

nih record

Office of the Director Hosts All-Hands Meeting

By Audrey Hill

On July 16, Office of the Director employees gathered at an all-hands meeting to hear NIH leadership thank them for their hard work, describe challenges and accomplishments and relay results of a recent employee survey.

To a full Masur Auditorium, Dr. Lawrence Tabak, NIH principal deputy director, joked, “The rumor is that I’m going to retire and that this was the only way I could get anyone to come to the party.” He urged everyone to “Exhale! Nothing bad is going to happen...Thank you, first and foremost. Without you, very important things would not get done around here.”

Tabak introduced the five other NIH deputy directors, allowing each to outline his or her responsibilities and share recent accomplishments and challenges.

Dr. James Anderson, director of the Division of Program Coordination, Planning and Strategic Initiatives, explained the div-

SEE OD ALL-HANDS, PAGE 6

NIH principal deputy director Dr. Lawrence Tabak addresses OD all-hands meeting.



Can We Be Clear?

Spiegelhalter Explores Ways to Convey Health Risks, Benefits

By Stacy Weiner

Would you be willing to forego your daily burger for the possibility of living a little longer? Would you tolerate some heartburn for the possible benefits of a statin? People make decisions about the risks and benefits of treatments and behaviors every day. But are they making them based on solid information and understanding?

In his recent lecture, “Communicating Possible Harms and Benefits of Treatment and Lifestyle,” Prof. David Spiegelhalter argued that researchers and clinicians need a broad array of tools if they are going to improve public understanding of health-related research.

“There is an ethical need to communicate harms and benefits in a transparent way,” said Spiegelhalter, who is Winton professor of the public understanding of risk at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom. “We

SEE SPIEGELHALTER, PAGE 4



Collins Discusses Biology of Aging at Interest Group Meeting

On July 12, all of the seats in Masur Auditorium were filled for a meeting of NIA’s geroscience interest group (GSIG), a newly formed trans-NIH group focused on the premise that aging biology is at the base of many of the chronic diseases that form significant portions of the research portfolios of most NIH institutes and centers.

SEE COLLINS, PAGE 8

ABOVE • HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius participates in HHS Night at the Ballpark. See story on p. 12.

features

NIH Deputy Directors Address OD Employees	1
Safety, Health and Wellness Day To Be Observed, Aug. 29	3
Three Intramural Scientists Win PECASE Honor	5
NIH’ers Enjoy Night at Nats Park	12

departments

Briefs	2
Feedback	9
Digest	10
Milestones	11
Seen	12



The NIH Record is published biweekly at Bethesda, MD by the Editorial Operations Branch, Office of Communications and Public Liaison, for the information of employees of the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services. The content is reprintable without permission. Pictures may be available upon request. Use of funds for printing this periodical has been approved by the director of the Office of Management and Budget through September 30, 2012.

To receive alerts to our latest issue, send an email to listserv@list.nih.gov with the words "Subscribe NIHRECORD" in the message body.

NIH Record Office Bldg. 31, Rm. 5B41
Phone (301) 496-2125 Fax (301) 402-1485

Web address <http://nihrecord.od.nih.gov>

Editor

Richard McManus
Rich.McManus@nih.gov

Associate Editor

Carla Garnett
Carla.Garnett@nih.gov

Staff Writer

Jan Ehrman
Jan.Ehrman@nih.gov

The NIH Record reserves the right to make corrections, changes or deletions in submitted copy in conformity with the policies of the paper and HHS.

NIH...Turning Discovery Into Health

briefs

16th Annual Free Outdoor Film Festival

Get ready for 3 nights of free movies, popular local bands and great food Aug. 23-25. The 2012 Comcast Outdoor Festival is newly located at Mid-Pike Plaza on Rte. 355.

Events begin each evening at 5:30 with live music along with food and wine sales from area food trucks and local restaurants. Films begin at dusk. Admission is free and a portion of food and beverage proceeds will benefit three NIH charities: Children's Inn, Camp Fantastic/Special Love and Friends of the Clinical Center.

The lineup includes:

Thursday, Aug. 23 *All the President's Men*

Friday, Aug. 24 *Midnight in Paris*

Saturday, Aug. 25 *We Bought a Zoo*

The festival is located near the White Flint Metro on the Red Line. On-site free parking is also available. Attendees should bring beach or lawn chairs. For more information, visit www.filmfest-nih.org.

NIH Sponsors 2nd Annual Safety, Health Photo Contest; Deadline Is Sept. 30

The Office of Research Services' Division of Occupational Health and Safety is holding the 2nd annual "In Focus! Safe Workplaces for All" photo contest.

Whether photography is your passion, hobby or just an occasional pastime, you are invited to participate and capture an image displaying safe workplaces or activities, e.g., the repair of earthquake damage to the Washington Monument, laboratory workers using personal protective equipment, crossing guards on busy streets, etc.

The goals are to: help reduce personal injuries and illnesses; educate and underscore the importance of safety; foster innovation to create shared solutions; and promote community involvement by displaying your talent, imagination and creativity to raise awareness of workplace safety and health.

Be part of building a positive safety culture and get involved by sending in your best shots.

First, second and third place photographs will be framed and prominently displayed throughout NIH. The three winners will receive a framed certificate from NIH leadership. The winning photos will also be featured on the ORS/DOHS web site.

The submission period is open until Sunday, Sept. 30. To learn more about the contest, rules,

panel of judges, selection process and to submit your photo, visit www.ors.od.nih.gov/sr/dohs/HealthAndSafety/infocus.

Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Series Is Off to a Great Start

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management's Black Employment Program joined with the Clinical Center's Medical Research Scholars Program this summer to host a monthly Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Series. The goals for the partnership are to provide early-career information to the next generation of clinician-scientists, physicians and dentists, so they can make choices about future training programs and jobs and to showcase the broad spectrum of intramural and extramural opportunities at NIH.

The first session was held June 14 in Bldg. 60. The first presenter was Dr. Roland Owens, assistant director in the Office of Intramural Research, who was instrumental in starting the series with Victoria Gross, NIH Black Employment Program manager, and Kenny Williams, Medical Research Scholars Program coordinator. Owens discussed "What You Can Put in Your Toolkit that Will Make or Keep You Eligible for Future NIH Tenure-Track Positions." Current CRTP fellows, HHMI-NIH research scholars, Graduate Partnership Program participants and summer interns who are currently enrolled in either medical or dental school attended.

July's brown bag was held in the Clinical Center on July 12. Dr. Charles Dearolf, also an OIR assistant director, led the session and provided details on the Lasker Clinical Research Scholars Program, Earl Stadtman Investigators and other training programs for early-career researchers.

The last lunch was held Aug. 9 in the CC Medical Board Rm. Dr. Patricia Cole, director of Intramural Loan Repayment Programs in the Office of Intramural Research, was the speaker.

The next brown bag is tentatively set for Thursday, Sept. 13. Contact Gross (victoria.gross@nih.gov) or Williams (williajk@mail.nih.gov) for details.

NIH Safety, Health and Wellness Day, Aug. 29 at Natcher

NIH Safety, Health and Wellness Day will be held Wednesday, Aug. 29, rain or shine, at Natcher Conference Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The opening ceremony will begin at 10:30 a.m. and be videocast live and archived at <http://video.cast.nih.gov>. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy the activities and learn about safety, health and wellness opportunities at NIH.

Dr. L. Casey Chosewood, senior medical officer for Total Worker Health Programs at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will speak about promoting worker safety and adopting Total Worker Health principles. Summertime safety will be emphasized, too, as well as focus on wellness for workers and their families.

This year, the Office of Research Services' Division of Occupational Health and Safety and Division of Amenities and Transportation Services are combining efforts to incorporate wellness promotion with worker safety and adopting Total Worker Health principles. TWH is intended to identify and support comprehensive approaches to reduce workplace hazards and promote worker health and wellbeing both on the job and at home.

There will be demonstrations on work, home and recreational safety. Exhibitors will show case river and boating safety; hiking and camping safety; bicycle, motorcycle and pedestrian safety; and laboratory sustainable (green) practices, to name just a few. There will also be exercises such as Zumba, self-defense demonstrations, breakout training sessions, police dog demonstrations and more than 40 exhibitors. Don't miss the Seat Belt Convincer ride and explosion demonstrations. In addition to the regular menu, there will be healthy food choices for purchase and cooking demonstrations provided by Eurest at several locations throughout Natcher. You can also relax with lunch and listen to the jazzy sounds of the CIT Band.

For more information and a complete schedule of activities, visit www.ors.od.nih.gov/sr/dohs. Individuals who need reasonable accommodation to participate should contact Chris Gaines at (301) 451-3631 and/or the Federal Relay at (800) 877-8339. A special shuttle route will run between Bldgs. 33, 10, 29 and Natcher Conference Center. For staff located off campus, there will be free parking in the MLP-11 parking garage off of Rockville Pike during the event.

Freire To Return to Area to Head FNIH

Dr. Maria Freire was recently named president of the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health. She will begin her tenure on Nov. 1.

Freire, who is currently a member of the advisory committee to the NIH director, comes to FNIH from the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, where she served as president since 2008. Prior to joining the Lasker Foundation, she served as president and CEO of the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development from 2001 to 2008, director of NIH's Office of Technology Transfer from 1995 to 2001, and led the Office of Technology Development at the University of Maryland at Baltimore and the University of Maryland Baltimore County from 1989 to 1995.

The recipient of numerous awards, including the HHS Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service, the Arthur S. Flemming Award and the Bayh-Dole Award, Freire was also awarded a Fulbright fellowship as well as two U.S. Congressional science fellowships.

Freire received her bachelor of science degree at the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima, Peru and her Ph.D. in biophysics from the University of Virginia. She has also completed post-graduate work in immunology and virology at the University of Virginia and the University of Tennessee, respectively.

In a release, FNIH noted Freire "has devoted her career to improving health and health research on a global scale and she will bring this same energy and expertise to the foundation. She has a proven record of innovative and strategic leadership, creative interdisciplinary team building and outstanding entrepreneurial and organizational skills. Dr. Freire will engage these same skills to achieve the vision and mission of the FNIH, creating innovative partnerships with a broad range of constituents and leading the organization with energy, intelligence and vision."



Parley's Place Makes Gift to Inn

Parley's Place, the snack and concession shop near the cafeteria in Bldg. 31, recently held a contest that offered a cash award to the shop's 3 millionth customer (\$100), and \$50 each to whomever was 2,999,999th and 3,000,001st.

Gene Cowgill (l), an NIH retiree who works at the store, said that if no one produced a receipt ending in the numbers 1971, indicating the 3 millionth sale, the entire \$200 would go to the Children's Inn at NIH. Because no one came forward with the winning receipt, Lauren Conte (r), annual giving and special events manager at the inn, accepted the check on July 24. Parley's Place began counting customers in 1990 and reached its 2 millionth in May 2006. Observed Cowgill, "I think a lot of people threw their receipts away, thinking the money would go to the Children's Inn, which is a good cause."



SPIEGELHALTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

have an obligation to do that if you believe in shared care and informed decision-making.”

But effective communication is no simple matter, noted Spiegelhalter, who spoke as part of NIH’s Medicine: Mind the Gap series.

For one, words used to describe risk can be quite unclear. “Might” and “possibly” mean different things to different people. Adopting shared definitions of terms is one solution to this problem. In the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s likelihood scale, for example, “very likely” means a 90-100 percent probability.

Numbers can be just as confusing, though. Spiegelhalter noted that when asked to identify the greatest risk of getting a disease—1 in 10, 1 in 100, or 1 in 1,000—only a quarter of U.S. study participants picked the right answer. “It’s very confusing because the biggest number is associated with the smallest risk,” he noted.

Spiegelhalter also cautions against “denominator neglect,” or the failure to consider a number in context. “Who does that?” he asked. “The newspapers do it every single day.” A negative event makes a dramatic story, he said, but the number of times that nothing negative happens—the denominator—often goes unnoticed.

Absolute risk and relative risk pose problems, too. A study can find that patients treated with a medication had a 36 percent reduction of heart attack risk compared to those taking a placebo. So, in terms of relative risk the effect sounds impressive. However, in terms of absolute risk, or the likely effect on the population, the number may be much less impressive, such as 1 out of 100 people.

The public should be particularly suspicious of mismatched framing, Spiegelhalter added. A misleading drug ad might report benefits in relative terms to play up the positives, but then describe harms in absolute terms to minimize the negatives. One way to address this problem is to report both benefits and harms uniformly on a drug fact label, such as one that an FDA advisory committee has recommended.

Above all, Spiegelhalter argued, effective risk communication requires a multipronged approach that uses words, numbers, images and varied metaphors.



For example, pictographs help convey a comparison. An image might use rows of stick figures to represent treated study participants on one side and those assigned a placebo on the other. Each possible benefit and side effect could be depicted in a separate line. Other approaches are useful too, including tree-maps, which divide an image into different-sized rectangles to convey the relative significance of compared items.

Spiegelhalter also recommends using measures that have concrete meaning in a person’s life. A man who hears that his life expectancy may be reduced by 1 year may not be impressed. But you may grab his attention if you translate that into losing a half-hour every day of his adult life. Spiegelhalter calls this half-hour a “micro-life” and can enumerate the microlife cost of behaviors like drinking a few extra beers.

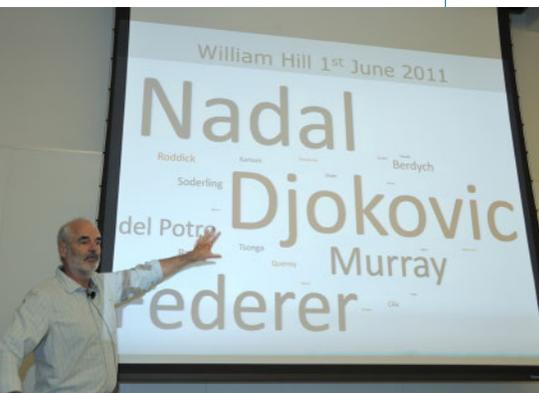
Sometimes, though, scientists do not have a solid understanding of the risks involved in a particular behavior. In that case, Spiegelhalter advocates finding ways to communicate uncertainty, such as an image that captures multiple possible outcomes or a confidence scale that conveys experts’ level of agreement.

After all, he said, some uncertainty is part of the process. The challenge is “to have faith about the rightness of one’s actions,” said Spiegelhalter, quoting NIH’s Dr. Paul Han, “while affirming the irreducibility of doubt.”

To watch a videocast of this lecture, visit <http://videocast.nih.gov>.



Dr. Paul Coates, acting director of the NIH Office of Disease Prevention and director of the Office of Dietary Supplements, poses a question during the seminar.



Prof. David Spiegelhalter (above and top r) said effective risk communication requires a multipronged approach that uses words, numbers, images and varied metaphors.

Bushnell Named Director of New NCCAM Program on Pain, Brain

Dr. M. Catherine Bushnell, an internationally recognized pain and neuroscience researcher, has been appointed scientific director of a new NIH research program focusing on the brain's role in perceiving, modifying and managing pain.

The program will be based at NCCAM, in the intramural division. It will be multidisciplinary and highly collaborative, including other NIH research programs on neuroscience, imaging and mental and behavioral health.



Dr. M. Catherine Bushnell

PHOTO: LISA HELFERT

Chronic pain is a major public health problem, affecting about 100 million American adults. It costs the nation up to \$635 billion per year in treatment and lost productivity, according to the Institute of Medicine. Managing pain and other symptoms is the most frequent reason that Americans turn to complementary health practices. While much progress has been made in drug treatment of acute pain, better methods are needed.

“Dr. Bushnell’s work has profoundly changed the ways in which we understand and study this very important problem,” said NCCAM director Dr. Josephine Briggs. “Under her leadership, this program will continue to work toward the development of better ways to safely and more effectively treat chronic pain and advance research on the intersection and integration of pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches.”

Bushnell comes to NIH from McGill University in Montreal, where she was the Harold Griffith professor of anesthesia, director of the Alan Edwards Centre for Research on Pain, Canada research chair in clinical pain and professor in dentistry and neurology.

Bushnell began her NIH career in 1976 in post-doctoral work at what is now NIDCR, after receiving a Ph.D. in experimental psychology from American University. Her research interests include forebrain mechanisms of pain processing, psychological modulation of pain and brain changes in chronic pain patients.—**Ellen O’Donnell**



NIH intramural PECASE honorees are (from l) Dr. Peter Crompton, Dr. Daniel Larson and Dr. Justin Taraska.

PECASE Honors Three from Intramural NIH

Three NIH intramural scientists are among 20 NIH-supported recipients of the 2011 Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, announced July 23 by the White House. President Obama named a total of 96 researchers as PECASE recipients. They hail from 8 departments, including HHS, as well as EPA, NASA and the National Science Foundation. It is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on science and engineering professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers.

The intramural honorees are:

Dr. Peter Crompton, chief of the malaria infection biology and immunity unit, Laboratory of Immunogenetics, NIAID, for studies on the mechanisms of naturally acquired immunity to malaria;

Dr. Daniel Larson, head, systems biology of gene expression, Laboratory of Receptor Biology and Gene Expression, NCI, for studies on transcription dynamics of single human cells; and

Dr. Justin Taraska, an investigator in the Laboratory of Molecular and Cellular Imaging, NHLBI, for studies on the architecture and control of vesicle fusion in excitable cells.

“This Presidential Award recognizes the achievements of scientists early in their career who show exceptional potential for leadership in science and technology,” said NIH director Dr. Francis Collins. “These individuals have only recently started research in their fields, and they have the potential for long and productive careers working on discoveries to improve the health of our nation.”

Since the program began in 1996, NIH has funded a total of 213 PECASE recipients. A complete list of NIH-supported recipients and program information is available at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/pecase.htm>. Awardees were honored by the President at a White House ceremony in late July.

Have a Family History of Alcohol Addiction?

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism is seeking men and women ages 21–30 with a family member (parent or sibling) with a history of alcohol addiction. Our study seeks to identify genes that are related to the response to alcohol in humans (study 11-AA-0180). Volunteers should be healthy and drug-free. Qualified participants will be reimbursed for their participation. The study involves a screening visit and two outpatient visits at the Clinical Center. For more details and to participate, call (301) 435-9397 or email AlcPGstudy@mail.nih.gov.

Among the NIH deputy directors on the panel were (from l) Colleen Barros, Dr. Kathy Hudson and Dr. Michael Gottesman.

PHOTOS: ERNIE BRANSON



OD ALL-HANDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ision's role of overseeing research infrastructure, advancing comparison medicine and identifying scientific priorities across NIH.

"We're becoming more effective in working across our offices," Anderson said. "It's sometimes a challenge to work across all the institutes and centers." Several deputy directors echoed this theme of improvement in working across divisions within OD, although challenges still remain in trans-NIH efforts because of the historically decentralized model of the organization.

Colleen Barros serves as deputy director for management and chief financial officer, overseeing the business infrastructure of NIH. "We have had a good past couple years with my management team, not only in terms of developing a vision for what we do administratively, but also in working very closely with our colleagues in the centers and institutes."

Office of Management accomplishments, Barros said, range from implementing telework programs to fostering a more collaborative culture across divisions. OM also orchestrated logistics planning and administration during this year's storms and heat wave, as well as helped oversee the creation of NIH's newest center, NCATS. OM's challenges range from navigating budget cuts to "developing saving strategies that may depend on consolidating activities in a highly decentralized environment."

Dr. Michael Gottesman, deputy director for intramural research, and his staff oversee intramural research, training, scientific appointments and technology transfer within NIH. "Our major goal is to ensure the scientific staff is of high quality, while creating a research environment for success." He said that expanding diversity within the

NIH scientific community is an ongoing challenge.

"Everything will be fine," assured the 19-year veteran of his post. By this fall, he said, he will have assembled an advisory committee to help guide the Office of Intramural Research. "I have to say," he admitted, "that 19 years went really quickly."

As deputy director for science, outreach and policy, Dr. Kathy Hudson works with her staff to promote NIH's research in the media, advance the organization's legislative agenda and develop scientific policy on issues such as avian influenza. She also stressed the importance of relationships with other organizations within NIH, such as their work to help the newest member of the NIH team, NCATS, get off to a smooth start.

Finally, Dr. Sally Rockey, deputy director for extramural research, explained that her world consists of grant funding for research that occurs outside of NIH; she pointed out that NIH made its first extramural grant in 1939.

"Our extramural research program is very large," she explained. "We support 300,000 scientists across the country and world." One of the challenges for the Office of Extramural Research, she



Masur Auditorium was full for the July 16 OD all-hands meeting.



Dr. James Anderson of DPCPSI



Dr. Sally Rockey addresses crowd in Masur.

continued, is that the program encompasses so many issues. New technology such as blogging, however, has helped provide information on OER grants and their results to a wider audience. She is also assisted by an attitude she has made public on numerous occasions: "It truly is a joy to come to work each day."

Tabak then reviewed a PowerPoint presentation depicting the results of the 2011 Employee Viewpoint Survey. "I don't even speak to my wife without [using] PowerPoint," he quipped. The answers to survey questions were collapsed into ratings of positive, neutral or negative responses. Additionally, several recommendations were borne of this survey, one of which, Tabak remarked, included the all-hands OD meeting.

He noted that 83 percent of respondents believe the work they do is important. Overall, a majority of respondents believe their supervisors are doing a good job and 68 percent report satisfaction with their job, but Tabak recommended more communication across work units and encouraged leadership to continue to support their staff.

"Based on the feedback, we need to enhance our efforts at rewarding creativity and innovation," he said, as only slightly over half of respondents felt they had sufficient resources to do their jobs. The majority of respondents, 64 percent, felt that OD has policies to promote diversity, Tabak added, "but we want 100 percent on this one."

Finally, Tabak initiated a question-and-answer period for the final 15 minutes of an hour-long session. Asked what would happen if the federal budget supercommittee could not agree on a budget before next Jan. 2, Tabak said, "The effect of sequestration on NIH as a whole would be nothing short of catastrophic." He predicted the loss of thousands of grants and "an impact on the workforce that we may feel for generations to come."

Employees are invited to email questions/comments to feedback@od.nih.gov. Concluded Tabak, "I hope this won't be a one-time event." 🗣️

NIH Officers Deployed for July 4 Celebration in D.C.

Fifteen NIH Commissioned Corps officers deployed in support of the National Independence Day Celebration in Washington, D.C., on July 4. The Department of Health and Human Services sent a team to provide adequate health and medical support, as requested by the National Park Service.

About half a million people gathered to listen to bands, watch a parade and view fireworks. To support their potential medical needs, approximately 120 members from the Office of Force Readiness and Deployment, National Disaster Medical System, Centers for Disease Control and Veterans Affairs were also deployed for the event. These responders were grouped into nine teams that attended to those seeking aid at eight stations around the mall.

With the oppressive weather conditions, medical teams treated more than 300 patients who mostly suffered from heat-related illnesses and blisters.

CDR Alan Ou (NIAID) served as the team lead for a medical tent located near the World War II Memorial. "In addition to our core PHS team, there were D.C. EMS staff and Red Cross volunteers based out of our tent," he said. "When the time came for the fireworks show, we were right under them and had an excellent view. Although we worked late into the night, it was gratifying to serve the public while meeting and working with new friends."



Medical tent team members near the Washington Monument include (from l) LT Tina Brad-Pitt, Ranger New, CDR Alan Ou (NIAID) and Charles Cali (Ohio DMAT team).



Above, LT Shane Deckert (OD) served as lead convoy driver and transported medical team personnel to various locations as needed throughout the day. Below (from l) LCDR James L. Kenney, CDR Sally Hu (OD) and LCDR Eric Zhou (NIAID) were deployed for the National Independence Day Celebration.



COLLINS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



NIH director Dr. Francis Collins wove an account of his decades-long interest in Hutchinson-Gilford progeria syndrome.

PHOTOS: ERNIE BRANSON

The full house was no surprise: The featured speaker was NIH director Dr. Francis Collins, who described his research on Hutchinson-Gilford progeria syndrome (HGPS) as well as its relevance to understanding normal aging. “It has been an amazing journey, moving very rapidly from gene discovery to clinical trials,” said Collins. HGPS is an extremely rare disorder characterized by exceptionally accelerated aging, leading to premature death at an average age of 13 years, usually from cardiovascular complications.

Collins’ journey in this field started when, as a young physician, he was put in charge of Meg, a “real spitfire” of a young lady, he says, affected by the disease. His interest in HGPS was reawakened many years later when he was approached by Dr. Leslie Gordon of the Progeria Research Foundation, whose son Sam also has HGPS.

Sparked by his encounter with Sam and others with HGPS, Collins’ laboratory put its interest into action and in 2003 identified a single point mutation responsible for the syndrome, a silent mutation (G608G) in the gene coding for lamin A, a structural component of the nuclear envelope. Further molecular studies revealed that the mutation caused increased activation of a silent splice site, leading to the production of a truncated lamin A molecule termed progerin.

Based on detailed knowledge of the biology of lamins and on his own research, Collins and his team were able to move the field rapidly toward translation. Within 5 years, a clinical trial for HGPS was begun and, today, a second clinical trial is currently being considered.

This is good news for the affected children and their families, who now have hope for management of HGPS. But interest in HGPS goes beyond the disease itself.

While the disease is viewed as an accelerated aging syndrome, many investigators in the aging research community have not thought these syndromes to faithfully represent normal aging. Aware of this view, Collins gave evidence of the potential for HGPS research to inform basic aging research. Not only is progerin produced by normal cells during aging, he noted, but abnormal splicing appears to be a common feature of aging, especially in cells that reach senescence via telomere loss. Collins is currently collaborating with NIA director Dr. Richard Hodes, an expert in telomere biology who conducts research in his laboratory at the National Cancer Institute, to further pursue this area of research.

“The seminar demonstrated the power of genetic and basic biology approaches not only to provide hope to individuals with rare diseases, but also to inform more common issues, including normal aging. I’m excited about the collaboration our labs have recently initiated,” said Hodes.

During a discussion with the GSIG executive committee after the seminar, both Collins and Hodes reinforced their hope that the group could become a major force in trans-NIH efforts.

“Aging biology has reached a tipping point for research,” said Dr. Felipe Sierra, GSIG founder and director of NIA’s Division of Aging Biology. “We have recent evidence that the aging process is malleable and it has been observed in several animal models that—when aging is delayed—so are the diseases and disabilities that normally accompany aging.”

For more information on GSIG, contact Sierra at sierraf@nia.nih.gov.

Right:

Special guests at the first GSIG lecture was a large group of Meyerhoff Scholars from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.



feedback

Have a question about some aspect of working at NIH? You can post anonymous queries at www.nih.gov/nihrecord/index.htm (click on the Feedback icon) and we'll try to provide answers.

Feedback: The online menu for the 2nd floor cafeteria in Bldg. 10 is frequently incorrect and/or incomplete. Is there a way to correct this? Another place I have worked had an automated call-in line that listed the menu—would this be an option?

Response from the Office of Research Services: The Division of Amenities and Transportation Services currently receives menu listings from the various cafeterias and vendors every Friday or Saturday and posts to www.ors.od.nih.gov/pes/dats/food/dining/Pages/dining_locations.aspx on Monday morning, as early as possible.

From this point forward, we will request that all cafeteria operators submit their menus on Thursday, to ensure information is available every Monday morning. In reality, menus are subject to change based on weekly availability and quality of ingredients. Due to the multiple cafeteria sites on and off campus, we have not explored a call-in option, but will discuss it with vendors and evaluate the possibility. Thank you for the suggestion.

Feedback: When will the James A. Shannon Building lettering be put back onto Bldg. 1's front?

Response from the Office of Research Facilities: The red James A. Shannon Building lettering was removed because it was deteriorating the limestone on the east side of Bldg. 1. In lieu of the lettering, we installed a brass plaque near the main entrance commemorating Dr. Shannon. The plaque is opposite a plaque describing President Roosevelt's dedication of the NIH Bethesda campus on Oct. 31, 1940. These two plaques seem more professional in appearance than the previous lettering and no damage is being done to the limestone, so our present plan is to leave the lettering off of the building.

Feedback: I often see cars parked in the metered spots in front of Bldg. 31 all day, with an expired meter all day. Rarely do I ever see parking tickets on these cars. Are some people allowed to park in these metered spots all day without paying? The signs indicate that this is not allowed, but I never see any police enforcement of the rules.

Response from ORS: Persons with disabili-

ties who have been issued a handicap permit or placard are allowed to park in metered spaces without paying. Those permits must be properly displayed. The NIH Police routinely monitor the area and will continue to take appropriate action when violations are observed. If you suspect a vehicle is parked illegally, please report it to the NIH Police at their non-emergency line, (301) 496-5685.

Feedback: When will the scaffolding be removed from Bldg. 1?

Response from ORF: The Office of Research Facilities anticipates the scaffolding will be removed in fall 2012. The scaffolding has been retained to accomplish a number of facility repairs for Bldg. 1. Initially it was installed to replace the roof. Since there is a relatively significant cost to install scaffolding and installation and breakdown can be noisy to building occupants, the decision was made to retain it and accomplish several other needed repairs including replacing an aging copper gutter system, repairing dormers at the roof line and repairs to the façade including building trim and windows.

The decision to keep the scaffolding up during the duration of these repairs was fiscally prudent, saving tens of thousands of dollars and reducing the number of drilled holes in the exterior of the building each time a new scaffold is erected. 🗨️

NINR Council Welcomes Five New Members

NINR director Dr. Patricia Grady recently welcomed five new members to the National Advisory Council for Nursing Research, the principal advisory board for NINR.

Dr. Julie Anderson is an associate professor of nursing at the University of North Dakota. She has extensive experience in neonatal intensive care nursing and her primary research interests center around skin and wound care.

Dr. Susan Gennaro is dean and professor of Connell School of Nursing at Boston College. Her research focuses on the improvement of global perinatal health and the identification of causes of preterm birth in minority women in the U.S.

Dr. William L. Holzemer is professor and dean at Rutgers University College of Nursing. His research examines quality of nursing education, quality of nursing care, outcomes research, variation in practice, self-care symptom management and quality of life, with special emphasis on people living with and affected by HIV infection.

Dr. Anne Rosenfeld is professor and associate dean for research at the University of Arizona College of Nursing. Her research focuses on symptom management for women with acute coronary syndrome.

Col. Bruce A. Schoneboom is the incoming commander for the Army Medical Research Institute for Chemical Defense at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md. His research interests include investigating neuro-immune responses of the central nervous system to viral pathogens with known bioterrorist capabilities and the development of new monitoring technologies with operational and garrison applications.



NINR director Dr. Patricia Grady (front, c) welcomes new council members Dr. Anne Rosenfeld (front, l), Dr. Julie Anderson; (rear, from l) Col. Bruce Schoneboom, Dr. Susan Gennaro and Dr. William Holzemer.

PHOTO: BILL BRANSON

Study Shows the Deaf Brain Processes Touch Differently

People who are born deaf process the sense of touch differently than people who are born with normal hearing, according to research funded by NIH. The finding reveals how the early loss of a sense—in this case hearing—affects brain development. It adds to a growing list of discoveries that confirm the impact of experiences and outside influences in molding the developing brain. The study was published in the July 11 online issue of the *Journal of Neuroscience*.

“This research shows how the brain is capable of rewiring in dramatic ways,” said NIDCD director Dr. James F. Battey, Jr. “This will be of great interest to other researchers who are studying multisensory processing in the brain.”

CT Scans May Help ER Personnel More Quickly Assess Patients with Chest Pain

Adding computed tomography (CT) scans to standard screening procedures may help emergency room staff more rapidly determine which patients complaining of chest pain are having a heart attack or may soon have a heart attack, and which patients can be safely discharged, according to a study funded by NHLBI. The study appeared in the July 26 *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Researchers in the study focused on a condition known as acute coronary syndrome, which includes heart attacks and unstable angina (chest pain), a condition that often progresses to a heart attack. This syndrome occurs when narrowed or blocked coronary arteries prevent oxygen-rich blood from reaching the heart muscle. Since chest pain has many causes, patients are often unnecessarily admitted to the hospital before it is determined that their chest pain is not due to acute coronary syndrome or other serious conditions.

CT angiography is a type of heart X-ray exam using a device that creates pictures of the coronary arteries, allowing physicians to see whether arteries have major blockages.

Study Reveals New Effects of Investigational MS Drug

Researchers at NIH have found evidence that a unique type of immune cell contributes to mul-

tipl sclerosis (MS). Their discovery helps define the effects of one of the newest drugs under investigation for treating MS—daclizumab—and could lead to a new class of drugs for treating MS and other autoimmune disorders.

In these disorders, the immune system turns against the body’s own tissues. Ongoing clinical trials have shown that daclizumab appears to help quiet the autoimmune response in MS patients, but its precise effects on the legions of cells that make up the immune system are not fully understood.

The new study, published in *Science Translational Medicine*, shows that one effect of daclizumab is to thin the ranks of lymphoid tissue inducer (LTi) cells. These cells are known to promote the development of lymph nodes and related tissues during fetal life, but their role during adulthood has been unclear. The new study marks the first time that LTi cells have been implicated in any human autoimmune disorder.

Dr. Bibiana Bielekova of NINDS and her team found that among MS patients participating in clinical trials of daclizumab, the number of LTi cells was elevated in patients not receiving daclizumab compared to those on the drug. Patients receiving daclizumab also had reduced signs of inflammation in the cerebrospinal fluid that surrounds the brain.

NIH Scientists Identify Likely Predictors of Hepatitis C Severity

Scientists at NIH have identified several factors in people infected with the hepatitis C virus that may predict whether the unusually rapid progression of disease from initial infection to severe liver conditions, such as cirrhosis, will occur. Knowing whether a patient’s condition is likely to deteriorate quickly could help physicians decide on the best course of treatment.

The study was conducted by an international team of researchers led by Dr. Patrizia Farci of NIAID and Dr. Harvey Alter of the Clinical Center. Their findings appeared online July 23 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

“Treatment for hepatitis C is often expensive and poorly tolerated,” said NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci. “Tools that would enable physicians to better predict the course of disease progression in hepatitis C patients would help guide treatment decisions. This small study is a potentially important step in developing such tools.”—compiled by Carla Garnett



NIDCD principal investigator Dr. Christina Karns provided this graphic of a human brain derived from multiple structural magnetic resonance images. Her team found that people born deaf process the sense of touch differently than those born with normal hearing.



milestones



Dr. James Balow (l) and Dr. Michael W. Krause

NIDDK Names New Scientific Director, Translational Research Director

Dr. Michael W. Krause was recently announced as NIDDK's new scientific director. He has been acting deputy scientific director since August 2011, chief of the Laboratory of Molecular Biology since 2006 and director of NIDDK's Genomics Core Facility since 2007.

He came to NIDDK in 1993 after a postdoctoral fellowship with Dr. Harold Weintraub, an international leader in molecular biology at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. There, Krause studied developmental gene regulation in *C. elegans*, uncovering mRNA trans-splicing and MyoD, a master regulator of muscle cell development. He received a bachelor's degree in biology and doctorate in molecular, cellular and developmental biology from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

"I am looking forward to the challenges and opportunities of the road ahead, and the chance to refocus on the core elements that define a strong and effective institute: great science and great people, synergizing to advance discovery that improves human health," Krause said.

Known internationally for pioneering research on the transcriptional regulation of cell fate determination in *C. elegans*, Krause has focused much of his career on muscle cell development. He has also collaborated to study sensors of nutritional flux as they relate to insulin and other signaling pathways, while also exploring novel links to transcriptional regulation. Other studies of cell cycle regulation, RNA modification, neuronal signaling and heme uptake using genetics, cell biology and whole-genome approaches reflect Krause's broad scientific interests.

"Mike brings to the position a strong commitment to science and teamwork, broad leadership experience and a solid ability to listen, negotiate and make tough decisions," said NIDDK director Dr. Griffin Rodgers.

NIDDK clinical director Dr. James Balow concurred. "Mike Krause is already an impressively effective spokesman for science and scientific excellence in the intramural program. He has an uncanny talent for translating arcane science into understandable concepts that can ignite the interest of a diverse constituency. What better starting point for the scientific leader of a broad-based institute such as NIDDK?" he said. "Add to this Mike's natural problem-solving skills, decisiveness, fair-mindedness, appreciation of the value of diverse approaches to science and generosity of spirit, all [of which] lead me to predict that he will be an exceptionally effective leader and manager of science for NIDDK and for NIH."

Balow, who had also served as acting scientific director since August 2011, will also take on a new role, with the additional title of director, translational research, and the responsibility to strengthen such programs in the division. He will encourage the transformation of basic scientific discoveries and pre-clinical observations into appropriate clinical investigations, foster multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary team science and accelerate the movement of promising discoveries and technologies into public-private partnerships.

CSR Alumnus Behar Mourned

Dr. Marjam Behar, who had a 21-year career (1980-2001) at the Center for Scientific Review and the Division of Research Grants, died on July 2. She resided in Lafayette Hill, Pa.

She retired as a scientific review administrator of a study section in CSR's biophysical and chemical sciences integrated review group.

Behar was well-known at NIH for recruiting and retaining top-notch reviewers and she excelled at assembling the best talent and brightest minds to review grant proposals for funding. In 2000, she received a CSR Director's Award "for her superb ability to recruit the ablest reviewers to her committees, for her dedication to successfully dealing with heavy review workloads, and for her unceasing promotion of the scientific review process."

In addition, in 1997 she was honored with the naming of a symposium in her honor, on advances in bioanalytical and bioinorganic chemistry, at the 213th meeting of the American Chemical Society in San Francisco.

She also found time to be a mentor for the American Chemical Society's Project SEED (Summer Educational Experience for the Economically Disadvantaged), and while at NIH, she served as chair of the local SEED chapter. In recognition of her commitment to the project, she was awarded an NIH EEO Special Achievement Award in 1997.

She is survived by her husband, Joseph, her children, Robert, Jamie and Saul and by four grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in memory of Marjam G. Behar to the American Chemical Society: Project SEED and mailed to American Chemical Society, Development Office, 1155 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. The direct link to donate online is www.donate.acs.org/program/seed. 





NICHD Celebrates 50 Years 'HHS Night at the Ballpark' Puts NIH'ers on the Field

"Play ball!" young Dillon Papier shouted through the loudspeakers July 18 at Nationals Park. With that the Nats took the field in what was to be another decisive victory over the New York Mets at HHS Night at the Ballpark.

More than 3,400 HHS employees, many from NIH, joined Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius for the game. NICHD participated as part of its 50th anniversary commemoration. Papier, a patient of NICHD clinical director Dr. Forbes Porter, and his family joined HHS for the ballgame.

In sweltering heat that defined the hottest July on record, the event narrowly missed being deluged by storms that moved through the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area just an hour before game time.

About 15 minutes before the first pitch, the skies cleared as dozens of HHS employees and their friends and family members—recognizable by their department or agency logo T-shirts and caps—continued to stream through ballpark gates. Throughout the game, Sebelius made her way around park stands and concourses, meeting with HHS'ers and posing for photos with enthusiastic baseball fans.



On the field to help commemorate NICHD's 50th anniversary are (from l) Darrile Papier; Nicole Yanjanin, NICHD nurse practitioner; Mark Papier; NICHD deputy director Dr. Yvonne Maddox; HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius; Dillon Papier; NICHD director Dr. Alan Guttmacher; NICHD scientific director Dr. Constantine Stratakis; and NICHD clinical director Dr. Forbes Porter.



Above, Sebelius makes her way throughout the park, chatting with enthusiastic baseball fans. At right, Papier hi-fives Screech, the Nationals' mascot.



PHOTOS: BILL BRANSON/NIH, CHRIS SMITH/HHS



Also attending agency night at Nationals Park are (from l) Christine Miller of CSR, Chol Pak of OD, Charlotte Pak of CC, Sebelius, Laura Anderson of CSR, Julie Peoples of NCI and Ned Culhane of OD.