



Inside MBC

"...molecular medicine through biotechnology"

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From the Publisher

With this edition of the MBC Newsletter, *Inside MBC*, the newsletter will begin to appear regularly, broaden its coverage, and become an item on our website. The publication schedule is bimonthly. The key change to *Inside MBC* that has made this possible is our new editor, Pamela Wright, who joined the MBC in June 2001. I would like to welcome her to the MBC and UMBI and eagerly support her aggressive coverage of topics important to us.

Since success of the newsletter depends on information about us and our work, Pamela will be in frequent communication with everyone, including faculty and staff. Until all of us are in the habit of sending her information on our travels, talks, visitors, grant awards and other happenings in our professional lives and laboratories, we might get a little tired

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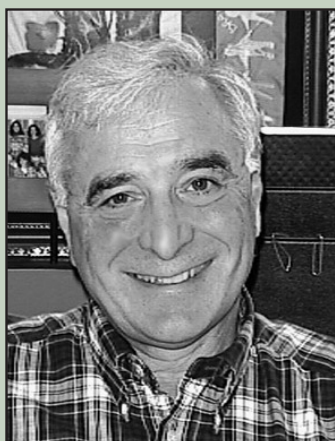
Dr. Collins Receives Elkins Professorship

"There is nothing more precious than a gifted mind. Our colleges and universities rise above the commonplace when they make it possible for the truly great thinkers of our time to nurture the creative spirit of our youth. This is the educational process at its finest." (W.H. Elkins)

In May of this year, the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland, Donald N. Langenberg, informed the president of UMBI, Dr. Jennie C. Hunter-Cevera, that MBC professor Dr. John Collins had been awarded the Wilson H. Elkins Professorship for 2002. The award is based on proposals submitted by USM Institution Presidents and is bestowed on those individuals who "have the greatest potential for making substantial contributions to the teaching, research, and service missions of USM." This is an extremely prestigious award and well deserved. Dr. Collins plans to use this opportunity to expand his research efforts into computational approaches to proteins with help from CARB professor, Dr. John Moul, and to help organize the new,

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Tramont Lectureship Announced



The first permanent director of MBC, Dr. Edmund Tramont, is leaving to become the Director of NIAID's Division of AIDS. He was recruited to head NIH's 8th largest unit. To honor Dr. Tramont for his contribution to the creation and success of MBC, Dr. Lederer announced the formation of the Edmund C. Tramont Lectureship. This is to be an annual event, tentatively starting in January 2002, with the first speaker to be Dr. Tramont himself.

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From the Editor

This is the first circulated issue of the MBC newsletter. It is designed with two things in mind. The first and foremost is to be a useful source for general information of concern to all members of the MBC community. The second is to promote MBC to the larger community. The first few volumes of *Inside MBC* are from our archives and will be reprinted shortly. As we publish new issues, I hope everyone will have a chance to contribute to *Inside MBC*.

Everyone at MBC has been very friendly and helpful. Thank you so much for the welcome. I hope that this newsletter and my other projects will be a valuable contribution to the MBC community.

Pamela Wright

From the Health Sciences Library:

As of July 1, Faculty and Staff will no longer be required to pay for online services like journals. However, you must have an UMnet account. To obtain an application, either visit the library or go online at www.hshsl.umaryland.edu/cats.

For current users, the library is switching its proxy server from one that requires a login every time you open Netscape to one that will only require a login for HSHSL resources. You must reconfigure your proxy server to do this. Instructions can be found on the site listed above. The old proxy server will only continue until Jan 1, 2002.

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Check it out! New FedEx Number

Are you using the correct FedEx account number? Do not assume the account number on the waybill is correct. We have a new account number. If you have not gotten it from Jamie, contact her immediately. The new number starts with a 2, the old one started with a 1.

Seminar Series

Our new seminar series, Seminars in Molecular Medicine and Biotechnology, is in full swing. This series brings in some of the leading young scientists from around the country. Look for supplements to the newsletter with a synopsis of each seminar. Seminars are held at 12 noon in the 6th floor conference room. Lunch in the 3rd floor conference room will follow each seminar. Please RSVP to Tongo if you are planning to attend the lunch.

- June 19, 2001 Dr. Geoffrey J. Goodhill
"Computational Models in Neural Development"
- June 21, 2001 Dr. Walter K. Schmidt
"Post-Translational Processing of Prenylated Proteins"
- June 26, 2001 Dr. Saleet Jafri
"Modeling the Mechanism of Calcium Sparks in the Heart"
- July 2, 2001 Dr. Ilia Baskakov
"Conformational Transition of the Prion Protein: Exception or Rule in Protein Folding?"
- July 5, 2001 Dr. David Johns
"Dissecting Disease Processes Using *In Vivo* Gene Transfer"
- July 9, 2001 Dr. Kim Finley
"Dropping Like Flies: The Role of the Blue Cheese Gene in Neural Degeneration of *Drosophila*"
- July 17, 2001 Dr. Amy Harkins
"Mechanisms Regulating Ca^{2+} -Dependent Transmitter Release"

New MBC Logo Unveiled

At the Center Directors Retreat on July 12, 2001, Dr. Lederer will unveil the new MBC logo. In preliminary “tests” it was extremely well received, according to Dr. Lederer. We have never had a distinct logo before and we are the only center to incorporate the Institute’s logo into ours.

The caduceus symbol in the foremost circle, though hardly representative of the broad range of research activity within the MBC, reflects the name of the center. The UMBI logo behind the main circle is a reminder that we do not stand alone but are part of something larger. It was designed by Pamela Wright as part of a larger effort to support a strong sense of community within MBC and to increase MBC’s visibility within UMBI and elsewhere.

The basic color of the logo has not been determined and suggestions are welcomed. If you would like a digital file for your own use please contact Pamela. It is available in jpeg or photoshop. We hope you find the new logo

MBC/UMBI Perspectives

by Tim Hughes

The history of MBC, while formally established in 1986, is also the history of UMBI. Tim Hughes has been intimately involved with the creation of both. He will be combing his extensive archives for the fascinating details of the creation of both these unique institutions. Though many of the “old timers” will have heard or experienced much of what Tim will be writing about, those of us new to MBC will now be able to appreciate the very special organization that is the Medical Biotechnology Center. We look forward to Tim’s first installment, due out in the next issue of *Inside MBC*.

The Editor

Tricks of the Trade

By Pamela Wright

Have you ever wondered how to emphasize a particular piece of data or how to reinforce an important point? One way is to tap into your audience’s subconscious use of color. Certain colors are associated with particular actions. One of the most well-conditioned associations is green for go and red for stop. This association can be used to reinforce your data. If you have positive feedback loops, increases, amplifications, enhancements; think greens. But if you have negative results, decreases, negative feedback, blockers, whatever stops the flow or process, then the color should be red. This will reinforce your findings by using your audiences’ already programmed responses.

Dr. Tramont cont.

Dr. Tramont was instrumental in taking the Medical Biotechnology Center through a major development phase which culminated with three significant accomplishments: first, the procurement of the funds for a new research building; second, the planning design and construction of a 200,000 gsf, state of the art research facility, the UMBI Medical Research Facility (MRF); and third, the recruitment of Dr. Robert Gallo and the development of the Institute of Human Virology (IHV). In reflecting upon the beginnings, he called the center a “fulfillment of a fantasy,” despite a rather steep and rocky road. The center almost did not survive those early days. With a beautifully designed facility that was still not fully occupied, the center was strongly coveted. However, through Dr. Tramont’s efforts the IHV was added and, despite the controversial nature of the acquisition, it provided the critical mass necessary to solidify the reality of UMBI’s presence in West Baltimore.

The facility will soon be celebrating its fifth anniversary with the Medical Biotechnology Center firmly entrenched. Yet the precarious nature of research will always be around and no one can become complacent. The politics took its toll. Dr. Tramont felt that “he wasn’t having fun anymore” and he needed to move on. Our loss is NIH’s gain. All of us hope that they truly appreciate what they have acquired.





From the Publisher cont.

of her emails and phone calls. It is her job to get us all thinking about sharing our activities and achievements with the MBC/UMBI community. *Inside MBC* will also include inserts and supplements for events of unusual interest. In addition, several regular columns will be included: one on computer graphics by Pamela and another called MBC/UMBI Perspective by Tim Hughes. There will also be regular notices from the administrative staff on personnel changes, new procedures and items of interest.

Our first major series will feature each member of the faculty with a personal profile and a report on research. Pamela will first conduct an interview and then prepare the material for publication. We seek illustrations to accompany the articles. Naturally, anything Pamela writes about members of the MBC and their work will be provided to them for review before publication.

W. Jonathan Lederer, Publisher

LOOK! The MBC Server is under going a major upgrade and overhaul. Most of the work will be done on Saturdays to minimize service interruptions. However, there still may be glitches during the upgrade. Please be patient. Look for an interview with Louie Arroyo in an upcoming issue about the changes.

Paperwork Shortcuts

With the increase in online orders with credit cards, Mary Graham wants to remind everyone that she still needs a confirmation and/or an invoice of online orders. The easiest way to get the information to her is just forward (graham@umbi.umd.edu) the usual confirming email that you get! The email should have the company name and contact info, your name, the item, the cost, confirmation number on it, and a note from you with the grant to charge it. That is sufficient for her records. Of course it would be nice if they had the matching packing slip. However, if there is no confirming email, print out the confirming order page with the information on it and give that to her.

Eldins Professorship cont.

system-wide bioinformatics initiative.

The Elkins Professorship was established in 1978 by Dr. Wilson H. Elkins, president of the University of Maryland from 1954 to 1978. It is the oldest permanently endowed, system-wide professorship at the University of Maryland. When the University became the University System in 1988, Dr. Elkins allowed the professorship to extend to the entire USM family. More about this professorship can be found on the USM web site at www.usmd.edu/Leadership/USMOffice/AcademicAffairs/elkins.html.

It has been six years since anyone at UMBI has received this honor and the **first time** anyone at MBC has been awarded it. Congratulations to Dr. Collins!

MBC Web Page Redesign

As many of you know, the MBC web page is undergoing a major overhaul. Ken Weinstein of the UMBI computing staff has started the graphics but the content will be the responsibility of Pamela Wright. Most of you have already been contacted about of your web page. We will also be taking new portraits for your page, unless you have one you really like. We are also interested in any research images you might like to have on your page. Check out Bruce Vogel's page to see what we mean. In the long run, we hope to have the newsletter available on the site as well as in print, with back issues archived; a password protected faculty area with calendar, internal memos, searchable seminar list, online journal page; and any other useful consolidations that will make the page a powerful information source for everyone at MBC, as well as, streamline some paperwork. Contact Pamela at wrightp@umbi.umd.edu with suggestions.

In the meantime, the current page has been brought up to date and the design modified somewhat. Mail links on current faculty pages have been added. Dr. Jackson did a fantastic job getting the page started, so that the update was very straight forward. The webmaster link has now passed to Pamela. If you find any problems, please contact her.