FROM THE DIRECTOR

Guiding Successful Careers to the Intersection of Basic, Clinical and Community Sciences

Translation of research advances to practices that will improve human health cannot occur without a cadre of well-trained translational and clinical researchers. Until recently, training for these researchers relied on one-on-one instruction by more senior mentors. However, the increasing complexity of biomedical research and the technologies used to carry out this research require a broad range of expertise that is difficult to acquire without structured programs.

To meet this growing need, NCRR's Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) consortium is developing innovative approaches that give researchers the skills they need for successful careers at the intersection of basic, clinical and community sciences. The article that follows in this issue of the *NCRR Reporter* highlights examples of training programs offered at three CTSA institutions and the individuals who have benefited from them, charting their own paths to successful careers. Although clinical and translational researchers face many challenges, the stories you will read in the next few pages demonstrate that these challenges can be overcome with the right infrastructure and resources.

The training programs designed by CTSA grantees incorporate didactic courses, often leading to master's or doctoral degrees; hands-on experiences in the laboratory and clinic; mentorship; and, importantly, exposure to large, interdisciplinary teams. At the same time, these programs give participants sufficient flexibility to embark on individualized career paths, such as research on vaccines, Alzheimer's disease, nutrition or chronic kidney disease.

In addition to providing courses that benefit budding researchers at their own institutions, CTSA grantees are working together as a consortium to leverage the expertise from each site to increase the impact and reach of available programs. Through partnerships, collaborations and connectivity, CTSAs are sharing courses, curricula and best practices — working together to ensure advancements in clinical and translational research and better health options for all.

Barbara Alving, M.D.

Barbara Alving, M.D.
Director, NCRR

INSIDE

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Editor
Joyce McDonald, NCRR

Managing Editors
Lamont Williams
Terry LaMotte
Palladian Partners, Inc.

Publication Design
Palladian Partners, Inc.

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Please send comments and ideas about future articles to:
Office of Communications, NCRR, NIH
One Democracy Plaza
6701 Democracy Blvd., 9th Floor
Bethesda, MD 20892-4874
Telephone: (301) 435-0888
Fax: (301) 480-3558
E-mail: info@ncrr.nih.gov
Web site: www.ncrr.nih.gov

On the Cover:
Translational research involves multidisciplinary research teams. No one knows that better than Joel Perlmutter (center), director of the Brain, Behavior and Performance Unit (BBPU) at the Washington University in St. Louis Institute of Clinical and Translational Sciences — a CTSA consortium member. The BBPU plays a critical role in the translation of basic research findings to patients by providing collaboration, consultation and training for clinical research studies of the nervous system. Here, Perlmutter is shown collaborating with scientists at another CTSA-funded resource, the Human Imaging Unit.

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