



THE CMBB QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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CMBB STAFF:

Sanya Springfield, Ph.D., Chief
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Ms. Bobby Rosenfeld, Senior Program Analyst
Ms. LaShell Gaskins, Program Assistant

We received a wonderful note from Dr. Larry Alfred, who was with us all of last year helping us get the Minority Institution/Cancer Center Program (MI/CCP) off the ground. Here is what Dr. Alfred had to say:

"I have just completed a one-year leave of absence in the Comprehensive Minority Biomedical Branch (CMBB) of the NCI as a "Special Expert". I never liked the term of Special Expert because I was really learning from many experts in CMBB, and other staff in the NCI and other institutes. My one appointment in the CMBB began on a cold day on December 1, 1999, and ended on a cold day on December 1, 2000. The year was one of the most rewarding in my professional career during which I was very warmly embraced by my colleagues in the CMBB. The Branch Chief, Dr. Sanya Springfield, who was once my protege became my mentor, for which I will always be grateful. She provided strong leadership and a vision for the goal of increasing the number of minority scientists involved in cancer research with a specific interest in cancer disparities in minority populations. I also learned a lot from Dr. Eric Bailey about the importance of cultural sensitivity and the important role it plays in cancer training of minority scientists, cancer education and community outreach. Ms. Bobby Rosenfeld, Dr. Springfield's very able

assistant, provides a level of organization and strength to the minority supplement and other components of CMBB. Ms. LaShell Gaskins, who in a quiet and humble manner keeps the members of the CMBB family together. I thank each of them for enriching my life and I will miss them.

My primary responsibility in the CMBB was to assist in the development and the management of the Minority-Serving Institution/Cancer Center Program (MI/CCP) partnerships. The goals of the program are to increase the cancer research capabilities of Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), increase the number of minority scientists engaged in cancer research, and to improve the effectiveness of NCI-designated Cancer Centers in developing and sustaining activities focused on cancer disparities in minority populations. We developed three RFAs to solicit partnership applications from Minority-Serving Institutions and Cancer Centers with support from the Office of Research on Minority Health and the NCI. The response from the MSI and cancer centers to the RFAs was outstanding, with 22 partnership applications in the first round. This amazing response set the stage for this model program that might be emulated by other institutes at NIH that are establishing similar partnership programs between MSIs and centers that address specific disease disparities

through research and research training. I firmly believe that the MI/CCP partnerships will be successful for several reasons. First, the leadership and dedication of Dr. Springfield and Dr. Brian Kimes (Director of the Office of Centers, Training and Resources), and their vision for the program will assure its success. Secondly, the strong commitment of a number of Cancer Center Directors to the goals of MI/CCP will create new approaches for research collaborations between scientists at minority institutions and cancer centers. The Cancer Center Directors see the mutual benefit to the partnership institutions, and they have set the stage for effective research training, cancer education and community outreach. I predict that in five years the outcomes of the MI/CCP will include the following:

- 1) MSIs will show a significant increase in developing cancer research projects.
- 2) A significant increase in the number of minority investigators in cancer research.
- 3) An increase in the level of productivity by minority investigators.
- 4) The development of self-sustaining research programs at MSIs, and
- 5) Cancer centers will be able to better serve cancer patients in their regions.

Finally, I want to thank the Cancer Center Directors and the Principal Investigators at MSIs with whom I worked during the year for their strong commitment to the MI/CCP. I look forward to working with you in the future. I encourage scientists at MSIs to visit the CMBB office to gain specific information on pre-application development for the MI/CCP."

MINORITY INSTITUTION/CANCER CENTER PROGRAM

The second issuance of the three RFAs - **PLANNING GRANT FOR MINORITY INSTITUTION/CANCER CENTER COLLABORATION (P20), COOPERATIVE PLANNING GRANT FOR COMPREHENSIVE MINORITY INSTITUTION/CANCER CENTER PARTNERSHIP (U56), and COMPREHENSIVE MINORITY INSTITUTION/CANCER CENTER PARTNERSHIP (U54)** have been announced

in the NIH Guide. The Letter of Intent receipt date is July 9, 2001 and the Application receipt date is August 13, 2001.

Our Technical Assistance Workshop for these RFAs will be held from May 6-8, 2001 in Phoenix, Arizona. The workshop is by invitation, so if you have not received a letter inviting you, and you plan to apply in response to one of the RFAs, please contact Dr. Eric Bailey or Dr. Sanya Springfield at 301-496-7344. There is a possibility that we will be able to accommodate you, but you may have to pay your own expenses.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

The next annual CMBB Professional Development Workshop will be held in Gaithersburg, Maryland from June 3-7, 2001. Invitations went out last month. Please note that if you have had the opportunity to attend one of our workshops in the past, you will not receive an invitation. Unfortunately, our budget only goes so far and there are many of our supplement and grant recipients who have not yet had the chance to experience and enjoy one of our workshops. However, if you are a graduate student, postdoctoral fellow or junior faculty supplement holder or a K01, K08, or F31 grant holder and have not attended a workshop in the past and did not get an invitation, please call Ms. Bobby Rosenfeld at 301-496-7344 and she will see to it that your invitation gets in the mail poste haste.