



## THE CMBB QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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Summer's over and we hope you all had time to relax a little and enjoy your vacations. Now it's back to work time, with plans for the new fiscal year in the offing. As the year progresses, we'll keep you posted on what to expect in the coming year.

We have already started thinking about our upcoming Professional Development Workshop scheduled for the first week in May, 2000. Mark your calendars. As our plans develop we'll keep you posted with more specifics.

### MINORITY CANCER CENTERS PARTNERSHIPS

The Minority Cancer Centers Partnership (MCCP), initiated by the Office of Research on Minority Health (ORMH), is based on the premise that medical institutions with both the appropriate and cultural sensitivity and state-of-the-art research capability will have a more immediate impact on reducing the cancer burden in ethnic minority populations.

This is a partnership in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This

MCCP initiative will support the establishment of long-term partnerships and collaborations where it is visualized that the collaborating partners will benefit from a broader range of research, training, education and outreach resources and approaches than are available at any one institution.

A workshop sponsored by Dr. Louis Sullivan at the Morehouse School of Medicine took place on May 24, 1999. The presidents (or their designates) from seven minority medical schools and cancer center directors (or their designates) of NCI-supported cancer centers, selected because of their interest and enthusiasm for the collaborations were in attendance. Also present were Dr. John Ruffin, ORMH/NIH; Dr. Otis Brawley, OSPR/NCI; Dr. Brian Kimes, OCTR/NCI and Dr. Sanya Springfield, CMBB/NCI.

The challenge to the group was to identify areas of opportunity, to establish potential partnerships between the institutions and to develop ways to initiate a planning process through support from the ORMH, and to consider the realistic, long-term resources and needs for implementing a multi-year

plan.

The workshop was successful and either during the workshop and/or during subsequent meetings/discussions with ORMH/NCI leadership, it was agreed that:

In FY '99, to use Cancer Center (P30) Supplements of \$200,000-\$500,000 for partnerships to begin exploring both planning activities and pilot studies in the areas of research, training, education and outreach. These demonstration projects were totally supported by the ORMH.

As a result of the May workshop, seven partnership applications were received. An ad hoc group, including Dr. Frank Jackson, OSPR; Dr. Jorge Gomez; OCTR; Dr. Colette Freeman, DCB; Dr. Jack Gruber, DCB; and Dr. Anthony Rene, NIGMS, was convened to review the applications, and four were approved for funding. The committee was chaired by Dr. Lawrence Alfred of San Diego State University. (By the way, CMBB us trying to recruit Dr. Alfred to join our staff in FY00 as an Expert Consultant.)

This initiative will be expanded and opened up to all NCI cancer centers/minority serving institutions during FY 2000.

### **WORLD WIDE WEB ACCESS**

We met with our new WEB design contractor and we're all set to go. Our new and better web page will be on line before the end of the year. We'll keep you posted.

### **SUPPLEMENTS TO THE CURE**

The supplements to the CURE are still coming in. This year we funded four P30s, Cancer Center Supplement for High School and Undergraduate Students; two K12s (Clinical Oncology Institutional Research Career Development Award); and one R25 (Cancer Education Award supplement).

### **AACR**

The next AACR Annual Meeting will be held in San Francisco from April 1-5, 2000. Look for the announcement about the Travel Awards for Young Investigators.

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MENTORED CAREER DEVELOPMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS.**

**Dr. Alex Adjei** has been invited as a plenary speaker at the International Conference on Molecular Targets and Cancer Therapeutics being organized by the NCI/AACR/EORTC, November 16-19 in Washington, DC. His talk will be on "Farnesyltransferase Inhibition: Use of surrogate markers; the work he is doing with his K01 grant.

**Dr. Thais Salazar-Mather** on her promotion to Assistant Professor of Research at Brown University. And thank you for your kind words acknowledging this office's programs which offer support and encouragement to minority investigators interested in a career in the biomedical sciences.

**Dr. J. Andres Melendez** has had a paper entitled "Nitric Oxide Enhances the Manganese Superoxide Dismutase-dependent Suppression of Proliferation in HT-1080 fibrosarcoma Cells" accepted as the cover article in the September issue of Cell Growth & Differentiation.

This year some of our MCDA recipients will be participating as ad hoc reviewers on the Manpower and Training Review Committee as part of their peer review activities.

### **BULLETIN BOARD**

We've received our first feedback from some of our **CURE** (P30) Cancer Center Supplements for High School and Undergraduate Students recipients. Here are a few excerpts from their letters.

“In a society that often views teenagers as irresponsible and untrustworthy, I have been handed a unique opportunity. With friends that are holding summer jobs from life-guarding to baby-sitting, I have found myself at Children’s Memorial Institute for Education and Research in Chicago, Illinois. I anxiously awaited my first day as a participant in the NCI/CURE Program, yet I approached with some caution: *was my scientific knowledge too small to understand the lab’s activities and experiments?* True enough I had taken Advanced Placement Biology the previous academic year but nothing prepared me for the complexity and fascination found in cancer research.”

“My experience in the NCI/CURE program also reached outside of the laboratory. On Fridays, scientists from the Robert Lurie Cancer Center and Northwestern Memorial Hospital came to educate us about the various cancer fields and even answer our questions about the process of becoming a scientific researcher and/or physician.”

“Every student interested in science, medicine, and technology should be handed this opportunity, regardless of whether they receive monetary rewards or not. Not many high school seniors are aware of research concerning Gli (a gene and its activities during development) and how it aids during the development in human embryos that I became aware of during my Developmental Systems Biology lab’s Gli-Club meetings. Every time I put on my latex gloves in the lab, opened the door to the cold room, and reached on the shelf to grab new pipettes, I grew increasingly grateful that someone realized the under-representation of minorities in cancer research and was willing to give high school and undergraduate students a chance to get a foot in the door of scientific research.”

“If only every lab in the world could offer local high school students, especially minorities, the opportunity that was handed to me this summer. I wish I could round up every cancer sufferer in the world and

introduce him or her to the members of the Developmental systems Biology lab at CMIER. They not only work diligently every day to understand Gli and search for the cure for cancer, but they cared enough to take time out of their schedule this summer to introduce me to cancer research, give me first-hand experience, and let me know that minority students like me can succeed in this field.”

The above excerpts are from a letter from **Maya Anjelou Evans**, a high school senior from Evanston, Illinois.

Another excerpt from **Angela Morris**, an undergraduate student attending Xavier University of Louisiana states, “I have learned the significance of scientific research. Also, I was impressed by the fact that while I learned more about research I was able to contribute to the lab. I treated this program as if it was a regular job, making sure I was prompt and got my work done on time. I respected my co-workers and they respected me. I also have been given the opportunity to work again over my Christmas vacation and next summer. Thank you Northwestern for this experience.”

And from **Teesha Block**, another CURE recipient. “The CURE program has been one of the most interesting and educational summer experiences. I have always been interested in medical fields but like many other students I am still not sure what field will be appropriate for me. Before entering this program I never saw myself in a laboratory research environment. I thought research was more of an antisocial profession. I found this to be a false misconception. I thought that the long hours of research with only minimal advancement would be painstakingly boring, but I also found this thought to be inaccurate.”

“This program has been a great experience, and I hope to still be a part of the program next year. The program has allowed me to

meet new people, make new friends, and it put to rest my false conceptions about lab research. My time spent at the cancer research center has opened the door to a field I may consider pursuing in college.”

I guess CMBB can conclude from these letters that the P30 Supplements to the **CURE** are off to a successful start.

**PLEASE KEEP SENDING US  
INFORMATION FOR OUR BULLETIN  
BOARD. WE WOULD LOVE TO PRINT  
SOME GOOD NEWS ABOUT YOU!**