Hunter Is Leaving

Dr. Eric Hunter, Professor of Microbiology and former Director of the UAB Center for AIDS Research (CFAR), has been named Endowed Chair, Department of Pathology, Emory University, Atlanta, effective August 1st. Dr. Hunter, a renowned retrovirologist, an exceptional administrator, as well as the recipient of numerous honors and awards, has directed the CFAR for the last sixteen years, from 1988 to April 2004. The CFAR wishes to thank Dr. Hunter for his many years of service, his commitment to AIDS Research, and to wish him well in all his future endeavors.

New Interim CFAR Director

Michael Saag, MD
Professor of Medicine
Division of Infectious Diseases

Dr. Michael Saag, a UAB faculty member since 1987, has been named Interim Director of UAB Center for AIDS Research, effective April 1st. Dr. Beatrice Hahn, Professor, Hematology/Oncology, has been named Interim Co-Director. Dr. Saag founded and has been the Director of the 1917 Clinic since its beginning in 1988.

Accolades and Kudos

Robert W. McDonald, MBA, MPH

Robert W. McDonald, Assistant to the Director, Center for AIDS Research, has been accepted into UAB School of Medicine. He will begin his medical studies in July 2004. Please join the CFAR in wishing this future ID doc great success in his studies, as well as many years of rewarding medical practice. Way to go, Rob!!

New Administrative Director

Michael Bertram, PhD

Michael Bertram, PhD, former Assistant Professor, Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism, has joined the CFAR team as the new Administrative Director, effective June 1, 2004. Mike replaces Rob, who, as we all know, will be leaving soon for medical school. Please join the CFAR in welcoming Dr. Bertram.

Science Magazine Publishes Derdeyn

Cynthia Derdeyn, Ph.D.
Research Instructor, Microbiology

Cynthia Derdeyn, lead investigator, and other researchers, have discovered new information that may be helpful in developing a vaccine against HIV. Their study, "Envelope-Constrained Neutralization-Sensitive HIV-1 After Heterosexual Transmission," closely observed the viruses that are transmitted between heterosexual partners in Zambia. The study revealed that the transmitted virus is surprisingly vulnerable to neutralizing antibodies from the infecting partner during the first weeks following infection. In fact, in the majority of cases, the virus that was successful at establishing a new infection had entry machinery that was smaller and less shielded by a sugar covering than the viruses in the infecting partner. This means that the virus that was transmitted may be less protected from neutralizing antibodies. It is this vulnerability that researchers hope to exploit by developing a vaccine that can induce neutralizing antibodies that target these particular virus strains. This study utilized samples collected from couples participating in a larger study being conducted in Zambia by Dr. Susan Allen. This study’s goal is to test, counsel and monitor heterosexual couples when one partner is HIV positive. Other researchers include Julie M. Decker, Frederic Bibollet-Ruche, John L. Mokili, Mark Muldoon, Scott A. Denham, Maritha L. Heil, Francis Kasolo, Rosemary Musonda, Beatrice H. Hahn, George M. Shaw, Bette T. Korber, Susan Allen, and Eric Hunter. For additional information regarding this study, please see the March 26 issue of Science. (Bold face text indicates UAB investigators).

Developmental Grants

The deadline for this round of proposals will be July 2, 2004. All faculty members (junior to senior) at UAB and SRI are eligible to apply. For complete instructions, please visit http://www.uabcfar.uab.edu/cores/development.

Flow Core Instrumentation Fully Operational

UAB CFAR multi-user Flow Cytometry Core, of which Allan Zajac, PhD, is Director, has upgraded its equipment in part through an HSF-GEF grant. The recent purchase of a state-of-the-art FACS Aria cell sorter includes the most advanced commercially available technologies and offers excellent sort rates, a multiparameter platform and superior fluorescent sensitivities.

256 Bevill Biomedical Research Building  Birmingham, AL  35294-2170  205-975-7043
Likewise, the new BD-LSR-II is a high-tech instrument that provides a powerful analytical system. Both of these instruments have added new capabilities to the UAB medical center as well as a superior ability to analyze rare populations of cells. For additional information, please contact Dr. Allan Zajac at azajac@uab.edu.

**UAB CFAR International Core Initiatives**

The Center for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ) began as a collaborative effort in partnership with Zambian clinicians and investigators – several of whom trained in Public Health at UAB, and UAB investigators – Drs. **Robert Goldenberg** (OB/GYN) and **Sten Vermund** (GeoMed). Today CIDRZ serves as the primary CFAR International Core hub, in Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia. Another very promising international core facility is currently in development in Jamaica. The most exciting initiative at present is the introduction of wide scale anti-retroviral therapy in Lusaka, Zambia, with the aim of controlled, rapid expansion throughout the city, and into two other provinces. This scale-up is made possible through the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR. For more information about Zambian HIV initiatives, please contact Drs. **Robert Goldenberg** (rlg@uab.edu), **Jeffrey Stringer** (stringer@uab.edu), **Sten Vermund** (sten@uab.edu), and/or **Craig Wilson** (cwilson@uab.edu).

**Ervin “Magic” Johnson**

Magic Johnson and a team of healthcare professionals presented a free educational program about HIV at the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church on March 10, 2004. The program was attended by more than 1500 participants. Magic, who is also an established businessman, co-owning several banks with Janet Jackson, as well as a number of other businesses, may return to Birmingham to present a workshop on how to start and succeed in business. For additional information, please contact rwm@uab.edu.

**Support Team Leadership Training Conferences (LTCs)**

Upcoming 2004 Support Team Leadership Training Conferences (LTCs) are scheduled for the following dates:

- **June 14-15, 2004** - Atmore, AL
- **June 22-23, 2004** - Tuscaloosa, AL
- **August 10-11, 2004** - Greenville, NC
- **August 18-19, 2004** - Shelby, NC

The LTC is a two-day conference that teaches congregations and organizations how to develop Support Teams in their setting. For more details, please visit www.careteam.org or call 205-975-9129.

**National HIV Testing Day**

**Sunday, June 27th**

For general information, visit http://www.napwa.org/hivtestinfo. For information about local events, contact **Kelly Ross-Davis** at 934-9253, or via KRD@uab.edu.

**Alabama HIV Prevention Council**

Would you like to provide direct input to the State of Alabama’s plan for HIV Prevention? If so, contact **Kelly Ross-Davis** (934-9253) or (KRD@uab.edu) to receive an application to serve on the Alabama HIV Prevention Council for 2005. The purpose of The Alabama HIV Prevention Council (AHPC) will be to develop a comprehensive HIV prevention plan in accordance with the Center for Disease and Control directives. The Council strives to be representative of those most affected by HIV, as well as those with academic expertise in prevention planning.

**Quest Publication**

If you have information that you would like published in Quest, please forward to the attention of Uvarta Coleman at uvarta@uab.edu.

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**The Zimbabwe Report**

Participants

**Malcolm Marler**, Director of The Support Team Network, traveled to southern Africa in April 2004. He visited four countries: Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The purpose of this trip was to develop the foundation for future Support Team Leadership Trainings and to develop Support Teams specifically for persons living with HIV/AIDS. While on this trip, Dr. Marler led the first International Support Team Leadership Training in Harare, Zimbabwe with 30 participants representing fourteen HIV/AIDS organizations in Zimbabwe.

**Support Team Member, Eric Moore, Offers Emotional Support Via Phone**

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