NIH Working Group Proposes Training Changes

The recommendations of a U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) Working Group on the biomedical research workforce include changes in the programs offered by academic institutions, limits on NIH support for graduate students, and changes in the way graduate students and postdocs are supported. The Working Group, a subcommittee of the Advisory Committee to the NIH Director, was formed in January 2011 by NIH Director Francis Collins to examine the state of the biomedical research workforce and make recommendations to ensure the future competitiveness of the U.S. biomedical research enterprise.

The Biomedical Research Workforce Working Group was co-chaired by Shirley Tilghman and Sally Rockey, NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research, and included ASCB members Leemor Joshua-Tor and Keith Yamamoto. In June 2012, the Working Group sent its report, with a series of recommendations, to Collins for his review and consideration.

Despite low unemployment for biomedical PhDs, the percentage of PhDs who move into tenured or tenure-track positions has declined by 8% since 1993. In contrast, science-related occupations that do not involve the conduct of research or do not require graduate training are seeing increases in employment. According to the Working Group's report, “Despite these changes, graduate training continues to be aimed almost exclusively at preparing people for academic research positions.”

NIH Working Group, continued on page 15

Annual Meeting Travel and Childcare Awards Available

Need help with travel or childcare costs associated with the Annual Meeting? The ASCB offers an array of awards for students, postdocs, and junior faculty. Information and online applications are now available at www.ascb.org/meetings; click on “Travel/Childcare Awards.”

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<tr>
<th>Award Category</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cell Biology Postdoctoral Travel Awards</td>
<td>Up to $300 to cover transportation expenses for cell biology postdocs (ASCB members or member applicants only) at any stage of training and from any country</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biotech Postdoctoral Travel Awards</td>
<td>Up to $300 to cover transportation expenses for postdocs in biotechnology</td>
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<td>Physical Sciences Postdoctoral Travel Awards</td>
<td>Up to $300 to cover transportation expenses for postdocs in the physical sciences</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Up to $400 to cover transportation expenses for doctoral students (ASCB members or member applicants only) at any stage of study and from any country</td>
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Awards, continued on page 6
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Not Just Your PI’s Society Anymore: ASCB Supports Student/Postdoc-Led Local Meetings

Two of ASCB’s most important missions are to promote scientific communication and mentor young scientists. This year, the Society has launched two new initiatives that will further both goals and provide more leadership opportunities for students and postdocs: a graduate student/postdoc-initiated Minisymposium at the Annual Meeting and graduate student/postdoc-led local meetings. The ASCB Annual Meeting has long served as a centerpiece for both communication and mentoring. Continuing this tradition, this year’s Annual Meeting in San Francisco will feature a fabulous smorgasbord of scientific talks and posters as well as opportunities for young scientists to obtain career and scientific advice through panel discussions and career discussion and mentoring roundtables with leading scientists. And for the first time this year, we also solicited ideas for a Minisymposium to be chaired and organized by students/postdocs. Rachel Roberts-Galbraith from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and Curtis Thorne from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, were chosen to lead a Minisymposium on the Cell Biology of Regeneration. We received many applications for this opportunity, so ASCB plans to have more student/postdoc-chaired Minisymposia at the 2013 Annual Meeting.

The second new initiative by ASCB is to fund one-day local meetings organized by students and postdocs. In May ASCB announced a competition for such meetings. We received excellent applications and decided to support eight of them. These upcoming local meetings encompass considerable diversity with regard to both topic and geography (topics, locations, and organizers are listed at the end of this column). And at its recent meeting and leadership retreat, the ASCB Council decided that student/postdoc-organized local meetings are great activities and that ASCB will continue to support and further promote them. This President’s Column is intended to make our membership aware of this new direction and to encourage young scientists to think of ideas for meetings that you would like to see happen in your local communities. ASCB is not just your PI’s Society anymore!

Student/Postdoc-Led Meetings: Sending the Right Message

ASCB views our student and postdoc members as being central to the future of our Society; we need to encourage their initiative and harness their energy. Having students and postdocs take the lead in planning meetings helps them to learn leadership and organization, skills that are critical for their future careers in science or related occupations. They are ready to do more work than pipetting and to make more contributions than producing papers.

Senior scientists often do not provide enough leadership opportunities for the young scientists working in their labs. Sadly, some PIs even discourage activities within the scientific community, believing that they take too much time away from the bench. In reality, however, running a local meeting is a very manageable time commitment, and the time spent is more than compensated for by the great learning experience of starting with an idea and bringing it to fruition. There are other tangible benefits for the organizers. Organizing a meeting brings peer recognition, is a nice addition to a resume, and, perhaps most important, offers the tremendous personal satisfaction of knowing that one has made an important contribution to one’s local scientific community.

Why Local Meetings? Why ASCB?

Local one-day meetings certainly are not a new invention, and many of them are organized by students and postdocs. Local meetings...
Having students and postdocs take the lead in planning meetings helps them to learn leadership and organization, skills that are critical for their future careers in science or related occupations.

The new student/postdoc-led local meetings differ from what ASCB and other societies have offered in the past in that they are “bottom up,” conceived by students and postdocs rather than organized “top down” by a society or PIs.

have a great track record of promoting a sense of local scientific community, fostering camaraderie, providing students and postdocs additional opportunities to present their work, getting people from different local institutions together, and stimulating new contacts and collaborations.

So what can ASCB offer beyond what is already taking place? First, we hope to stimulate more such meetings. By providing funds and announcing application deadlines, we hope to plant seeds for students and postdocs to think about ideas for meetings and reduce the activation barrier for getting started. The magic sauce of these local meeting is the energy of the organizers.

Second, ASCB can offer funds to assist the execution of the event (the recently selected meetings were funded at $1,200–$1,500 each). Funding allows the organizers to invite and pay the travel costs of an outside “keynote speaker” and buy food/refreshments, which are always a magnet for students and postdocs. However, the organizers are free to write a budget plan that will best serve the goals of their meeting. For most local meetings, these funds suffice to pull off a successful event. Beyond the grant, the ASCB office in Bethesda, MD, will work with local organizers to make posters for the event that can be distributed locally. ASCB staff will also email ASCB members in the area near the meeting to make them aware of the event. If the organizers need more funds, ASCB sponsorship and initial funding provides important validation upon which to seek further institutional or company support.

ASCB as well as other scientific societies have sponsored short (a few days’ duration) regional meetings or workshops. While we may sponsor such meetings in the future as well, these meetings are costly and many other organizations (Gordon Research Conferences, Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, Keystone Symposia, etc.) are organizing such meetings. The new student/postdoc-led local meetings differ from what ASCB and other societies have offered in the past in that they are “bottom up,” conceived by students and postdocs rather than organized “top down” by a society or PIs. These bottom-up meetings tend to offer more opportunities for students and postdocs to speak. Furthermore, in an era of tightening grant support, one-day local meetings are a low-cost model for scientific communication, since air travel and hotel costs are minimal. As a result, ASCB can sponsor many student/postdoc-organized meetings for less than the cost of one Society-sponsored regional meeting.

More Local Meetings Coming
We intend to have two submission deadlines each year for local meetings—one in the spring (in May this year) and another in the fall (the next will be announced in late summer 2012). Meetings proposed in the spring would typically take place in the fall, while fall submissions would be for meetings to be held in the fall or following winter/spring (although this is not a strict criterion).

We welcome proposals on a wide range of topics pertaining to basic science and career development, as long as there is clear relevance to the broadly defined field of cell biology. Meetings must involve two or more local research institutions or colleges. We also welcome applications from outside of the United States; in this last round, we funded applications from Jamaica, England, and Canada. The application should come from two to four graduate student or postdoc co-organizers, all of whom must be (or become) members of the ASCB.

The proposal should be short and should include, in up to one page: 1) the topic and goals of the meeting, 2) a proposed or approximate date, 3) the intended audience and institutions to be invited, and 4) a statement of how the meeting will benefit the local community. A tentative outline (up to one page) of the sessions is also required and should include, for example, the number of student/postdoc talks, faculty talks, poster sessions, and breakout discussion groups. The meeting outline does not need to be submitted in final form, but should provide enough information to allow us to understand the proposed event. Our goal is to stimulate new meeting ideas and not co-fund already planned or regularly occurring meetings. Sue Biggins (Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center) and Ben Glick (University of Chicago), who are members of the ASCB Council, will review submitted applications. This spring we funded eight proposals, but we will likely increase this number in the fall and in 2013.
Ideas for the Future
A core strength of the ASCB local meetings is that students and postdocs have the freedom to think of topics that interest them and their communities. However, in addition to accepting “open” proposals, we might occasionally announce a timely call for a student/postdoc-led meeting on a particular topic that represents an important forward-looking direction for cell biology and our Society. The student/postdoc organizers would still have great freedom to plan and organize within that broad topic area. With such initiatives, ASCB can stimulate its membership to think about new scientific directions through the local meetings as well as the Annual Meeting. By interacting with and getting feedback from student/postdoc organizers, we can learn from the scientific and organizational outcomes of such meetings. Student/postdoc organizers might also work together with the ASCB in other ways to benefit our broader membership. For example, news or short reports on the meeting (with the consent of the speakers) might appear in the ASCB Newsletter or in social media. More ambitious but potentially interesting would be for Molecular Biology of the Cell to invite commentaries, perspectives, or meeting reviews from student/postdoc co-organizers and attendees that are based upon the meeting (although the scope could be broader than the content of the meeting itself). And no, PIs would not need to be co-authors, unless they are invited by the organizers and contribute.

It is open territory at this point, so we welcome ideas from the membership on how to develop local student/postdoc-led meetings!

Comments are welcome and should be sent to president@ascb.org.

We welcome proposals on a wide range of topics pertaining to basic science and career development, as long as there is clear relevance to the broadly defined field of cell biology.... We also welcome applications from outside of the United States....

Upcoming Local Meetings, Fall 2012

We Need to Talk: Communicating About the Life Sciences in the 21st Century
University of West Virginia, Morgantown, WV
Organized by Cheston Saunders, Gina Childers, and Beatriz Vienna (all graduate students)

Oxford Fly Retreat
Maison Française, Oxford, UK
Organized by Caroline Fabre (postdoc) and Catarina Vicente (graduate student)

The 2012 METRAPHOLIS: Membrane Trafficking and Polarity Interest Symposium
Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, NY
Organized by Dawn Fernandez (graduate student), Aleksandr Treyer (graduate student), and Ryan Schreiner (postdoc)

Cellular Studies Towards the Development of Translational Research in the Caribbean
University of the West Indies, Jamaica
Organized by Kameka Johnson and Keriayn Smith (both postdocs)

Cell Biology at the Frontier of Collaborative Efforts: A Retreat for Postdoctoral Fellows Focusing on Career Development and Scientific Example
University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, Albuquerque, NM
Organized by Olivia George and Gloriana Trujillo (both postdocs)

Montréal Cell Cycle and Cytoskeleton Meeting
Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
Organized by Jonas Dorn (postdoc), Benjamin Lacroix (postdoc), Chloe van Oostende (postdoc), and Amel Kechad (graduate student)

Appalachian Regional Cell Conference
(Marshall University, Ohio University, University of Kentucky, University of Virginia)
Charleston Area Medical Center, Charleston, WV
Organized by Danielle Shepherd, Alena Smith, Yanrong Qian, and Mary Allison Wolf (all graduate students)

Southern Science Symposium: Cell Biology and Careers
Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Puerto Rico
Organized by Elinette Albino-Rodriguez, Abigail Ruiz-Rivera, Maricelly Santiago Ortiz, and Viviana Vázquez Rivera (all graduate students)
Did You Know…?

July 30 is the regular abstract submission deadline (for Minisymposium or poster presentation) for this year’s ASCB Annual Meeting, to be held December 15–19, 2012, in San Francisco, CA.

- Sponsorship of abstracts is required.
- Any current regular, postdoctoral, or emeritus ASCB member or member applicant may sponsor TWO abstracts. These abstracts can be his or her own or can be abstracts submitted by other people.
- Any current student member or student member applicant may sponsor only ONE abstract, and this abstract can be his or her own abstract only.

Are there nonmembers in your lab who want to submit abstracts? Now is the time to encourage them to join ASCB. Not only will they be able to sponsor their own abstract, but they will be eligible for the discounted member-only registration rate. For more information on how to apply, go to www.ascb.org and click on “Membership.”

Awards, continued from page 1

Undergraduate Travel Awards—Up to $300 to cover transportation expenses for undergraduate and master’s degree students from any country (ASCB members or member applicants only)

Faculty Travel Awards—Up to $500 to cover expenses for primarily undergraduate faculty members, with preference to those who are beginning their careers and/or those who demonstrate financial need (ASCB members or member applicants only)


Awards for Underrepresented Minorities

Minorities Affairs Committee (MAC) Travel Awards—Up to $1,800 to cover meeting expenses (transportation, housing, meals, poster expenses, and meeting registration), supported by a Minority Access to Research Careers grant from the National Institute for General Medical Sciences and by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund

Undergraduate students, predoctoral (graduate) students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty (assistant professor or equivalent) who meet the ethnicity and residence requirements, are presenting an abstract at the ASCB Annual Meeting, and who are currently conducting research in topics related to cell biology and related fields are eligible to apply for a MAC Travel Award. Current and past MAC awardees (Linkage Fellows and Visiting Professors) as well as those who are not able to submit an abstract are also encouraged to apply.


If funding is still available, MAC travel award applications may be accepted after the deadline.

Childcare Awards

The ASCB Women in Cell Biology (WICB) Committee, with funding from the Nature Publishing Group, is accepting applications for support to help offset the cost of childcare, enabling scientists with dependent children to attend the ASCB Annual Meeting. Applicants must be an ASCB member (or member applicant) and must be presenting a talk or poster at the meeting. Awards will be in the form of reimbursement of qualified expenses up to the designated limit, to be remitted at the ASCB Annual Meeting. Only one parent of a child or children may apply. Priority will be given to students and early-stage scientists.


Information and online applications are now available at www.ascb.org/meetings; click on “Travel/Childcare Awards.”
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Marianne Bronner, Albert Billings Ruddock Chair in Biology, Division of Biology, California Institute of Technology, was named by the ASCB’s Women in Cell Biology (WICB) Committee to receive the 2012 WICB Senior Award. Sophie G. Martin, Associate Professor, Department of Fundamental Microbiology, University of Lausanne, Switzerland, will receive the WICB Junior Award.

The WICB Senior Award is presented to a woman or man in a later career stage (generally full professor or equivalent) and recognizes outstanding scientific achievements coupled with a long-standing record of support for women in science and of mentorship of both men and women in scientific careers. Bronner exemplifies these accomplishments. She is being honored for her many discoveries in the areas of early neural development, neural crest biology, craniofacial development, gene regulatory networks, and evolutionary biology. Using her deep understanding of cell and developmental biology, she sees the big picture and is able to translate the relevance of her work to drive the field in new directions. Bronner is esteemed in the international scientific community for her scholarly science, high-impact research discoveries, exceptional commitment to education and training, and truly inspiring mentoring of women and men. She is extensively involved in women’s and minority issues and has served on the Women’s Center Advisory Committee at the California Institute of Technology and the Committee on Affirmative Action at the University of California, Irvine. In addition, she has taught courses at all levels from undergraduate to graduate to postgraduate and has received awards for her educational excellence.

The WICB Junior Award recognizes a woman in an early stage of her career (generally less than five years in an independent position) who is making exceptional scientific contributions to cell biology, who is developing a strong independent research program, and who exhibits the potential for continuing a high level of scientific endeavor and leadership. Martin is already an established international leader in the study of cell polarity and cell cycle regulation and was identified as one of the best yeast geneticists of her generation. She received a four-year career development award from the Swiss National Science Foundation at the Centre for Integrative Genomics and funding for her lab from Roche, the Human Frontier Science Program, and the European Research Council. Martin’s group has published a series of ground-breaking papers in *Molecular Biology of the Cell, Nature, Current Biology*, and *Cell* in a remarkably short time, during which she also gave birth to two children. She was given a European Molecular Biology Organization Young Investigator Award in 2010 and was then promoted to associate professor (with tenure) at the University of Lausanne. Her research makes use of fission yeast to address how a cell acquires and maintains cell polarity and how this process is linked with cell proliferation.

The awards will be presented at the WICB Awards and Mentoring Theater event on Sunday, December 16, at 2:30 pm, at the 2012 ASCB Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

—Cheryl Lehr, Executive Assistant/Office Manager and Sandra Masur, Chair, Women in Cell Biology Committee

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**Yamamoto Selected to Receive Public Service Award**

The ASCB Public Policy Committee (PPC) has selected long-time ASCB member Keith Yamamoto, University of California, San Francisco, to receive its 2012 ASCB Public Service Award. The award will be presented at the ASCB Annual Meeting in December.

If there is an issue in the life science community that needs to be addressed and a committee has been formed to tackle it, Keith Yamamoto is probably on the committee and may chair it. In his message of invitation, PPC chair Doug Koshland referred to Yamamoto’s “omnipresence of … effort, vision, and goodwill in science policy both in the past and today.”

—Kevin M. Wilson
Iain Cheeseman and Gia Voeltz have been named the 2012 ASCB Early Career Life Scientist Awardees. Cheeseman is at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research and is an assistant professor of Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Voeltz is an assistant professor in the Department of Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Cheeseman was selected because of his exceptional work in the fields of kinetochore assembly, chromosome segregation, and the mechanism of mitosis. Prior to completing his PhD, he defined substrates of the Aurora B kinase whose phosphorylation dissolves incorrect kinetochore–microtubule attachments. As a postdoc, he utilized proteomic methods to identify a widely conserved network of 10 interacting kinetochore proteins. The proteomic tags that Cheeseman developed as a postdoc have been distributed worldwide and used in many different research areas in cell biology. Currently, his lab is attempting to define the mechanisms by which these kinetochore proteins act to generate an integrated microtubule binding interface. He also uses combined cell biological and biochemical approaches to analyze the contributions of this binding interface to the proper assembly and function of the kinetochore. He is investigating the behavior and DNA-binding properties of the microtubule binding interface and the way that it is targeted to kinetochores in human cells. Cheeseman’s students appreciate his skill at conveying concepts, his genuine interest in them and desire for them to master the material, and his humor.

Voeltz was selected because of her path-breaking work in reticulons. As a graduate student, she studied the regulation of mRNA deadenylation and decay. During her postdoc, she identified the first class of integral membrane proteins (the Reticulons and Dp1/Yop1) that regulate the structure of the tubular endoplasmic reticulum (ER), both in vitro and in vivo, in yeast and mammalian cells. This research made a major impact in the field. Currently, her lab is exploring how integral membrane-shaping proteins, the cytoskeleton, and interorganelle contacts together regulate the structure of the peripheral ER. Voeltz has also shown unusual skill and commitment in teaching cell biology and mentoring the students in her lab.

The ASCB Early Career Awards will be presented in Minisymposia at the 2012 ASCB Annual Meeting in San Francisco. The ASCB congratulates Cheeseman and Voeltz, and thanks the Selection Committee.

—Cheryl Lehr, Executive Assistant/Office Manager

Thomas W. Marshall, of the Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah, was named by the Molecular Biology of the Cell (MBoC) Editorial Board as recipient of the 21st annual MBoC Paper of the Year Award. As a postdoc in Jody Rosenblatt’s lab, Marshall was first author of the article “The tumor suppressor adenomatous polyposis coli controls the direction in which a cell extrudes from an epithelium” (Mol. Biol. Cell 22, 3962–3970).

“This is an important and surprising paper,” said Alpha Yap, the MBoC Associate Editor who served as monitoring editor for the manuscript. “Epithelial cells are able to extrude abnormal neighboring cells, and whether those abnormal cells are extruded apically or basally is potentially important. The authors have identified APC [adenomatous polyposis coli] as controlling apical extrusion by determining the site for cortical recruitment of microtubules. So that’s a new role for this well-studied tumor suppressor. But what’s really surprising is that the impact of APC occurs in the presumptive extruded cell, which then influences the recruitment of microtubules and actomyosin in the surrounding cells that will drive extrusion. I think this work has immediate implications for understanding both the cell biology of cell extrusion and how APC dysfunction promotes tumorigenesis.”

Marshall will present his research at a Minisymposium at the ASCB Annual Meeting in San Francisco this December. The MBoC Paper of the Year is selected by the Editorial Board from among papers published in the journal each year between June and May that have a postdoc or student as the first author.

—W. Mark Leader
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Dual-Career Support: A Viable Solution

The so-called “trailing spouse” (or accompanying partner) issue is a major worry both for professionals who are considering relocating and for employers who are concerned with retention after the expense of recruitment. Spousal employment challenges and the inability of families to assimilate into their new surroundings are among the major reasons why recruited employees leave their new positions.

An innovative approach to address these issues was designed by Tech Valley Connect (TVC) to provide multiple services to newly relocated professionals and their families in the New York Capital Region near Albany. Piloted in July of 2009 at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute as an innovative way to address retention, TVC is a not-for-profit consortium of area employers (academic, healthcare, high-tech, corporate, nonprofit, and more) and has become a strong part of the Capital Region infrastructure. The initiative has helped to bolster local economies while increasing retention rates for area employers.

The TVC program provides relocated professionals, including many academic scientists, with dual-career support as well as helping them with family assimilation and cultural transitions. Participation in the program begins when an employer who is a member of the consortium (e.g., Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, State University of New York at Albany) refers a new hire and his or her family to TVC. Once the family has made contact, an in-depth evaluation session is scheduled in which the family speaks confidentially with a coordinator, who will be assigned to the family for one year.

Helping a Spouse or Partner to Find Employment

A professional who is recruited from outside the region is often concerned about finding appropriate employment for his or her spouse or partner. TVC’s spouse/partner employment program takes a unique approach to the problem: Its coordinators set up informational networking interviews for the spouse or partner with decision makers from within the consortium who are in the spouse/partner’s discipline.

These informational interviews are not job interviews—they are opportunities to have access to management and begin the process of building a substantive professional network. The conversation is more specific and the dynamic of the meeting is different than they would be in a formal interview. And these face-to-face meetings have a more powerful impact than emailing CVs and responding to job postings. A spouse or partner meets professionals who may have inside knowledge about local colleagues who are looking for quality candidates or may be able to introduce them to others in their field, broadening the spouse’s or partner’s web of contacts. Based on data from the National Bureau of Labor Statistics, over 70% of employed people got their jobs through some form of networking. We believe this rate is higher among professionals, which may be related to that population being the most difficult to retain.

Helping Families to Assimilate

To help with family assimilation, a coordinator conducts a thorough evaluation of the family...
The TVC coordinator becomes a confidential sounding board, steering family members toward resources that will ultimately enhance their quality of life.

Foreign nationals face even harder challenges when relocating to the United States. For example, one of our foreign national clients had no idea how to use an American oven. Another had limited language skills and could not figure out how to put gas in her car. And a third didn’t think she could have children over to her house because she had heard “Americans all sue one another.”

In response to such problems, TVC is launching a Cultural Transition Program to help assimilate people to U.S. culture, customs, and traditions. We have sought partnerships with area groups associated with the international sector to create well-rounded and educational workshops. Staff has been certified in Cross Cultural Competence at the Interchange Institute in Boston, MA. TVC workshops will cover a comprehensive agenda to include topics such as education, healthcare, banking, government, and households. The program is set to start in July in a pilot phase and will launch in earnest in September.

We project that our Cultural Transition Program will become central to our region’s infrastructure as we increase efforts to accommodate a more sophisticated international population. Being able to offer understanding and a means to learn about U.S. culture that includes focused guidance to local resources can give families the tools they need to transition successfully. Giving employees a good quality of life is essential when striving for retention.

Measuring Success
Professionals and top executives typically are the most expensive hires for employers and at the most risk for voluntary turnover. The cost to an employer is astronomical when it does not retain its new hire: between two to determine the members’ specific needs and what resources they require. A customized portfolio is prepared for each family connecting them to qualified, vetted resources within the Capital Region. TVC coordinators are equipped to offer newcomers suggestions for resources such as trusted mechanics, electricians, and house painters as well as physicians, dentists, veterinarians, and specialty and ethnic grocery stores.

The coordinator attempts to engage the family in social events, local venues, and volunteer opportunities to help assimilate them into their new surroundings. Local school districts have identified student leaders who can help incoming students integrate into the school’s population and culture. Entertainment venues such as theaters and concert halls have sponsored free tickets to productions with a “meet and greet” beforehand for families to engage with one another. The attendees include newcomers to the area as well as established professionals.

The TVC coordinator becomes a confidential sounding board, steering family members toward resources that will ultimately enhance their quality of life. Integrating new people into a local economy is critical in terms of economic development. TVC is a trusted conduit for people who arrive in the Capital Region not knowing where to start.

Helping Foreign Nationals Understand U.S. Culture
Foreign nationals face even harder challenges when relocating to the United States. For example, one of our foreign national clients had no idea how to use an American oven. Another had limited language skills and could not figure out how to put gas in her car. And a third didn’t think she could have children over to her house because she had heard “Americans all sue one another.”

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and five times the salary of the original hire, depending on the factors involved with the recruitment. In contrast, TVC charges less than 4% of what it would cost to lose an employee. There are discounted packages for volume referrals. Thus employers are willing to broaden their scope beyond focusing resources on the recruitment end and are now looking to invest in retention.

TVC’s metric for success is retention of the original hire for at least three years. According to the National Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average national voluntary turnover rate in 2011 was 9.1%.

TVC has been operating for three years (as of July 2012) and as an independent not-for-profit organization for two years. In that period, 75 families have been referred to the program and none of the original hires has left his or her position. Although this number is not a representative sample size yet, we say we are currently operating under our target of 3% voluntary turnover per year. Statistically, we know we will lose people eventually, but after three years our record is certainly a phenomenal testament to TVC’s approach.

The TVC model has been tested in a community with large employers from varying sectors (higher education, healthcare, high tech; corporate and government) and found highly effective. Even after 10 years, if we are reducing employee turnover by roughly 60% we will have kept significant dollars not only within the region, but within the businesses themselves. In addition, because TVC is the only organization in the country right now with a regional commitment from employers to spousal employment, it is helping to distinguish the Capital region from competing regions in attracting new businesses and talent. The membership has grown from 12 institutions in the pilot phase to 45 members to date.

If TVC’s noteworthy success in reducing voluntary turnover continues, it will have made significant strides in addressing the dual-career issue. And when a heavily recruited professional considers whether his or her spouse/partner will have meaningful opportunities for employment, employers in the Capital Region will have the advantage of being able to offer a structured organization that attends to these specific needs over the course of one year.

—Angela McNerney, Tech Valley Connect, Inc.

References


New ASCB Member Benefit: One-on-One CV Review

Need some help with a cover letter, CV, resume, statement of teaching philosophy, or other document for the next step in your career? Members of the ASCB Education Committee are willing to help. Just fill out a short form, and we’ll put you in touch with the right reviewer. Then the two of you can decide which digital collaboration tool to use (email, Google Docs, Skype, Wikispaces, etc.). You must be an ASCB member to take advantage of this new service.

—Thea Clarke
One Small Step...

With the support of Senate Democrats, the FY13 budget for the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) emerged from an appropriations subcommittee with a slight increase, but in the full committee Democrats defeated a Republican proposal for a larger increase.

On June 12, the Senate Labor, Health & Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee approved its version of the FY13 budget for the departments it oversees. That budget includes funding for the NIH.

The bill includes $30.723 billion for the NIH, an increase of $100 million, or 0.32%, above the FY12 NIH budget. While this increase is slight, it is, at least, an increase.

The bill was approved by a vote of 10 to 7, with all Democrats on the panel voting for the bill and all Republicans opposing the bill. Republican opposition centered on the portions of the bill that fund the Affordable Care Act, sometimes referred to as ObamaCare.

Senate Democrats Vote Against NIH Funding Increase

Later that week, the full Senate Appropriations Committee met and approved the work of the subcommittee. Before approving the funding bill, however, the committee rejected, on an essentially party line vote, an amendment by Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) that would have increased the NIH FY13 budget by $1.2 billion to $32 billion. All 16 Democrats on the committee voted against the funding increase for the NIH. The ASCB strongly supports an increase for the NIH to $32 billion in FY13.

The Moran amendment would have increased the funding for the NIH by reducing funding for all other programs in the bill. In his remarks, Senator Moran said that the NIH was “such an important priority” that it warranted the cuts to other vital programs within the bill. In particular, Moran said that “flat funding discourages the next generation” of scientists from even entering the field of research.

During committee debate on the Moran amendment, long-time NIH supporter Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) said the 0.32% increase included in the FY13 appropriations bill is “enough” for NIH basic research. In opposing the amendment, Harkin reminded his Appropriations Committee colleagues that the name of the NIH is the National Institutes of Health, not the National Institutes of Basic Research.

In arguing for his amendment, Senator Moran made the point that the cuts to other individual programs in the bill, including education, job training, and health programs, would be minor. Those opposing the amendment also opposed setting a precedent of funding one program through across-the-board cuts to other programs.

As of press time, the House of Representatives’ Appropriations Committee had yet to approve its version of the Departments of Labor, Health & Human Services, and Education funding bill. Once the Senate and House each passes its own version of the funding bill, expect everything to stop until after the election.

—Kevin M. Wilson

Got Questions?

Labby has answers. ASCB’s popular columnist will select career-related questions for publication and thoughtful response in the ASCB Newsletter. Confidentiality guaranteed if requested. Write us at labby@ascb.org.
Eight members of the ASCB Council and three ASCB postdoc members spent June 7, 2012, on Capitol Hill meeting with Senators, members of Congress, and their staffs. ASCB Council members Sue Biggins, Don Cleveland, Ray Deshaies, Kathy Green, Mark Peifer, JoAnn Trejo, Ron Vale, and Yixian Zheng were joined by postdocs Charles Easley, Audrey Howell, and Jason MacGurn.

The ASCB members had 19 meetings throughout the day with congressional offices representing California, Illinois, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Washington. Along with meeting with congressional staff, ASCB members also met with Representative Brian Bilbray (R-CA), Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), and Representative Tim Murphy (R-PA). ASCB members were joined by ASCB Accounting Assistant Stella Bermejo, ASCB Senior Director of Finance & Administration Cynthia Godes, Coalition for the Life Sciences Director Lynn Marquis, and ASCB Director of Public Policy Kevin Wilson.

As they have done in the past, the ASCB members told Congress about the important role basic research plays in the development of treatments and cures for disease. At the same time, research funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Science Foundation has a considerable economic impact on the United States. In their meetings, Council members heard strong support for increasing funding for the NIH within the confines of a shrinking federal budget.

—Kevin M. Wilson

NIH Working Group, continued from page 1

With these facts in mind, the Working Group made several recommendations for changes to graduate training programs. These recommendations include:

- Institutions should develop training programs for nonacademic positions.
- Institutions should be encouraged to develop other degree programs for those who are interested in science but not in life at the bench.
- The NIH should cap the number of years a graduate student can be supported by NIH funds. The report recommends an institutional average of five years and an individual limit of six years of NIH support.
- The number of graduate students supported by training grants should be increased relative to the number supported by Research Project Grants (RPGs).

Despite a lack of data on the number and length of training of postdoctoral researchers in the United States, the Working Group felt that the postdoc experience should be considered an extension of the training period. For that and other reasons the Working Group’s proposals for postdoctoral researchers include:

- The NIH should increase the proportion of postdocs supported by training grants and fellowships and reduce the number supported by RPGs.
- Stipends for the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards (NRSA) should start at $42,000 and then be indexed for inflation.

- NRSA stipend levels should increase with each year of the postdoctoral experience by 4% for the second and third years and 6% for years four through seven.
- The NIH should adjust its policies and require that institutional policies be adjusted to require that postdocs receive employment-related benefits that are comparable to other institution employees.
- NIH should double the number of Pathways to Independence awards, which provide up to five years of support for postdocs.

The Working Group Report also addresses other areas, including possible use of staff scientists and a reduction in “soft money” positions. In the report, the Working Group said, “The growth in ‘soft money’ positions in academic medical schools, in which investigators are required to raise 100% of their salaries and research funds, has contributed to the negative views of a career in biomedical science, and has had the additional consequence of encouraging institutions to expand their physical space without making additional long term commitments to faculty.”

To read the complete Biomedical Research Workforce Working Group report or review additional data go to http://acd.od.nih.gov/bwf.htm.

—Kevin M. Wilson
Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual has always been the one indispensable molecular biology laboratory manual for protocols and techniques. The fourth edition of this classic manual preserves the detail and clarity of previous editions as well as the theoretical and historical underpinnings of the techniques presented. Ten original core chapters reflect developments and innovation in standard techniques and introduce new cutting-edge protocols. Twelve entirely new chapters are devoted to the most exciting current research strategies, including epigenetic analysis, RNA interference, genome sequencing, and bioinformatics. This manual is essential for both the inexperienced and the advanced user.

2012, 2,028 pp., illus., appendices, index
Cloth (three-volume set) $475
Paperback (three-volume set) $365

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It’s a big name, but the University of Texas of the Permian Basin (UTPB) is named for a vast geological feature, the sprawling 300 million-year-old sedimentary formation, rich in oil and natural gas, that undergirds west Texas. Yet UTPB in Odessa is the smallest branch of the University of Texas system, with 4,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Forty-eight percent are Latino, making UTPB officially a “Hispanic-serving institution.”

Small, minority-serving, and in Texas, UTPB was exactly what Tracie Gibson was looking for in the fall of 2007. She went to Odessa to teach molecular biology, research retroviral infection mechanisms, and mentor a new generation of minority students. They would be bright, ambitious, and as clueless about the profession of science as Gibson had been 20 years before.

As an African-American woman teaching biology on a campus that is only 5% black, Gibson stands out in Odessa, says Renato Aguilera, who is at the University of Texas, El Paso, a campus five times larger than UTPB. “Tracie is a beacon in the middle of that university because it’s so little and because she’s a big personality. It’s a perfect match.”

Aguilera chairs ASCB’s Minorities Affairs Committee (MAC), which selected Gibson in 2010 as a Linkage Fellow in this National Science Foundation–funded program to promote undergraduate interest in cell biology. This spring Gibson was also named a MAC Visiting Professor through the Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) program of the National Institutes of Health/National Institute of General Medical Sciences, which will fund Gibson’s summer research collaboration with Steven R. Goodman at the Upstate Medical University, State University of New York in Syracuse.

Last September, Gibson used her Linkage grant to organize UTPB’s first-ever “STEM Day,” a celebration of the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, complete with a keynote address, contingents from nearby community colleges, and a student poster session. Aguilera was the keynote speaker. He came away dazzled by the enthusiasm of Gibson’s own students. “It was a blast to meet them,” says Aguilera. “They were just so eager, so genuine. As an educator, you live to see that sparkle in students.”

In the Right Place
That’s the beauty of a small campus, says Aguilera, especially for minority students with some interest in science. “Having the right person there for them is incredibly important,” he says. And Gibson is that person at UTPB, well versed in research, an energetic teacher, and a one-of-a-kind role model, says Aguilera, for minority and nonminority students. “I felt like saying to her, ‘I am so glad that you are here for these kids.’”

“I can’t tell you enough about Tracie,” says Juan E. González, a microbiologist at the University of Texas, Dallas, who knows Gibson through the UT’s system-wide Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) mentoring program for undergraduates. “She’s a fantastic human being, a first-class researcher, and someone who is always being nominated for Teacher of the Year awards. She makes me feel bad because I don’t do enough.”

For minority scientists, mentoring can be both invigorating and a burden, according to González. “I run a research lab but like all minority members, I have additional requirements and responsibilities,” he explains. “We were all mentored by other people. We feel it’s our obligation to pay back in one way or another. Many of us juggle a full research lab with these other responsibilities. Tracie had told me that she was mentored by people who gave her the opportunity to get in.”

Talk to successful minority scientists, says González, and they all have similar stories of struggling to catch up or to stay afloat. “But there was always somebody out there who gave them the chance to prove themselves,” says González.

Tracie Gibson is from Detroit, the city itself, she insists, not the suburbs. She grew up in a no-nonsense, two-parent household with two older siblings. Her father, Rudolph Gibson, was a high school dropout from Georgia, and her mother, Betty Gibson, a high school graduate from Houston. They were both big on education and expected results. The Gibson kids, who were not Catholic, went to Catholic schools. Her father worked on the assembly line at Ford. “You know that old movie Coalminer’s Daughter? Well, I’m the autoworker’s daughter,” Gibson says.
A Death in the Family
When she was 15, her father died of leukemia. “I just couldn't understand why the doctors couldn't save my father. They had all this knowledge. Why couldn't they save him?” Gibson vowed to become a doctor and cure cancer. Her father's death also left the family reeling financially, eventually losing their house and the ability to pay school tuition. But Gibson kept her grades up in public high school, did well on tests, and went off to the University of Michigan, intent on pursuing a pre-med curriculum. Ann Arbor was a shock. The fall she enrolled, a white student read out of a racist joke book over the campus radio station. Angry protests by black students set off a sullen white backlash at their “oversensitivity.” Gibson wanted out. “In my mind, I decided that I would go to the school that was the nicest to me.” She found it by mistake. Gibson looked up “Cornell,” found two, the large university in upstate New York and the small liberal arts college in Mt. Vernon, IA, wherever that might be. Near Cedar Rapids came the answer, along with a friendly invitation to visit. Small, isolated, and nearly all white, Cornell College was home to Robert Black, a field ecologist who studied zooplankton predation rates. Black taught a laundry list of biology courses as well as serving as the assistant men's basketball coach. With 1,100 students, Cornell was that kind of place. Black listened quietly to Gibson’s teen dreams of medicine and her equal horror of blood and needles before suggesting that she join his zooplankton lab. “It was not so much the research project itself but the whole mentor–mentee relationship,” says Gibson.

In my last year, Dr. Black started challenging me. ‘What are you going to do next? You don't sound like you want to go to medical school. I'll cut a deal with you.’ He proposed a series of lunches with friends who had MDs and friends who had PhDs. Over lunch, Gibson could decide which kind of person she was. “And I’ll pay for lunch,” Black said. Over seven lunches, the PhDs swept the field of dreams, Gibson recalls. “Dr. Black was the ideal professor and the more I talked to his friends, the more I thought a PhD was closer to what I wanted to be. By then I wanted to be like Dr. Black.”

Her mentor was not naïve, Gibson recalls. “He was the first person to introduce me to the concept that there are not a lot of people of color in the sciences. He told me, ‘Going into biology, you may not see a lot of people like you.’ But he was with me, every step of the way.” He prepped her for interviews, pushed her to improve her poster talk, and made sure she had the right courses on her transcript. As Gibson narrowed her list of schools, Black worked the academic grapevine, trying to gauge how programs handled women, minorities, and outgoing personalities like Gibson. “We decided that Purdue was the best school for me,” Gibson recalls.

Death of a Mentor
Only after becoming a mentor herself did Gibson fully grasp the blend of tact, pressure, and skill that Black had employed in the making of “her” choice. It came to her again last January with the sudden news that Bob Black had died, aged 61, in Mt. Vernon. “I’m sure he impacted the lives of many other students, but Dr. Black was everything to me,” she adds quietly.

Purdue turned out to be a very good school for her, especially after David Asai took her into his *Tetrahymena*- and *Paramecium*-based lab that studied dynein and microtubules. There she did molecular biology research for the first time, analyzing the heavy chains of ciliary outer arm dynein. “His people in the lab were incredibly helpful,” she remembers. “It was just a great nurturing atmosphere.” But above all else, she found in Asai another quiet mentor who listened but pushed, sometimes at the same time. “Dr. Asai made me believe in me by challenging me,” she recalls. “He believed in me when I did not believe in myself as a graduate student.”

Asai kept careful watch over her postdoc search as she finished up her PhD in 2000. After she interviewed with John A.T. Young at Harvard Medical School (HMS), Gibson recalls, “Dr. Asai actually pulled a Dr. Black moment. He spoke with JY on the phone after...
I’d interviewed and then Dr. Asai came into the lab and told me I was doing a postdoc with JY. I have no clue what they discussed. I just know what happened on my end. I knew that JY’s lab would be best for me.”

The position took her on a cross-country lab odyssey. When she interviewed, Young was at HMS in Boston. By the time Gibson joined the lab, Young had moved to the University of Wisconsin, Madison. By the time she finished her postdoc in 2005, Young was at the Salk Institute in La Jolla. The way retroviruses subvert the host’s cytoskeleton fascinated Gibson even if she grew tired of the high-stakes competitiveness surrounding HIV research. In California, she was also thinking more and more about Dr. Black. “It came to me as a revelation. I needed to be him. I needed to be at a smaller institution. I needed to teach. And so I had to tell JY my revelation.”

Avoiding “PowerPoint Coma”
If Gibson was going to teach, she needed classroom practice. An instructor’s post opened in her old department at Purdue and Gibson jumped at the chance. “My first year, oh my god, it was crazy. It was the hardest thing I ever did. I was trained to be a research scientist. I was not trained to be a teacher.” Smarting from bad reviews, Gibson sought out Purdue’s professional development program for faculty. “That’s where I learned to be an effective educator. They recorded us teaching and that’s how I learned to avoid the ‘PowerPoint coma,’ how to deliver a message, and how to bring it down to the students’ level.”

In 2007, Gibson followed up on an ad in the Chronicle of Higher Education. She knew and loved Texas through frequent childhood visits to her mother’s extended family in the Houston area. But Odessa is not Houston. When Gibson arrived, she was shocked to learn that the local Ector County Independent School District (ECISD) system was under a federal court desegregation order, the result of a lawsuit that had dragged on since 1970. “A desegregation order? In 2008? What was this? I saw a problem and my immediate reaction is always, how can I be part of the solution?” Gibson promptly volunteered and was appointed by the ECISD School Board to serve on the court’s advisory Tri-Ethnic Commission. The Ector County desegregation case was finally settled in 2010, but Gibson remains on the advisory board. The high school dropout rate for minority students is still alarmingly high, she says. “That’s just not acceptable.”

Gibson has made a home for herself and her cat, CJ, in Odessa. Gibson is very active in her local church, especially in organizing women’s programs. She has a circle of buddies, who drag her into new things, most recently, to a local movie theater to see grand opera. Gibson says she was knocked out by the HD transmissions from the Metropolitan Opera and sees nothing unusual about moving to Odessa to discover opera in New York.

But her greatest interests and efforts are centered around the UTPB campus, where Gibson is widely known for her colorful classroom style and her retrovirus research lab, plus the high-volume music she plays in both locations to elevate the mood. “Most other labs I’d seen were really quiet,” reports Chidinma Nwankwo, a senior of Nigerian origin who grew up in Dallas. “It didn’t look like they were having fun. Dr. Gibson makes it fun while you learn and while you get your work done.”

Gibson also made a lab seem safe enough to enter, says Nwankwo. “Growing up, I never pictured myself working in a lab. I knew that it’s not the way it looks on TV like in CSI, but I was nervous.” She was especially fearful about the human retrovirus, HTLV-1, that Gibson uses to probe the role of cytoplasmic dynein in viral transport. “When people aren’t informed about what a lab is working on, they assume it’s dangerous and fear getting too close.”

Learn As You Lab
“Dr. Gibson has been the biggest single influence in my whole academic life,” reports Sara Ontiveroz, a senior from Odessa. “I always thought that you had to have some kind of previous knowledge before you could come into a research lab. But I found out that it’s more of a learning process. Along the way, you will eventually gain the background you need to do your work.”

Both seniors are applying to grad school in biology. Both are following Gibson’s directions on taking the GREs, buffing their transcripts, and compiling research resumes. Thanks to Gibson, both gained experience on poster presentation, starting with the on-campus STEM event in Odessa and the statewide LSAMP student research seminar in Arlington, TX. It all culminated at what Nwankwo calls “the big adult science fair,” the 2011 ASCB Annual Meeting. Without their small meeting experience, they would have been hopelessly intimidated in Denver, says Ontiveroz.

As it was, Gibson warned them that national experts on dynein would be scrutinizing their

“Most other labs I’d seen were really quiet,” reports Chidinma Nwankwo, a senior of Nigerian origin who grew up in Dallas. “It didn’t look like they were having fun. Dr. Gibson makes it fun while you learn and while you get your work done.”

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posters at ASCB. They had to know their stuff cold. “There was this one man in particular who Dr. Gibson warned me might come by,” Ontiveroz remembers. “He wasn’t as intimidating as Dr. Gibson said before, but I guess it was better to be prepared. He was just real interested in what I did, thank goodness.”

Cell biology opened other vistas for Ontiveroz. Denver was her first trip from west Texas into snow country. “We hardly ever get any snow in this area. But whenever we went out, it was snowing. Just to see snow, it was awesome.”

A successful poster presentation, a first time snowstorm in a new city, a complex lab procedure, these are milestones of a successful mentoring process. “Tracie’s always been so positively influenced by a few mentors in her life,” says Asai, her Purdue thesis advisor who is now director of precollege and undergraduate education for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. “I think that would be something she’d always aspired to—to be a good mentor to students.”

But Asai also serves on ASCB’s MAC, which has struggled for years to increase diversity in the scientific workforce through programs like the MAC Linkage Fellows, the MAC Visiting Professorships, and the undergrad MAC travel awards for the Annual Meeting. “It’s a long road,” says Asai, “as we work on developing all the talent that we have in our country.”

The MAC programs are good for individuals, both scientists and would-be scientists, but also vital for American science, Asai believes. “Good for her. Good for us, I say. It’s a long road because we don’t have a million Linkage Fellows, just a handful.” But one of them is Tracie Gibson, adds Asai. “That’s something the Society should be proud of.”

—John Fleischman

New Media and Old, PIC Needs Outreach Help

ASCB’s Public Information Committee (PIC) needs volunteers for a working group of Associates to screen abstracts for its annual press book and to “CellTweet” about breaking discoveries. “PIC’s original mandate was to spread the word about our science through the traditional news media,” says PIC Chair Simon Atkinson. “We still do that with our press book for journalists at the Annual Meeting. But PIC is expanding into social media like Twitter to take cell biology directly to the public. That’s why we need more PIC Associates.”

The press book features PIC’s “Novel & Newsworthy” stories based on abstracts selected from among the hundreds submitted for the Annual Meeting, Atkinson explains. To plow through the abstracts and winnow them down to those important or intriguing enough to appeal to journalists requires panels of screeners. “We couldn’t do it so thoroughly without our PIC Associates,” says Atkinson.

PIC has also started “CellTweets,” a Twitter feed linked to an ASCB website page that features stories about recently published data and discoveries. PIC Associates frequently tweet about stories from ASCB’s journal Molecular Biology of the Cell. “It’s sort of journal club on Twitter,” says Atkinson, “with ASCB members using their background to translate intriguing papers into ordinary language for those outside cell biology. Twitter is giving biologists a radically different way to reach ordinary people.” Writing a CellTweet is also great for sharpening communication skills, says Atkinson. “Making ASCB members better science communicators is another part of the PIC mandate.”

Members interested in becoming PIC Associates should contact Atkinson or John Fleischman, ASCB’s Science Writer, at jfleischman@ascb.org.

—John Fleischman
Starving Cell Biologists Shoot for Glory in Celldance 2012

Researchers hungry for fame and fortune have their best shot at both in San Francisco at Celldance 2012, ASCB’s Cell Biology Film Contest. This year, Celldance offers $1,000 in cash prizes and immortality (albeit fleeting) to winners when their videos hit the big screen at the 52nd Annual Meeting (plus lots of little screens thereafter on the Web).

In its eighth year, the target of Celldance remains the same: to open the eyes of the world to the best video and animated images showcasing the wonders of cell biology. Celldance 2012 judges look for the best videos, “remixes” of classic cell biology sequences, animations, or products of any other dynamic imaging process that combine striking visuals with effective elucidation. In addition, the Society’s Public Information Committee (PIC), which organizes Celldance, makes a Public Outreach Award to a film of strong artistic and creative merit that communicates the excitement of cell biology to the general public or students. Being funny, entertaining, or breathtakingly beautiful counts for Public Outreach.

Celldance is open to all ASCB members or member applicants. The deadline for entries is Thursday, September 27, by 5:00 pm EDT. Winners will be notified by October 19. The Celldance Awards will be unveiled in San Francisco on Tuesday, December 18. Winners do not have to be present, although they will miss the chance to feast on public acclaim if they’re not.

The complete rules and entry portal for Celldance 2012 are now available at www.ascb.org/2012Celldance.html.

— John Fleischman

Celldance 2011 Winner Donates Prize to Japanese Earthquake Relief

The first-place winner of Celldance 2011 has donated his $500 cash prize to the Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Fund through the Japanese Red Cross. ASCB member Tsutomu Tomita of Time Lapse Vision, Inc., in Asaka, Saitama, came in first in Celldance 2011 with his video Cancer Dance. Tomita reports that he converted his $500 prize into ¥39,000 and added another ¥11,000 to bring the contribution to an even ¥50,000. “The amount is small,” says Tomita, “but surely it can help.” Tomita’s video and the other Celldance 2011 winners are at: http://bit.ly/MNLTbc.

— John Fleischman

Join the Data Stream

What happens when you expand the ASCB Directory so that members can add information on their research interests, experimental approach, model system, funding sources, and teaching activity? You get a data stream. You also get a useful tool for finding other members who share your interests. Plus, collectively, members are filling out an intriguing group portrait of ASCB. Response levels continue to grow, but we can already confirm that a) not everyone in ASCB does cytoskeleton, b) some of us study plants, c) some of us are bioengineers, and d) the ASCB group picture will gain scope and detail if you expand your own member profile today.

Please update your profile in the online Member Directory at www.ascb.org. You’ll need your username (first initial and last name) and password (ASCB ID number).

— John Fleischman
2012 ANNUAL MEETING
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SYMPOSIA

Cell Fate Decisions
Hans Clevers, Hubrecht Institute, The Netherlands
Tariq Enver, The Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, MRC, University of Oxford, UK
Shinya Yamanaka, Center for IPS Cell Research and Application (CIRA), Kyoto University, Japan

New Model Systems for Cell Biology
Lawrence S.B. Goldstein, University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine
Nicole King, University of California, Berkeley
Alejandro Sánchez Alvarado, Stowers Institute/HHMI

Cell Biology of the Neuron
Wieland B. Huttner, Max Planck Institute of Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics, Germany
Fumio Matsuzaki, RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology, Kobe, Japan

Cell Division
Daniel Gerlich, Institute of Molecular Biotechnology of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria
Gonta Goshima, Nagoya University, Japan

Cell Growth and Cell Cycle Control
Sue Jasperse, Stowers Institute for Medical Research
Jan Skotheim, Stanford University

Cell Mechanics and Intermediate Filaments
Harald Hermann, German Cancer Research Center, Heidelberg, Germany
Sarah Köster, Georg-August-University Göttingen, Germany

Cell Migration and Motility
Marianne Bronner, Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology, Singapore

Cell Polarity
Yves Barral, ETH Zurich, Switzerland
Stephan Grill, Max Planck Institute of Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics, Dresden, Germany

Cell-Cell and Cell-Matrix Interactions
Joan Brugge, Harvard Medical School
Viola Vogl, ETH Zurich, Switzerland

Cellular Stress, Protein Folding, and Disease
Nancy M. Barini, University of Pennsylvania/HHMI
Andy Dillin, Salk Institute for Biological Studies/HHMI

Development and Morphogenesis
Carl-Philipp Heisenberg, Institute of Science and Technology Austria, Austria
Ichiro Nishinaka, Temasek Life Sciences Lab, Singapore

Integrated Research and Teaching and Its Benefits to Faculty and Students
David Botstein, Princeton University
Karen Kalumuck, Exploratorium

MINISYMPOSIA

Actin Organization and Dynamics
Enrique M. De La Cruz, Yale University
Ann Miller, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Autophagy, Self Renewal, and Cell Death
Ana Maria Cuervo, Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Feruz Papa, University of California, San Francisco

Cancer Cell Biology
Cristina Lo Celso, Imperial College London, UK
Jeffrey Settleman, Genentech, Inc.

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Don Cleveland, University of California, San Diego
Morgan Sheng, Genentech, Inc.

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Cliff Brangwynne, Princeton University
Tracy Johnson, University of California, San Diego

Microtubule Organization and Dynamics
Elizabeth C. Engle, Children’s Hospital Boston/Harvard Medical School/HHMI
Luke Rice, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

Molecular Basis of Infectious Disease
Norma Andrews, University of Maryland, College Park
Pascale Cossart, Institut Pasteur, France

Molecular Motors
Vladimir Gelfand, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine
Kathleen Tybus, University of Vermont, Burlington

Nuclear Structure and Function
Kerry Bloom, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Anne Villeneuve, Stanford University School of Medicine

Organelle Structure and Vesicle Formation
Elizabeth Conibear, University of British Columbia, Canada
Richard A. Kahn, Emory University School of Medicine

Physical and Computational Tools for Cell Biology
Adam Cohen, Harvard University
Jan Liphardt, University of California, Berkeley

Prokaryotic Cell Biology
Martin Thanbichler, Max Planck Institute for Terrestrial Microbiology
Ethan Garner, Harvard Medical School

Regulation/Organization of the Genome
Daniela Rhodes, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, and MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology Cambridge, UK
David Sherratt, University of Oxford, UK

Signal Transduction/Signaling Networks
Fumiyo Ikeda, Institute of Molecular Biology, Kobe, Japan

Stem Cells and Induced Pluripotency
Margaret Fuller, Stanford University School of Medicine
Marius Wernig, Stanford University School of Medicine

Travel Awards
Childcare
Minorities
Postdocs in Cell Biology, Physical Sciences, or Biotech
Undergraduate Faculty
Undergraduate Students, Graduate Students

Application Deadline: September 4

Continued on next page.
New! Meeting Threads

Cell Biology and Medicine

Saturday*

- Keynote Speaker: Arthur D. Levinson, Chair of Genentech and Apple, Inc. (the public may sign up to attend)

Sunday-Wednesday

- Frontier Symposium: Cell Biology and Medicine
- Panel Discussion: Sense and Reproducibility: The Problem of Translating Academic Discovery to Drug Discovery, chaired by Ira Mellman
- Panel Discussion: Is There a New Paradigm for Drug Discovery?, chaired by James Sabry
- Career Presentation: Careers Outside Academia, with biotech representation
- Minisymposia: Cell Biology of Neurodegeneration, Cellular Stress, Protein Folding, and Disease; Molecular Basis of Infectious Disease; Stem Cells and Induced Pluripotency
- Working Groups: New Technologies in Molecular Biology/Genetics; New Technologies in Proteomics
- Science Discussion Tables: Meet Bay Area biotech scientists
- Career Discussion and Mentoring Roundtables, with biotech representation
- Travel awards available for postdocs in biotech

The Intersection of Cell Biology and the Physical Sciences

Saturday*

- Workshop: Open Problems in Biology Requiring the Physical Sciences, organized by Julie Theriot, Rob Phillips, and Dan Fletcher
- Interdisciplinary Gathering: Cell Biologists, Physical Scientists, Engineers, and Computational Scientists
- Keynote Speaker: Steven Chu, U.S. Secretary of Energy (the public may sign up to attend)

Sunday-Wednesday

- Frontier Symposium: Applying Physics, Engineering, Computation to Cell Biology, with Bill Bialek, Rob Phillips, and Margaret Gardel
- Symposium: Synthetic Biology, with Jay Kiesling, Wendell Lim, and Laurie Zolot
- Minisymposia: Cell Mechanics and Intermediate Filaments; Molecular Motors; Physical and Computational Tools for Cell Biology
- Working Groups: New Technologies in Imaging; Visualizing Biological Models and Information
- Science Discussion Tables: Informal discussions with leading scientists doing interdisciplinary research
- Career Discussion and Mentoring Roundtables, with physical sciences representation
- Travel awards available for postdocs in the physical sciences

*Programs are subject to change.
Regulation of Wnt signaling by the tumor suppressor adenomatous polyposis coli does not require the ability to enter the nucleus or a particular cytoplasmic localization

D. M. Roberts, M. I. Pronobis, J. S. Poulton, E. G. Kane, and M. Peifer

In this study, we test two current models for the function of the tumor suppressor adenomatous polyposis coli (APC). We find that APC can regulate Wnt signaling from diverse cytoplasmic locations, suggesting that its roles in the nucleus or in localizing the β-catenin destruction complex are not essential.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (11), 2041–2056

Regulation of myosin activation during cell–cell contact formation by Par3-Lgl antagonism: entosis without matrix detachment


Two polarity proteins, partitioning defective 3 homologue (Par3) and mammalian homologues of Drosophila lethal(2)giant larvae (Lgl1/2), antagonize each other in modulating myosin II activation during cell–cell contact formation in Madin-Darby canine kidney cells. Altering the counteraction between Par3 and Lgl1/2 leads to entosis without matrix detachment.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (11), 2076–2091

Phosphatidylserine dynamics in cellular membranes

J. G. Kay, M. Kolvusalo, X. Ma, T. Wohland, and S. Grinstein

The distribution and dynamics of phosphatidylserine are studied in the plasma membrane and in organelar membranes of live cells using two novel fluorescent probes in combination with various biophysical techniques, including fluorescence correlation spectroscopy and single-particle tracking.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (11), 2198–2212

Cell survival, DNA damage, and oncogenic transformation after a transient and reversible apoptotic response


Dying primary liver, NIH 3T3, and HeLa cells can reverse the advanced stage of apoptosis and survive even after incurring DNA damage. Some surviving cells harbor genetic alterations that result in phenotypic diversity, including oncogenic transformation.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (12), 2240–2252

The PDZ-adaptor protein syntenin-1 regulates HIV-1 entry


Syntenin-1 is recruited to the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-induced capping area but vanishes once the viral particles have entered
Syntenin-1 limits HIV-1 infection. Moreover, syntenin-1 depletion specifically increases the HIV-1 entry step without affecting viral attachment to the cell surface. Silencing of syntenin-1 expression blocks actin polymerization triggered by HIV-1 contact and enhances phosphatidylinositol 4,5-bisphosphate production.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (12), 2253–2263

Spindle checkpoint–independent inhibition of mitotic chromosome segregation by Drosophila Mps1
F. Althoff, R. E. Karess, and C. F. Lehner

The conserved protein kinase Mps1 is required for the spindle assembly checkpoint (SAC). It is also involved in correction of erroneous attachments of kinetochores to the mitotic spindle before anaphase onset. Characterization of Drosophila Mps1 reveals yet another function: SAC-independent inhibition of sister chromatid separation.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (12), 2275–2291

Phosphorylation of Rab11-FIP2 regulates polarity in MDCK cells

Ser-227 phosphorylation of Rab11-FIP2 by Par1b/MARK2 regulates the establishment of polarized epithelial monolayers in three-dimensional MDCK cell cultures and has an ongoing influence on the composition of both adherens and tight junctions in polarized epithelial cells.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (12), 2302–2318

Adaptor protein 2–mediated endocytosis of the β-secretase BACE1 is dispensable for amyloid precursor protein processing

An adaptor protein complex, AP-2, is involved in the endocytosis of β-secretase (BACE1) via the clathrin-dependent machinery. Endosomal targeting of either the amyloid precursor protein (APP) and/or BACE1 is expendable for the amyloidogenic processing of APP.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (12), 2339–2351

Orm protein phosphoregulation mediates transient sphingolipid biosynthesis response to heat stress via the Pkh-Ypk and Cdc55-PP2A pathways
Y. Sun, Y. Miao, Y. Yamane, C. Zhang, K. M. Shokat, H. Takematsu, Y. Kozutsumi, and D. G. Drubin

This study reveals the basis for how temporal phosphoregulation of Orm protein controls sphingolipid production in response to stress. Orm protein phosphorylation is highly responsive to sphingoid bases, and Ypk1 protein kinase transmits heat stress signals to the sphingolipid biosynthesis pathway via Orm phosphorylation.

Mol. Biol. Cell 23 (12), 2388–2398
An MBoC 20th Anniversary Favorite

In celebration of the first 20 years of Molecular Biology of the Cell (MBoC), members of the Editorial Board, members of the ASCB Council, and others comment on their favorite MBoC papers from the past two decades.

Here William P. Tansey, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, comments on:


The proteasome is a complex multifunctional machine that destroys proteins marked for ubiquitin-mediated proteolysis. In this 2000 paper by Verma et al., the authors employ an elegant approach to isolate and define yeast proteasomes and their suite of interacting proteins. This paper has something for everyone. The method the authors developed has now become the standard in the field for rapid proteasome purification. They identified and validated a new subunit of the proteasome. And their work gave a powerful glimpse into the role of the proteasome as a node of intracellular protein interactions, with dozens of proteasome-interacting proteins (PIPs) associating with core proteasome subunits in a nucleotide-dependent manner. The technological achievement and unique biological insight provided by this study justify its place as one of MBoC’s most-cited articles.

This and other MBoC 20th Anniversary Favorites will appear in the journal throughout 2012.

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Are You Getting ASCB Pathways?

You should now be regularly receiving our monthly email update, *ASCB Pathways*—alerting you to the latest ASCB happenings and Annual Meeting updates. If you aren’t seeing the e-newsletter in your inbox, please check your spam filter, and/or contact your system administrator to whitelist *ascb.org*.

Interesting Uses of The Cell: An Image Library-CCDB

The Cell: An Image Library-CCDB (www.cellimagelibrary.org) continues to evolve. Some interesting new or anticipated uses for images in The Cell include:

- A Canadian textbook company has shown interest in using some images they found in The Cell-CCDB for an upcoming biology textbook.
- ATCC Cell Biology ran an image contest on its Facebook page (www.facebook.com/atcc.cellbiology). Participants were asked to identify certain structures in each image, and many of the images used were from The Cell-CCDB.
- Braininfo (http://braininfo.rprc.washington.edu/Default.aspx) has expressed interest in programmatically incorporating links from their detailed structure pages to The Cell-CCDB’s image search results for those structures. This would allow a seamless connection between the kinds of data Braininfo presents and the images representing those structures at The Cell-CCDB.
- The Cell-CCDB received an inquiry from researchers in the UK asking whether they could use The Cell-CCDB to archive the images and metadata from their study for subsequent use and reuse by the research community. The intended study is an image-based screen of bacterial proteins expressed in mammalian cells and will look at protein localization and fluorescent reporter readouts. This is a high-throughput study and will result in 23,000 images. (The Cell-CCDB of course replied that the images would be welcome and that this is one of the intended uses of the library, to save researchers the effort of creating their own websites while still meeting the need to make their data public.)

Join us on LinkedIn for more conversation on everything microscopy related at www.linkedin.com/groups/about=&gid=3733425.

Please help us spread the word and share with your colleagues what a great resource The Cell: An Image Library-CCDB is. Have you used The Cell in interesting ways? Please let us know by sending an email to David Orloff at dorloff@ascb.org. All documented usage helps support our efforts to obtain continued funding.

—David Orloff, Director, Image Library
GRANTS & OPPORTUNITIES

A list of current grant and other opportunities can be found at www.ascb.org/GandO.html. The following item was added since the last issue of the Newsletter:


Members in the News

Five members of the ASCB were among the 84 scientists elected as members of the National Academy of Sciences.

Nancy Bonini
University of Pennsylvania
First joined in 1987

Gideon Dreyfuss
University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
Member since 1991

Natasha V. Raikhel
University of California, Riverside
Member since 1983

Liqun Luo
Stanford University
Member since 2001

Xiaowei Zhuang
Harvard University
First joined in 2003

Mina Bissell, of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, an ASCB member since 1973 and 1996–1997 ASCB President, received the 2012 Distinguished Lectureship in Breast Cancer Research from the American Association for Cancer Research.

Peter Cresswell, of Yale University School of Medicine, an ASCB member since 1998, was presented the 2012 AA–Life Technologies Meritorious Career Award by the American Association of Immunologists.

Pietro De Camilli, of Yale University School of Medicine, an ASCB member since 1980, was awarded the Biophysical Society’s Sir Bernard Katz Award for Excellence in Research on Exocytosis and Endocytosis.

Arthur Weiss, of the University of California, San Francisco, an ASCB member since 1995, received the American Association of Immunologists’ AAI Lifetime Achievement Award.

Peter Walter, of the University of California, San Francisco, an ASCB member since 1984, received the 2012 Paul Ehrlich and Ludwig Darmstaedter Prize. He was also one of the recipients of the 2012 Ernst Jung Prize for Medicine.

Tom Misteli, of the National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, an ASCB member since 1995, will receive a 2012 Arthur S. Flemming Award, as one of 12 outstanding federal employees honored for career achievements in science, mathematics, engineering, management, and law.

F. Ulrich Hartl, of the Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry, an ASCB member since 2004, and Arthur L. Horwich, of Yale University School of Medicine, an ASCB member since 1991, were awarded the 2011 Massry Prize.
MEETINGS Calendar

A complete list of upcoming meetings can be found at http://ascb.org/othermeetings.php. The following meetings were added since the last issue of the Newsletter:

**September 13–14, 2012. London, UK**

**October 11–15, 2012. Gleneden Beach, OR**

**November 7–10, 2012. Leipzig, Germany**

**February 3–9, 2013. Ponce, Puerto Rico**

ASCB Annual Meetings

December 15–19, 2012. San Francisco

December 14–18, 2013. New Orleans

December 6–10, 2014. Philadelphia

December 12–16, 2015. San Diego

December 3–7, 2016. San Francisco

MEMBER Gifts

The ASCB is grateful to the following members who have recently given a gift* to support Society activities:

Farzad Ghamsari
Rosine Haguenauer-Tsapis
Alexander Kirov

*As of June 20, 2012

2012 Half-Century Fund Donors

The ASCB is grateful to the following donors* whose contributions support Society activities:

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Anne Cress
Susan Gerbi McIlwain
Helen Piwnica-Worms
Bill Saxton
Huntington Sheldon
Kenneth Yamada

**Silver**
Kathleen Green and Rex Chisholm
Daniel Lew

**Bronze**
Virginia Zakian

**Sustainer**
Jean Sanger
Joseph Sanger
Barbara Vartel

*As of June 18, 2012

BOOKS by Members


Are you planning to publish a book in 2012? If so, let ASCB know! Send the title, publisher, and ISBN information, and, if you wish, a thumbnail (300 dpi) of the cover. We’ll include it in the ASCB Newsletter. This publicity is available only to ASCB members. Please send submissions to Thea Clarke at tclarke@ascb.org.
Dear Labby,

I have obtained some great data in my postdoctoral work and am on the job market for my first independent position. ASCB's Annual Meeting is the best place to present the data and also to network for a job. My PI has offered to pay for my travel and hotel, for which I am very grateful, of course.

But there is a major problem: I am nursing my six-month-old baby and my spouse’s work schedule is designed to be reciprocal to mine so that we can share in baby coverage. But traveling will disrupt my time with the baby, and we can’t afford to pay for extra daycare while I’m away. My mother-in-law is willing to come with me to the ASCB meeting to help, but we can’t afford to pay her airfare to San Francisco.

Where can I find funding to cover my parental responsibilities while I attend ASCB’s Annual Meeting?

—Depressed Postdoc in New York City

Dear Depressed Postdoc in New York City,

Be not depressed! ASCB’s Women in Cell Biology (WICB) Committee has been on top of childcare issues for several years. In 2008 ASCB received a grant from Elsevier to launch a program of childcare awards to attendees at the Annual Meeting. The WICB Committee administers these awards and over the past four meetings has funded 92 applications, totaling approximately $17,000. Approximately 85% of applicants have received funding. Now ASCB has secured funding from the Nature Publishing Group to ensure the continuation of these awards.

The expenses that can be covered by the ASCB WICB childcare awards are various and include your particular need. The award can cover the Annual Meeting-related expenses for a child caretaker at home, a relative or caretaker to travel to one’s home, a child or children to travel to a relative, childcare at a location near the meeting, extended daycare hours, a caretaker (related or not) to accompany the parent (especially a nursing mother) to the meeting, or other creative solutions to the problem of childcare coverage during the meeting. All the details and the application form are on the ASCB website at https://www.ascb.org/Meetings/Forms/WICB/wicbgrant.cfm. The deadline for receipt of applications is September 4, 2012. You must be an ASCB member to receive a childcare award, and you must be giving a talk or presenting a poster at the meeting. Labby hopes that you will apply and wishes you success in obtaining an ASCB WICB childcare award, in your presentation at the meeting, and in your networking and job search.

—Labby

Direct your questions to labby@ascb.org. Authors of questions chosen for publication may indicate whether or not they wish to be identified. Submissions may be edited for space and style.
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- Subgroup application

See scientific program and new meeting threads on p. 22.