IT’S OFFICIAL

Dr. Michael Saag, who had been serving as Interim Director of UAB Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) since April of last year, was officially named Director, effective August 2004. Beatrice Hahn, MD will serve as Co-Director.

Drug Discovery and Development Research Grant

Olaf Kutsch, Ph.D., Research Assistant Professor and CFAR Member, was recently awarded a 2004 GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) Drug Discovery and Development Research Grant in the amount of $83,000. Dr. Olaf Kutsch and other researchers at UAB recently developed a new drug screening system to identify potential inhibitors of HIV transcription or replication.

TEEN FILMMAKER

AIDS IN AFRICA: The Plague that Thunders. This is a 27 minute documentary that aired Saturday, Sept. 25, at 2:00 pm in the McWane Room as part of Birmingham’s Sidewalk Film Festival.

This documentary illustrates the effects of the AIDS epidemic in Zambia. It shows the current situation as well as what is currently being done by the United States and UAB to combat this plague. A Q&A section followed the screening with Harry Saag, Michael Saag, MD (Director, UAB Center for AIDS Research), Rob McDonald (former Assistant to the Director, UAB Center for AIDS Research) and Maggie Mumbi-McDonald. If you have not seen this film and are interested in seeing it, please contact the office of Dr. Michael Saag to schedule a possible viewing.

2004-2005 CFAR DEVELOPMENTAL GRANTS AWARDED

The CFAR has awarded Developmental Grants for year 2004-2005. The most recent development awards resulted in support for the following five UAB faculty members:

- David Ansardi, Ph.D. (Cell Biology)
  Animal Model for HIV Genital Tract Transmission. This study seeks to develop a new and novel small animal model that, if successful, would greatly facilitate studies to further refine both the virological and immunological parameters associated with heterosexual HIV-1 transmission.

- Laura H. Bachmann, MD (Infectious Diseases)
  Risk Assessment of Long-Haul Truck Drivers. This study aims to interview U.S. truck drivers and trucking industry executives and to conduct focus groups with truck drivers for the purpose of constructing a behavioral risk assessment instrument.

- Paul Goepfert (Infectious Diseases)
  Mechanisms of HLA Class I Alleles in AIDS Protection. This project seeks to analyze the binding affinities of peptides to the two Class I molecules and to look at differences in CD8 responses to antigen presentation of these peptides by the two Class I alleles.

- Lawrence Lamb, Ph.D. (Hematology/Oncology)
  Center for Cellular Therapy and Experimental Processing. This project proposes to build a state-of-the-art shared resource for cell and tissue engineering in support of basic and translational work in the fields of malignant diseases, transplantation science, regenerative medicine and stem cell biology.