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Office of Education, Division of Intramural Research National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute **FELLOWS NEWSLETTER**

The Fellows Newsletter is published monthly by the Office of Education, Division of Intramural Research, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and distributed to NHLBI DIR members to promote the interest of DIR Fellows.

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From the Director of the Office of Education

As you can see in the panel below, registration is now open for the 5th Annual Fellows Retreat. Attending the retreat and presenting a poster about your work can benefit you in many different ways. One is that you might be chosen to win a Fellows Research Award, which carries with it an increase in your stipend. While these awards will be given to only a select few, presenting your research to people outside your field will give you necessary experience that will help you as you prepare for a future position. We encourage all fellows to submit an abstract and present a poster for these reasons alone!

Our major speakers are leaders in their fields and are guaranteed to captivate your interests, while the members of the career development panel will provide helpful insights into how to get a job. Finally, participating in the retreat will give you the chance to interact with other NHLBI fellows both in a professional and social situation. In addition, you will get a chance to visit Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, which is rich in American history. I look forward to seeing you all there!

**Registration is now open for the
DIR Annual Fellows Retreat!**

**April 19- 20, 2007
Wyndham Gettysburg, PA**

**Abstract Deadline: March 19th
Registration Deadline: March 25th.**

Visit the Retreat Web site for more info!

<http://dir-intranet.nhlbi.nih.gov/oe/abstractsubmission>



The Academic Job Search: Perspectives from the Other Side

by
Herbert M. Geller

The hiring process for a tenure-track Assistant Professor is normally thought to be a rational series of events, beginning with the establishment of the vacancy, the definition of desired areas, advertising the position, ranking the candidates, interviewing and finally the job offer. As you can easily imagine, each one of these steps has its own set of issues and problems that can have a major impact on the success or failure of a search, independently of the candidates.

While many position vacancies are real, in which a position is allocated to a specific Department within a University, others are really competitions between Departments to gain a position that may reside in a more generalized unit, such as a College, School or Center. In this case, several Departments may advertise the same position, and each set of candidates will be judged by different criteria. The final decision on who to hire and which Department gets the position may be made without taking into account the qualifications of the individual applicants.

Even if a position is “real”, there may be competing factions within a Department that complicate the hiring process. The ideal situation is when a job is advertised as open to candidates within a broad field, such as Biochemistry. On the other hand, some jobs may be defined more narrowly in terms of candidates with interest in “gene expression or cell

cycle control”. This dichotomy may actually represent a genuine interest in filling a gap in these areas within a Department, but alternatively, could represent different factions within the Department, each of which will be promoting candidates within one area while ignoring the other. Thus, not being selected for such a position may simply reflect upon the politics of the Department rather than your credentials. The flip side of this argument is that a compromise candidate may turn up whose interests are in neither area but could somehow accommodate to all concerned. The take home message is that it does not hurt to apply for positions for which you might not be the closest fit to the job description.

Based on the above criteria, you can easily imagine that search committees will be faced with a major task sifting through a huge number of applications (it would not be unusual to receive over 100 for a single position). The criteria for selection to the next level will likely be different depending upon the institution/department. While some smaller institutions may be interested in teaching, most large research institutions and Medical Schools will initially focus almost entirely on both your research achievements and promise for the future. While letters of reference are sometimes evaluated at this point, most search committees will only write for letters from those selected at the first cut. If so, the factors that are evaluated are 1) your educational history; 2) your publication record; 3) your statement of research interests, and how they a) address important problems and b) fit in with the interests/ needs of the Department

or Unit. Once you have passed this level, the committee will reevaluate once again once letters of reference are received. In this case, your references are just as important, if not more so, than what they write about you. People who are known to the committee members, either personally or by reputation, will have more credibility than unknowns. At this point, committees will often choose to interview the top candidates by either conference call or videoconference before inviting them for on-campus interviews. We’ll discuss what’s next in next month’s Newsletter.



New NHLBI Fellows



Brian Busser, Ph. D. is a new Postdoctoral Fellow in the Genetics and Developmental Biology Center under the mentorship of Dr.

Alan Michelson. He received his Ph.D. in Biomedical Studies from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in Philadelphia, PA. While at the NHLBI, Dr. Busser will be working on transcriptional networks in *Drosophila* mesoderm development.

The Fellows Advisory Committee Needs You!

Do you want to be a voice for members of your lab or branch? Then join the FAC! Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of every month at 4 p.m. We are specifically in need of reps from:

LBG, LCE, LDB, LKEM

Contact the Office of Education for more information!

NHLBI Former Fellows: Charles Joyce, NHLBI Review Branch

Interviewed by
Jessica Llewellyn

This month's interview comes from Dr. Charles Joyce, formerly of the Molecular Diseases Branch. Dr. Joyce is a Scientific Review Administrator for the NHLBI Division of Extramural Research's Review branch where he "organize(s) and serves as executive secretary during the scientific review of grant applications submitted to the institute and is responsible for post-review meeting preparation of summary statements. These statements are then provided to applicants and forwarded to the NHLBI Advisory Council, which provides funding recommendations to the NHLBI Director, Dr Nabel." In addition, Dr. Joyce serves on multiple division and institute committees.

JL: *What was the hardest thing about transitioning from being a fellow to being a Scientific Review Administrator?*

CJ: The most difficult part was switching to the extramural side and realizing that I was leaving the lab. The benefit that I have found, however, is being able to have a much broader view and interpretation of research in the context of public health. With an extramural career, you are exposed to a variety of public health issues rather than a specific disease pathway. This job provides a broad perspective on public health and what the NIH is doing to improve [it].

JL: *What advice do you have for fellows wanting to transition to extramural side?*

CJ: Leave your options open. The extramural side won't be a good fit for everyone. Some people like the flexibility of a lab based schedule and performing bench science. [In extramural] you will no longer be doing the science and presenting your work, rather you will be learning what others are doing and thinking of ways that may facilitate their ability to be more successful. For some people, it will be difficult to leave the lab behind especially, during their first year of extramural experience.

For those curious about the extramural side of NIH, you should take advantage of programs such as the NHLBI Fellows Rotation in Extramural Research (FRER). This program is flexible in providing an extramural experience while maintaining your intramural position. Those considering such a program should take time to research the two types of extramural positions that would be available, i.e. scientific review administrators or program officers.

JL: *What was the best thing about your fellowship at NIH?*

CJ: Having the immediate resources of the clinical center available for my research. I was very fortunate to be in a branch that had a lot of good people that [had a] pro teamwork approach to science rather than an environment of competition amongst fellows.

JL: *What skills did you need to successfully perform at your present job that you wish you had acquired during your training years?*

CJ: It has been a few years since I was a fellow in the lab. I feel that [many] intramural fellows miss out on adequate instruction in grant preparation/ grantsmanship. A majority of Ph.D. fellows will be going on to positions in academia or research based clinical centers where grant skills are necessary survival skills.

JL: *What is your mantra? (What gets you through the day)?*

CJ: I'm a pretty optimistic person - I tend to look at the glass half full rather than half empty. So during my move to extramural I perceived it as a learning opportunity, rather than giving up bench science for a desk job. This job has truly been an educational experience with assignments in diverse areas including heart, blood, and lung disease, sleep science, and clinical trials research.

JL: *Any other advice you would like to impart to the fellows at NHLBI?*

CJ: Fully take advantage of the resources available at NIH. Scientifically, there are many learning opportunities in different areas of science beyond your pipette and bench top. The core facilities provide vital skills that many fellows take advantage of – but do not make time to understand the actual procedure or process. You will find that understanding the process will be much more beneficial than being handed the assay results.

For more information on an extramural career or to send Dr. Joyce a greeting, e-mail him at: cjoyce@nhlbi.nih.gov.



Recent Publications by NHLBI Fellows

- Basso, F., Freeman, L. A., Ko, C., Joyce, C., Amar, M. J., Shamburek, R. D., Tansey, T., Thomas, F., Wu, J., Paigen, B., Remaley, A. T., Santamarina-Fojo, S., & Brewer, H. B.** (2007). Hepatic ABCG5/G8 overexpression reduces apoB-lipoproteins and atherosclerosis when cholesterol absorption is inhibited. *J. Lipid Res.* 48, 114-126.
- Lee, D. Y., Park, S. J., Jeong, W., Sung, H. J., Oho, T., Wu, X. W., Rhee, S. G., & Gruschus, J. M.** (2006). Mutagenesis and modeling of the peroxiredoxin (Prx) complex with the NMR structure of ATP-bound human sulfiredoxin implicate aspartate 187 of Prx I as the catalytic residue in ATP hydrolysis. *Biochem.* 45, 15301-15309.
- Liang, Y., Huang, Z. F., Chen, H. W., **Zhang, T. Y., & Ito, Y.** (2007). Preparative isolation and purification of two closely related glycosidic flavonoids from *Exocarpium citri grandis* by high-speed countercurrent chromatography. *J. Liq. Chromatog. Rel. Tech.* 30, 419-430.
- Miyoshi, N., Uchida, K., Osawa, T., & Nakamura, Y.** (2007). Selective cytotoxicity of benzyl isothiocyanate in the proliferating fibroblastoid cells. *Int. J. Cancer* 120, 484-492.
- Montero, A., **Savani, B. N., Shenoy, A., Read, E. J., Carter, C. S., Leitman, S. F., Mielke, S., Rezvani, K., Childs, R., & Barrett, A. J.** (2006). T cell depleted peripheral blood stem cell allotransplantation with T cell add back for patients with hematological malignancies: Effect of chronic GVHD on outcome. *Biol. Blood Marrow Transpl.* 12, 1318-1325.
- Morinaga, N., **Yahiro, K., Matsuura, G., Watanabe, M., Nomura, F., Moss, J., & Noda, M.** (2007). Two distinct cytotoxic activities of subtilase cytotoxin produced by shiga-toxicogenic *Escherichia coli*. *Infection and Immunity* 75, 488-496.
- Roh, T. Y., Wei, G., Farrell, C. M., & Zhao, K.** (2007). Genome-wide prediction of conserved and nonconserved enhancers by histone acetylation patterns. *Genome Res.* 17, 74-81.
- Savani, B. N., Montero, A., Srinivasan, R., Singh, A., Shenoy, A., Mielke, S., Rezvani, K., Karimpour, S., Childs, R., & Barrett, A. J.** (2006). Chronic GVHD and pretransplantation abnormalities in pulmonary function are the main determinants predicting worsening pulmonary function in long-term survivors after stem cell transplantation. *Biol. Blood Marrow Transpl.* 12, 1261-1269.

Jessica's Corner

Happy Valentine's Day Fellows and Fellow-ettes! Even though it falls smack in the middle of the week, I still hope you'll make time for that special someone. (Even if that special someone is a cat, best friend, roommate or parent). Dr. Geller and I have decorated the office with some festive hearts and have plenty of chocolate to go around. Feel free to stop by!

As far as February goes, I'm having a pretty good one. Plans are coming together for the retreat and I am extremely excited to organize it! I'm looking forward to seeing many of the faces I already know and meeting some of you newbies who happened to slip past me! Please be sure to clear your calendars for April 19-20. Where else will you see The Drs. Geller AND Dr. Adelstein sing and dance for your very amusement? Let's not forget all the science. (But seriously - think of the singing and dancing! I'm already giggling).

So here goes your inspirational song lyric for the month. It comes from the Disney channel's newest TV show and soundtrack, *Hannah Montana*. [Don't laugh - it's a good show!]. The song is by Everlife and it really peeps me up on rough days. Maybe it will give you some encouragement too!

"Don't let anybody tell you who you are. It's okay to let go - you're that shooting star. Remember all you wished for - believe it will be true. You will never find yourself anywhere else. You'll find yourself in you."

- "Find Yourself in You," by Everlife.