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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.
Building 10, Room 2N242
DIREducation@nhlbi.nih.gov
Tel: 301-451-9440

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From the Director of the Office of Education

We have just gotten over "Trick or Treat" on Halloween. Luckily for children, the most prevalent response at Halloween is to offer a treat, rather than a trick. In fact, our approach to science needs to have the same philosophy: our goal is to reveal the truth (a real "treat"), rather than to play a trick on society by unethical behaviors or practices. On **November 26th**, the Office of Education is sponsoring a talk by Dr. Michael Lauer, who recently joined NHLBI, on the subject of "Ethics in Biomedical Authorship". Dr. Lauer's talk is highly relevant to what we do every day, and he is an outstanding speaker. This is a must for all NHLBI fellows and investigators.

My column this month is about how to attend a scientific meeting. Again, this is a highly relevant subject as many of us are about to depart for the AHA or Neuroscience while others are getting ready for the ASCB or ASH in December. As with every aspect of your education, you get the most out of attending a meeting when you have a clear goal in mind of what you hope to achieve.

I am pleased to tell you that our first Fellows Dessert Party was a resounding success. For those of you that missed it, the Fellows Advisory Committee is planning others. Finally, I'd like to welcome several new members of the Fellows Advisory Committee, whose names are listed to the left. If you have any items or issues for NHLBI fellows that you think would be of general interest, please contact them with your issues, and they can then discuss them with me and the entire committee.

Getting the Most from a Scientific Meeting

By
Herbert Geller, Ph.D.

Atending scientific meetings one major part of progress in your career. The NHLBI has a policy that Fellows should be able to attend any meeting that is essential for their scientific progress. Laboratory CANs include travel funds, and so your mentor should be able to support your attendance.

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Careers in Sales and Marketing

By
Jean Yves Metais, Ph.D.

Last month's career development seminar dealt with using your Ph.D. in sales and marketing. The seminar consisted of a panel of three former scientists working in this field: Leena K. Paul, Ph.D., an account manager at Amara Biosystems; Mini Varugese, Ph.D., a technical sales representative of Stratagene;

[\(cont'd on page 3\)](#)

(scientific conference cont'd)

However, getting the most out of a scientific meeting requires more than just randomly walking around a convention center. Large conferences (such as the one I am about to attend, the Society for Neuroscience, with over 30,000 participants) can be overwhelming. As with all aspects of career development, knowing what you want to achieve at the meeting is essential for you to plan your itinerary.

The first reason to attend a meeting is for networking purposes. At an earlier time, I might have said that one reason to go is to learn "what's hot". This is still a valid reason, but the current practice has evolved to where most labs don't present their unpublished data. And what is valuable to you is often a function of the stage of your career. Finally, most meetings have a vendor exhibit, where they really do show their latest and greatest stuff.

For Graduate Students, I often recommend that they focus on the major symposium talks. This is more important for many NIH students, as these talks often present a global overview of the state of a field, rather than details of a particular experiment. While attending posters in your area of interest is valuable, it's better to visit fewer and gain an in-depth knowledge of the work, rather than trying to see many superficially. It's also a good time to check out potential postdoctoral advisors. You first identify their lab presentations by doing a computer search on the meeting program. You can then meet their lab people at their posters, talk about their work, and observe how they interact with their mentor. You are also likely to get a chance to ask pointed questions of the students and postdocs without their mentor being around.

As soon as you have data to show, presenting a poster is an essential part of

your networking experience. Posters are preferred to a platform presentation because you will reach more people and have a greater chance for serious conversations about your work. As you present more posters, your circle of acquaintances grows larger and larger, and amongst these will be the leaders (and future leaders) in your field. There are many sources of information for creating a poster (see the OE web site), but the key is to make it very simple to read, with clear organization and large type. While the people who are doing things closely related to your work will have identified your poster as one they intend to visit, you will probably attract just as many casual visitors with a good looking poster and a catchy title. I suggest that poster titles be informative, but not so informative that a reader can predict the result from the title alone. Use declarative titles rather than descriptive ones. (A certain amount of ambiguity in the title will bring in a curious reader.)

While it may seem somewhat pretentious, print up some business cards on your lab laser printer and hand them out generously. Senior scientists meet so many people that it's easy for them to forget you, so giving them a printed reminder is helpful. You might consider putting your poster title and information on the back so they can even look it up after the meeting.

One obvious fact: you cannot meet anyone interested in your poster if you are not there to explain it to them or let them read it by themselves. While all meetings have an assigned time for you to explain your poster, the time allotted at larger meetings is usually much too short. So best to stand by your poster as much as you can and engage each visitor. Offering to take them through your poster or asking if they have any questions is a good way to get started.

The computerized search of the meeting program is both a boon and a bane to the conference attendee. If your field is active, you identify many more posters than you have time to see. Do not be obsessive-compulsive in following your list. Identify the key posters for each session, and give them a proper amount of time (10-15 min) to meet the presenters and take adequate notes. (If you take skimpy notes, you will find that you cannot reconstruct the results). You can then either rank the others according to your expected time, or simply walk down the aisles and visit some. It is best to be selective, rather than rushing from one poster to another.

The vendor's exhibits are a must. This is where you can see the latest equipment and learn about new methods that are just being commercialized. Many vendors will have "sponsored talks" featuring their initial users, and these can be very helpful (they often come with free food and drink). Take the time to chat with the technical reps whose products you use. They can be an incredible resource when you have problems or need to do a new procedure, and if they know you, they will put you on their list of "beta testers" for new products. The exhibit is a very good place to discuss things that haven't worked as advertised. A vendor will do almost anything to make you happy in front of other potential customers.

Finally, the meeting does not end when the sessions are over. Social situations are a great way to get to know other scientists and exchange information. So don't just go back to your room after the sessions end: find out where the night life is, and take advantage of it. Of course, make sure that you get to bed early enough so that in the morning you're fresh enough for another day of science.

(sales and marketing cont'd)

and Omayma Al-Awar, Ph.D., Director of Sales and Marketing at Edge Biosystems.

The panelists pointed out that our Ph.D. and postdoctoral experience is ideal training to this occupation, as companies are actively seeking reps with a scientific background. Companies also want you to be able to use and demonstrate their products in the lab as well as provide advice to users. Who better to sell a product than a consumer who has used it and had success with it? In this way, you are not completely separated from the lab. In addition, although it is not completely necessary, the panelists mentioned that acquiring a second expertise in another field, an MBA for instance, would be a plus.

Technical support for a product is an entry level job that gets you started in a company without any experience. Before you pursue a job like this, however, be sure that this company is looking for highly technical people or consultants, field application specialists or technical support specialists. This will ensure that it appeals to both your scientific based background and your willingness to work with people. Over time, these jobs lead to higher level positions in the company, such as sales representatives or in management. Because sales forces are largely determined by assigned territory, most of the time getting advancement means to switch to another company as in sales or marketing a manager, cover a large area and a large number of people.

Probably the best part about a sales position is the ability to work independently in a job that covers multiple aspects (science and sales) and in a job where you are in contact with people of diverse backgrounds in science.

As great as working independently is, it can also be an unattractive feature



Amy Grimes, Ph.D. is a postdoctoral fellow in the Laboratory of Molecular biology under the mentorship of Dr.

Jennifer Lee. She received her Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Maryland. While at the NHLBI, Dr. Grimes will be studying the effect of inhaled anaesthetics on suspected sites of action.



Bon-Nyeo Koo, MD, Ph.D. is a visiting fellow in the Laboratory of Developmental Biology under the mentorship of Dr. Yoh-suke

Mukoyama. Dr. Koo received her degree from Yonsei University College of Medicine, Seoul, South Korea. While at the NHLBI she will be working on vascular stem cell proliferation.



Asim Okur, Ph.D. is a visiting fellow in the Laboratory of Computational Biology under the mentorship of

Dr. Bernard Brooks. Dr. Okur received his Ph.D. in Chemistry from Stony Brook University in New York. He will be

about this type of job. Working independently also means that you are working alone, hence spending most of the day alone. Another negative aspect is having to do sales calls where scientists often do not wish to be interrupted, even for five minutes – to talk about their products! But it is part of their job - and maybe one day it will be our future job, so the next time you see a sales rep, just smile and answer few questions!

If you are interested in such a position, your best contact is the sales person for the products you like best.

New NHLBI Fellows

investigating the conformational changes in Insulin upon binding to its receptor using molecular dynamics simulations while at the NHLBI.



Tomoiku Takaku, MD, Ph.D. is a visiting fellow in the Hematology Branch under the mentorship of Dr. Neal S. Young.

He received his M.D and Ph.D. from Tokyo Medical University in Japan. While at the NHLBI, Dr. Takaku will be working on the immune response to viral interaction using CDNA microarray.



Rajgopal Yadvalli, Ph.D. is a visiting fellow in the Laboratory of Cell Biology under the mentorship of Dr. Lois

Greene. He received his Ph.D. in Animal Sciences and Neuroscience from the University of Hyderabad, India. Dr. Yadvalli will be working on the role of intracellular trafficking pathways in prion disease models.

They will know of openings in their company, as well as other similar openings. And because you have interacted with them, this recommendation will be a big plus.

One final thought before finishing - to get a job in sales and management, as with any job, don't forget to network!

Jean Yves Metais is a visiting fellow in the Hematology Branch with Dr. Cynthia Dunbar.

Jessica's Corner

Happy Official Fall everyone! I hope you all had fun dressing up in costume and painting the town black and orange. And if you didn't, well, that's okay too! Thanks to everyone who came to our fellows' social event! We hope to have many more in the future, so keep your eyes on the e-mails.

Fall is officially upon us – we can tell from the brick freezing cold weather! One weekend, I'm in my car sweating praying that the AC will work in my car – and the next I'm bundled so far up that I can barely see. And immediately I get that thought about fall leading to winter and the darkness and cold weather; shoveling snow off my car; waiting in snowy weather traffic and most people being in a completely miserable mood until the spring – despite the pending holiday season. In addition to that are the impending functions at work and with my volunteer activities – feeling like I'm being torn in a million different directions – it's enough to make a person SNAP!

But as I'm stressing out and worrying about all of these events, once again, my Ipod comes to the rescue. Did anyone see the movie "Hitch" with Will Smith? This month's little burst of inspiration comes from that movie's soundtrack. The song is called "Happy" by Melanie Smith. In it, she discusses all the things that are going wrong in her life and how sometimes, it's just so hard to hold on and find the bright patch in the darkness. Then eventually, you just have to take a step back and say, "Come on – why am I worrying SO MUCH about this, when there are so many reasons just to be happy?" So as the cold weather approaches and you feel that "bleh, whatever" mood seeping in, remember Melanie's words and try to hang on to the bright side:

*Got my dreams, got my life, got my love
Got my friends, got the sunshine above
Why am I making this hard on myself,
When there are so many beautiful reasons I have to be happy :)*

Come to the next **Career Development Seminar**

Tuesday, November 20th

from

12 Noon to 1 p.m.

10/13S235B

Featuring

"Careers in Regulatory Pharmacology"

by

Desmond Hunt, Ph.D.

US Pharmecopia

Recent Publications by NHLBI Fellows

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