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# BENCHMARKS

THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2008

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Employee recognition events scheduled.** Human Resources will honor employees who reach major milestones with two events in April. The employee recognition reception, to recognize employees who have worked at The Rockefeller University for 10 and 20 years, will be Thursday, April 3; the anniversary retirement dinner, which honors employees celebrating 25 or 45 years with the university as well as those recently retired, will be Thursday, April 17. Also this spring, the employee art show will be held Monday, March 31 to Friday, April 18, and “take your child to work day” will be Thursday, April 24. For more information, contact Human Resources at x8300.

**Public lecture to feature Miles O'Brien and Susan Wood.** A public event, “Science and Politics,” will be the first of a new series of lectures to focus on the intersection of science and culture, and is designed to appeal to a broad external audience. President Paul Nurse will join panelists Miles O'Brien, CNN's Emmy Award-winning chief technology and environment correspondent, and Susan Wood, former director of the Office of Women's Health at the United States Federal Drug Administration, for a discussion on the difficult relationship between science and public policy. The event, to be moderated by WNYC radio host Leonard Lopate, will take place in Caspary Auditorium at 7 p.m., with refreshments at 6:15. If successful, the series, called “Conversations on Science,” will continue in the next academic year with three additional lectures, each with a panel of two to three high-profile experts. For more information, contact Arianne Dowdell-Marshall, x8073 or adowdell@rockefeller.edu.

**Direct deposit available for flexible spending accounts.** The new option is open to employees receiving reimbursements under either the health care or the dependent care flexible spending account. For more information, contact Human Resources at x7788.

Announcements for this page may be submitted to [thenning@rockefeller.edu](mailto:thenning@rockefeller.edu).

## BENCHMARKS

**Paul Nurse**, President  
**Jane Rendall**, Corporate Secretary  
**Joe Bonner**, Director of Communications

**Zach Veilleux**, Executive Editor  
**Talley Henning Brown**, Assistant Editor

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## OBITUARY

### President Emeritus Joshua Lederberg dies at 82

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

His career spanned 60 years, more than a few fields of science and a presidential legacy of dramatic expansion. And throughout it all, Joshua S. Lederberg was valued as highly for his role as mentor, colleague and member of a global community as for his groundbreaking research. At Yale, the University of Wisconsin, Stanford and ultimately Rockefeller, Dr. Lederberg approached his work with scrupulous attention to detail, highly imaginative approaches to problems and lifelong dedication to fostering community. Dr. Lederberg died February 2, at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, at the age of 82.

Dr. Lederberg, who grew up in New York City, was an undergraduate at Columbia College, working in the lab of geneticist Francis Ryan, when Oswald Avery, Colin MacLeod and Maclyn McCarty published their landmark 1944 paper on DNA transformation. With Dr. Ryan's help, Dr. Lederberg began working with Edward L. Tatum at Yale University, where he looked for mutant genes in *Escherichia coli*, the common colon bacteria, and soon made his first famous discovery: that some bacteria have sex. It isn't sex as humans know it, but

[continued on page 3](#)



## CAMPUS NEWS

### Neuroscientist Gerald Fischbach named visiting professor

by ZACH VEILLEUX

A neuroscientist who spent his scientific career studying how connections between brain cells form — and who currently helps form connections between researchers studying autism — has been appointed a visiting professor at Rockefeller University. Gerald Fischbach, the second visiting professor to be named since the formal visitors program began last fall, will divide his time between the university's campus and his office at The Simons Foundation, where he has served as scientific director of the foundation's Autism Research Initiative since early 2006.

Dr. Fischbach, who received his M.D. from Cornell University Medical School in 1962, has worked for much of his career on synapses, the connections between nerve cells through which information and instructions are passed during perception, thought and locomotion. He was the first to pioneer the use of nerve cell cultures in order to study developing synapses in laboratory conditions, and his research led to the characterization of many of the biochemical, electrophysiologi-

cal and molecular mechanisms by which they function. His more recent work has been on neurotrophic factors that influence synaptic efficacy and nerve cell survival.

Over the last four decades he has held faculty positions at the National Institutes of Health, Harvard Medical School, Washington University School of Medicine and Columbia University Medical Center. In addition to his research, Dr. Fischbach served as chair of the department of neurobiology at Washington University and at Harvard Medical School, as director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders

and Stroke and, from 2001 to 2006, as Columbia's executive vice president for health and biomedical sciences and dean of the faculties of medicine. Since stepping down from the last position he has been eager to reimmerse himself full-time in big-picture thinking about science.

With its focus on autism, The Simons Foundation afforded Dr. Fischbach that opportunity. Founded by mathematician,

[continued on page 2](#)

## FACULTY

### Hironori Funabiki promoted to associate professor

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

Hironori Funabiki, head of the Laboratory of Chromosome and Cell Biology, has been promoted from assistant professor to associate professor. Dr. Funabiki, who came to the United States from Japan in 1996 and to Rockefeller University in 2002, studies how chromosomes segregate evenly during cell division. Following approval by the Rockefeller Board of Trustees in November, the promotion was officially announced December 1.

Dr. Funabiki has been studying the details of cell division since graduate school. He earned his undergraduate degree in chemistry and his doctorate in cell biology from Kyoto University, working there with Mitsuhiro Yanagida. In 1996 he joined the laboratory of Andrew Murray for postdoctoral research that began at the University of California, San Francisco, and later moved to Harvard University. Dr. Funabiki's main research question over the last dozen years concerns a biological function that is essential for the development of all life: When a cell prepares to divide into two daughter cells,

[continued on page 2](#)



**Reconnecting.** Gerald Fischbach at his Simons Foundation office.

# Carolina in his mind

## Assistant Director of Security Michael John leaves after 31 years

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

The Monday morning commute can be arduous enough within city limits, but when you're traveling 411 miles, it's an epic journey. It's also a trip that Michael John, assistant director of security, has been making regularly for the last two years. His commute this month, however, will be his last. Mr. John is retiring from Rockefeller University after 31 years to move to Wake Forest, North Carolina, and the new home he has built there with his wife.

Mr. John joined Rockefeller as a maintenance clerk in March 1977, one month after arriving in the United States from his native Trinidad and Tobago. He joined the Office of Security that summer, as a guard on the night shift, and moved to the day shift one year later. He was promoted to sergeant in 1987, lieutenant in 1988, captain in 1990, operations manager in 1999, and in May 2007, Mr. John became assistant director of security.

It was for a security industry conference in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 20 years ago that Mr. John first visited the state, and he felt instantly at home. "You can blame the Security Office for my move. I love being at Rockefeller, but once they sent me to that conference, I knew that I wanted to live in North Carolina one day," says Mr. John. Ten years later, he met his future wife, Martha, who grew up in



**Headed south.** Michael John's new home, in Wake Forest, North Carolina, during its construction. Mr. John's wife, Martha, has been living there since 2005.

North Carolina and had long harbored the desire to move back there as well. The two married in 2004 and in 2005 chose Wake Forest, a college town outside Raleigh, to build their new home. Since then, Mr. John has traveled by plane at least once a month back to Wake Forest, where his wife moved two and a half years ago. This spring, Mr. John will join her permanently.

"Michael John is an example of the American dream both in personal achieve-

ments and service to others," says John Tooze, vice president for scientific and facility operations. "We all wish him as much success in North Carolina as he has enjoyed in New York."

Among the proudest accomplishments of his three decades at Rockefeller, Mr. John counts the bachelor's degree he earned at Lehman College in 2003, majoring in English literature, through Rockefeller's tuition reimbursement program. He has also been central in preparing for many

of the university's high-profile visitors, working with federal agencies to coordinate security for First Lady Laura Bush, former United States President Jimmy Carter, former First Lady Hillary Clinton and former Vice President Walter Mondale, among others.

"One of the things I appreciate most about Rockefeller is the network between the offices. My office has always had a great working relationship with people in the other offices, and it makes everyone's jobs much easier," Mr. John says. "I'm really going to miss the genuine team spirit this university has."

Mr. John will continue to work in security in North Carolina, and in his off-hours will be busy in his role as homeowner.

"I really love to work in the garden, and my wife has a very long 'honey-do' list of things to do around the house," he says. "I'm surprising myself by doing a lot of things I've never done before, building this and that around the house, and I'm getting pretty good at it!"

Mr. John's official last day is March 31, but he'll be available to help with the transition while Security Director James Rogers begins the search for Mr. John's replacement. "Rockefeller has been really good to me, over the years, and I would be happy to go the extra mile and make sure everything goes well," he says.

## Faculty and Students Club turns 50

Originally suggested in the mid-1950s by Life Trustee David Rockefeller and President Detlev W. Bronk, the Faculty and Students Club opened in 1958 to encourage social interaction and scientific collaboration among the faculty, postdocs, students and staff of Rockefeller University. The Faculty and Students Club celebrated its 50th anniversary on Monday, March 17, complete with a proper Saint Patrick's Day spread of corned beef, cabbage and Irish coffee. Pat Griffin — who began as a bartender in 1986 — has been manager of the FSC since 1994. He and two part-time bartenders now serve 400 to 500 FSC members each week, out of a total membership of about 750. The most popular drink? At about five kegs a week, beer — specifically Yuengling draft, Yuengling Black and Tan, Brooklyn Lager and London Pride — with margaritas a close second. Photos from the club's past include, clockwise from top left: Peter Dumiak and an unidentified bartender; T.P. King and Mabel Bright mid-dance; a chef laying out a catered spread; and the Lester Lanin Band, which played at the club's 25th anniversary, in 1983.



## Fischbach named visiting professor (continued from page 1)

hedge fund manager and Rockefeller trustee Jim Simons and his wife Marilyn, The Simons Foundation has awarded \$130 million over five years to researchers studying autism. Recent awards have focused on understanding the complex genetics of autism; in its biggest project, about 100 researchers at 13 universities are interviewing families and collecting blood samples in an effort to identify genetic factors that may enhance the risk of the disease. Other investigators are focused on the neuroscience of autism and on data analysis.

"Autism is not like other brain disorders — there are no molecules to target and the mutations involved are complex," says Dr. Fischbach. "In order to learn more about it, we need scientists to think about the brain from many different angles. We need mathematicians, engineers, chemists and neuroscientists to approach the problems from their unique perspectives and share their findings."

It's this commitment to interdisciplinary thinking that makes Dr. Fischbach an ideal

addition to the university, says Rockefeller president Paul Nurse. "Gerry has spent his career working on synapses, but he's always asked broad questions. He wants to know how synapses form and how they function, but also how they interact with muscles, what happens when they fail, and how they account for behavior and social interactions," says Dr. Nurse. "As an administrator, he's worked hard to bring scientists together across disciplines."

"What's exciting about Rockefeller is that the faculty here are already thinking in broad ways and focusing on big problems," says Dr. Fischbach. "There's a lot of activity in terms of applying math and physics to all aspects of neurology. I'm looking forward to engaging with the community, taking part in discussions and helping contribute to the academic life of Rockefeller. I may even do some experiments."

Dr. Fischbach will continue at The Simons Foundation while at Rockefeller and will also maintain his small lab at Columbia, from which he is on leave.

## Funabiki promoted (continued from page 1)

how are the chromosomes equally divided so that each new cell ends up with exactly the same set of chromosomes? The cascade of events known as mitosis is guided by a signaling pathway that scientists have yet to fully characterize, and because dysfunctions in the mitotic process may cause cell death or an abnormal number of chromosomes that can lead to cancer or birth defects, the question carries weighty implications.

"The common metaphor is that the chromosome is like a passenger being carried to its proper place. But I believe it is not a passive passenger, like someone on a subway, but an active passenger, like someone in a taxi giving an address and perhaps even directions to a driver," says Dr. Funabiki. "We're trying to listen to that conversation between the passenger and the driver."

Dr. Funabiki began his independent career at Rockefeller in 2002, and since then has made some key discoveries to help translate that conversation. Chromosome

segregation depends on a precise concert of steps, including the formation of the mitotic spindle, which guides the direction of chromosome movement. Dr. Funabiki discovered that the spindle forms when an enzyme called Aurora B is activated by chromosomes and that this mechanism, together with others, facilitates the construction of the structural pathways on which chromosomes segregate.

Dr. Funabiki's lab has driven collaborative investigations at Rockefeller as well, with C. David Allis, head of the Laboratory of Chromatin Biology and Epigenetics, and with Brian T. Chait, head of the Laboratory of Mass Spectrometry and Gaseous Ion Chemistry.

"I am extremely fortunate to be at Rockefeller University. The community here has been tremendously supportive, not only by encouraging my research but by collaborating with me on things I might not otherwise have had the opportunity to do," says Dr. Funabiki. "I look forward to all that is just beginning."

## Madhav Dhodapkar to move to Yale

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

Madhav Dhodapkar, head of Rockefeller University's Laboratory of Tumor Immunology and Immunotherapy, has accepted a new appointment as professor of medicine and chief of hematology at Yale University School of Medicine and director of hematologic malignancies and stem cell transplantation at the Yale Cancer Center. Dr. Dhodapkar plans to expand the clinical aspect of his research when he moves his laboratory to Yale this summer.

A graduate of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, India, where he received his medical degrees, Dr. Dhodapkar served as assistant professor of hematology and oncology at the Myeloma Institute of the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences before joining Rockefeller in 1998. "It was Rockefeller's particular strength in immunology and the presence of Ralph Steinman at Rockefeller that drew me

to come work here 10 years ago," says Dr. Dhodapkar, who was an assistant professor in Dr. Steinman's Laboratory of Cellular Physiology and Immunology before becoming head of his own lab as Irene Diamond Assistant Professor in 2001. He was promoted to associate professor in 2004 and named Leon Hess Associate Professor in 2007.

Dr. Dhodapkar works to understand how the human immune system detects and responds to growing tumors in people with multiple myeloma, a cancer of the plasma cells in bone marrow that affects upward of 45,000 people in the United States. It was Dr. Dhodapkar's work with stem cell transplants in the 1990s that convinced him that immunology might lead to effective therapeutic possibilities for cancer. "Following a transplant, the donor T cells react against tumor cells in the patient receiving the transplant; it's called

the graft-versus-tumor effect," he says. Dr. Dhodapkar is also interested in whether there is immune recognition against cancer cells in people who don't have cancer, and if so, how that immune recognition is happening and what causes the dysfunction of those immune cells in cases where tumors develop. "Our goal is to translate the evolving body of knowledge surrounding these questions into something that is clinically useful, because our belief is that it should be possible to actually harness the immune system against cancer," he says.

Dr. Dhodapkar's work at Rockefeller has contributed to the recognition that the immune system targets preneoplastic lesions in people without tumors, and also helped identify the drug thalidomide as a treatment for multiple myeloma, developments that have helped increase long-term survival rates from under five percent to nearly 25 percent.

At Yale, Dr. Dhodapkar will shift his focus to emphasize translational research, as many of his laboratory findings — specifically, ideas for new vaccines — are at a preclinical stage. "Having greater access at Yale to facilities for making dendritic cell and other vaccines should allow us to ask many of the clinical questions we have formulated and hopefully will fuel that part of our research," he says.

After accepting the position last fall, Dr. Dhodapkar began moving his laboratory to Connecticut this spring and he expects the transition to be complete by late summer. "There is so much I will miss about Rockefeller, because it is a very special place. Not only are there phenomenal scientific minds here, but also the people here who don't directly do science care so much about helping to create an environment that is tremendously supportive," he says.

## OBITUARIES

### Joshua Lederberg dies at 82 (continued from page 1)

"bacterial conjugation," as he termed it, that accomplishes the mission of genetic exchange. This momentous discovery, made at the age of 22, was the subject of Dr. Lederberg's Ph.D. It would later be recognized with the 1958 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, which he shared with Drs. Tatum and George Wells Beadle.

It was also the beginning of the burgeoning field of molecular genetics. Norton Zinder, head of Rockefeller's Laboratory of Genetics, was Dr. Lederberg's first graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where Dr. Lederberg joined the faculty in 1947 and founded the department of medical genetics in 1957. Dr. Zinder's experiments showed that certain bacterial viruses, called bacteriophages, can pick up bacterial genes and transfer them to the cells they infect — a second means of genetic exchange. "Josh recruited people all beginning work in new areas, and that seemed to be his recipe for success," says Dr. Zinder. "Everywhere we turned we struck oil. You can't imagine how excited I was ... just figuring out how it all worked, completely on our own and with all this new stuff coming in as fast as it could. We rarely did an experiment that didn't work and tell us something we didn't know before." It was also at the University of Wisconsin that Dr. Lederberg published several research papers with his first wife, Esther Lederberg.

Following the University of Wisconsin, Dr. Lederberg began his pioneering work in the fields of artificial intelligence and exobiology at the Stanford University School of Medicine, where he founded its department of genetics.

He was the fifth president of The Rockefeller University, serving from 1978 to 1990. Among his numerous contributions to the university's growth, Dr. Lederberg oversaw the construction of the John D. Rockefeller Jr. and David Rockefeller Research Building and oversaw the creation of the highly successful University Fellows Program in 1985. Under the program's auspices, 20 recruits have become tenured professors at Rockefeller.

James Darnell Jr., head of the Laboratory of Molecular Cell Biology and coauthor of the University Fellows Program with Dr. Lederberg and David Luck, was one of Dr. Lederberg's closest colleagues. "I have been privileged to know at least fairly well all of the giants who created molecular biology in the last century and Josh Lederberg's brilliance placed him high up in this group," Dr. Darnell says. "If you excitedly began to tell him of your latest result, he grasped it completely before your last sentence was finished and

he was ready immediately with the next experiment you should do."

Throughout his research career, Dr. Lederberg remained a dedicated and trusted public policy adviser, serving nine U.S. presidential administrations and many world leaders on issues ranging from cancer and emerging infectious diseases to space exploration, nuclear and biological weapons disarmament, mental health and antimicrobial resistance. From 1966 to 1971, he wrote a weekly column for *The Washington Post* called "Science and Man," commenting on timely, often controversial topics including science education, science and democracy, population control, intelligence testing, regulation of recombinant DNA technology and biological warfare. "Josh's fine appreciation of the invisible colleges of the scientific disciplines that network the world made him sure that science could bridge America and Iran or Israel and Palestine," said Jesse Ausubel, director of the Program for Human Environment at Rockefeller, speaking at Dr. Lederberg's funeral February 5.

Dr. Lederberg retired from the Rockefeller presidency in 1990, becoming University Professor, Raymond and Beverly Sackler Scholar and head of the Laboratory of Molecular Genetics and Informatics, where he continued to conduct research. "As an emeritus president, Josh continued to be a wonderful campus citizen and a valued and trusted adviser to succeeding presidents, including myself," says Paul Nurse, Rockefeller's ninth and current president. "I am enormously grateful for the support, encouragement and friendship he afforded me."

In addition to the Nobel Prize, Dr. Lederberg's was awarded a National Medal of Science, a Presidential Medal of Freedom and many other prestigious awards, as well as membership in the National Academy of Sciences, the New York Academy of Sciences and the New York Academy of Medicine and foreign membership in the Royal Society, London.

"Josh died with his scientific boots on," says David Thaler, associate professor and member of Dr. Lederberg's Rockefeller laboratory. "He once said to me that when he is not there I should frame a matter in my mind and imagine what he would say about it. I replied that it is a treasure to interact with him precisely because what he has to say is likely to be an enlightened and delightful surprise."

Dr. Lederberg is survived by his wife of 40 years, Marguerite S. Lederberg, children Anne Lederberg and David Kirsch and two grandchildren.

### President Emeritus Frederick Seitz dies at 96

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

"Over a long time, things that people learn purely out of curiosity can have a revolutionary effect on human affairs." As president of The Rockefeller University, Frederick Seitz helped lay the foundation for entirely new avenues of inquiry at Rockefeller and forged lasting relationships with the larger scientific community to help ensure the future success of Rockefeller scientists. Dr. Seitz, fourth president of Rockefeller University, passed away March 2, at the age of 96.

As a physicist, Dr. Seitz was perhaps best known for his hand in developing the Wigner-Seitz method, the first mathematical system for calculating the cohesive energy of a metal based on the known properties of its atoms, which he created with his teacher at Princeton University, Eugene P. Wigner, during his doctoral studies in physics. One of the several books he authored, *A Modern Theory of Solids*, was influential in the growth of solid-state physics — the study of the atomic properties of matter. "This book, one of Fred Seitz's many original contributions to theoretical physics, played a crucial role in producing the remarkable post-war generation of solid-state physicists," says Nicola Khuri, head of Rockefeller's Laboratory of Theoretical Physics and a close colleague of Dr. Seitz. "A mere 10 years after this book appeared, the amazing technological revolution started, all born out of solid-state physics." In 1973, Dr. Seitz received from President Richard Nixon the National Medal of Science, the country's highest award for scientists, for his contributions to the modern quantum theory of the solid state of matter.

Frederick Seitz was born July 4, 1911 in San Francisco, California, to Frederick and Emily Hofman Seitz. Following a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Stanford University in 1932, he received his Ph.D. from Princeton in 1934. He served on the faculties of the University of Rochester, the University of Pennsylvania, the University



of Illinois and the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University). He also worked as a research physicist at the General Electric Laboratories and from 1962 to 1969 was president of the National Academy of Sciences. Dr. Seitz became the fourth president of The Rockefeller University in 1968.

During his 10 years as Rockefeller president, Dr. Seitz oversaw the creation of new basic research programs in the fields of reproductive biology, cell biology, molecular biology and the neurosciences, as well as new clinical investigations at The Rockefeller University Hospital. The university also began its joint M.D.-Ph.D. program with Cornell University Medical College, and created seven endowed professorships during his tenure, and Dr. Seitz was instrumental in launching the first development program in the university's history. He also helped establish the 1,200-acre Center for Field Research in Ethology and Ecology in Millbrook, New York, and the Rockefeller Archive Center in Pocantico, New York, and oversaw construction of the Benjamin and Irma G. Weiss Research Building, the Laboratory Animal Research Center (now the Comparative Bioscience Center) and Faculty House. Dr. Seitz retired from Rockefeller University in 1978.

Dr. Seitz is survived by his son, Joachim Seitz, three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. His wife of more than 50 years, Elizabeth Seitz, died in 1992.

# MILESTONES

## PROMOTIONS, AWARDS AND PERSONNEL NEWS

### Awarded:

**C. David Allis**, the 2008 ASBMB-Merck Award, from the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. The award, which includes \$5,000, recognizes outstanding contributions to research in biochemistry and molecular biology. Dr. Allis, head of the Laboratory of Chromatin Biology and Epigenetics, will receive the award and present a lecture at the ASBMB annual meeting in San Diego, California, in April.

**Emil C. Gotschlich**, the 2008 Dart/NYU Biotechnology Alumnus Achievement Award, for his development in the 1960s of vaccines against Groups A and C meningococcal meningitis, and for his later studies of the pathogenicity of streptococci and gonococci. The Dart/NYU awards recognize the role of pure science in the development of pharmaceuticals and honor those scientists whose work has led to major advances in patient care. Dr. Gotschlich, head of the Laboratory of Bacterial Pathogenesis, will be presented with the award at a special symposium at New York University on March 31. **Arnold J. Levine**, professor at the Institute for Advanced Study and former president of Rockefeller University, is also one of this year's awardees.

### Promoted (academic appointments):

**Robert Agate**, from postdoctoral fellow to research associate, Nottebohm Lab.

**Chae Gyu Park**, from research associate to research assistant professor, Steinman Lab.

**Cristian Perez**, from postdoctoral associate to research associate, Friedman Lab.

### Hired:

**David Amadu**, research assistant, Steinman Lab.

**Sigalit Benjamin**, postdoctoral associate, Steller Lab.

**Marun Capoor**, visiting scientist, Fischetti Lab.

**William Carey**, administrative assistant, Hatten Lab.

**Hung-Yuan Chi**, postdoctoral associate, Fuchs Lab.

**Hyo-Young Chung**, postdoctoral associate, Rice Lab.

**Fabien Decailot**, postdoctoral associate, Sakmar Lab.

**Aimee deCathelineau**, associate editor, *JCB*, The Rockefeller University Press.

**Jeffrey DeGrasse**, postdoctoral associate, Chait Lab.

**Keya Doyle**, wireless administrator, Telecommunications Services.

**Camille Fontaine**, research assistant, Pfaff Lab.

**Genevieve Hannon**, laboratory administrator, Muir Lab.

**Yoshika Hayakawa-Yano**, postdoctoral associate, Robert Darnell Lab.

**Leanne Johnson**, postdoctoral associate, Krueger Lab.

**Lennox Joslyn**, animal attendant, CBC.

**Dimitris Kallifidas**, postdoctoral associate, Brady Lab.

**Jung-Min Kee**, postdoctoral associate, Muir Lab.

**Jung-Ae Kim**, postdoctoral associate, Allis Lab.

**Danielle King**, laboratory administrator, Tarakhovskiy Lab.

**Wu Li**, member of the adjunct faculty, Gilbert Lab.

**Francisca Lottersberger**, postdoctoral associate, de Lange Lab.

**Joana Loureiro**, postdoctoral fellow, Rice Lab.

**Chen Luxenburg**, postdoctoral associate, Fuchs Lab.

**Philip Mazzola**, senior Windows systems administrator, Information Technology.

**Lisa Mercado**, animal attendant, CBC.

**Roxana Mironska**, research assistant, Rout Lab.

**Hiroshi Mitsui**, visiting assistant professor, Krueger Lab.

**Gladys Negron**, assistant metabolic cook, Hospital Bionutrition.

**Eleonore Real**, postdoctoral fellow, Vosshall Lab.

**Joel Richter**, visiting professor, Robert Darnell Lab.

**Joseph Schauer**, research assistant, Steinman Lab.

**Nicholas Schiff**, member of the adjunct faculty, Pfaff Lab.

**Thomas Luke Simmons**, postdoctoral associate, Brady Lab.

**Christina Ann Sobin**, member of the adjunct faculty, McEwen Lab.

**Margaret Sosa**, laboratory administrator, Kreek Lab.

**Isaul Vargas**, Java programmer, Hospital Informatics.

**Robert Weiss**, administrative assistant, Hirsch Lab.

**Haiqiang Yu**, visiting scientist, Proteomics Resource Center.

**Yuan Yuan**, postdoctoral associate, Robert Darnell Lab.

**Neta Zach**, postdoctoral fellow, Gilbert Lab.

This publication lists new hires, retirements, awards and promotions. Staff promotions are listed yearly; academic promotions and appointments are listed monthly.

## OBITUARIES

# Biochemist Shigeru Sassa dies at 72

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

For more than three decades, Shigeru Sassa served as not only a faculty member, but one of Rockefeller University's most dedicated ambassadors. Having come to the United States and Rockefeller University in 1968 after beginning his scientific career in Japan, Dr. Sassa was a talented physician-scientist who helped forge lasting relationships between his colleagues at Rockefeller and those in his native country. Dr. Sassa, associate professor emeritus, died January 27, at the age of 72.

Dr. Sassa was a biochemist, cell biologist and physician whose research focused on the biosynthesis of heme, an oxygen-binding pigment that gives color to red blood cells and plays an important role in metabolizing drugs and environmental chemicals. Dr. Sassa discovered the mechanism by which heme is produced in erythroid progenitor cells — the precursors to red blood cells — during their differentiation process. In addition, he characterized several gene defects that can lead to porphyrias, a group of metabolic disorders that can involve severe skin, gastrointestinal and/or neurological problems, and created a test for lead poisoning that is still in common use today.

Born March 3, 1935 in Tokyo, Japan, Dr. Sassa received his M.D. and

Ph.D. from the University of Tokyo in 1961 and 1966, respectively. He served as an instructor in medicine and a hematologist at the university's research hospital until 1968, when he came to New York and The Rockefeller University as a research associate in the laboratory of plant physiologist Sam Granick. In 1971, he was appointed assistant professor and joined Attallah Kappas's Laboratory of Pharmacology. He was appointed associate professor in 1975 and associate professor with tenure in 1979. In 1992, Dr. Sassa became head of the Laboratory of Biochemical Hematology, and from 1996 until his retirement in 2000, he served as chair of The Rockefeller University Hospital's Institutional Review Board.

Dr. Kappas, who is now Sherman Fairchild Professor Emeritus, says, "Shigeru Sassa's contributions were many and important. He was a splendid teacher, a meticulous experimenter and a close and dear friend to those with whom he worked." In addition to his work in the laboratory, Dr. Sassa took time from his research to help initiate and maintain cooperative relationships with colleagues at Japanese organizations and academic institutions.

Dr. Sassa is survived by his wife, Reiko, son Osamu and daughter Junko.

# Jonathan Winson, founder of dream analysis, dies at 84

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

"Dreams were never designed to be remembered, but they are keys to who we are." Widely considered the founder of modern dream analysis, Jonathan Winson, who wrote these words in 1985, bridged the fields of psychoanalysis and neurobiology by elucidating the biological underpinnings and evolutionary imperative of dreams. Dr. Winson, associate professor emeritus of The Rockefeller University, passed away February 3 from pneumonia in Santa Monica, California. He was 84 years old.

Born February 20, 1923 in New York City, Dr. Winson received his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from City College of New York in 1944 and his master's degree in aeronautical engineering from New York University the following year. After completing a professional degree in the same field at the California Institute of Technology and a doctoral degree in applied mathematics from Columbia University, Dr. Winson took over management of his family's New York manufacturing business with his brother, Mike Winson. A long-held fascination with sleep and dreams led him in 1967 to join The Rockefeller University, as an apprentice in Neil Miller's Laboratory of Physiological Psychology.

Through studies of the rat brain, Dr. Winson reasoned that the key to understanding dreams is theta rhythm, sinusoidal waveforms that occur in the brains of all vertebrates and that synchronize the neuronal transmissions that occur during waking experience in order to store them in long-term memory during rapid-eye-movement (REM) sleep, the state of sleep when most dreams occur. He made two remarkable discoveries about theta rhythm: that its

elimination results in severe long-term memory deficits; and that it occurs during species-specific behaviors that are crucial to survival.

Dr. Winson also showed that information flow through the hippocampus, the part of the brain responsible for learning and memory, is at its highest rate not only during crucial waking events but also during REM sleep. From these findings, Dr. Winson formulated the theory that dreams evolved as a tool for remembering information important to survival and for consolidation of new and old memories. In 1985, he published *Brain and Psyche: The Biology of the Unconscious*, inextricably tying together the fields of neurobiology and psychoanalysis.

Dr. Winson was appointed assistant professor at Rockefeller in 1973 and associate professor in 1979. He retired in 1988 and moved to Santa Monica, California. "Dr. Winson was an old-world gentleman. He saw science, and one's participation in it, as a real privilege not to be taken lightly," says Constantine Pavlides, research associate professor at Rockefeller and Dr. Winson's first graduate student. "As a graduate student, I was always worried that we better get our results published or someone would beat us to it. Dr. Winson reassured me that science is a gentleman's game and that the important thing is to scrutinize one's findings and make sure they are, above all else, correct. He stressed that science is the pursuit of truth, and that that should never be compromised."

Dr. Winson is survived by his wife of 61 years, Judith, his brother Mike, daughter June Meehan, son-in-law Garvin Meehan and granddaughter Heather.

## Speakers named for Evolution Symposium

"From RNA to Humans: A Symposium on Evolution" will be held May 1 and 2 on the Rockefeller University campus. Experts from institutions across the world will speak on subjects from the RNA world hypothesis to the development of eukaryotes to the evolution of humans. The speakers are:

### May 1

#### Session 1: *Archaeon Chemistry and Earliest Fossils*

Gerald F. Joyce, The Scripps Research Institute  
Jack W. Szostak, Harvard Medical School  
Russell F. Doolittle, University of California, San Diego  
Roger Buick, University of Washington  
Andrew H. Knoll, Harvard University

#### Session 2: *Cells, Cellular Evolution and Protein History*

Thomas Cavalier-Smith, University of Oxford  
Eugene V. Koonin, National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Institutes of Health  
W. Ford Doolittle, Dalhousie University  
Phillip A. Sharp, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

### May 1 Evening Lecture

Jerry A. Coyne, The University of Chicago

### May 2

#### Session 3: *Development of Eukaryotic Genetic Capacity and Multicellularity*

Andrew Roger, Dalhousie University  
David Penny, Massey University  
Peter W.H. Holland, University of Oxford  
Ulrich Technau, University of Vienna

#### Session 4: *Human Evolution through the Lens of DNA Sequences*

L. Luca Cavalli-Sforza, Stanford University School of Medicine  
Katherine S. Pollard, University of California, Davis  
Bruce T. Lahn, The University of Chicago  
Svante Pääbo, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology