after-

noons during the school year really helped. I've learned so much working on my project where I'm studying second and third members of the polo-like kinase family that regulate cell division."



Maureen Murphy-Ryan

A senior at Governor Thomas Johnson High School in Frederick, Murphy-Ryan plans to major in biology at Duke University. She said she looks forward to pursuing a career in cancer research. "Cancer research is really appealing because you're working not for yourself but for a higher purpose," she said.

NIH Celebrates Asian/Pacific Islander American Heritage

The 31st annual NIH Asian/Pacific Islander American Heritage Program was held in two parts last month—a celebration of culture and cuisine on May 16 and a salute to the performing arts on May 30. These scenes from the events capture the spirit.

PHOTOS: BILL BRANSON



The Chinese Lion Dance, complete with musicians (above) and the sometimes two-story feline itself (below, r) was performed outdoors in front of Bldg. 31A. Despite this spring's often damp conditions, attendees and dancers found dry spots from which to enjoy the festivities.



Braving the beast: Dr. Victor Fung feeds the lion during the Chinese Lion Dance.

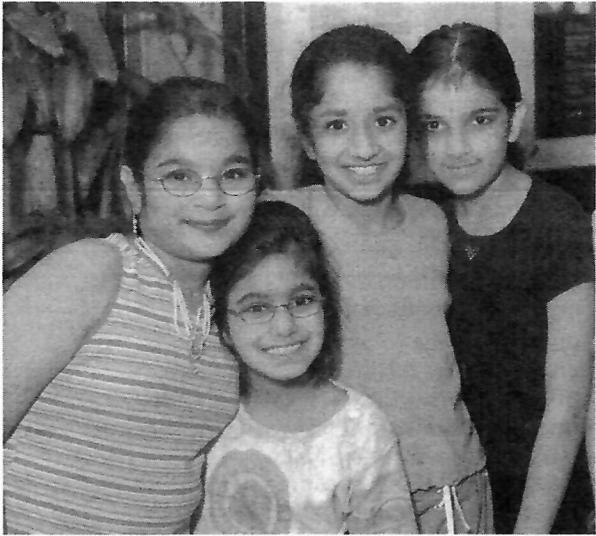


The NIH Tae Kwon Do Club demonstrates several self-defense techniques during the May 16 event.



Above, a Korean Royal Court Dance performer. Below, Masayo Ishigure plays the koto (Japanese).





Performers from the Pushpanjali School of Dance



At left, the Cambodian Suvan Machha (golden fish) Dance; at right, a performer of the Korean Drum Dance



Several Indian folk dances were featured at the program celebrating cultural music and performing arts on May 30 in Masur Auditorium.



Above, the Cambodian Umbrella Dance is performed. Below, Amelia (l), daughter of NIH'er Tony Itteilag, is among the umbrella troupe.



Healthy Volunteers Needed

An NIH study seeks healthy adult volunteers for an examination of the health effects of calcium supplementation over 2 years. Call 1-800-411-1222, TTY 1-866-411-1010. Compensation is provided.

SARS MEETING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

meeting with praise for the scientific community's "rapid, skillful and amazingly successful start so far" in containing and characterizing SARS, and noted that the SARS challenge "is big enough to keep all of us busy for a very long time...The hopes and prayers of many people around the world are with you today."

NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci cautioned that the session "is certainly not the last meeting we'll have on this very important disease," then displayed a slide he has shown for years depicting emerging and reemerging diseases around the globe. "This slide requires almost continual updating," he said. "Some (of the diseases) are merely curiosities, others have great public health impact both in their reality and potential." As of May 28, he said, there had been 8,240 reported cases of SARS, with 745 deaths, most of them in the Far East. Addressing SARS "will require many partners...all of us working in synergy," Fauci said.

Describing SARS epidemiology was Dr. Klaus Stöhr, project leader of the World Health Organization's global influenza programme. In spite

of signs that the SARS outbreak was declining at the end of May, Stöhr warned, "Complacency can lead to the reemergence of this disease."

He said the outbreak began in the last quarter of 2002. Health care workers were at greatest risk of contracting SARS in the early stages of the outbreak. The illness appears to have a 15 percent fatality rate, but he cautioned the sample size has been small. Almost three-quarters of SARS deaths occur in people over age 60. "Age is definitely a risk factor, as is comorbidity," he said. "Males are slightly more at risk than females, but again, the sample size is small."



Dr. Malik Peiris

His slides were fact-laden and his presentation

Fauci Outlines NIH Response to SARS

The day before his institute hosted a major international meeting on SARS, NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci answered some questions about NIH's response to severe acute respiratory syndrome, an emerging viral illness that in some respects mirrors the emergence of AIDS more than two decades ago.

When did you first become aware of the epidemic and what were the first steps?

It was right around the end of February, the beginning of March. We had heard of these cases in Hong Kong, and there was an interesting series of events that had occurred in late 2002, when we were hearing rumors that there was some atypical type of pneumonia in China. And we were not sure whether it was a repeat of the H5N1 flu that jumped species from birds to human. We were a little concerned because we were afraid that there might be an H3N2 flu circulating in China. When you have somebody coinfecting with H5N1 and H3N2, then you could wind up having a situation where the bird flu can be easily transmitted from human to human. Because when the two combine, they could assume the capabilities of not only jumping from a fowl to a human, which is H5N1, but (also) the naturally human infection, H3N2, can be combined in the same person. So we were thinking that maybe something was going on in China that was very vague—the reports were not very robust—it was just 'Something funny is going on in China.'

At the end of February, beginning of March,

when the cases of something that clearly was not flu were going on in Hong Kong—and the reason we know is that the people in Hong Kong know what they are doing; they are very sophisticated, they know how to diagnose flu—and they were saying, 'We're having a strange cluster of cases where we do not know what it is, but it seems to be spreading from person to person, we do not have an etiologic agent, it appears to be respiratory-borne, and it is very high-risk among health workers taking care of the patients.'

We had in Geneva one of our own NIAID people—Lone Simonsen—gathering information. She was there for another reason, (but) we told her to stay there and see what she could find out, at the same time that the CDC was trying to make contacts in Hong Kong as well as in China, if possible. It was at that point when I spoke to her and others on the phone that this was a serious issue. So then we said, 'Wait a minute—this we have to take very seriously.' And then everything exploded [in the world media].

When it became clear that we were dealing with a new disease, the agent (of which) we did not know, we immediately gathered our forces at NIAID and said, 'This is another emerging disease, we've got to prepare for it, we've got to get our people ready to move as quickly as possible.' So as soon as the agent was identified as a coronavirus, then it became very clear that we had the opportunity to do drug screening and to grow the virus in culture. We started a vaccine endeavor with both intramural and extramural (scientists) and we began talking to

rigorous: A person is most infectious in the first 7 days after acquiring the disease; it is not known if the route of infection (direct mucous membrane contact, fecal/oral contact) influences the incubation period; there is no evidence of SARS transmission before the onset of first symptoms; the people most ill are also the most infectious to others; there is no evidence of food- or water-borne SARS; there has been no transmission on an airliner since Mar. 23; seroconversion can occur in the absence of disease; children seem to have a built-in defense against the virus, getting only mildly ill in most cases.

A veterinarian by training, Stöhr is exploring whether masked palm civets, raccoon dogs and other animals found in Chinese food markets are reservoirs for SARS.

Explaining SARS etiology was Dr. Malik Peiris, professor in the department of microbiology at the University of Hong Kong, which helped identify a new coronavirus as the cause of SARS. He said that people in the United States who have not traveled to Asia recently “can’t have a feel for how devastating in social and economic terms SARS is.”

He recounted early reports last February of an

outbreak of atypical pneumonia in Guangdong province in China, and said it was quickly appreciated that something other than influenza or other conventional respiratory virus was at work. Scientists soon learned that the SARS coronavirus was more stable in the environment than other respiratory viruses, and could survive for as long as a few days on dry surfaces at room temperature, Peiris reported.

“For the front-line health care workers, it was basically fighting a war,” he said, to a spontaneous wave of applause.

Offering a view from the trenches was Dr. Allison McGeer, director of infection control at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Toronto, who expressed both her gratitude for a “phenomenal degree of collaboration and willingness to help” on the part of the international public health community, and her pleasure at finally being able to spend a day without wearing a mask.

“Hospitals are the epicenter of this outbreak,” she reported; patients, visitors and health care workers are at highest risk of infection. The venues next

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industry about the possibility of getting drugs for them to put into our screening capability. We already have a contract that is a collaboration with CDC, USAMRIID (U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases), and NIAID—and it is a drug-screening contract, so we immediately plugged that in and started looking at the effect of certain already well-known antivirals, as well as some compounds that have not been fully developed. We started the screening process. Brian Murphy of our intramural Laboratory of Infectious Diseases got the virus from the CDC and began growing it in his lab for the purpose of developing a vaccine. Gary Nabel in NIAID’s Vaccine Research Center got the sequences from the CDC, so began doing the molecular approach with his vector approach—he has been working with adenovirus vector with the company GenVec. He has been making an HIV vaccine using an adenovirus vector; he immediately adapted that to the SARS [virus] and is now working with that. Subsequently, we began sending out the word to our grantees, particularly those who have been funded on coronavirus over the years—not the SARS coronavirus, but coronavirus in general—getting them interested in using their expertise to start thinking and talking about the coronavirus that’s causing SARS... We put together a first-stage research agenda involving basic research, pathogenesis, antiviral screening, targeted antiviral, vaccines, animal model development, and then a clinical component, and that was what you read about and heard about with the Clinical Center being involved. We felt we had the responsibility, if

it came to that, to study SARS-infected people in the Clinical Center. As it turns out we don’t have a lot of cases [in the U.S.], so the worry about that, which I think was understandable, [did not materialize]. We were very concerned about safety. So we are looking at not only studying acutely infected people—which there are not very many around in this country, in fact there are none right now—but also how long people shed virus. What about people in the convalescent stage? If we bring people in who have been infected, [we want to] look at their immunological response, to see if there is any residual evidence of virus. If they are asymptomatic, does the asymptomatic state coincide with a good immunological response? So there are a whole host of questions that are involved.

Is there still a possibility that the Clinical Center will admit SARS patients?

Yes. Oh, absolutely.

Are there such things as “superspreaders” in other infectious diseases or is this a novelty?

Superspreaders is somewhat of a misleading term. There is a biological variability; there are



NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci visits with Dr. Kathryn Holmes, a virologist at the University of Colorado who has studied coronaviruses for many years.

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most susceptible to SARS transmission are doctors' offices, households and family members of SARS patients. The virus rarely pops up in the community outside these sites, she said, and only one instance of workplace (other than hospital) transmission has been reported in Toronto.

She related a fearsome tale of a SARS patient who arrived at a Toronto hospital by ambulance with his wife, who did not yet realize she was infected. In mere hours in the ER and adjoining rooms, the pair infected almost everyone in the vicinity, even housekeepers, visitors and passersby. Commented Fauci, "It's astounding that we have only 8,000 cases, and not 80,000 or 800,000 cases, given this level of infectivity."

McGeer said that abnormal chest X-rays don't show up in SARS patients until around day 7 of illness. "This is a slowly progressive disease," she emphasized. Severity peaks at days 13-17, and in cases that proceed to mortality, the process lasts around 7 weeks, she said.

An impressive amount of scholarship already has been devoted to coronaviruses, as evidenced in talks given by Dr. Kathryn Holmes of the University of



Dr. Allison McGeer

Colorado and Dr. Mark Denison of Vanderbilt University Medical Center, both long-time NIH grantees. "A very large international group has been studying coronaviruses in animals and man," Holmes said. The coronavirus group was first recognized, by electron microscopy, in the late 1960's, she said. The spikes that characterize the surface of the round viral particles are viral fusion proteins, and are specific to certain

NIH RESPONSE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

people who, for a variety of reasons, shed more virus, or shed virus when they are asymptomatic, which gives them a greater opportunity to come in contact with other people and spread it more readily versus a person who is very sick and would only have contact with close family members or

hospital people. So the idea about a superspreader is not a new concept. There are people with HIV infection who are very efficient transmitters of HIV, for a number of reasons—they may have genital ulcers that allow the virus to be shed more readily in their genital tract, they may have a

high titer of virus that easily spills over into seminal fluid or vaginal secretions—so the answer to your question is that it is not unheard of...The typical distribution curve of efficiency of transmission is very common in different diseases.

How similar is the emergence of SARS to AIDS in your personal experience?

It's different because HIV/AIDS is a behaviorally spread disease. SARS is a respiratory disease and hence everyone could be at risk, so there is a big, big difference in how it is spread. The similarities are that A) It is a brand new disease, B) It is a newly recognized virus that belongs to a class of viruses that has been known. [AIDS] was a retrovirus; we knew about retroviruses but we did

not know about AIDS. This is a coronavirus; we knew about coronaviruses, but we did not know about SARS. It is brand new, it causes a serious disease, it could be fatal, and it very likely jumped from an animal species to a human, so it is what we call a zoonotic infection. The primary animal reservoir(s) of SARS are currently unknown; with AIDS, the chimpanzee likely was the main source of HIV-1 and the monkey the main source of HIV-2.

Are other NIH institutes and centers involved in SARS research?

Right now, I do not know of any others that are involved...There may be...but there's no major involvement other than NIAID.

How likely is it that the current outbreak is a "herald wave" or harbinger of worse things to come next fall?

We don't know, and that's the big unknown, and that's the reason why we have to be very vigilant and take this extremely seriously, because we are still in the evolutionary stage of an epidemic. We do not know whether it is going to plateau a little bit, then take off again, or whether it is going to drop dramatically and then come back in a seasonal way. We just do not know.

Is it surprising to you that there has been a reemergence of SARS in Toronto (as of late May)?

Not at all. I've been saying that before congressional committees. It ain't over 'til it's over. You've really got to be careful; there could be undetected chains of transmission that might pop up again, and that's exactly what happened in Canada.



VRC director Dr. Gary Nabel (r) chats with attendee Dr. Bruce Gellin of the HHS National Vaccine Program Office.



tissues, she added. "Fifteen to 30 percent of colds in people are due to one of the coronaviruses," she reported. The SARS-CoV has a 30,000-base RNA genome, which Denison dubbed "the genome from hell."

Coronaviruses fall into three distinct genetic groups, Holmes said; the SARS-CoV may belong to a new, fourth group. It appears to favor the lower respiratory tract in humans, and almost never the upper, and Holmes believes it can be enteric as well, mimicking the dual respiratory-enteric sites of other coronavirus infection in animals. She is optimistic that the SARS virus offers "many potential targets for drugs, including blocking and inhibition of various receptor interactions."

The morning session concluded with a rousing endorsement of the NIH model of funding basic

research on the faith that it will reap benefits downstream.

Vanderbilt's Denison, who described himself comically as "just a little old country virologist from Tennessee," applauded the value of basic research, which prompted another ovation from the audience. "I've been funded for 18 years by NIH," he said, "and I can tell you that the NIH investment in coronavirus



Dr. Yuming Shao comments from the audience.

biology in the past 20 years is less than the daily cost of the SARS epidemic worldwide."

He said the SARS outbreak "scares me—it has incredible pandemic potential." He said the health care workers who have responded to the epidemic "are my heroes," and cautioned that the outbreak could have been much worse. Glad for the newfound attention to his field, Denison reported that "there have been more coronaviruses sequenced in the past month than in the past 25 years."

The afternoon of the colloquium was devoted to breakout sessions designed to give NIAID what Secretary Thompson hoped at the outset would be "an aggressive set of goals" for containing and managing this new disease.

For more information on NIH's SARS response, visit www.niaid.nih.gov. For the most recent information on the SARS situation, visit www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/ and www.who.int/csr/sars/en/index.html. ■

Healthy Volunteers Needed

Participate in an ovarian function study. Call 1-800-411-1222 (TTY 1-866-411-1010). Compensation is available. Refer to study number 00-CH-0189. ■

Training Branch Class Offerings

The Training and Development Branch supports the development of NIH human resources through consultation and provides training, career development programs and other services designed to enhance organizational performance. For more information call 496-6211 or visit <http://LearningSource.od.nih.gov>.

Advanced MS Access 2000	6/25
Negotiating Skills	6/25
Processing Employee Benefits: A Refresher	6/26-27
NBS Travel System	6/30-7/1
Personal Computing ABCs	7/1
Travel Refresher Course	7/2
Leading Others: A Myers-Briggs Workshop	7/7
How to Give Constructive Feedback	7/8
Speaking on the Job-Part II: Presenting Yourself	7/8-10
How to Plan and Run Productive Meetings	7/9

IntraMall 'Summer Showcase,' June 25

All are invited to the 5th anniversary NIH IntraMall Summer Showcase, held at the Natcher Center on Wednesday, June 25 from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event will display the award-winning electronic purchasing system designed exclusively for NIH to simplify and speed purchasing.

Since opening in June 1998, the IntraMall has become a leading NIH web site for using government purchase cards to locate, buy and track purchases from almost 150 vendors, offering almost 3 million laboratory, office and computer items.

An array of speakers from NIH, GSA, US Bank and the National Industries for the Blind will provide 30-minute presentations about trends and tools for simplifying purchasing. Additionally, more than 40 vendors will exhibit their products and services and be available to answer product questions and to provide equipment demonstrations.

Register for the event (and the free lunch) from the web site <http://intramall.nih.gov/showcase>. To view a list of all the IntraMall vendors, visit <http://intramall.nih.gov/livevendors.html>. ■

Adults Needed for Study

NIMH's section on clinical and experimental neuropsychology is looking for adults 18 to 30 years of age for a study of visual and auditory attention. You will be asked to complete several computer-based tasks that involve paying attention to things you see and hear. Compensation is provided. For more information call 496-2552. ■

Lymphoma Patients Needed

If you or someone you love has lymphoma, call today for study information: 1-800-411-1222 (TTY: 1-866-411-1010). ■



Dr. Claire Gutkin is a new CSR scientific review administrator who will coordinate the review of small business grant applications for the risk, prevention and health behavior integrated review group. She previously was the principal scientist and a cofounder of metaLinker.com, a company established to conduct research, develop software, and consult in the long-term care arena. The National Institute on Aging supported her research, which focused on new approaches to clinical assessment at nursing homes. Gutkin previously spent 20 years at the Hebrew Rehabilitation Center for Aged, where she served as the center's director of information systems. She holds a Ph.D. from Brandeis University in social gerontology, an M.P.H. from Columbia University, and an M.S. in health planning and environmental health from Tufts University.

NIH Director's 2003 Awards Ceremony

All employees are invited to the 2003 NIH Director's Award ceremony on Friday, June 27 at 1 p.m. in the Natcher Bldg. main auditorium. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Sign language interpreters will be provided. Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodation to participate in the event should contact their IC award coordinators.

Imaging in Living Cells Symposium, July 10

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences will sponsor a symposium, "Tools for Discovery: Imaging Molecular Events in Living Cells," on Thursday, July 10, 8:30 a.m. to noon, in Lipsett Amphitheater, Bldg. 10.

Biological imaging of dynamic molecular events in living cells promises to provide new insights into



This image shows an abnormal mitotic spindle—the structure that pulls chromosomes to opposite ends of the cell during cell division—in a mammalian cell. A normal mitotic spindle is made up of two spindle poles, one at each end. This image shows a cell that has been experimentally treated with an inhibitor that has blocked formation of one of the spindle poles. The cell's chromosomes are attached to the mitotic spindle fibers radiating from the single pole. (Image courtesy of Ted Salmon, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

fundamental cellular processes. Recent advances in the tools used for intracellular imaging have opened the door to new information on the spatial and temporal relationships between molecules within the cell. The complex behavior of individual molecules and molecular assemblies, and their movement within the cell, can now be captured by increasingly sophisticated optical microscopic techniques. This symposium will feature examples of leading technologies that extend the limits of biological imaging to give high resolution detail on dynamic cellular events *in vivo*.

The program includes five speakers:

Wolfhard Almers of the Vollum Institute, Oregon Health and Science University; Jennifer Lippincott-Schwartz of NICHD; Ted Salmon of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Roger Tsien of the University of California, San Diego; and Simon Weiss of the University of California, Los Angeles.

There is no fee, but advance registration is required. To register online, go to <http://pub.nigms.nih.gov/imaging>.

Sign language interpretation will be provided. For information or other accommodation, contact Terese Trent, trentt@nigms.nih.gov or call 594-0828. ■

Balance Study Offered

A balance study for those experiencing leg weakness after stroke is being offered at the NIH. One visit required. For information call 1-800-411-1222, TTY 1-866-411-1010. ■

NIH Scholar Speaks at National Press Club

"Please know that with all the things money can buy, [a] scholarship has the ability to purchase hope," said OrLando Yarborough III, an NIH scholarship recipient, at a National Press Club event held on May 1 to kick off May as National Scholarship Month.

Yarborough, a participant in the NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program (UGSP), said, "The NIH UGSP financially secured my education, allowing me to completely focus on achieving academic excellence...The program took that which was out of my reach, and physically placed it within my hands." The UGSP is managed by the Office of Loan Repayment and Scholarship, OD (see <http://ugsp.info.nih.gov> for detailed information and application materials).

Yarborough, a senior and a Meyerhoff scholar at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, will begin an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program at Yale in



OrLando Yarborough III (l), a participant in the NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program, meets with Dr. William C. Nelson, president of Scholarship America, the organization that organizes National Scholarship Month.

the fall. This summer will be his third internship at NIH, training under the mentorship of Dr. Roland Owens, senior investigator in NIDDK's Laboratory of Molecular and Cellular Biology.

Other speakers during the two days of kickoff events

included Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio, Miss America 2003 Erika Harold and Claes Nobel, a member of the Nobel Prize family and founder of the National Society of High School Scholars.

National Scholarship Month was created in 1998 to raise awareness about the need for scholarships and to encourage individuals, organizations and corporations to support scholarships. According to *USA Today*, a quarter of the brightest low-income students don't go to college because of costs, and over the next decade, some 6 million qualified students may not go to college due to costs.—Matthew Holder ■

Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (JRA)?

Take part in an NIH study testing a new drug treatment for JRA. For more information call 1-800-411-1222, TTY 1-866-411-1010. ■