



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

November 2004 Fellows Newsletter

From the Director of the Office of Education:

This newsletter comes to you at the beginning of the Holiday season. We hope that you had a Happy Thanksgiving, and wish you a Happy Holiday Season.

This season is the time for giving, and we remind all Fellows that their contribution to the Combined Federal Campaign will help assist your favorite charities. So ask your branch or lab secretary for a pledge card.

In this newsletter, we feature a column by Dr. Denise Crooks describing the ability of Felcom to influence NIH policy, and continue the After Hours column with a contribution by Dr. Kevin Welch on bicycling. We would like to use this column for you to write up a description of your favorite activity outside the lab for inclusion in the newsletter.

A Career Development Seminar on the subject of "Negotiation Skills" will be held on Tuesday December 14th in 10/7S235. It will be conducted by Dr. Howard Gadlin, the NIH Ombudsman. It promises to be a very special event, and I urge you to attend.

Save the date for the Fellows Retreat for May 12th and 13th 2005 at the Harbortowne Resort on the Eastern Shore in St. Michaels, Maryland. If you have any suggestions for speakers at the retreat or are willing to assist with the planning, please let me know.

Finally, the Newsletter will be taking a Holiday break in December, and you will receive your next newsletter at the beginning of January.

A Room of Ones' Own: NHLBI Fellows Achievement

By Denise Crooks

Earlier this month, many of us received an e-mail message from Dr. Geller requesting volunteers as NHLBI representatives to Felcom, the NIH-wide Fellows Committee. Felcom sponsors activities such as career development seminars, job fairs and the FARE award that impact many of the fellows at NIH and NHLBI. Sometimes it provides support for a much smaller group of fellows. We do not always hear those stories, but the issues are no less important to the work life of the affected fellows. This is one of those stories.

Earlier this year, the NIH Lactation Program in Building 10 was over-enrolled.

Although the Work/Life Center (WLC) had been provided with funding to support lactation consultation, no provisions had been made for providing additional lactation rooms. There were stories of women using closets or cars when they were on the waiting list for the Building 10 lactation room. The WLC and the Office of Research Services (ORS) Division of Employee Services had done a lot to advocate for better space in Building 10. ORS of created an amenities plan that would include requirements for lactation rooms. However, that plan did not apply retroactively. So at the same time that this plan was being considered, the Employee Services Division also submitted a Space Justification Document (SJD) for at least one additional lactation room in Building

10, and at least one lactation room in the new CRC. There were no guarantees that this SJD would be approved. In an effort to move the issue forward, Ms. Alisa Green, Acting Manager of the WLC, sent out a memo urging the NIH employees who benefit from the lactation rooms to let the Space Recommendation Board know how they were being affected by the lack of space.

One of the 30-odd women who heard from Ms. Green was Dr. Bernadette Gochuico of the Pulmonary-Critical Care Medicine Branch (P-CCMB). Dr. Gochuico in turn spoke to P-CCMB NHLBI fellows committee representatives Dr. Heather Jones and Dr. Ivan Rosas. "Many NHLBI fellows (including some from P-CCMB) and others use or have

used this valuable resource," stated Dr. Gochuico. The problem was that "the program has grown in popularity, and resources (especially space) have become limiting. There are people who are now unable to use the facilities in Building 10, and are being scheduled in neighboring buildings. As someone who has used this terrific resource, I think that being scheduled in another building is prohibitive to being able to pump (women pump for 15 to 30 minutes up to 3 to 4 times daily)." She concluded that perhaps "this is an issue that the Office of Education could look into to help working women who choose to participate in this program."

NHLBI and NIMH fellows then took this on as a grass roots effort to improve the crisis in the Building 10 lactation program. "I began working with the NHLBI Felcom rep to plan a presentation at the next Felcom meeting (the NIH-wide Fellows Committee), scheduled for May 6th, to make the committee aware of the crisis and to ask for intervention on behalf of the administration. We felt that the presence of fellows who have been directly impacted by this crisis would be invaluable to making our case," said Dr. Jones. Dr. Jones contacted Dr. Kristi Poulin of NHLBI and Dr. Stacia Friedman-Hill of NIMH to urge them to attend the Felcom meeting and explain the importance of the Building 10 lactation room. Dr. Friedman-Hill was very willing to participate, having already written a letter to the committee responsible for making decisions about space in Building 10, without a response. "This issue is really important to me," she said. "I feel that if the NIH can't get it right, who can?"

On May 6, an ad hoc committee of NHLBI and NIMH fellows, and Lactation Program Consultants presented their case to the NIH-wide Fellow's Committee. Drs. Poulin and Friedman-Hill spoke of their individual experiences with the

Lactation Program. Ms. Green and Ms. Jane Balkam, a Lactation Consultant, spoke of their unsuccessful efforts to obtain more space. Dr. Jones and Dr. Hymavathi Tirupati, the NHLBI Felcom representative, discussed the need to supporting working mothers as part of the group's commitment to serving NIH fellows. The Felcom representatives were unanimous in their support. The committee formally requested that Dr. Joan Schwartz, Assistant Director in the Office of Intramural Research, bring this matter to the attention of Dr. Michael Gottesman, who is a member of the Space Recommendation Board.

With a mandate from Dr. Gottesman, they were able to have access to the people responsible for Space Justification Requests. By August, Ms. Green's report was very positive. They now had three rooms: one in the old Building 10, one in the ACRF, and one in the CRC. "Some women will still have a ways to walk, but it's a lot better than the alternative. [It] looks like with your help we've made real progress."



After Hours: Bicycling at NIH

By Kevin Welch

Last month we read about the great opportunity for exercise and socializing by playing "Ultimate Frisbee" with other fellows here at the NIH. However, not all of us have the knees, shoulders, etc. to play those types of sports anymore. Instead we have turned to a form of exercise that is friendlier to our aching joints, such as cycling. I personally started cycling as source of exercise after too many knee and shoulder surgeries from playing football (American football, not soccer). I soon found that in addition to a great way to stay in shape, cycling served as an excellent source of stress relief and a good way to meet new friends.

Although the Washington D.C. metro area may not be as well known, or even have the same quality of riding, as say, "l'Alpe d'Huez" in France for road cycling or "Slickrock" in Moab for mountain biking, it is a good area for the non-professional cyclist (which we all are, or we wouldn't be here). There are a lot of bike advocates in the Washington D.C. metro area who have ensured that there are a number of roads in the area with bike lanes, or actual bike paths off of the road, to facilitate commuting to and from work. Additionally, they have made sure that there are some good areas to ride for recreation or exercise in the metro area and surrounding communities. Fortunately some of these bike advocates work right here at the NIH, in fact they have formed an NIH bike club. The following is a message from the current president of the NIH bike club, Angela Atwood-Moore.

"Just to give you a little better idea of who we are, our organization has an established program that connects commuters new to the area with a biking mentor who can help them get a bike, find appropriate safety gear, determine the safest/most efficient bicycle commuting route and address other bike commuting questions/concerns. We are a non-dues based organization; we are a membership club under the broader umbrella of the Recreation and Welfare Association. We have a list-serve (currently 170 subscribers) and a website which provides valuable bicycling safety information and other significant bicycle related links. We also work on bike safety issues: for example, this summer we performed trail maintenance (removing shrubs and debris) on paths near campus frequently used by NIH bike commuters, we hosted the NIH Bike to Work Day, and we perform annual bike counts and surveys. We monitor closely the local community and NIH roadways most heavily trafficked by cyclists and most in need of safety improvements

and we also monitor the status of bike parking, bike storage and showering facilities for NIH bike commuters. Periodically we offer basic bike maintenance courses on topics such as "How to Change a Flat Tire." Our current winter project (in addition to trying to get our introductory pamphlet into all new employee orientation packets) is the development of our own NIH Bikeways Master Plan which will propose bike lanes and improved signage on roadways we have determined to be most heavily utilized by NIH bike commuters. We are also making improvements to our website and making preparations for next year's Bike to Work Day, in conjunction with the National Bike to Work Day celebrations."

The website for the NIH bike club is <http://www.recgov.org/r&w/nihbike/bike>. There is a lot of good information on the website for NIH cyclists, such as bike commuter routes to campus, bike racks and lockers, shower facilities, basic bike maintenance and bike mentor information. The people who have agreed to be bike mentors are nice people and they are a great source of information for many of your cycling needs. There are also links to local maps and other relevant bike related websites. You can join the bike listserv by going to <http://www.recgov.org/cgi-bin/majordom.oEU/>. The listserv is a good method to obtain information regarding cycling at the NIH and Washington Metro area.

Two of the major bike trails in Maryland converge very near the NIH campus. One is through Rock Creek Park which can be easily accessed from a trail



that begins on the northeast corner of Rockville Pike and Cedar Lane. Once you get to the park, you can go north to the terminus at Lake Needwood or South to the Terminus at the Memorial Bridge to Virginia. If you cross over the Memorial Bridge, you can follow the George Washington Parkway all the way to Mt. Vernon. The other major trail is the Capital Crescent Trail which can most easily be accessed in the center of Bethesda at the corner of Woodmont and Bethesda Avenues. Going south, this trail ends in Georgetown, where you can easily connect with the Rock Creek Park trail. Going north, you can follow the C & O canal to its terminus in Cumberland, Maryland.

Just remember, a bad day bike riding is better than a good day at work and to take a line from the International Mountain Bike Association "long live long rides."



Recent Publications by NHLBI Fellows

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New NHLBI Fellows



Dr. Yasuharu Takagi is a Visiting Fellow who has recently joined the Laboratory of Molecular Cardiology under the supervision of Dr. James Sellers. Dr. Takagi completed his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania in 2004. He is currently working on "Construction of an optical trap setups to measure mechanical and kinetic parameters of single motor proteins."



Dr. Robert Burton earned his Ph.D. in Structural Biology at Purdue University, Indiana in 2004. He is an IRTA Fellow and is currently working at the Laboratory of Biophysical Chemistry under the supervision of Dr. Nico Tjandra. Dr. Burton is working on "Structure and Dynamics of Caspase-8."



Ms. Cynthia Perez has recently joined the Hematology Branch under the supervision of Dr. Cynthia Dunbar. Ms. Perez is a BRPTUM student who earned her B.S. Degree in Microbiology at University of Texas at El Paso, Texas. she is currently working on "Lentiviral gene transfer of siRNA to create a non-human primate model of paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH)" and "Analysis of Integration Sites using the Phage Φ PIC31 in Hematopoietic stem cells in the Rhesus Macaque Model."

Volunteers Needed

The Office of Education welcomes your participation

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