

Inside:

- UMBI News
- Legislative Testimony Shocker
- MBC Scientists and UMCP Gemstone Program
- Science Center Features Dr. Lederer
- Globetrotting with MBC Scientists
- MBC Happenings

Chancellor Tries to Reassure UMBI; UMBI's Fate to be Decided by RFP

The resignation of UMBI President Jennie Hunter-Cevera hard upon the heels of the announced and then abandoned reorganization plan has led to much consternation within the UMBI community, especially at Central Administration (*Inside MBC* Vol. 12, No. 1).

USM Chancellor Brit Kirwan has begun what is likely to be a long campaign to reassure staff and faculty throughout the process of evaluating UMBI and deciding its long term fate. Though he had a previous private meeting with Central Administration staff, the Chancellor had his first UMBI wide meeting when the UMBI Faculty-Staff Senate opened up its scheduled meeting with the Chancellor on March 12. In person and via IVN, everyone had the opportunity to hear the Chancellor outline the process put in place to evaluate UMBI and to ask questions. The meeting went very smoothly. At that meeting the most pressing issue was the appointment of an acting president and whether that person would be someone from inside UMBI or from the outside.

The Senate has voted its preference for both a practicing scientist and inside person, though the vote was not unanimous in regard to the choice being from inside UMBI. The Chancellor did say he hoped to make an appointment soon so as to make the transition in leadership as smooth as possible. Dr. Hunter-Cevera will not officially leave until June 30, 2009. However, as of the end of April, no appointment had been made.

Continued page 4

Kao, Rosen Win Regents Award

MBC Professor Joseph Kao and his UMB School of Pharmacy collaborator, Gerald Rosen won the Regents Research Collaboration Award for their work on EPR imaging. Collaboration in research is a relatively new category for the Regents Awards, though collaboration in teaching and public service have been recognized for a number of years. The Regents Awards are the highest honor bestowed on faculty within the system. Both Dr. Kao and Dr. Rosen were delighted at being chosen. Dr. Rosen is the Isaac E. Emerson Professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Science.

From left to right, Dr. W. Jonathan Lederer, Dr. Joseph Kao, Dr. Gerald Rosen and Dr. Andrew Coop, Chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.



Congratulations to the President

UMBI President Jennie Hunter-Cevera was again named one of the Influential Marylanders by the Daily Record. This was the second time in two years that the Daily Record has honored her in this way. The Awards Ceremony was held April 22, 2009.

Annual Lovelace Lecture Held

The Annual Lovelace Memorial Lecture in Ethics was given by Dr. Nigel M. de S. Cameron on April 7, 2009. The lecture honors Dr. James Lovelace, Vice President for Academic Affairs, who passed away in 2004.

Legislative Testimony Shocker

Each year, legislative testimony is required of all the leaders of the University System of Maryland, including the Board of Regents, the Chancellor, all the Presidents, and various Deans, Vice-Presidents, Center Directors. UMBI's testimony was given to the House of Delegates March 4 and to the Senate on March 13 by UMBI President Jennie Hunter-Cevera. In addition to these representatives of USM, there is a legislative analyst who writes a report on each of the institutions and the System. MBC has hosted a number of these individuals in the past as they collected information about the institutions under their purview.

Testimony by everyone is written and made available ahead of time. (All USM testimony can be found at <http://www.usmd.edu/usm/legislation/>). Dr. Hunter-Cevera sent a copy of her testimony to everyone via email on March 4, 2009. In addition, she sent a link to the legislative analyst's report. Usually this report is very dry, detailing the previous year's expenditures, noting any possible upcoming issues, and either making recommendations for remediation and/or asking for comment. However, this year the analyst included a recommendation to eliminate UMBI! Such a recommendation is unprecedented. As Dr. Hunter-Cevera reported in her email, "[A]t the House testimony, both Chancellor Kirwan and Regent Cliff Kendall testified to the House that UMBI is not a statutory institution and that it is the responsibility of the Board of Regents to decide the future of UMBI." By eyewitness accounts, both Chancellor Kirwan and Regent Kendall maintained a respectful tone, but their demeanors were far more agitated.

Any legislative action will not be known for sometime.

Editor and Designer: Pamela B. Wright
Assistant Editor: Tim Hughes

Publisher: W. Jonathan Lederer, Director MBC
Assistant Publisher: Joseph Kao, Assoc. Director MBC

Contact us at: wrightp@umbi.umd.edu
or 1-410-706-8181

Medical Biotechnology Center
725 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201 USA

Back issues of *Inside MBC* are available on the web at:
<http://www.umbi.umd.edu/~mbc>

©Medical Biotechnology Center, University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute. All rights reserved.

Congratulations!

One of Dr. W. Jonathan Lederer's recent publications (Iribe et al., 4:787-95) was chosen for comment in the same issue of *Circulation Research* as well as for the cover.

Dr. Lederer was also interviewed for an article on Stem Cell funding that appeared in the *Washington Post* on July 10, 2009 (page B01 and online).

Finally...

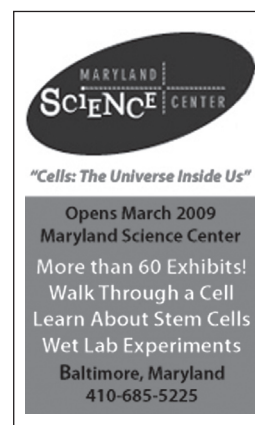
The July-August 2008 issue, long overdue for IP issues, was finally allowed to be published.

MBC Scientists and UMCP Gemstone Program

MBC scientists, Dr. Ilia Baskakov and Dr. Joseph Kao, along with two other UMBI scientists, Drs. David O'Brochta (CBR) and Zvi Kelman (CARB), and two UMCP scientists, Drs. Srinivasa Raghavan and Daniel Stein, formed the advisory committee for a team undergraduate thesis on microbial fuel cells as part of the Gemstone Program at College Park in the Clark Engineering School. With Dr. O'Brochta as Mentor, six students, down from an original 14, submitted a thesis entitled "Harvesting Life's energy: Electricity Production in *Geobacter*-based Fuel Cells." This undergraduate research honors program brings together a team of students from different majors to investigate a single problem. More information can be found at <http://www.gemstone.umd.edu/about/>. This was the first time MBC scientists had participated in this program, but both were extremely impressed by the students and hope to continue to participate in the Gemstone Program.

Science Center Features Dr. Lederer

The Maryland Science Center's new exhibit "Cells: The Universe Inside Us" opened on March 28. One of the sections is on stem cells, and MBC Director W. Jonathan Lederer and his stem cell collaborator, Dr. Terry Rogers from UMB, were part of the exhibit. The two of them had been interviewed and filmed several months ago, but had not seen the final product.



Globetrotting with MBC Scientists

The first four months of the new year had MBC scientists visiting 5 countries and two continents. MBC Director started the new year by traveling to Germany, giving a talk in Dresden and organizing research collaborations in Göttingen; while Dr. Mariusz Karbowski spent time in February in Finland reviewing grants. After freezing in Finland, he thawed out in Barcelona, Spain, giving a talk at the Institute for Research in Biomedicine.

March is still cold in Europe, but Dr. Mervyn Monteiro and his PhD student Janet Ugolino attended the 9th Alzheimer's Conference/Parkinson's Conference (AD/PD 2009) in Prague, Czechoslovakia, March 11-15, presenting two posters. It was the first international trip for Janet.

Dr. W. Jonathan Lederer headed back to Germany in March, taking along his Research Associate, Dr. Brian Hagen. The collaborations he arranged in January came to fruition in Göttingen with Dr. Stephan Lehnart at the University of Göttingen and Dr. Stefan Hell at the Max Planck Institute of Nanoscopy. The work involved a new imaging confocal microscopy technique called STED (STimulated Emission Depletion) that Dr. Hell invented and that Dr. Lederer hopes to develop here. Currently, commercially available STED microscopes do not operate at the same nanoscale sensitivities of the one at the Max Planck.

Dr. Lederer did not stop traveling in April, after a quick day trip to New Orleans, he headed to South America as a featured speaker at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute sponsored workshop, Current Topics and Methods in Ca^{2+} Signaling, held at Ouro Preto, Brazil. He also expects to discuss collaborations with Dr. Silvia Guatimosim at the University of Belo Horizonte, with whom he has submitted an NIH Fogarty International Research Collaboration proposal.

er's
Circ. Res.
mentary in
earch, as

ewed
ng that
on March

held up
to be

MBC Happenings

Comings and Goings

Dr. Hongmin Wang has left Dr. Monteiro's laboratory. Kristin Brueckner joined the Monteiro lab as a research assistant.

Grants and Contracts

Dr. Joseph Kao, NIH-NIGMS, Caged Probes for Cellular Physiology, \$349,807, 3/1/2009, yr 3 of 4; Minority Supplement, \$28,612

Dr. Bruce Vogel, NSF, Assembly and Composition of Elastic Fiber-like Structures in the Nematode *C. elegans*, \$159,999, 3/1/2009, yr 2 of 4.

Dr. Mervyn Monteiro, NIH-NIGMS, Functional Studies of Ubiquitin, \$307,500, 3/1/2009, yr 2 of 4.

Dr. Chris Geddes, University of Maryland, Baltimore (MARCE), Multiplexed Ultra Fast and Sensitive Bioagent Assays -Diagnostics Hub 2, \$261,377, 3/1/2009, yr 1 of 5.

Dr. W. Jonathan Lederer, Columbia University (NIH PPG), Molecular Basis of Sudden Cardiac Death, 4/1/2009, \$354,274, yr 3 of 5

Dr. Mervyn Monteiro, NIH, Functional Studies of Calmyrin, 4/1/2009, \$282,877, 4/1/2009, yr 5 of 5.

Publications

Note: E-publications will no longer be listed here. They will appear on this list once they have appeared in print.

Vernazza C, Lingard B, Flick-Smith HC, **Baillie LW**, Hill J, Atkins HS. Small protective fragments of the *Yersinia pestis* V antigen. Vaccine. 2009 May 11;27(21):2775-80.

Dobrev D, Teos LY, **Lederer WJ**. Unique atrial myocyte Ca^{2+} signaling. J Mol Cell Cardiol. 2009 Apr;46(4):448-51.

Dragan AI, Zhang Y, **Geddes CD**. Voltage-gated metal-enhanced fluorescence II: Effects of fluorophore concentration on the magnitude of the gated-current. J Fluoresc. 2009 Mar;19(2):369-74.

Zhang Y, Aslan K, **Geddes CD**. Voltage-gated metal-enhanced fluorescence. J Fluoresc. 2009 Mar;19(2):363-7.

Iribe G, Ward CW, Camelliti P, Bollensdorff C, Mason F, Burton RA, Garry A, Morpheus MK, Hoenger A, **Lederer WJ**, Kohl P. Axial stretch of rat single ventricular cardiomyocytes causes an acute and transient increase in Ca^{2+} spark rate. Circ Res. 2009 Mar 27;104(6):787-95.

Talks and Travels

Dr. Mervyn Monteiro, invited speaker, Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College London, UK, "Misfolded proteins and stress in neurodegenerative diseases: lessons from a trip to the ER," Mar 19, 2009.

Dr. W. Jonathan Lederer, invited speaker, 2009 FASEB Experimental Biology Meeting, New Orleans, LA, April 20, 2009.

Dr. Ilia Baskakov, invited speaker, UMBI Graduate Student Research Day, "Sun-powered microbial fuel cells," April 22, 2009.

Dr. W. Jonathan Lederer, invited speaker, HHMI International workshop on "Current Topics and Methods in Ca^{2+} Signaling," Ouro Preto, Brazil, April 26-29, 2009.

Chancellor, continued

RFP: High level meetings with the Chancellor and the Board of Regents Ad Hoc Committee continue with some regularity for the Center Directors and other members of UMBI's leadership. In April, the Chancellor's office and the Ad Hoc Committee briefed the Presidents from other institutions within the system and outlined a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for considering how to "best utilize UMBI's intellectual, physical and financial resources in a way that achieves and enhances [UMBI's] mission." Any interested USM institution, including UMBI itself, could respond with a plan. The Chancellor's office put together a packet of information from various sources, including some of the information that UMBI had been requested to collect, for background. Interested institutions could then arrange meetings at each center, coordinated by COMB Director Yoni Zohar. MBC was visited by representatives from UMB on April 23. RFPs are due May 8.

As part of the strategy of evaluating UMBI the Ad Hoc committee has planned a series of meetings at each of the centers. MBC is scheduled to host one on June 1. While the meetings are closed, tours of each of the facilities are planned. After all proposals are evaluated, the committee will make a recommendation to the entire Board of Regents at the regularly scheduled June 19 meeting to be held at Frostburg State University in Western Maryland.

No matter what the decision, any change will be gradual and unlikely to affect laboratory personnel or the high quality of science throughout UMBI.



Newsfeed Articles

Articles can be found at <https://intranet.umbi.umd.edu/computing/rss/motd.php>. This does require a UMBI login.

3-6-09: Dr. Chris Geddes' NIH Site Visit

3-10-09: Dr. Brian Hagen Visits Kennedy Krieger School

3-11-09: Dr. Kao and Dr. Rosen Receive BOR Faculty Award

3-18-09: Dr. Chris Geddes NIH Award (Note: the newsfeed erroneously stated that the award had been made; as of April 30, the details had yet to be worked out.)

3-27-09: Dr. Lederer in Germany

4-3-09: MBC Announces Annual Retreat

4-10-09: Lederer Laboratory Attends Annual Biophysical Society Meeting

4-23-2009: MBC Lab Groups Present Project Updates at Annual Retreat

4-24-2009: Dr. Ilia Baskakov Develops Sun-Powered Microbial Fuel Cells