

NIAAA NEWSLETTER

FEATURING INFORMATION FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM

FALL 2006 NUMBER 11

Crews to Give Keller Lecture on Nov. 7

Dr. Fulton Crews, Director of the Bowles Center for Alcohol Studies and Professor of Pharmacology and Psychiatry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine, was selected to receive the 2006 Mark Keller Honorary Award. He will lecture on "Mechanisms of Neurodegeneration and Regeneration During Alcohol Addiction and Recovery."



The lecture will take place on November 7, 2006, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., at the Lipssett Amphitheater in the NIH Clinical Center, Bethesda, MD. For details visit www.niaaa.nih.gov.

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NIAAA Committed to Fostering Future Researchers

In his October 5, 2006, Report to the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, NIAAA Director Dr. Ting-Kai Li emphasized that the Institute is "committed to the development of new investigators." The report noted that in FY2006 new investigators received approximately 20 percent of NIAAA's R01 awards for independent research, reflecting an increase of nearly 8 percent over last year.

The data underscore a commitment to fostering "Pathways to Independence," a program that Dr. Li announced in November 2005 to representatives from the Institute's Alcohol Research Training Programs. The plan is a comprehensive strategy to advance multidisciplinary training so that new investigators can more rapidly become self-sustaining alcohol researchers.

In keeping with this strategy, NIAAA's support for training future researchers also has risen. "We've seen an increase

in the number of individual fellowships as well as institutional training grants from a year ago," said Dr. Tom Gentry, leader of NIAAA's cross-disciplinary Centers and Training Team. He presented data on the Institute's training programs at this fall's Council meeting.

At the same meeting, Dr. Judith Arroyo, also with the Centers and Training Team, said NIAAA continues to attract a growing number of applicants for its diversity supplement program. "These awards are aimed at promoting diversity in health sciences research by increasing the number of investigators at all levels of training from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, with disabilities, and from disadvantaged backgrounds," she said.

Looking ahead, the Director's Report noted that FY2007 could see an increase in the number of research career awards with the implementation of the NIAAA K22 Career Transition award and the NIH K99/R00 Pathway to Independence award.

Grantee Wins Presidential Award

NIAAA grantee Dr. Debra Furr-Holden (right, with NIAAA Director Dr. Ting-Kai Li) received a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers from President Bush on July 26. The award provides up to \$500,000 each year over 5 years. NIAAA nominated the PIRE Public Services Research Institute epidemiologist for her study on environmental factors associated with increased violence and exposure to alcohol and other drugs among children in Baltimore neighborhoods.



On September 27, NIAAA hosted a reception for Dr. Furr-Holden in honor of her prestigious award. Dr. Li said, "Such recognition of her work underscores the importance of comprehensive epidemiologic research to help adolescents in high-risk environments."



PERSONNEL NEWS

Dr. Abraham Bautista was named Chief of NIAAA's Extramural Project Review Branch. He previously served at NIH's Center for Scientific Review as Scientific Review Administrator for the NeuroAIDS and AIDS Immunology & Pathogenesis Study Sections. Prior to that he was an independent investigator and core director in the Alcohol Research Center at Louisiana State University Health Science Center, New Orleans, where he was professor of physiology. Dr. Bautista has made noteworthy contributions in the alcohol field through his research and numerous professional and academic appointments.

Jason Lazarow left NIAAA in August to return to teaching science. He joined NIAAA in 2002 to coordinate science education grants and contracts. He assisted other agencies with program development and curriculum review and worked with national and local outreach programs for professional teacher development.

Steve Long, NIAAA Executive Officer, left in September to become Associate Director for Administration at the University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Cancer Center located on the university's medical campus at Baltimore. He worked in the Federal government for 36 years, 28 of them at NIAAA. He became executive officer in 2000, having previously served as budget and planning officer and as director of the former Office of Policy, Legislation, and Public Liaison. From 1988 to 1992 he was director of financial management of what was then the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration. His accomplishments include establishing the national "Research-to-Practice Network" initiative to help State alcohol treatment centers adopt research-based alcoholism treatments. He also launched a college drinking prevention initiative that brought together college presidents, alcohol researchers, and students. The initiative resulted in the publication of a report entitled "A Call to Action:

Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges," and an award-winning Web site. Mr. Long's many awards include the first Seixas Award for Service from the Research Society on Alcoholism and the 2006 NIH Director's Award for Mentoring. He has mentored numerous management interns over the years and has chaired the committee that oversees NIH's Management Intern Program and NIH's participation in the Presidential Management Intern Program.

Robin Kawazoe has been named Acting Executive Officer following Steve Long's departure from NIAAA. She will continue in her position as Acting Deputy Director, NIAAA.

Dr. Denise Russo left NIAAA to join the NIH Office of Extramural Research, where she will be responsible for publication of the *NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts*. She joined NIAAA in 2001 and served several leadership roles, including Coordinator for Research on Women's Health.

Intramural Program Update

Dr. Hee-Yong Kim recently was named chief of a new Laboratory of Molecular Signaling. The new laboratory was established as part of a recent reorganization of the Division of Intramural Clinical and Biological Research (DICBR), which is headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland.

DICBR also created several new research units in existing laboratories. A revised NIAAA organization chart is available at www.niaaa.nih.gov, under the section labeled "About NIAAA."

DICBR Researcher Honored

On May 22, 2006, Dr. Andrew Holmes received the 2005 Young Investigator

Award from the International Behavioral and Neural Genetics Society. The award recognizes the contributions of exceptional young scientists to the field of behavioral and neural genetics.

Dr. Holmes is chief of the Section on Behavioral Science and Genetics in the Laboratory for Integrative Neuroscience in DICBR. His principal area of research interest is studying how stress affects risk for neuropsychiatric disorders, including addictions.



Dr. Holmes (right) holds the award presented by Dr. John Crabbe (left) of Oregon Health and Science University.

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NEW PUBLICATIONS

Alcohol Alert

Health Services Research (No. 69).

This *Alcohol Alert* examines the challenges researchers and clinicians face when translating research findings into practice. It describes how research is influencing treatment of special populations such as adolescents, women, and racial/ethnic minorities and looks at the costs and benefits involved in providing that treatment.



Alcohol Alert (No. 70) highlights selected findings from the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions. It describes the NESARC design then summarizes results from studies that have used the

dataset. Some of the topics include alcohol-related problems, drinking patterns, underage and young adult drinking, comorbidity, drinking and driving, and treatment and recovery.

Alcohol Research & Health

National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions: Selected Findings (Vol. 29, No. 2).

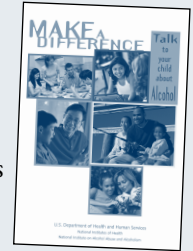
In 2001–2002, NIAAA conducted the first wave of the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC), the largest and most ambitious comorbidity study ever undertaken. This journal issue features information about NESARC, including selected articles from scholarly journals that feature findings based on NESARC data. Other articles provide background on the NESARC



survey and describe how NESARC findings can be put into practice.

Make A Difference: Talk to Your Child About Alcohol

NIAAA has recently updated this popular booklet designed for parents and caregivers of children ages 10 to 14. The revised booklet covers a number of important topics, from strategies for preventing underage alcohol use to recognizing the warning signs of a drinking problem. The latest version incorporates new statistics on underage drinking and represents the current state of research on this topic. Copies of both the English and Spanish brochures are available at www.niaaa.nih.gov.



Visit www.niaaa.nih.gov, or write to: NIAAA, Publications Distribution Center, P.O. Box 10686, Rockville, MD 20849–0686.

Awards

Dr. Ricardo Brown, NIAAA Minority Health and Health Disparities Coordinator, received an NIH Director's Award for exemplary service on the trans-NIH Type 1 Diabetes Research Strategic Plan. Dr. Brown also was selected as a Fellow for the 2007 Class of Leadership of Greater Washington.

Dr. Vivian Faden was honored by the American Psychological Association (APA) as one of three recipients of the APA Meritorious Research Service Commendation. Dr. Faden was honored for "her role in shaping the priorities of the Federal alcohol research effort and her strong and articulate advocacy for the importance of social and behavioral research on alcohol abuse and related problems."

Dr. Robert Freeman received a National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Director's Award for his work on the trans-NIH Child Abuse and Neglect Working Group.

Margaret "Peggy" Murray, Senior Public Health Advisor, was selected to receive a 2006 NIH Merit Honor Award for serving with the NIH Social Work Research Working Group. The group was cited for its outstanding contributions in developing and implementing a trans-NIH program to support research on social work practice and concepts in health.

Blueprint for Neuroscience Awards went to the following Division of Neuroscience and Behavior program staff in recognition of their outstanding

effort and exemplary teamwork as members of various NIH Neuroscience Blueprint Teams:

- Dr. Roger Sorensen (Centers Core Project Team);
- Dr. Lindsey Grandison (Course Development in the Neurobiology of Disease Project Team);
- Dr. Ellen Witt (Blueprint Pediatric MRI Study Project Team);
- Dr. Lisa Neuhold (Neuromouse Project Team); and
- Drs. Lindsey Grandison and Roger Sorensen (Research Training Project Team).

NIAAA Renews Two Large Research Projects

NIAAA recently renewed funding for two separate multicenter programs, one a major neuroscience initiative, the other a large-scale study of alcohol and HIV disease.

Renewal for INIA West Funding

In October, the Western consortium of NIAAA's Integrative Neuroscience Initiative on Alcoholism, known as INIA West, received a 5-year grant totaling \$38 million. The funds are shared among investigators located at primary research centers, including Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California; the University of Texas, Austin; Oregon Health and Science University in Portland; Stanford University and SRI International in Stanford, California; Indiana University Medical Center in Indianapolis; and the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver.

INIA West aims to identify the molecular basis of alcoholism, establishing a platform upon which future treatments can be built. Principal investigator Dr. George F. Koob,

professor at the Scripps Research Institute, said, "Most people in this country drink, yet only some become alcoholics. Why? That's the question we're trying to answer."

INIA also has a separate Eastern consortium focused on characterizing the effects of stress and alcohol on the nervous system. Both groups maintain the independence of individual research teams and yet develop shared resources that would be beyond the reach of any single laboratory.

NIAAA Director Dr. Ting-Kai Li said, "The INIA consortia have become invaluable resources for identifying the neuroadaptive mechanisms that underlie alcohol-related behaviors."

VACS Funding Renewed

Also this fall, NIAAA approved a 5-year, \$13-million award to continue the Veterans Aging Cohort Study

(VACS). The study has enrolled nearly 33,000 HIV-positive veterans and a comparison group of almost 66,000 patients who are not HIV positive. "VACS is one of the largest ongoing observational studies of HIV and the only study to include a matched HIV-negative comparison group. As such, it is uniquely poised to examine the independent effects of alcohol use and abuse, aging, HIV infection, and HIV treatment as well as the interaction between these factors," said the study's principal investigator, Dr. Amy Justice, associate professor of internal medicine at the Yale School of Medicine and Public Health and the VA Connecticut Healthcare System in West Haven.

Dr. Kendall Bryant, NIAAA coordinator for HIV/AIDS-related research and a scientific collaborator with the study, said that findings from the VACS program will help both physicians and people living with HIV to understand how best to optimize their medical care.

Calendar of Events

NIAAA will participate in or exhibit at meetings and conferences listed below. For additional information or updates on these events, consult the sponsoring organization.

NOVEMBER

► November 7

Mark Keller Honorary Lecture

"Mechanisms of Neurodegeneration and Regeneration During Alcohol Addiction and Recovery."

Dr. Fulton Crews, Director of the Bowles Center for Alcohol Studies and Professor of Pharmacology and Psychiatry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine.

Lipsett Amphitheater (Building 10), NIH Campus, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD, Time: 1:30–3:30 p.m.

Program Details: www.niaaa.nih.gov

As a tribute to Mark Keller's contributions to the field of alcohol research, NIAAA has established the Mark Keller Honorary Lecture Series. Each year the series features a lecture by an outstanding alcohol researcher who has made significant and long-term contributions to our understanding of how alcohol affects the body and mind, how we can prevent and treat alcohol abuse and alcoholism, and how today's scientific advancements can provide hope for tomorrow.

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DECEMBER

► December 7–10

American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, 17th Annual Meeting & Symposium

St. Pete Beach, Florida
Contact: www.aaap.org/

FEBRUARY

► February 8

Meeting of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

5635 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD
Contact: Melvin Carter, 301/443-9788; carterm@mail.nih.gov