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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.

Office of Education, DIR, NHLBI

Herbert M. Geller, Ph.D., Director
Jessica M. Llewellyn, MBA, Coord.
Aurora J. Taylor, Assistant Coord.

DIREDucation@nhlbi.nih.gov

Building 10, Room 2N242
Tel: 301-451-9440

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From the Director of the Office of Education

Summer intern season upon us. This year, the NHLBI has a record number of students (81) which means that many of you are participating in supervising a summer intern. This is a valuable experience in informal mentoring and training, and such experience is considered very positive when you are looking for your next position. Summer Intern Poster Day on August 7th in Natcher. Almost every lab at NIH is represented, and so cruising through the posters is a major opportunity to find out what is going on in other labs, especially in terms of techniques.

Summer is also the time for outdoor recreation. There are many different venues near NIH for running, biking and swimming. While there are no official NIH leagues, we'd like to know if any of you are interested in participating in organized team sports. If so, tell your Fellows Advisory Committee representative, and if there's sufficient interest, we'll ask for volunteers to get this going.

Dealing With Rejection

Herbert M. Geller, Ph.D.

Many Fellows come to the Office of Education seeking advice about future careers and how to get their next job. The penultimate step in this process is writing the letter of application, with the hope that it will directly lead to an interview and then a job offer. While this is sometimes the norm, in most cases Fellows receive one or more rejection letters before actually achieving their goal. So what does this mean and what is the best strategy when dealing with rejection?

While getting a rejection letter can be a blow to your ego, the first strategy is to realize that while there were likely a huge number of applicants for the job, relatively few were interviewed, and only

one was offered the position. In this light, rejection, rather than acceptance, is the expected outcome. And while having insight into why you did not make the cut can help you with your next application, such insight or introspection may not be very helpful as each job for which you apply has its own distinctive set of criteria. So if you come to the conclusion that your lack of grant writing experience was a reason you may not have gotten an academic job offer, other search committees may feel (as I do) that if you are doing good science you will learn quickly how to write a winning grant application. A good analogy is trying to buy gloves: you try on many different pairs, and the one you ultimately buy is the one that fits you perfectly. The gloves that you leave behind in the bin are perfectly good ones, but someone else will take them home.

This is not to say that your job application letter should not emphasize your skills and qualities that seem most appropriate for the job, but it does say that there are many different reasons why an employer may not choose to pursue your application, only some of which can be anticipated. If you repeatedly receive rejection letters with no interview, it is highly likely that your cover letter and application are not adequately targeted and do not address the specific requirements outlined in the job description. In this situation, it will be to your benefit to consult with the Office of Education about how to construct your Curriculum Vitae or Resume and how to write an appropriate cover letter (a topic we discussed last month).

If your rejection came after going through a lengthy interview process, the reasons for rejection are often harder to discern, since your credentials and application must have been appealing to have gotten you that far. And you will likely feel more insulted. However, information gleaned at this stage can be very helpful but hard to get. After any academic interview, in many situations it will have nothing to do with you – half the Department wanted a cellular immunologist, while the other half wanted a more molecular person, and the other side won. Or you might find out that they were looking for someone who had experience teaching a specific course, which you did not. Under these circumstances, there is absolutely nothing you could have changed or done that would have mattered. On the other hand, you might receive specific input about your performance that could lead to changes in your next interview.

One strategy is to replay the interview to see where the difficulties may have been. Could you identify questions that you had difficulty with, and why? Were there any questions that you

could have asked but didn't? How did your talk go? Did you get a lot of questions and how did you answer them or did you get relatively few questions (which could mean that your talk was out of sync with the audience)? Were you knowledgeable about the place before you went - did you do a PubMed search for each name on the list of interviewers? How did the conversation go at mealtimes? Did you identify potential collaborators (and did you make sure that they felt the same way about you?) It might be useful if you could find a friendly person at that institution (such as your advisor's colleague) who will be honest enough to tell you what went wrong.

In the business setting, it's sometimes harder to find out information, since your contact with the company is normally filtered through the Human Resources department. But keep in mind that the person who handled your interview has a vested interest in attracting people to the company. Thus, they may tell you that the job actually required that you had demonstrated your ability to carry out a particular technique or procedure. Or that there was someone else that was better qualified or there was an internal candidate. Often you will find that the job did not get filled simply because of budgetary constraints that were not predicted.

The main thing to keep in mind is that the process really does not end until you actually get and accept a job offer. Getting depressed or angry will not actually help you achieve your goals. So you need to keep an open mind and a positive outlook for the next job interview. Treat the process as a learning experience, and you will find that you ultimately have acquired the knowledge to be successful.

Jessica's Corner

Happy Summer Science Fans! I love the DC Metro Area in the summertime. The area is all a buzz with the tourists and summer interns. The smell of barbeque everything is in the air. And then of course is the fourth - with fireworks ablaze over the White House. Yes, this is a pretty special city.

But, as much as I love it here, it's always great to go back home. My hometown is Queens New York. Technically this makes me from The City or the "Big Apple" or the City that Never Sleeps. But to me, New York is more than just tall buildings and great shopping. It's being 20 minutes away from the beach and people with super strong accents (if you have ever heard anyone from Long Island, you would know what I mean!) It's also my crazy, mixed up, but oh so loveable family. But I am by no means "homesick" =)

I feel extremely lucky to have the best of both worlds - my professional life here in DC and my family, friends and memories in NY. I get to call both places "home". For those of you who are new to the DC metro area, especially visiting fellows and summer interns, I hope you'll find just as much joy in this crazy city as I have. It can be a bit scary to move away from your family and everything you have known for all of your life. But I promise that if you are open to it, you will have one of the best times of your life.

The best part about all of it is that no matter what happens or where you go, your stable network of friends, family, and hometown life will always be there for you. And coincidentally, so will your Office of Education. =)

This is home. Now I'm finally where I belong. Yeah, this is home. I've been searching for a place of my own. Now I've found it. – Switchfoot, "This is Home"

Faces I remember, I'll still see. And places in a memory, hold on to me. I can't wait to crawl out of my shell. Movin' on forever, Livin' life this way. And I can't wait to crawl, I can't wait at all! - Thisway, "Crawl"

Lenfant Award Winner: Silvia Vergarajauregui

Interviewed by
Jessica Llewellyn



This month, we congratulate Dr. Silvia Vergarajauregui from the Laboratory of Cell Biology for being the most recent recipient of the NHLBI Lenfant Award.

Here's what Dr. V had to say:

JL: Congratulations Silvia! How does it feel to be the latest winner of this award?

SV: I am really happy and it is very unexpected. It will be good for my CV and provide me with lots of opportunities.

JL: Can you tell me a bit about the research that helped win this award?

SV: Sure! My research focuses on understanding how defects in the traffick-

ing of proteins in the cell can lead to human diseases. My research focuses on elucidating the molecular basis of Mucopolipidosis IV and the protein that is linked to this disease.

JL: What are your career plans after you finish your fellowship?

SV: I hope to return to my home of Spain and continue my research in an academic position.

JL: What was the process for getting this award?

SV: My mentor, Rosa Puertollano, sent me an e-mail asking if she could nominate me for this award. I said "sure!" and after a bit I got it. She is a very good mentor and very supportive of my work.

JL: Do you have any advice for fellows hoping to achieve such an award?

SV: Talk to your mentor and ask what is out there. I also have a lot of friends in other institutes who tell me about opportunities and help with applying

for these awards.

JL: Where is the next place that you will be presenting this research (if fellows wanted an opportunity to hear about it)?

SV: There will be a symposium on Mucopolipin at the beginning of June, the Gordon conference and of course our branch seminar on June 11th. And I will also be presenting a talk at the next Fellows Retreat (April 2-3 in Annapolis).

Dr. Vergarajauregui is a 4th year fellow in Dr. Rosa Puertollano's laboratory. She is originally from San Sebastian, Spain, performed her Ph.D. research in Madrid, and presently lives in downtown Bethesda. Silvia received her Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Centro de Biología Molecular, Severo Ochoa., Madrid, Spain.

Come to the next

Career Development Seminar

featuring

"Science Policy"

featuring

Julie Wallis, Ph.D.

NIDDK

Tuesday, June 17th

Noon to 1:00

10/13S235

New NHLBI Fellow



Motoyuki Nakao, Ph.D. is a recent visiting fellow in the Translational Medicine Branch under the mentorship of Dr. Joel Moss. He received his Ph.D. in Agriculture from Osaka Prefecture University in Japan. While

at the NHLBI, Dr. Nakao will be studying the enzyme involved in ADP-ribosylation.

Recent Publications by NHLBI Fellows

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- Miller, B. T., **Zheng, W. J.**, Venable, R. M., Pastor, R. W., & Brooks, B. R. (2008). Langevin network model of myosin. *J. Phys. Chem. B* 112, 6274-6281.
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- Yang, Y.**, Wu, T., Yang, W. X., Aisa, H. A., **Zhang, T. Y.**, & Ito, Y. (2008). Preparative isolation and purification of four flavonoids from *Flos Gossypii* by high-speed counter-current chromatography. *J. Liq. Chromatog. Rel. Tech.* 31, 1523-1531.
- Young, N. S., **Scheinberg, P.**, & **Calado, R. T.** (2008). Aplastic anemia. *Curr. Opin. Hematol.* 15, 162-168.
- Yu, Q.**, Leatherbury, L., Tian, X., & Lo, C. W. (2008). Cardiovascular assessment of fetal mice by in utero echocardiography. *Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology* 34, 741-752.