



## Center for Clinical and Translational Science e-NEWSLETTER

### Center News

## Introducing the Center for Clinical and Translational Science e-Newsletter!

We are delighted to introduce the Rockefeller University Center for Clinical and Translational Science e-Newsletter.

We hope that it will be a valued source of information on the programs supported by the Center, including funding opportunities for pilot research studies; Clinical Scholar and medical student supported positions; and new core facilities to support clinical and translational science. We also will introduce new members of the Center, providing information on their experience, expertise, and role in the Center. The Center e-Newsletter will also be a source of information on upcoming Seminars in Clinical Research and the dates of upcoming meetings of the Advisory Committee for Clinical and Translational Science (ACCTS) and the IRB, along with the deadlines for submitting new protocols. To keep readers up-to-date on the scientific studies being conducted at the Center, we will periodically highlight

one or more studies. Finally, we plan to use the Center e-Newsletter to keep you informed of new information technology, statistical resources, and other infrastructure supports to enhance the conduct of clinical and translational science at Rockefeller. We are eager for feedback from you on how well the Center e-Newsletter is serving its purposes and suggestions about how to make it more valuable.

We would like to thank all those who have worked so hard to bring the Center e-Newsletter to fruition, in particular Jennifer Spada, Ed Barbour, Cameron Coffran, and George Lee.

Barry Collier, Director  
Jim Krueger, Co-Director

### Announcements

#### NIH Makes Two Visits RU Center for Clinical and Translational Science

Dr. Daniel Rosenblum, the Rockefeller University Hospital's Center for Clinical and Translational Science NIH Program Officer, made a second visit on March 28th to meet with Drs. Collier and Krueger and Informatics CORE Manager, Ed Barbour. Dr. Rosenblum was informed of the progress being made in the Center's Informatics Core, and provided with a broad update of the Center's progress. Dr. Rosenblum is looking forward to working with RU as a partner, helping this Center identify resources that may help it achieve its goals.

On December 15, Dr. Daniel Rosenblum, NIH Program Officer for the Center's CTSA, and Dr. Anthony Hayward, the leader of the CTSA program in the NIH National Center for Research Resources (NCRR), visited the Rockefeller University to assess our progress in implementing the CTSA. They heard presentations from the leadership of the Center across a broad range of topics. At the end of the day, they expressed their appreciation to the Center for providing the information and satisfaction with the progress has made in implementing the CTSA.

#### New ACCTS Subcommittee

A new ACCTS Subcommittee on Technology Transfer and Private Sector Partnering has been created to review current policies and make recommendations for streamlining the processes and educating investigators about these important issues. The Subcommittee will be co-chaired by Dr. Madhav Dhodapkar and Ms. Terry Solomon. Kathleen Denis and Daniel Levine will also serve on the Subcommittee. If you would like to suggest topics for the Subcommittee to review, contact either Dr. Dhodapkar or Ms. Solomon. For a full list of ACCTS Subcommittees please visit <http://www.rockefeller.edu/ccts/acctssubcomm.php>.

## Clinical Scholars Program 2006-2007

Dr. Edgar Charles: Chief Clinical Scholar Mentors - Drs. Charles Rice & Lynn Dustin

Dr. Charles is currently working with two mentors, Charles Rice, Ph.D. and Lynn Dustin, Ph.D., to investigate the autoimmune manifestations of chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection. They have identified specific B cell subsets that are clonally expanded in HCV-infected patients who have the syndrome of mixed cryoglobulinemia. They ultimately hope to apply their findings toward the diagnosis and treatment of HCV-related autoimmune disorders. He can be contacted at [charlee@rockefeller.edu](mailto:charlee@rockefeller.edu)

Dr. Marina Caskey  
Mentor - Dr. Ralph Steinman

## Choice, Control, and Change - C3 Program in Nutrition in Middle Schools

Members of The Rockefeller University CTSA are currently collaborating with Dr. Isobel Contento, the Coordinator of the Program in Nutrition at the Teachers College Columbia University, in the Choice, Control, and Change Program. Members of the Rockefeller University Hospital's Center for Clinical and Translational Science Bionutrition and Research Nursing Staff, as well as members of the Faculty and Clinical Scholars Program have made visits to New York City public schools to discuss health careers with 6th and 7th grade students. The students have been

## New Staff Member Biographies

Ms. Melissa Offenhartz was promoted to the position of Director of Nursing and Patient Care on May 1st, 2007. Ms. Offenhartz first joined the Center in January 2005 as the Nurse Manager of the Outpatient Unit and in January 2006 she was promoted to Assistant Director of Nursing. Ms. Offenhartz received a BS in Biology from the State University of New York, her BSN from Indiana University, and an MA in Nursing Education from New York University. She worked as a staff nurse at Lenox Hill Hospital for 7 years, primarily in the Cardiac ICU. As an adjunct faculty member at NYU, Ms. Offenhartz has taught health assessment and nursing fundamentals in the undergraduate program and is currently teaching a pathophysiology course. She has also worked at the Mount Sinai Medical Center as a Cardiac Clinical Educator. Her contact information is: moffenhart@rockefeller.edu; 212-327-7203

Ms. Elizabeth Londoño brings five years of outreach and recruitment experience to her new position as Outreach/Recruitment Specialist in the Clinical Research Support Office. Originally an outreach coordinator the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation, and the Arthritis Foundation of New York, in 2003 Elizabeth came to Rockefeller as a volunteer with the Clinical Research Office assisting with recruitment. Her efficiency and efforts resulted in her being hired by the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center where she has led recruitment for 3-1/2 years. She now returns to Rockefeller with increased responsibilities: to partner in the development and implementation of a an expansive Strategic Plan for Community Engagement and Recruitment for the Clinical Research Office and the CCTS, while managing and enhancing the day to day recruitment for enrolling Center protocols. Ms. Londoño graduated from SUNY Stony Brook with a BS in Psychology and is fluent in both written and spoken Spanish. Her contact information is: elondono@rockefeller.edu; 212-327-8409

Ms. Natasha Levenkova joined the Center's Informatics Department on March 21, 2007 as a Phenotype Analyst. Ms. Levenkova received a Masters of Biotechnology degree, with a concentration in Bioinformatics/Computational Biology, from The University of Pennsylvania. She comes to The Center from the Wistar Institute in Philadelphia, PA where she served as a Bioinformatics Specialist. She designed and implemented software for the analysis of proteomics data, as well as developed an open-source tool and web server for siRNA design which can be viewed here . She also has a strong background in microarray analysis, notably in the use of GeneSpring. Ms Levenkova will be developing phenotype/genotype databases and data mining techniques, scoring algorithms, and working closely with Rockefeller University researchers to help them develop ontologies and analyze disparate data, including phenotype data. Her contact information is: nlevenkova@rockefeller.edu; 212-327-7465

## Clinical Scholars Visit Rare Book Room at New York Academy of Medicine

On May 14, a group of six Clinical Scholars, accompanied by Drs. Barry Collier and Sarah Schlesinger had a private tour of the New York Academy of Medicine's Rare Book Room led by the library's curator of historical books, Arlene Shaner. Ms. Shaner provided an overview of the library's holdings and then showed the group a series of the most famous books in the collection, selected to coincide with the research interests of the Scholars, including works by Vesalius, Harvey, Kaposi, and Jenner. Several remarkable artifacts were displayed, including presentation samples of Erhlich's 606 and Fleming's penicillin mold, as well as George Washington's mandibular denture!

## Clinical Scholars Program 2006-2007 (continued from page 1)

Dr. Caskey trained in Infectious Diseases at Weill Cornell Medical Center and after completing fellowship she joined Dr. Ralph Steinman's laboratory. She is now studying the immune responses elicited by DEC-205 monoclonal antibody targeted HIV-1 vaccine. She is also working to bring this novel candidate HIV vaccine into Phase I clinical development at The Rockefeller University Center for Clinical and Translational Science. She can be reached at [mcaskey@rockefeller.edu](mailto:mcaskey@rockefeller.edu).

**Dr. Allegra Grossman**  
Mentor - Dr. Markus Stoffel

Dr. Grossman's research focuses on the nature, diagnosis and treatment of obesity and diabetes. One of her clinical studies looks at whether the frequency of eating, not the total number of calories consumed, has an effect on fat and glucose metabolism. A second study looks at the expression of a protein called *foxa2* in human fat cells. This protein in the fat cells of obese mice helps fat to take up and break down sugar from the blood.

*Foxa2* also prevents the generation of more fat cells. *Foxa2* is only present in the fat stores of obese mice and absent from the fat stores of lean animals. Insulin can stimulate the production of *Foxa2* in fat cells. Furthermore, the levels of *Foxa2* protein correlate with the degree of blood insulin levels. Dr. Grossman's study is a follow-up study to the studies that have been conducted in mice to answer the question of whether *Foxa2* is also produced in the fat cells of humans and if these levels correlate with the degree of obesity, blood insulin levels and insulin resistance. She can be contacted at [agrossman@rockefeller.edu](mailto:agrossman@rockefeller.edu).

**Dr. Andrea Low**  
Mentors - Dr. Martin Markowitz

Dr. Low is currently working at the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center in the labs of Dr. Markowitz and Dr. Muesing. She is examining the integrase gene of HIV for natural resistance to Integrase inhibitors. She received her Medical Degree at McGill University in

Montreal, with a residency in Internal Medicine at St. Vincent's Hospital. She later trained at NYU in Infectious Disease. She can be contacted at [alow@adarc.org](mailto:alow@adarc.org)

**Dr. Lisa Neff**  
Mentor - Dr. Jan Breslow

Dr. Neff is trained and board-certified in internal medicine, endocrinology, and clinical nutrition. Her current clinical research studies include a controlled feeding study investigating the metabolic effects of different weight loss diets in individuals with the metabolic syndrome and a longitudinal study examining biologic, environmental, and behavioral predictors of long-term success with conventional weight loss treatments. She can be contacted at [lneff@rockefeller.edu](mailto:lneff@rockefeller.edu)

Go to <http://www.rockefeller.edu/ccts/k12program.php> to view a full description of the Clinical Scholars Program

---

## Choice, Control, and Change - C3 Program in Nutrition in Middle Schools

(continued from page 1)

very enthusiastic about the program and have asked many fascinating questions. On April 20th, Dr. Barry Collier, Melissa Offenhartz, Suzanne Magnotta, and Elizabeth Londono visited The Dual Language Middle School (MS247), which is a bilingual school for English and Spanish speaking students. A second visit took place on May 22nd in which Dr. Marina Caskey (Clinical Scholar), Brenda Ray, N.P., and Elizabeth Londono visited Crossroads MS246.

The program is designed to create a curriculum in nutrition and exercise to help students develop healthy eating and physical activity habits. The study involves 278 middle school students in 19 science classes within 5 schools. Based on paired t-tests, students significantly improved on many curriculum specific eating and physical activity behaviors.

Interim data indicates that a strategy based on fostering personal agency, cognitive self-regulation and competence shows promise in increasing healthy eating and exercise habits.

## New Staff Member Biographies (continued from page 2)

Ms. Maritza A. Puello joined the Center on April 2, 2007 as the Administrative Assistant for the Center for Clinical and Translational Science. Ms. Puello received her bachelors degree from Union College, Schenectady, NY in 2004 with a double concentration in Youth and Popular Culture & Business Ethics. She comes to the Center with over 10 years of administrative and quality assurance experience. She previously worked for Health Management Systems, Inc. as a Quality Assurance Associate conducting quality reviews as a means of billing enhancement and recovery services to government healthcare programs and payors. Her contact information is: mpuello@rockefeller.edu; 212-327-8710

Ms. Kim Bazylewicz joined the Center on January 24th, 2007 as the Investigational New Drug (IND) Specialist/Monitor for the Clinical Research Support Office. She will be responsible for the implementation of a new Program of IND Assistance (PIA), intended to provide guidance, support and assistance to investigator/sponsors in their IND-related roles. Assistance offered may take the form of help in preparation of an IND submission, FDA phone calls, response to FDA queries or requirements, and ongoing updating and reporting for active IND protocols. The PIA office will maintain a database for tracking of all IND protocols at the Center, a PIA website of guidance and assistance, and a program of regular informational and educational audits. In addition, Ms. Bazylewicz will participate in executing the non-IND program of post approval monitoring of active protocols at the CCTS. Ms. Kim Bazylwicz brings to her new position deep and broad experience in the conduct and oversight of clinical research. Starting as a clinical research assistant, she advanced through the protocol coordination hierarchy, teaching and supervising other coordinators on research projects at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and ultimately joining their Clinical Research Office in the IND department. Kim left MKSCC to obtain experience in a small research corporation, but found she preferred the emphasis and priorities of academic research. Her contact information is: kbazylewic @rockefeller.edu; 212-327-7408

Ms. Maija Neville joined the Center on December 18, 2006 as Administrative Director. Ms. Neville obtained her Masters in Public Health from New York University. She has had extensive experience in grant writing, grants administration, and community outreach, having served as Director of Health Education/HIV Prevention Services at Settlement Health, Inc. from November 2000 to June 2006, and Associate Staff Analyst/Director of Grant Development at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene from December

2005 to December 2006. In her current position, she will be responsible for administering the CTSA, focusing on supporting the ACCTS and its Subcommittees, budgeting, and reporting Center metrics to NIH. Her contact information is: mneville@rockefeller.edu; 212-327-8501

Ms. Arielle Black joined the Center as the new Administrative Assistant/Recruitment-Outreach Assistant to the Clinical Research Support Office on Dec. 20th, 2006. Ms. Black, a recent graduate of SUNY Albany, came to the Center with experience in administrative support as well as in the areas of recruitment, marketing, and public relations. In her new position Ms. Black is responsible for the clerical and administrative support to keep the growing Clinical Research Support Office (CRSO) working smoothly, as well as financial and data management projects. On the recruitment/outreach front, she is working with the recruitment team to organize and systematize practice and record keeping. Ms. Black is the main keeper of the metrics for the CRSO. Please contact her to arrange appointments with the CRSO personnel or if you need assistance in obtaining access to CRSO resources. Her contact information is: ablack@rockefeller.edu; 212-327-7709