



Center for
Molecular Medicine
& Genetics

Advances



Dear Colleagues:

As we begin the new millennium, I want to update you on some of the continued changes and successes at the Center for Molecular Medicine & Genetics at the Wayne State University School of Medicine. We continue to move forward in our mission to conduct groundbreaking basic and translational research that will impact the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease.

Center Director Meets with U.S. Legislators

As the Center director, I spent two successful days in Washington, D.C. in late fall familiarizing influential Michigan legislators and policy makers about the activities of the Center for Molecular Medicine & Genetics.

I met with the key staff members of several legislators, including U.S. Senators Spencer Abraham and Carl Levin and U.S. Representatives Lynn Rivers, Carolyn Kilpatrick, and John Conyers. I also met with several senior staff at the National Institutes of Health, including directors of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (Dr. Duane Alexander) and the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (Dr. Phillip Gorden).

My next trip to Washington, D.C., is planned for late spring.

Two Center Faculty Receive Major Federal Funding

Center faculty Helena Kuivaniemi, M.D., Ph.D., and Gerard Tromp, Ph.D., received major funding for two research studies. They have received a \$1.2 million, four-year grant from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for Genetic Factors in Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms. They have also received a \$1 million, four-year grant from the National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for DNA Linkage Analysis in Intracranial Aneurysm Families.

Center Has Great Success with Graduate Student Recruitment This Year

As a result of an aggressive pursuit of graduate students, focusing on the top candidates in the country, the Center successfully recruited nine graduate students to beginning in the fall of 2000. In addition, these nine students were among 36 who received funding from WSU's schoolwide

Interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences (IBS) Graduate Program. The Center had more students funded by IBS than any other program or department.

The Center's recruitment marketing campaign included sending out new brochures to thousands of students across the country. More importantly, the Center quickly identified the best applicants from the increased pool of applications and actively communicated with them, including bringing them to campus.

Center Creates Clinical Genetics Services Program

As genetics fast becomes an increasingly important part of the daily practice of medicine, the Center was recently charged with coordinating and further developing clinical genetic services throughout Wayne State University and its affiliated institutions. Gerald L. Feldman, M.D., Ph.D., who recently joined the Center faculty, is leading this

effort. Some immediate plans include expanding cancer genetic and neurogenetic services and establishing an adult genetics clinic. Learn more about this exciting program in the upcoming issue of the Center's *Advances*.

Mark Your Calendar for the Mary Webber Parker Distinguished Lecture 2000 on April 20

Plan to attend the first Mary Webber Parker Distinguished Lecture on Thursday, April 20, 2000 from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. in Room 2268, Scott Hall. The symposium, entitled "Reconstructing Human Evolution in the Age of Genomic Exploration," honors Professor Morris Goodman's more than 40 years of molecular studies in primate phylogeny.

Featured speakers include Arno Motulsky, professor of medicine and genetics, University of Washington, Seattle, who will present, "Evolutionary, Historical and Medical Implications of Genetic Diseases among Ashkenazi Jews," and Caro-Beth Stewart, associate professor of biological sciences, State University of New York (SUNY), Albany, who will present, "Identifying Genetic Changes that Made Us Human."

For more information, please contact Professor Lawrence I. Grossman at 313-577-5326 or via email at lgross@cmb.biosci.wayne.edu or Assistant Professor Li Li at 313-577-8749 or via email at lili@med.wayne.edu.

Center Held Second Annual Scientific Retreat

An extensive presentation on WSU's participation in the State



CMMG graduate students Wendy Walter and Mikhail Kolonin.

of Michigan's \$1 billion Life Sciences Initiative by Center faculty member Mark Hughes, M.D., Ph.D., was fea-

tured at the Center's Second Annual Scientific Retreat in late November. A scientific poster session and lectures were also part of the agenda for the annual retreat, attended by Center faculty and distinguished guests, including Center external advisors Professors Haig Kazazian, University of Pennsylvania, and Kurt Hirschhorn, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine.



CMMG faculty members John Kamholz, M.D., Ph.D. and James Garbern, M.D., Ph.D.

We will keep you informed about our continued progress and change. I welcome your input and involvement as we move forward. Please feel free to call me at 313-993-7385.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to be "George Grunberger".

George Grunberger, M.D.
Henry L. Brasza Professor
Director, Center for Molecular
Medicine & Genetics

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This newsletter is edited by:

Anne E. Greb, M.S.

313-577-6298

agreb@cmb.biosci.wayne.edu

David D. Womble, Ph.D.

313-577-2374

dwwomble@cmb.biosci.wayne.edu

The online version of the newsletter and other information about CMMG are available at the CMMG Web site: <http://cmmg.biosci.wayne.edu>

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