

Network of Minority Research Investigators Workshop

**Bethesda Marriott
Bethesda, Maryland
April 22-23, 2004**

Workshop Summary (Excerpts From the Various Sessions)

THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2004

Premeeting Orientation for New NMRI Members—Dr. Judith Podskalny

Dr. Podskalny reviewed topics covered in previous Network of Minority Research Investigators (NMRI) meetings, highlighting the following:

- An overview of the NIH, including its budget
- The need to become familiar with the NIH Web site
- The grant review process
- Funding mechanisms
- The difference between RFAs and PAs
- The importance of signing up for the NIH Guide Listserv and of understanding the CRISP database
- Cover letter details—requesting an Institute or study section as well as indicating the area of expertise needed for an adequate review of the application and possible conflicts of interest
- The review criteria used to evaluate applications
- The loan repayment program.

Dr. Podskalny gave meeting attendees the following take-home messages: sign up for the NIH Guide Listserv, keep the phone number and e-mail address of the Program Director of the Institute to which you think your grant will be assigned available, and be persistent in trying to obtain grant funding.

Introduction—Dr. Lawrence Agodoa

Dr. Agodoa welcomed the NMRI meeting attendees and reminded them that the NMRI was formed to help minority investigators achieve career success and work on the issue of health-related racial and ethnic disparities. He discussed the need for attendees to discuss and decide on NMRI's future directions.

Health Disparities in the United States and the Intersection of NIDDK's Research Agenda—Dr. Griffin Rodgers

Dr. Rodgers noted that racial and ethnic minority populations have poorer overall health than the non-Hispanic white population. NIH hopes to reduce the disparities through enhancing research; recruiting qualified, motivated scientists; and bolstering public education.

Dr. Rodgers used the issue of type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) as a paradigm for NIDDK's integrated research programs, noting its prevalence and increasing rate in the United States among certain population groups, such as African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, and certain Native American Tribes as well as children and adolescents. He highlighted NIDDK's input into T2DM issues, such as the For Life pamphlet, WIN Program, and training for Program Directors. Dr. Rodgers then discussed several diabetes-related issues, including the following:

- The importance of environmental factors, such as obesity, diet, activity, and geography
- The role of animal models in studying the genetics of the disease

- The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)—prevention of T2DM in persons at high risk, DPP’s approach, and a post-DPP study to determine the program’s long-term effects.

Dr. Agodoa ended the session by acknowledging the Program Committee: Dr. Jackie Tanaka, who leads the committee; Dr. Dale Abel; Dr. Lydia Aguilar-Bryan; Dr. Maria Castro; Jamil Scott; Dr. Podskalny; Winnie Martinez; and Dr. Ricardo Azziz.

Scientific Reasoning: How To Get to the Core of the Question—Drs. Ricardo Azziz, Lydia Aguilar-Bryan, and Renty Franklin

Dr. Azziz discussed the basics of scientific reasoning. He defined the concept of science and discussed three main concepts: the scientific method, which has five steps (observation, hypothesis formulation, the use of hypotheses to predict behavior, the experiment, and hypothesis modification); scientific knowledge; and the scientific mindset.

Dr. Aguilar-Bryan talked about choosing a field of study. She noted the need for having a passion for your subject and for selecting an important, cutting-edge field and the role of the mentor in guiding young investigators toward an independent, self-sufficient career.

Dr. Azziz discussed understanding the history of the field. He stated that fields of study evolve over time and that grant applicants needed to be aware of the chronological development of the field to be able to identify potential biases and dogma, avoid duplicative studies, and know the important past and present researchers and their contributions.

Dr. Franklin spoke about the need to ask important research questions in your grant application. Does the question pass the “so what” test? Is it relevant to human well-being? Is it fundamental to current research in the field? Research can open new avenues of investigation or expand existing ones.

Dr. Agodoa ended the session by complementing the panel for dealing with and answering many questions with which NIDDK must grapple regularly.

Managing Career Transitions

Student or Resident to Postdoctoral Fellow—Drs. Maria Castro, Eddie Greene, and Lydia Aguilar-Bryan

The focus of the discussion involved the process of balancing education, training opportunities, research, career goals, and family responsibilities. The facilitators offered the following advice:

- Begin investigating and researching your field of interest about 1 year in advance.
- Choose a university or research institution in which you want to grow.
- Identify mentors and role models and ask them questions.
- Learn new skills.
- Talk to the students in the laboratories where you may want to work.
- Do not sacrifice family life.
- Attend workshops and conferences that relate to your field of interest.
- Build a relationship community.
- Make contacts with others involved with similar career paths.
- Recognize that you cannot do everything.

The female facilitators addressed the issue of when to have children. If you choose to have children early in your career, you will need a supportive mate and a good support system. If you choose later in life,

your “biological clock” may limit the number of children you have. Both options have career advancement and lifestyle implications.

The facilitators noted that some institutions are more family-friendly than others. The facilitators also gave examples of these organizations and the names of individuals who participants should contact depending on their area of interest. A mentor is important and should be someone who makes time to talk to you and offer guidance, although he or she need not be in your department.

Postdoctoral Fellow to First Faculty Appointment—Drs. Dale Abel, Jackie Tanaka, and Francisco Andrade

What factors are important to consider in making the transition from a postdoctoral fellow position to a faculty appointment position?

- Identify what you want to do as an investigator over the next 5 years and for your career.
- Look for institutions that you think will accept you.
- Determine if there will be a good mentor for you at the institution you are considering.

To find an institution, a young investigator needs to network, look for faculty opening announcements, and keep in mind that it is not uncommon for positions to be created for qualified young investigators.

When you get your first faculty position, it is important to do the following:

- Consider whether this is an institution at which you plan to stay.
- Gauge your (potential) mentor with regard to your remaining at the institution over the long haul.
- Look at your (potential) mentor’s record with previous mentorees.
- Identify funding mechanisms to support your salary if you plan to remain for a long time.
- Negotiate the contents of your offer letter.
- Consider how your time (teaching vs. research vs. clinical responsibilities) will be spent.

The panel advised NMRI members to seriously consider their initial salary, as it can greatly influence their salary progression over time, and to expect 3 to 5 years of research training. Before moving to an assistant professor position, a young investigator should have one or more awards, have been published and/or have publications in press, and consider family issues so that he or she can progress successfully.

Junior Faculty to Tenured Faculty With an Independent Research Program—Drs. Ricardo Azziz, Greg Florant, Sid Golub, and Mario Ascoli

Panel members advised NMRI members to understand the particular circumstances of their institution, such as the following:

- Match your expectations with those of your chairs and your research with the mission of the laboratory or institution.
- Find out whether the institution places greater emphasis on clinical or research work.
- Remember that the faculty manual is a guide, not a series of rules to be strictly followed.
- Maintain a strong relationship with the department chair, who wields great influence on promotions.
- Keep in mind the importance of teaching to your tenure track.
- Know your research milestones. If you are not on a tenure track, leave before the 7th (and last) year.

The panel noted some common mistakes by young investigators, such as pushing too soon for promotion or tenure, grammatical and formatting problems on grant proposals, and trying to be a jack-of-all-trades in the laboratory. Young investigators must learn to do a few things really well, become the laboratory or department expert on a research question, publish often in peer-reviewed journals, obtain funding, and learn to work with and manage postdoctoral and graduate students.

Panel members stressed the necessity for finding the people who can best answer questions concerning your grant proposal and future laboratory work and for getting important, career-affecting decisions in writing, such as your responsibilities with respect to clinical, research, teaching, and administrative duties.

Welcoming Remarks—Dr. Allen Spiegel

Dr. Spiegel stated that NIDDK is the lead NIH Institute for obesity research, citing the biological, dietary, and environmental causes of obesity. He said that obesity problems track inversely with education and that people with a low socioeconomic status tend to eat the least nutritional food, because the food industry has lowered the price for that quality of food. Dr. Spiegel also noted the importance to NIDDK of translational research—“bench-to-bedside” medicine.

Dr. Spiegel reminded attendees that about 75 percent of NIDDK’s annual grant budget funds continuing (years 2 to 5) grants, leaving new grant proposals to compete for the remaining 25 percent.

Selling Your Science—Drs. Lydia Aguilar-Bryan and Ricardo Azziz

Dr. Azziz stated that young scientists could have a great idea but little knowledge about how to “sell” it. He and Dr. Aguilar-Bryan noted the importance of incorporating many of the following ideas when developing your grant proposal:

- Use a uniform, logical outline and graphics; make your text clear and tightly focused; and tell a good story when writing your proposal, allowing a reviewer not likely to be an expert in your field to easily understand your research grant.
- Know how to succinctly describe your research in an oral presentation.
- Choose the right meeting at which to present your research and take the time to write a strong, concise abstract or present a well-designed poster and accompanying literature.
- Learn from a negative decision regarding your research grant, read the reviewers’ notes, make the appropriate changes, determine if the Institute is the best place for your research, ask for a critique(s) from your mentor or a senior investigator, and resubmit the proposal when it is ready.

Grant-Writing Workshop

Going From an Idea to Specific Aims

Basic Sciences—Drs. Renty Franklin and Irma Russo

- Avoid obvious flaws.
- Follow the grant guidelines strictly.
- Develop a title that provides a clear idea as to the proposal’s subject matter.
- State the hypothesis(es) and specific aims on the first page of the proposal.
- State your research aims in short, succinct phrases or sentences.

Clinical Sciences—Dr. Carlos Isaacs

- Use the input from your mentor, who has probably submitted many proposals.
- Keep in mind that NIH scrutinizes an investigator’s experimental process now more than ever to ensure that it tracks with the original grant proposal.
- Be on the lookout for new, unexpected research avenues.

Turning an Early Draft or Preliminary Data Into a Successful Proposal

Basic Sciences—Drs. Greg Florant and Maria Castro

- Avoid text that is too dense, such as small type and long paragraphs, and graphics that are too small.
- Include the appropriate caveats and alternative theories.
- Place your Methods section in the Appendix.
- Limit the number of research aims and break down broad aims into subaims.
- Remember your grant timeline (e.g., 5 years) when developing your proposal.
- Keep in mind that first-time grant proposals need to be of high quality, as the potential grantee has no record to which the reviewer can refer when noting a weakness in the proposal.

Clinical Sciences—Dr. Ricardo Azziz

- Define all your acronyms for the reviewers.
- Mention what the data from your previous work or the work of others has shown.
- Note your long-term objectives.
- Make your aims interdependent issues rather than parallel problems to be solved separately.
- State the hypothesis(es) in one sentence and ensure that it is a prediction, not an observation.

Reviewing Proposals Under Development

Basic Sciences—Drs. Martin Frank and Francisco Andrade

- Show reviewers your expertise by reviewing your previous work in developing the preliminary data.
- Avoid conflicts of interest with other grant proposals, for example, overlapping data.
- Remember that the annual grant money is not guaranteed; it is based on your research progress relative to your proposal goals.

Clinical Sciences—Dr. Dale Abel

- Remember your aims in composing your analysis and do not allow the latter to stray from the former.
- Provide a brief explanation of your experiment at the beginning of your proposal.
- Justify your sample sizes.

Writing the Introduction to a Revised Proposal

Basic Sciences—Dr. Mario Ascoli

- Feel free to suggest possible study sections to consider your grant but do not suggest reviewers.
- Ask that reviewers be excluded only in extreme cases, such as conflicts of interest, although reviewers can exclude themselves from considering a grant proposal.
- Know that bias in a reviewer is rare, because the other reviewers would likely notice such bias.

Clinical Sciences—Dr. Lydia Aguilar-Bryan

- Ensure that you possess the necessary qualifications when applying for a regular grant or applying in response to an RFA.
- Understand the grant application review system and your own limitations.
- Convince the study section reviewers that you and/or your collaborators have the necessary expertise to undertake what you propose in your grant application.

- Despite an existing opportunity, do not assume that you will obtain grant funding without submitting a carefully written proposal.
- Remember that being a member of a minority group does not improve your chance to obtain funding.

Dinner Meeting—Beating the Odds: Preparing Minorities for Research Careers in the Biomedical Sciences—Dr. Freeman Hrabowski

Dr. Hrabowski noted that society must provide families with incentives to empower young African-Americans and other minorities to work to be the best to compete successfully not only with the majority population but also with students who come to the United States from all over the world, many of whom tend to be more disciplined than U.S. students. The importance of young people reading early and often cannot be overstated.

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) guides undergraduate students to consider the M.D./Ph.D. track, as opposed to just an M.D. track, and engages the students in research, having them work closely with senior and junior investigators. Retaining students in the sciences is a major challenge. Many scientific programs seem to expect many students not to make the grade, and many science students leave their fields in the 1st or 2nd year of college, whereas medical schools seem to encourage as many students as possible to make it through to graduation.

Since its inception, UMBC's Meyerhoff Scholars Program, which targets high-achieving minority students in science, has produced large numbers of African-Americans who have gone on to receive science Ph.D.s or M.D./Ph.D.s. Recent data show that, of the 65 African-Americans who received bachelor's degrees in biochemistry, 22 of them graduated from UMBC. The program includes the following components that encourage the development of minority investigators:

- Support the students and helping them make it through the first 2 years with at least a B average.
- Encourage those who receive a C in a science class to retake the course, aiming for at least a B.
- Focus on group work and engage the students in scientific research as undergraduates.
- Involve faculty members in many aspects of the program, encouraging them to support the students.
- Create among students a sense of pride in high academic achievement and in being a scientist.

Dr. Hrabowski advised NMRI members to focus on the quantity and quality of their science before applying for one's first grant. He encouraged them to participate on committees and help young scientists where possible but to be "selfish" and focus on their careers first. There will be time to help postdoctoral researchers and graduate students once they have become senior scientists/professors, but they must first become successful scientific investigators.

FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2004

Introduction and Welcome—Dr. Lawrence Agodoa

Dr. Agodoa greeted NMRI attendees for the meeting's 2nd day, made a few meeting-related announcements, and dismissed the group to attend the first session.

Resource Management Workshop

Multiple Project and Productivity Issues—Drs. Mario Ascoli, Sid Golub, and Rosita Rodriguez Proteau

- Learn to manage a laboratory and the people who work there while keeping up with the expected quality and productivity of the research.
- Manage your time beyond the first few years as you are asked to take on more teaching and administrative responsibilities.

- Realize that your laboratory's productivity is limited more by a lack of money than by a lack of ideas.
- Ensure that your laboratory pays as much attention to its ongoing successful research project(s), which produces data and generates peer-reviewed journal articles, as it does to newer, riskier, and unproven avenues of research.
- Do not work in isolation and always be aware of laboratory issues, be they staff- or resource-related.
- Take the hiring process seriously by investigating the science projects listed on an applicant's resume to ensure they were done and are relevant to your work and by checking resume references.
- Where possible, use undergraduate students to hold down costs but, when necessary for certain jobs, hire skilled laboratory technicians.
- Learn to manage your own time with respect to discussions with students and be selective about administrative assignments, because minority students tend to want to talk with minority scientists and university bureaucracies are always looking to diversify their committees and boards.

Funds and Other Resources—Drs. Dale Abel, Eddie Greene, and Carlos Isales

- Base laboratory employees' pay on their skill levels and experience.
- Use the university human resources department to figure out proper pay scales.
- Invest in a software package called "Lab Manager," which provides inexperienced managers with pointers on laboratory management.
- Know the rules of your institution and the grantor institution concerning the issue of money left over at the end of a given year. Can you carry it over, or must the annual grant be fully spent?
- Manage your funds so that certain fixed costs, for example, salaries and benefits and equipment, are spent early in a grant year, allowing the remaining costs to be managed the rest of the year, and build in a buffer to factor in costs for repairs or unanticipated supply needs.
- Meet with your department chair regularly to go over the budget and your research productivity, which is probably as important as the quality of your science.
- Search for less expensive quality equipment, using university resources as a guide to finding bargains.
- Use market forces to shop competitively for the best price for new or replacement equipment.
- Keep employee morale high to avoid excessive turnover and training costs.
- Use your organization's grant office to investigate funding avenues other than NIH.
- Write your follow-on grant in year 3 or 4 of your current grant. If the new grant is rejected, you will have time to fix what is wrong and resubmit it for consideration before your current funding ends.

Hiring Decisions, Human Resources-Related Issues, and Conflicts—Drs. Martin Frank, Ricardo Azziz, Samuel Dagogo-Jack, and Stephen Eck

- Develop a consistent management style, recognize that style, and try to compensate for your shortcomings: where possible, moderate your style to accommodate your employees' different cultures, genders, and life experiences.
- Ensure that potential hires are interviewed by you and other veteran members of your staff, who are more likely to engender probing questions and "unguarded" answers from the potential hire.
- Understand your employees' problems and empathize with them but avoid getting too friendly.
- Ensure that difficult employees know that they must adapt their personalities and work habits to the laboratory atmosphere, leave, or be fired under institution rules. Remember that your friends can become problem employees after you gain a promotion and serve as their supervisor.

Balancing of Research With the Rest of Your Life—Drs. Maria Castro, Greg Florant, Lydia Aguilar-Bryan, and Vernon Bond

- Ensure that the inevitable drop in one's productivity that follows starting a family does not affect the quality of your science and the overall productivity of the laboratory.
- Marry someone who is familiar with or fully understands the demands of you being a scientist.

- Set goals, plan your day, and be as productive as possible while in the laboratory.
- Take advantage of the bump in salary you will get by being a full professor/senior scientist and hire, for example, lawn care, cleaning, and snow-removal services.
- Let your children see how hard you work and what you do for a living to show them the value of hard work no matter what employment choices they make.
- Do not assume that single professors/senior scientists have no life and want to work all the time.

Developing Contacts and Collaborative Projects With Industry—Dr. Stephen Eck

Dr. Eck stated that there are many opportunities for minority investigators to collaborate with industry, whose collaborations with academia have grown over time. The pharmaceutical industry will not fund a failing research program but will fund a successful one. He noted one difference between the two: Academics are rewarded for success, whereas pharmaceutical company employees succeed by failure, as long as the failure is not terribly expensive.

Dr. Eck provided a history of industry-academia collaborations and the industry's merger history as a lead-in to his discussion of the process for those collaborations. He noted several features of the industry-related drug development process (DDP):

- The DDP for large-scale drugs averages 17 years.
- The complexity level of the DDP adds to a drug's costs.
- Industry funds about one-half of clinical trial sponsor costs, and NIH funds slightly less than one-half.

In industry-academia collaborations, the DDP involves shared expectations among academic and industry personnel and the need for personnel to understand the particulars of each institution. For example, academics must understand and accept the importance of intellectual property rights. The objectives of such collaborations would include (1) the interdependence of industry and academia knowledge and resources and (2) consistency with corporate goals and the academic mission.

Dr. Eck said that most investigators collaborating with industry are chosen more for their productivity than for their reputation. Industry usually finds out about a potential collaborator through publications or public presentations and also uses NIH as a resource to find potential collaborators. Such collaboration contracts demand research productivity and are tightly overseen by industry. Industry-academia collaborations involve the following issues:

- Conflict-of-interest problems endemic to life sciences research
- The pros and cons of collaborations, such as the dissemination of new discoveries and the integrity of the university's mission
- Legitimate skepticism on behalf of academics
- The value of the collaboration with respect to your science background and funding levels.

Lunch Meetings—Concurrent Meetings of Senior and Junior NMRI Members

Senior NMRI Lunch Meeting—Drs. Lawrence Agodoa and Jackie Tanaka

Dr. Agodoa mentioned that from here on, the success of the NMRI would rely more on its members than on NIDDK. NMRI members will set up the future structure of the Network, with guidance and resources from NIDDK. Both senior and junior Network members will contribute to that structure.

The senior investigators discussed many issues, including the following:

- The lack of mentors at many academic institutions
- Junior investigators needing to know that their senior counterparts are available, in person, by phone, or by e-mail, to deal with issues and to answer questions

- Assignments for junior investigators to work with before the annual NMRI meeting and to discuss the results of in a session at the meeting
- Institutional networking programs involving senior and junior investigators
- The idea of senior investigators helping their junior counterparts identify research niches that have yet to be fully investigated and the development of an investigator and field-of-endeavor database to avoid duplication of research efforts
- Scientific investigator “pipeline” problems
- The resubmission of failed grant proposals and use of the aforementioned database to find expert reviewers to critique first-time or resubmission proposals
- The motivation for senior investigators to help junior ones, such as departmentwide recognition for doing so and letters to department chairs and deans praising their work with junior investigators
- The value of Network members attending meetings from related organizations, such as the American Diabetes Association
- The use of the NMRI Web page as a clearinghouse of information for outside organization meetings
- The need to track both the total grant proposal submissions and the proposal success rate with respect to minority investigators
- The value of networking within and beyond the Network, the need to spread that knowledge to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who consider themselves too busy to engage in the process, and the development of a minority investigator listserv not directly affiliated with NIDDK.

Toward the end of the session, panel members asked senior investigators to volunteer for the 2005 NMRI program committee. Drs. Greene, Azziz, and Castro agreed to help organize the meeting, other investigators will be expected to help with agenda ideas and conference call input.

Junior NMRI Lunch Meeting—Drs. Dale Abel, Maria Castro, and Judith Podskalny

The purpose of this session was to obtain feedback from attendees about what did and did not work so far in the meeting, what should be changed, and how the NMRI should move forward.

Current meeting feedback: What did and did not work?

- The information provided on grant writing was helpful.
- The practical advice and specific examples provided at the meeting were well received.
- Consider ways to expand the poster sessions at the next meeting.
- Focus on just a few issues (e.g., publication production and management).
- In future grant-writing sessions, provide each attendee with a hard copy of the grant(s) being reviewed and, at the end, have NIDDK collect and account for the copies.
- Consider adding a session on patenting and intellectual property.
- Offer a session on writing parts of and avoiding common mistakes when writing a scientific paper.
- Provide information on how to respond to a reviewer’s critique of one’s scientific paper.
- Schedule the small-group sessions to last longer and include fewer people.
- Consider offering sessions in which people are grouped based on similar work and/or career stages.
- Offer small-group coaching and mentor sessions with a senior person.
- Offer a session on how to motivate undergraduate students toward a science career.
- Offer a session for researchers on how to set up a laboratory.

What can be done to help sustain the NMRI?

- Implement a mechanism to let NMRI members know who is available to assist with providing preliminary feedback on grant drafts.
- Set up an NMRI listserv.
- Establish a mentoring network.
- Post a security-protected NMRI membership directory.

How should the NMRI be structured?

- Implement a steering committee that includes senior and junior representatives.
- Have steering committee members serve a 2-year term.
- Delineate committees that support NIDDK scientific fields of interest. Each committee should have a chair and suggest a topic to be covered at the next NMRI meeting.

Update on NIDDK Education Programs for Ethnic Minorities—Ms. Elizabeth Singer

Ms. Singer discussed the creative ways that NIDDK disseminates information to the public in general and to ethnic minorities in particular.

Using the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP), Ms. Singer described the importance of including members of voluntary, professional, and community organizations in the leadership of the national program and in the design of social marketing campaigns. The NDEP supports a steering committee, operations committee, workgroups, and more than 200 organizations in its National Partnership Network. Initial campaigns focused on diabetes awareness and on the importance of control (e.g., “Control Your Diabetes, for Life,” “Be Smart About Your Heart: Control the ABCs of Diabetes.”) With the end of the Diabetes Prevention Program in August 2001, preventing diabetes and being aware of prediabetes are emphasized through the “Small Steps, Big Rewards: Prevent Type 2 Diabetes” campaign.

Ms. Singer described the five NDEP prevention campaigns for ethnic minorities: “More Than 50 Ways To Prevent Diabetes,” for African-Americans; “Prevengamos las Diabetes Tipo 2: Paso a Paso,” for Hispanic and Latino Americans; “We Have the Power To Prevent Diabetes,” for American Indians and Alaska Natives; “Two Reasons To Prevent Diabetes: My Future and Theirs,” for Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders; and “It’s Not Too Late To Prevent Diabetes: Take Your First Step Today,” for older adults. All brochures, tool kits, and materials for health care professionals and the public are available through the NDEP Web site, www.ndep.nih.gov, and through their toll-free number, (800) 860-8747.

Ms. Singer then described a National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP) pilot project to reach African-Americans at high risk for kidney failure with a prevention message. In the United States, about 20 million people have kidney disease, and more than 400,000 are on dialysis or have had a kidney transplant because their kidneys have failed. African-Americans are four times more likely to develop kidney failure than whites. Diabetes and hypertension account for about 70 percent of kidney failure in African-Americans. The NKDEP is testing awareness techniques to bring the message that effective treatment is available and can prevent or delay progression to kidney failure. “You Have the Power To Prevent Kidney Failure” was introduced in Atlanta, GA, Cleveland, OH, Jackson, MS, and Baltimore, MD, in April 2003. Surveys of the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of African-Americans at high risk and their health care providers will inform the development of strategies to increase the number of African-Americans tested and treated to prevent kidney failure. Additional information is available through the NKDEP Web site, www.nkdep.nih.gov, and through their toll-free number, (800) 860-8747.

Wrap-Up and Future Goals—Dr. Lawrence Agodoa

Dr. Agodoa reiterated that Network members taking the lead role in running the NMRI was one goal of this NMRI meeting. He noted the ongoing creation of a membership directory, including member photos and biosketches, on the Web.

Dr. Agodoa hoped that junior investigators would actively partake in the planning and management responsibilities, the membership would grow over time, and the steering committee would rotate leadership and member positions. He also suggested the need for greater peer-to-peer feedback outside of the meeting, such as through a listserv when the idea is cleared by NIDDK, and the need for the steering committee to decide on how Network members would meet and exchange ideas and information outside of the Network.

Dr. Agodoa ended the 2004 NMRI meeting by thanking MasiMax staff members, Winnie Martinez, Dr. Podskalny, and the six members of the steering committee. He then awarded Dr. Jackie Tanaka a plaque recognizing her contributions to the NMRI over the past few years.

Dr. Agodoa adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.

NMRI Meeting Summary
6/30/04