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## NEWS AND NOTES 1992, VOL.2, NO.17

The Rockefeller University

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# news & notes

January 17, 1992 Volume 2, Number 17

The Rockefeller University



Those who worked on the 1992 *Funding Guide* include (from left to right) Lauren Hackett, Tish Koyen, Brian Hardy, Penny Cook, and Ginny Losito.

## Lecture features top cancer researcher

Bert Vogelstein, professor of oncology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, will be the featured speaker at the 15th annual Philip Levine Memorial Lecture to be held at Rockefeller Tues., Feb. 18, at 3:45 P.M.

Vogelstein, widely recognized as one of the nation's leading cancer researchers, will speak on "Genetic Alterations Underlying Colorectal Tumorigenesis." Vogelstein has proposed a model for this tumor type that may ultimately lead to a means for assessing an individual's risk for developing cancer and for gauging a cancer patient's prognosis.

The afternoon talk is part of the Friday lecture series but was moved to Tuesday due to scheduling conflicts. It will be preceded by tea in Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Hall at 3:15 P.M.

Philip Levine, a major contributor to the conquest of Rh hemolytic disease, was on the scientific staff of Rockefeller, then known as The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, from 1925 to 1932. He worked with Nobel laureate Karl Landsteiner in the discovery of the Rh factor and in delineating its importance for human disease. In

1946 he received the Lasker Award. As a visiting professor at Sloan-Kettering Institute after his retirement, he developed an interest in the expression of blood group factors in cancer cells, theorizing ahead of his time about the relationship of human genetics to neoplasia. He established the lecture series on the pathogenesis of cancer at Rockefeller in 1977.

Faculty from Rockefeller, The New York Hospital, and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center select the lecturers. Previous speakers include Michael Potter, Philip Leder, and Suzanne Cory.

## New manager gives benefits field 'personal touch'

Darryl Williams, the new benefits manager in Personnel, entered his profession because he wanted to change it.

"When I looked at how benefits were being managed at many institutions, I saw something important was missing: that was a personal touch," he said. "All the principles of customer service were neglected when it came to communicating with an organization's own employees. I saw making employee benefits work better as a challenge."

Once Williams dug deeper into the field—first at Chase Manhattan Bank, then at Hertz Corporation and Columbia University—he found that its complexity fascinated him. Each employee's age, plans, temperament, family, and financial status affect how he or she can use a benefits package to the best advantage. In addition, benefits offered to employees must respond to rapidly changing Federal regulations, from tax laws to social security mandates.

Williams is eager to help

## Guide to help Rockefeller's investigators follow the money

A publication from the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) will soon offer guidance to all Rockefeller investigators in pursuit of funding for their research. 1992 *Funding Guide* will provide the first comprehensive list of grants offered to Rockefeller scientists by foundations, voluntary organizations, and government sources.

"We hope that the guide serves as a useful resource for investigators on campus," said Penny Cook, director of Sponsored Programs. "Funding, especially from Federal sources, is becoming increasingly difficult to come by. We want to make sure that Rockefeller investigators are aware of all potential sources of support."

The guide was assembled by OSP staff, most notably Tish Koyen, over the last several months. It is divided into five sections: Public Health Service programs, National Science Foundation programs; other government programs; non-Federal programs; and institutional/nominated programs (in which the organization nominates the researcher for support). The publication describes all programs in detail and lists application deadlines and requirements.

1992 *Funding Guide* will be sent

to all lab heads through interoffice mail by the end of the month. OSP is also planning to put the text onto the central computer for easy reference. In the meantime, extra copies will be available in OSP, Caspary 3B. The guide will be revised yearly. To keep researchers up to date on changes in the programs that occur subsequent to the publication of the guide, a monthly addendum will be circulated.

"Even with the new guide and addenda, it's a good idea to check with our office before putting together an application," Cook said. "Deadlines and procedures can change without notice."

In a related effort to make information about funding readily available, OSP sent a thesaurus to Rockefeller investigators this week, requesting that they identify key words describing their research. The key words will enable OSP to send new information about funding for a particular research area to the appropriate individuals.

OSP, which oversees investigator-initiated requests to standard grant programs, processed 512 grant applications to nearly 60 agencies in

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2 Both art, science intrigue postdoc

3 Talks put spotlight on students

4 Program vanquishes hospital boredom



Darryl Williams

SRA) as part of an integrated, personal financial plan;

- Check payroll statements to determine whether the deductions for benefits are correct.

Williams is a native of Cleveland, Ohio. He enjoys playing the clarinet and listening to music. He is also an avid reader of biographies and other nonfiction.



## Both art, science intrigue postdoc

When Helen Field's parents gave her paper and pencils as a child to stop her from talking in church, they had no idea they were encouraging an artist.

Field, now a postdoc in the G. Cross lab, painted on and off until she was 16. Her artistic career was put on hold while she pursued a Ph.D. in biochemistry at Oxford. "Science needs a proper amount of time," noted Field. Degree in hand, Field moved to New York, and picked up her brushes again. She now goes from looking at surface antigen changes in trypanosomes to looking at models in portraiture classes at the Art Students League two to three times a week.

Field is attracted to portrait painting because of the challenge of putting "the whole person on the canvas and getting a good likeness and a good feel" for the subject. She describes her style as "realistic with lots of color." She finds both oils and watercolors intriguing, for different reasons. With watercolors she can "do things quickly and more accurately" but with oils, which take longer to dry, the painting can be constructed in layers.

In the two years she's been at Rockefeller, Field has been frequenting the city's great museums, especially the Met, "learning to see." Monet tops her list of landscape painters, while John Singer Sargent's and Rembrandt's portraits fascinate the artist/scientist.

Field and her husband recently moved to a new apartment which was large enough to have one room converted into a studio. Providentially it faces north, providing her with the unchanging light artists prefer. But Field also follows in Monet's footsteps and often paints outside, usually in Central Park. "Painting in Central Park is fun," she noted. "If you wear sunglasses people leave you alone."

According to Field, being an artist is "very chancy professionally" especially in New York where an artist is "in competition with the newest and the best." That could be why she says her next hobby may be scuba diving or at least "something dangerous" which few people venture to do. In the meantime, she will keep her day job at Rockefeller.



Helen Field, postdoc in the G. Cross lab, stands with her watercolor painting, *Su's Wedding Night*.

## Children's School accepts applications

The Rockefeller University Children's School is now accepting applications for the 1992-1993 academic year.

Two options will be available:

- **Full Year/Full Day Program.**

The Full Year/Full Day Program will run from Sept. 8, 1992, through Sept. 3, 1993, from 8:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. for children ages two years nine months through six years. The school will be open every day the university is open.

- **Academic Year Program.**

The Academic Year Program will run from Sept. 8, 1992, through June 30, 1993, with vacation coinciding with the customary December and spring breaks. The hours will be 8:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. for children ages two years nine months through six years, with a half-day option (8:30 to

11:30 A.M.) available for children ages two years nine months to three years four months. Students enrolled in the Academic Year Program may attend a summer program at additional cost.

Both the Full Year/Full Day and the Academic Year Programs will teach the academic curriculum from 8:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M., September through June.

To be assured of priority enrollment, members of the Rockefeller community must apply before Jan. 31; late applications will be considered only if space is available.

Those who have further questions or who wish to receive an application form should contact the Children's School educational director Barbara Adams, x8580 or box 50. Application forms can also be picked up at Sophie Fricke Hall.

## Corners



The hospital stairs provide a roundabout way to move among floors.

## Guide to help in search for funding

*Continued from page 1*

fiscal year 1991. This resulted in 283 awards for a total of approximately \$42 million. (Money raised by the Development Office, which oversees university-initiated proposals, is accounted for separately.) Government support makes up roughly 90 percent of the money raised through sponsored programs. Foundations and voluntary health organizations make up 7 to 8 percent, and corporations, 3 percent.

In addition to the Federal government, major supporters of Rockefeller research include: American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Arthritis Foundation, Leukemia Society of America, and Lifesciences Research Association.

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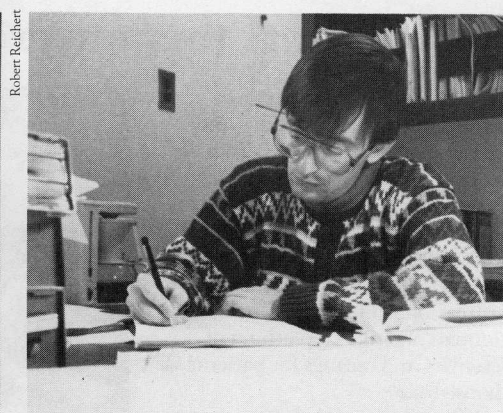
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Ideas and submissions can be sent interoffice (Box 68), by electronic mail (*newsno*), or by fax (212-570-7876).

The Rockefeller University is an equal opportunity employer and has an affirmative action program to increase the employment of women and members of protected groups at all job levels.







Thesis presentations reflect the special regard—and the special expectations—the Rockefeller faculty holds for its students. Among the Rockefeller students who gave thesis presentations recently are (from left to right) Robert Kovelman, Yuhang Zhao, and Ioannis Giannakis.

## Thesis presentations put spotlight on graduate students

by Susan Blum

Poking unobtrusively through the soil, the modest little notice board on the path to Caspary Hall belies the import of the events announced upon it. The Friday afternoon lectures given by eminent scientists from Rockefeller and elsewhere, the symposia that gather renowned researchers from around the world, the prestigious Harvey Lectures held periodically throughout the year—all are announced on simple black and white notices surrounded by the display cabinet's green wood frame.

Throughout the winter months, the board alerts the community to another important series of scientific talks: the thesis presentations of Rockefeller's graduate students. These talks summarize and explain the research project that has occupied the student for much of his or her graduate career. The research is also presented in a written thesis, and then defended orally in front of a thesis committee. About 20 graduate students will go through the process this year.

### Talks are a tradition

The thesis presentation is a tradition dating back to the time of Detlev Bronk's presidency—the era when The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research first became the Ph.D.-granting Rockefeller University. (The first class graduated in 1959.) From the start, the community-wide presentation has reflected the special regard—and the special expectations—the Rockefeller faculty holds for its students.

"Graduate students here are considered to be colleagues engaged in significant scientific research," says Bruce McEwen, Dean of Graduate Studies. "Their thesis presentations are really analogous to the lecture of any established scientist, and are worthy of university-wide attention."

Certainly the trappings of the thesis presentation are indistinguishable from other scientific talks held on campus. First comes the pre-talk tea held in the Abby dining room; then the assembly heads into Caspary Auditorium and settles in for the hour-long session.

Each presentation poses numerous challenges. Some of them are purely practical and might even be dismissed as trivial—until one considers what is actually involved in talking for an extended time in front of a sea of intent, expectant faces. Slides and other visual aides must be clear, effective, and readable. Speech must be neither too fast nor too slow, and its mike-amplified volume neither too high nor too low. ("It's a really strange sensation to hear your voice coming back to you through the mike for the first time," said Yuhang Zhao, who gave her presentation on Dec. 16.)

Walking, like talking, can also be tricky. "The mike wires have a limited length. If you're not aware of how far you can go, you can really embarrass yourself," said Ioannis Giannakis, who presented on Dec. 11. Stage fright, too, is a possibility. "Caspary Hall can be a pretty daunting place, especially when you know your thesis committee and all your friends are sitting there watching you," said Robert Kovelman, whose thesis presentation took place last week.

### Practice makes perfect

It is partly to deal with these practicalities that before the big day students give practice talks in their labs and then hold a "dress rehearsal" in Caspary Auditorium. But they hone and rehearse for far more important reasons, as well. Practicing in front of advisors, colleagues, and friends, they make sure that the talk flows logically, covers the essential points and—perhaps most important—presents

the facts in a context that makes their significance clear even to audience members who aren't specialists in the field.

The task of communicating to non-specialists may be hardest of all for graduate students in physics. "When people hear you're working in mathematics or physics, they assume it's beyond their capability to understand. But physicists are people too, and their work can be understood by non-physicists," said Giannakis. He structured his talk on superstring theory to prove just that.

Superstring theory has been dubbed "a theory of everything"—one that may explain nothing less than the creation and evolution of the universe. Giannakis's work is extremely mathematical, and he found that preparing for the thesis talk was very different from preparing for the talks he'd given in the past to specialists. "This time, for each factual statement I tried to find an analogue, a metaphor, that would make sense to non-physicists." In the process, he said, he ended up clarifying some points for himself. "Generally, I'm not forced to think at that level. But this time I had to conceptualize things in a way a general audience could understand."

Zhao did not have to start at ground zero. Her research focused on the proto-oncogene *yes*, and the basic facts about proto-oncogenes—normal genes that, when mutated, can cause cancer—are generally well known even to biologists who don't specialize in the field. Still, Zhao said, the first 10 or 15 minutes of her talk were devoted to background information that would underscore her work's significance. Kovelman, too, provided the background that made his talk on a transcription factor called TFIIC understandable to biologists who weren't necessarily transcription aficionados. "People said they

found the talk very accessible," he said. "To me, that was the highest compliment of all."

Kovelman likened giving the talk to a rite of passage. "It's something every scientist has to do," he said. Moreover, he added, "the mere fact of having done it makes you feel better about doing it again somewhere else."

### Presentations are a must

That confidence is all to the good, for successful scientific careers depend in large part on the ability to give successful presentations. "You almost can't survive in science without being an effective speaker," said Peter Model, Associate Dean for Curriculum. "Most people build their reputations by presenting their work at meetings. It's possible to build a reputation through published papers alone, but even then, successful papers lead to invitations to give presentations. Most of the leaders of science are on the circuit," he said.

One such leader is Thierry Boon, a Rockefeller graduate who earned his degree in 1970. Now a cancer researcher at the Institut Ludwig in Brussels, Boon has recently published exciting work on tumor antigens that may ultimately result in the first anti-cancer vaccine. More than 20 years after the fact, he still recalls with pleasure the process of giving his thesis presentation. "It was a superb experience," he recalled. "I had already given some scientific talks elsewhere, but the thesis presentation was special. Every means was provided us to do the best possible job. I have very good memories of that time."

So does Zhao—whose nostalgia extends back only weeks, rather than years. "Before the talk, you're nervous. You don't know what will happen. But when the time comes, it goes by very fast. And after it's over, you realize you actually enjoyed it."



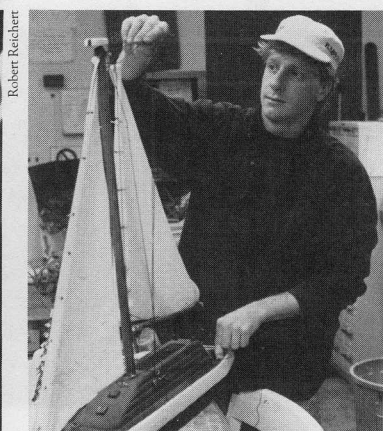
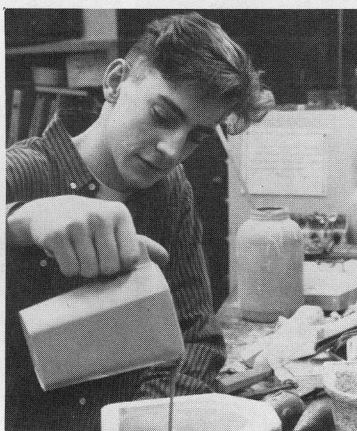
## Recreational therapy program relieves boredom of hospital routine

Boredom can be the worst part of an extended stay at a hospital—the long days can stretch on with little except another patient's snores to punctuate the passing of each minute. Patients at The Rockefeller University Hospital, however, are in little danger of this affliction. Recreational Therapist Elizabeth Gorman organizes a plethora of activities and outings for patients to choose from.

"The recreational therapy program is part of the Hospital's effort to make patients' stay here as pleasant as possible," Gorman said. "All our patients are volunteers and some of them are healthy. They really appreciate the opportunity to take up a hobby and to get away from the hospital routine."

Patients can pursue ceramics, painting, leather crafts, woodwork, ping pong, pool, discussion groups, and gardening (in the summer). They can also listen to music on the stereo or watch videos on the VCR. In addition to on-site activities, Gorman organizes trips to concerts, sporting events, and tapings of TV programs such as *The Bill Cosby Show*, *Geraldo*, and *Joan Rivers*.

Spence West, a volunteer in a three-month metabolism study, has made good use of the program's



**Left:** Volunteer Chris Dougherty pours clay. **Center:** Elizabeth Gorman, the hospital's recreational therapist looks on as Susan Ahn, a patient and volunteer, works on the pottery wheel. **Right:** Patient Spence West works on his model boat.

facilities since he arrived at the hospital. He has taken on several projects, including carving a model boat from scratch, sewing curtains for the program's new dark room, and creating velvet culottes for a friend. "I've even mended old clothes," he said. "I'm trying to put my time here to good use."

Much of the recreational equipment was donated to the program. "We're always delighted to get donations," said Gorman. "Right now we'd be especially grateful for used CDs, IBM software,

and camera equipment—and tickets. If anyone can't make it to a show at the last minute, I can always find a patient who would 'love to go.'" Gorman can be reached at x8474.

Thirteen volunteers assist Gorman, accompanying patients to events, teaching classes, and just being there in the off hours. Volunteers include Gladys McMillen, administrative secretary in the Chait lab; Madelein Naylor, secretary in the Luck lab; Chris Dougherty, son of Beth Dougherty,

secretary in the President's Office; and Dorothy Meyer, formerly of The Population Council. According to Gorman, the program still needs volunteers, especially on weekends and in the evenings.

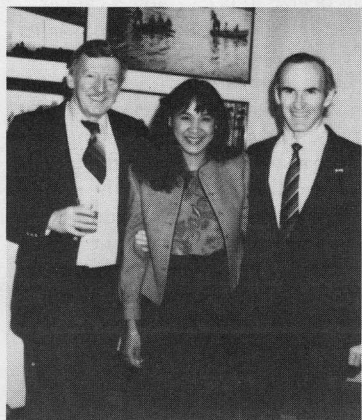
"This program brings people together," Gorman said. "It's wonderful to see patients becoming friends with each other and with the volunteers. Some patients stay in touch with each other long after they leave the hospital. Others come back and visit. That's when I know we've really been successful."

## Potpourri

**Alumnus to head institutue**  
Rockefeller alumnus Christopher Walsh (Class of '70) was named president of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston.

### Marriage

Thelma Chen, assistant professor in the Allfrey lab, was married to E. Gordon Cleland, an attorney, on Jan. 2.



The Allfrey lab held a reception for Assistant Professor Thelma Chen (center) and her husband E. Gordon Cleland (right) after they were married. Standing with the couple is Professor Vincent Allfrey.

### Archive authors

Darwin Stapleton, director of the Rockefeller Archive Center in Pocantico Hills, and his assistant Kenneth Rose contributed an article to the Spring 1992 "Philanthropy and Education" edition of *Teachers College Record*. Their article reviews John D. Rockefeller's founding of The Rockefeller Institute, the Rockefeller Foundation, the University of Chicago, and Spelman College, as well as the continuing Rockefeller tradition in education.

### Children's School Benefit

Walt Disney's classic film *Fantasia* will be shown in Caspary Auditorium, Sat., Jan. 18, at 4:00 P.M. A donation of \$3 is requested to benefit the Children's School.

### Chemical neuroanatomy course

Postdocs and students are invited to participate in a course "Chemical Neuroanatomy" offered by Teresa Milner of Cornell University Medical College. The course, to be held Tuesdays and Thursdays, Jan. 28 through March 31, from 1:00–2:30 P.M., will be a joint teaching effort of faculty members from Cornell Medical College, Rockefeller, Memorial Sloan-Kettering,

and New York University. Animal models will be used to present contemporary methods in tract-tracing, immunocytochemistry, digital image analysis, tissue culture, receptor autoradiography, and *in situ* hybridization. A background in neuroscience and cellular neuroscience is prerequisite. The course will be given in Room A531, CUMC, 1300 York Ave. For further information, call Milner at 570-2900.

### Computer Course

The Electronics Laboratory is offering an introductory course on the use of the personal computer in the laboratory. The course will begin Tues., Jan. 21, in Tower 305, from 9:30–10:30 A.M. It will

include a comprehensive presentation of the PC-DOS/MS-DOS operating system, Version 5.0, for IBM PCs or compatibles; graphical user interfaces; a guide to hardware systems; and recommended practices such as disk file management. Those wishing to attend should contact Paul Rosen, x8750.

### Lunchtime film

As the PBS documentary, *Cajun Country: Don't Drop the Potato* was not shown in its entirety at the December showing due to technical difficulties, it has been rescheduled for Thurs., Jan. 30, at noon, in Tower 305. Folklorist Alan Lomax will trace the history of French-speaking Louisianians. Admission is free.

## Last chance to sign up for conference

There are only a few days left to reserve a place at the symposium "Tropical Forest Medical Resources and the Conservation of Biodiversity" at Rockefeller University next Friday and Saturday. The conference will explore the

medical value of tropical forests and examine ways that medicinal plant use can help conserve endangered tropical forests. Those interested in attending should contact the Deans' Office, x8086, before Wed., Jan. 22.