



## THE CMBB QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Issue 9, January 2001

### CMBB STAFF:

**Sanya Springfield, Ph.D., Chief**  
**Eric Bailey, Ph.D., M.P.H., Program Director**  
**Alfred Montgomery, DVM, Program Director**  
**Ms. Bobby Rosenfeld, Senior Program Analyst**  
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**We at CMBB sincerely wish you and yours the HAPPIEST OF NEW YEARS and hope that you had a wonderful holiday season.**

You may notice from our masthead Dr. Larry Alfred's name is missing - and so is he from our office. Dr. Alfred worked with the CMBB on a one year Intergovernmental Personnel Action (IPA) contract, which expired on November 30, 2000. He has returned to San Diego State University, and we miss him and wish him well. In the short time that Dr. Alfred was with us, he was instrumental in getting the MI/CC Program off the ground and his experience and expertise with the program will be missed.

To help us out for now and to learn more about what we do, Dr. Alfred Montgomery has been detailed to our office. He comes to us as a veterinarian that is working at the FDA as a Senior Scientific Reviewer where his primary duties include the design and evaluation of clinical trials for new medical devices. His past experience includes regulatory work within FDA's Office of Seafood and USDA's Meat and Poultry Inspection Program. He was the Area Veterinarian in Charge of Maryland, Delaware, the District and New Jersey for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service that provides Federal assistance in epidemiological tracing efforts, as well as import and export disease surveillance. Dr. Montgomery served in the

U.S. Army in the Liberation of Kuwait during Desert Storm. He has four children and his hobbies include jogging, antiquing, gardening and aviculture. Please feel free to seek his expertise or advise as needed. We welcome Dr. Montgomery to the CMBB.

### MINORITY INSTITUTION/CANCER CENTER PROGRAM

The review of the MI/CCP applications took place last month and really went quite well. It won't be long before those of you who applied will be receiving your summary statements. Please take the criticisms as constructive ones and, if you are not one of the ones that fared well enough to be awarded, we strongly encourage you to re-apply this year. We are planning to reissue all three RFAs, with application receipt dates of **July 26, 2001 and July 26, 2002**. Other MSIs and Cancer Centers are also encouraged to apply

We are planning to hold the next Technical Assistance Workshop for these RFAs on **May 6, 7, 8, 2001 in Phoenix, Arizona**. Invitation letters are being drafted and should be in the mail by early February.

**Miguel Berrios**, A K01 recipient, was one of the reviewers on the Special Emphasis Panel that

reviewed the MI/CC applications. He states that the P20s and U56s are great initiatives that will bring about the formation of strong “collaborative unions” between apparently diverse institutions. He thought that nearly all of the proposals that were reviewed had potential, however there were some that needed redirection/ reorganization before resubmitting.

We want to thank the reviewers who took part in the special review and also in helping us with revising the RFAs for reissue.

### **ANNUAL MENTORING AND PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP**

We have started to make plans for our next annual workshop. This year, because of a conflict with the May dates, **the workshop will be held June 3-7, 2001**. Another change this year will be the addition of our graduate students holding minority supplements as well as our F31 Fellowship awardees and all of our K series grant holders. More information to follow as soon as it becomes available.

### **THE CMBB BULLETIN BOARD**

Thank you for your e-mails and letters. We love hearing from you and truly appreciate all your kind words. This quarter, CONGRATULATIONS go to:

**Dr. Berrios** also let us know that his K01 project has been developing well and things are coming along as planned. His other news is what is most exciting, however. With strong encouragement from the University and his mentor, they started a biotech company at the Long Island High Technology Incubator located on campus. The operation is small, and they are attempting to develop and commercialize reagents already disclosed to the University Tech Transfer Office. Check out their website at [www.bccmicro.com](http://www.bccmicro.com).

Recently a new product called Enviro-Genie produced by Scientific Industries appeared on the laboratory equipment market. The new laboratory device facilitates the incubation of membrane blots and it is a variant on a similar product, the Roto-Shake-Genie. Both apparatuses are based on an “invention” that came out of their laboratory. You may want to take a peek at these at <http://www.scientificindustries.com/whatnew.htm>.

Imagine, our first K01 recipient as a Biotech Company!

**Dr. Margo Holland**, Iowa State University. She has let us know that since she attended our last Mentoring and Peer Review Workshop her career has improved. She was promoted to Associate Professor and awarded tenure at Michigan State University. Then, she took a position as a tenured Associate Professor at Iowa State University in the Department of Microbiology and Preventive Medicine. In addition, she will be applying for an investigator-initiated award in the near future as she has some exciting preliminary data and is in the process of submitting two manuscripts from research completed from her minority supplement.

**Dr. Selwyn Vickers**, University of Alabama, Birmingham. He has written to advise us of his recent promotion to Director of GI Surgery at UAB. Dr. Vickers currently has a Mentored Career Development Award.

**Dr. Juan Melendez**, Albany Medical College. Dr. Melendez advises us that he was promoted to the level of tenure-track Assistant Professor at Albany Medical College. His promotion came with a generous start-up package and a laboratory he can call his own. He further states that as a result of the studies funded in his Mentored Career Development Award, he has authored or co-authored six peer-reviewed manuscripts and has two that are presently under review. Dr. Melendez has three Ph.D. candidates and a postdoctoral fellow working in his laboratory. He has submitted an abstract to the AACR and submitted a revised R01 application to the NCI and a new R03 application to the NIA.

Dr. Melendez expressed his thanks to the CMBB staff for their support and for organizing the mentoring and peer review workshops. He states that the workshops were instrumental in providing him with the background and insight needed to submit grant applications and to successfully manage his laboratory, his time and his professional relationships. The workshops were also instrumental in negotiating for a tenure-track position. He goes on to say that he would encourage everyone who is sponsored by CMBB to take full advantage of the training sessions.

On a more personal note, Juan and his wife,

Pauline, had their first child in November. Congratulations and best wishes.

(See FEEDBACK below for his views on his peer review experience.

**Dr. Elena Martinez** has written to let us know that she has been invited to serve as a full member of the EDC-2 study section. She has also been recommended for promotion to Associate Professor. Congratulations, Elena. We are so proud of you, Another wonderful success story from our group of Mentored Career Development Awardees.

**Dr. Greg Carey**, supplement awardee, American Red Cross. Dr. Carey for his contributions as part of the "African American Student Tutorial Program" at his son's elementary school. He relates the following great story.

This wonderful African American Principal, Mrs. Linda Warren, asked him to do a presentation to his son's class (as a scientist). She then convinced Dr. Carey that he could also teach the kids as a positive role model. Dr. Carey became part of tutorial program that started last year. With the efforts of a half-dozen other volunteer tutors, this year was the first time that African American kids in that school met county standards for reading and math. Some even out-performed their majority counterparts. Actually, it caused quite a ruckus. People couldn't believe there was no tax money involved, that no one was paid for months of volunteer time and that the parents and kids themselves raised all the monies for their rewards.

He and the other volunteers are hoping that this is the beginning of a trend. The kids are beginning to believe for themselves that if they work hard, given that their resources are 10x what Dr. Carey had growing up in the Bahamas, they can do as well, if not better, than they did this year. Maybe some will be budding scientists sponsored in Dr. Carey's own lab, taking advantage of the CURE/CMBB program themselves someday.

Thanks, Greg, for that wonderful story. Maybe it will inspire some others to get involved with their children's school and/or volunteer program.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

We received feedback from our MCDA recipients that had the opportunity to participate as reviewers at the last Manpower and Training Review Committee meeting. Here are excerpts from their letters:

**Dr. Juan Melendez** first expressed his thanks for the opportunity to participate as a reviewer. It was a wonderful experience and provided him with insight into the NIH peer-review process. He goes on to say that the most impressive aspect of the peer-review process is that it is extremely fair. It was quite enlightening to find out that members of the study section are also scrutinized by the same review process. One key point that was mentioned when talking to other members of the study section was to not lose heart when receiving summary statements. What Dr. Melendez says to do is "read the criticisms (stew for a few days) and then use the comments of the reviewers as a guide for how to improve your grant." There were several instances when revised applications were reviewed and the applicant successfully addressed the concerns of the initial review. Those applications received favorable scores. Another major point was that when applications had a linear flow to the studies and the experimental design, those applications were awarded better priority scores.

"I must say that the most enjoyable part of the Manpower and Training Review was the wonderful dinner provided to the entire study section at the home of the SRA, Dr. Mary Bell. Thanks so much, Ma Bell."

**Dr. Elaine Alarid** was another of our MCDA recipients who had the opportunity to participate in the review process. She writes:

She had a wonderful time serving on Mary Bell's subcommittee. There are plenty of positives to report about the experience. First, our MCDA reviewers found that they were very reasonable in their reviews, "owing much to our past experience with the Mock Study Sections.

Dr. Alarid goes on to say that the review process was just like the mock reviews. She goes on to say that people need to be aware

that really two judges decide the fate of the grant. Those two people are not always direct experts in the field, but the current panel is made up of a wide range of expertise which covered all the grants that were up for review. She became aware of the fact that the reviewers have an enormous task of reviewing more than 90 grants in a session, three times a year. Putting yourself in their position makes you realize how important it is to prioritize the information that you include in a grant, focusing on the pertinent issues relevant to the aims proposed. By doing this, you simplify the grant substantially, the grant is easier to read and is generally received more favorably. Another key point is the relevance to cancer. What cancer problem are you trying to address and does the proposed research, in fact, address this. Dr. Alarid was also impressed with the panel of reviewers. The panel is made up of researchers with an incredible breadth of knowledge in cancer biology. They were gracious and helpful to all new members of the panel, and there was genuine concern for the grantee. They took pains to make constructive criticisms that would help the grant get funded if it returned. They were not stingy with praise if the grant was good. The reviewers all realize that these are training grants, but it is still important to conduct novel and well designed science.

Dr. Alarid goes on to thank us for the opportunity to sit in on a review panel and says it was a wonderful experience.

**Dr. Alex Adjei**, the third reviewer from our K01 pool, wrote to thank us for the opportunity to participate in the review process. He goes on to say that it was an invaluable experience, and nothing like the mock sessions. However, the mock sessions prepared him well to give thoughtful and sound reviews of the grants assigned to him.

**REMINDER:** If you are planning to submit a “K” grant of any type, please send your application to CMBB at least one month in advance for a pre-review by current K01 awardees.

## **NEWS OF INTEREST**

To direct implementation of NCI’s Strategic Plan to Reduce Health Disparities and provide an organizational locus for critical tasks in

translating discovery into delivery, on December 3, 2000 the National Cancer Institute established the **Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities**. The Center has absorbed the former Office of Special Populations Research. Harold P. Freeman, M.D. has been named Director of the Center.

Staff of the CMBB attended the 7<sup>th</sup> RCMI International Symposium on Health Disparities from November 12-15, 2000 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The Research Centers in Minority Institutions (RCMI) Program in the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) is congressionally mandated. It’s mission is to expand the nation’s capacity for research in the health sciences by assisting, through grant support, predominantly minority institutions that offer the doctorate in the health professions and/or health-related sciences to strengthen their research infrastructure. The goal of this symposium was to provide a forum where discussions could be initiated or ideas stimulated that will lead ultimately to collaboration.

**Dr. Larry Alfred** introduced the two mini-symposia related to Cancer and also gave the closing remarks. Two of our very talented supplement holders spoke about their research; **Dr. Chanita Hughes** from Georgetown University spoke about “Genetic Testing for BRCA1/2 Mutations” and **Dr. Kola Okuyemi**, University of Kansas Medical Center addressed “Smoking Behaviors of African-American Light Smokers.”

## **NEW LUNG CANCER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOWS AND JUNIOR FACULTY**

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) is pleased to announce the availability of two new grants for postdoctoral or clinical fellows and junior faculty:

AACR-AstraZeneca-CRFA Fellowship in Translational Lung Cancer Research  
This three-year, \$30,000 per year award will support the salary of a postdoctoral or clinical fellow in the 2nd to 5th year of fellowship work who proposes a meritorious project in any aspect of translational lung cancer research. The research may be the continuation of an

ongoing project or may be a completely new project. Supported by AstraZeneca and the Cancer Research Foundation of America, the Fellowship will be awarded at the Annual Meeting of the AACR in March, 2001, and the funding will commence in July, 2001. Applicants should check the AACR Website at <http://www.aacr.org>, under "Research Awards and Fellowships," then click on "AACR-AstraZeneca-CRFA Translational Lung Fellowship." Applications may be downloaded from the Website. Application deadline is December 15, 2000.

AACR-Cancer Research Foundation of America Career Development Award in Translational Lung Cancer Research. This two-year, \$50,000 per year award will support the direct research expenses (not salary) of a scientist in the first or second year of appointment as an Assistant Professor, tenure track who proposes a meritorious project in any aspect of translational lung cancer research. The research may be the continuation of an ongoing project or may be a completely new project. Supported by the Cancer Research Foundation of America, the Career Development Award will be awarded at the Annual Meeting of the AACR in March, 2001, and the funding will commence in July, 2001.

Applicants should check the AACR Website at <http://www.aacr.org>, under "Research Awards and Fellowships," then click on "AACR--CRFA Career Development Award." Applications may be downloaded from the Website. Application deadline is December 15, 2000.

#### **NCRR SHARED INSTRUMENTATION GRANT**

If you are a grantee with costly instrumentation needs above 100K, we would like to direct you to this NCRR PAR:  
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-01-034.html>

#### **NCRR SHARED INSTRUMENTATION GRANT**

Release Date: December 15, 2000  
PA NUMBER: PAR-01-034  
National Center for Research Resources  
Application Receipt Date: March 23, 2001

#### **PURPOSE**

The National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) is continuing its competitive Shared Instrumentation Grant (SIG) Program initiated in Fiscal Year 1982. Results of the most recent study, "The National Survey of Academic Research Instruments and Instrumentation," published in 1997 identified bioanalytical equipment of the type provided through this Program as the top most priority. The objective of the program is to make available to institutions expensive research instruments that can only be justified on a shared-use basis and for which meritorious research projects are described.

The SIG Program provides a cost-effective mechanism for groups of NIH-supported investigators to obtain commercially-available, technologically sophisticated equipment costing at least \$100,000.

**CMBB STAFF AND FRIENDS AT THE  
RECENT RCMI SYMPOSIUM**

**A FOND FAREWELL TO DR. LARRY ALFRED**