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The Rockefeller University

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news & notes

April 23, 1993 Volume 3, Number 28

The Rockefeller University



Annemarie Walsh-Mullen will give teenage girls a tour of the Transgenic Service Laboratory she directs as part of Take Our Daughters to Work Day on Wednesday.

University invites parents to take girls to work

As part of "Take Our Daughters to Work Day," The Rockefeller University is inviting parents to bring their teenage daughters to campus on Wed., Apr. 28 to learn more about careers in science and fields related to science.

"Participating in this nationwide program is a great way for the university to encourage girls to consider careers in science," said Ingrid Reed, vice president for public affairs and corporate secretary. "We are offering an organized program of activities to familiarize them with the university, show them the variety of work that goes

See *University*, page 2

2 A scientist ahead of his time

3 Business and science in NYC

Committee reviews health benefits

A new eight-member committee, the Employee Representative Committee on Health Insurance, met for the first time last Friday. The committee will review proposals to revise employee contributions for health insurance.

"The rising cost of health insurance has put pressure on every other budget item at the university," said Fred Bohen, executive vice president and chief operating officer. "That includes lab support, services, and salaries. Unless we can begin to control the rapid growth in the cost of the university's contributions for our health benefit programs, all other aspects of the university's programs will be adversely impacted."

Employee contributions for health insurance have not changed at Rockefeller since 1976, when employees covered 30 percent of the university's expenses for the plan. Due to inflation and rising costs, employees now pay for less than 3 percent. "While the cost of health care benefits has risen dramatically—doubling since 1989—the university has not yet passed on any of these increased costs to health insurance participants, unlike most other institutions in the country," observed Virginia Huffman, director of Personnel.

The committee will review a draft of an administration proposal designed to maintain the high level of health care coverage for members

of the university, while starting to bring the university's costs under control. Proposals include increasing employee contributions so that they cover a larger share of the university's health insurance expenses and establishing a more progressive system so that employee contributions are related to salary levels. Other proposals are to encourage spouses who can get health insurance from other institutions to do so and to introduce a new "couples" category of coverage.

Committee members will also discuss the issue of eligibility for the university's health insurance. They will consider whether insurance should be extended to unmarried domestic partners, and under what conditions part-time and short-term employees should be eligible.

In addition, committee members will discuss whether the university should initiate a program of partial tuition reimbursement for job-related educational investments by staff.

Members of the committee are: Postdoctoral Associate Edgar da Cruz e Silva, Assistant Professor Steven DiNardo, Professor Nicola Khuri, Assistant Foreman of the Carpenter Shop "Jeff" Prout, Assistant Director of Purchase and Supply Sonia Reynes, Assistant Foreman of Maintenance James Schaefer, Employee Health Supervisor Candice Scheiner, and Professor and Senior Physician Ralph Steinman.

RU investigator to lecture on cell cycle research

Assistant Professor Fred Cross, head of the Yeast Molecular Biology Laboratory, will speak on "A Switch at the Start of the Yeast Cell Cycle," at the Friday lecture today (Apr. 23).

Cross studies genes that regulate the cell cycle in budding yeast. The genes, called cyclins, influence, and in some cases determine, the progress of the cell cycle—the multi-stage cycle through which a cell duplicates its genetic material, DNA, to produce two identical "daughter" cells.

"The best-characterized cyclins to date activate the final step of the cell cycle which results in cell division," explained Cross. "But I will talk about three cyclin homologs thought to activate the first step of the cycle that results in DNA replication."

Cross believes that findings in yeast organisms may help scientists understand the mechanisms driving the cell cycle in other organisms, including humans. "The basic steps of cell cycle control are remarkably similar across organisms," he explained. "Because it has a genome that can be easily manipulated, the yeast organism provides us with the opportunity to carry out powerful genetic experiments."

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RU to host cardiovascular conference

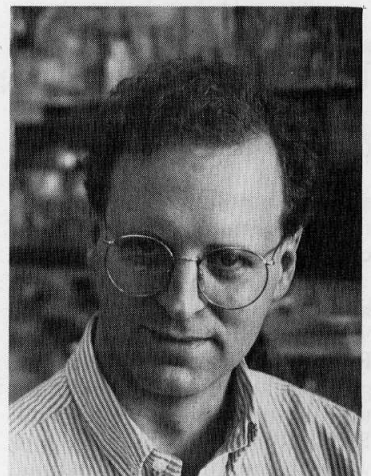
The university will host a cardiovascular colloquium, sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb Pharmaceutical Research Institute, on Wed., May 26. Six lectures will be featured:

- "Growth Regulatory Molecules, Atherosclerosis and Restenosis" by Russell Ross;
- "Heart Failure: Physiologic Derangements, Prognostic Markers, and the Potential for Preventing Progression" by Jay Cohn;
- "Progress in Understanding the Molecular Genetics of Familial Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy" by Christine

Seidman;

- "Novel Molecular Mechanisms Responsible for the Biosynthesis of ApoB-Containing Lipoproteins" by James Scott;
- "Epidemiological Contributions to Prevention of Coronary Disease" by William Kannel; and
- "Modern Treatment of Myocardial Infarction" by Eugene Braunwald.

The event will begin at 9:00 A.M. in Caspary Auditorium. Registration is recommended by May 1. Call Betty Gualfetti, (609) 252-5646.



Rockefeller University Assistant Professor Fred Cross studies yeast.

Lecturer describes scientist before his time

Long before genetics became a common scientific discipline, an English physician by the name of Archibald Garrod (1857-1936) developed the concepts of inherited metabolic disorders, which he called inborn errors of metabolism, and of subtle chemical differences among individuals. Alexander Bearn, trustee, adjunct professor, and visiting physician at The Rockefeller University, spoke about Garrod at the Tri-Institutional Biomedical Forum early this month.

"By the time Garrod died in 1936, fewer than 10 inborn errors of metabolism had been described, of which he had described six," said Bearn, whose book on Garrod, *Archibald Garrod and the Individuality of Man* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), will be published this summer. "Now, thousands of



Trustee Alexander Bearn, who lectured at the Tri-Institutional Biomedical Forum this month, recently completed a book on Archibald Garrod which will be published shortly.

such disorders have been identified. His ideas about chemical individuality were even more far-reaching. Without ever using the word 'gene,' he understood a great deal about genetics and its relation to disease."

Unlike Gregor Mendel, Garrod was a well-known and well-liked scientist whose views were published in mainstream medical books and journals. He received awards, was elected as vice president of the Royal Society, and eventually became the Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford University. However, Bearn said, "his colleagues could never fathom what on earth he was talking about."

Garrod's interests and ideas were unorthodox for his day. During his practice as a physician, he became interested in a rare disorder called alcaptonuria, a harmless disease easily recognized in a baby because soon after birth his or her diapers were stained black. The urine turned black on exposure to air or alkali.

Garrod found about a dozen cases of the disease, and, according to Bearn, in three papers laid the groundwork of much of what we know about alcaptonuria today. Garrod noted that although the disease was very rare, it was common among siblings. "He recognized, even before he really understood anything about Mendelism, that consanguinity seemed to bring out this particular condition," Bearn said. "With an understanding of Mendelism, he realized that it would be perfectly logical if the condition was inherited in a recessive fashion."

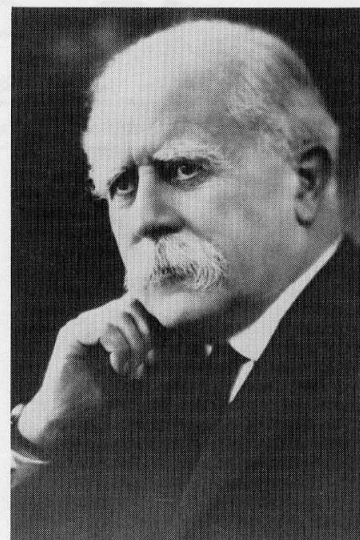
Garrod also postulated that the disease was caused by an enzyme deficiency, an idea that was proven correct years after his death.

George Wells Beadle—who won the Nobel Prize in Physiology in 1958 with E.L. Tatum and Professor Joshua Lederberg, former president of The Rockefeller University—recognized Garrod's contribution to his own pioneering work: "Regardless of when it was first written down on paper or in what form, I myself am convinced that the one-gene, one-enzyme concept was the product of gradual evolution, beginning with Garrod."

Garrod's work on alcaptonuria also led him to believe that no two individuals are exactly alike chemically any more than they are structurally. "I fancy that monstrosities or malformations; vestigial remnants and individual differences all have their chemical analogs," Garrod wrote. Garrod suggested the idea that susceptibility and immunity to even common diseases such as hypertension and diabetes are inborn. Today, the role of genes in determining susceptibility to common diseases is becoming increasingly studied in laboratories around the world.

Nevertheless, Garrod's colleagues remained unconvinced about his idea of chemical individuality. At one point Garrod appealed to a friend, distinguished biochemist and Nobel laureate Frederick Gowland Hopkins, to try to help him find chemical differences among individuals. Hopkins did not take up this proposition.

"I almost think he didn't understand," said Bearn, citing the fact that Hopkins left the concept of chemical individuality out of the obituary he wrote of Garrod after his death in 1936. "Of course, one shouldn't really blame Hopkins because one couldn't really document chemical individuality until methods such as chromatography, electrophoresis, and so on were



Archibald Garrod (1857-1936) understood a great deal about genetics before it was established as a scientific discipline.

developed which enabled one to separate closely similar compounds."

The idea of chemical individuality has only recently become accepted, Bearn said. Few scientists were thinking in terms of polymorphisms and variability in structure until the early 1960s.

If Garrod were alive today, Bearn believes he would have been delighted to see how his ideas have been supported and developed. He would have been pleased to see the explosion in our knowledge of inborn errors of metabolism, the increasing amount of research on the role of genes in determining susceptibility to common diseases, and, most of all, our increasing awareness of the chemical individuality of human beings.

University invites parents to take daughters to work

(continued from page 1)

on in a lab or office, and expose them to the challenges that science can offer."

The girls will be given a guided tour of the campus, beginning at 9:30 A.M. in the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Hall lounge. After the girls go to their parents' workplace, they are invited to lunch at 12:15 P.M. on the 17th floor of Tower where they will meet with Reed, Professor Mary Beth Hatten, Personnel Director Virginia Huffman, and Director of the Transgenic Service Laboratory

Annemarie Walsh-Mullen. Finally, Walsh-Mullen will give the girls a tour of the Transgenic Service Laboratory at 1:30 P.M.

"The girls will have a rare opportunity to see people working at the cutting edge of science," said Walsh-Mullen, who herself has five daughters. "On my tour, I will explain to them the power of animal models to study the genetics of human disease. I believe it is important for us to make science attractive to the younger generation."

Take Our Daughters to Work is a national public education cam-

paign organized by the Ms. Foundation for Women to draw public and media attention to girls' ideas, concerns, and dreams. The initiative aims to help girls feel comfortable in the workplace and to prepare them to talk with future employers.

The Rockefeller program is open to girls over the age of 11. Because of safety concerns, the organizers of the event request that all participants in the program register in advance and obtain approval from their lab head. Children should be closely supervised at all times. Call Eileen Holleran, x8557, to register.

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Panel urges New York City to revitalize biomedical sector

By Doron Weber

Last month, The Rockefeller University played host to a lively public discussion entitled, "The Business of Science: Can New York City Be Competitive?" The meeting was spurred in part by a recent study from the New York Academy of Medicine's Commission on Biomedical Research and Development which confirmed a view increasingly held by many government and private experts: that New York City's competitiveness in biomedical research is eroding at a worrisome pace.

President Torsten Wiesel welcomed the gathering, which drew about 200 people from the worlds of business, science, health care, and government, emphasizing his concern with the role that the university plays in the life of the city. "I believe that we have much to contribute, both in terms of conducting research into the city's major health problems, such as AIDS and tuberculosis, as well as in terms of providing economic benefits, such as jobs," Wiesel said.

Rockefeller Trustee Alair Townsend, formerly New York City's deputy mayor of finance and economic development and now publisher of *Crain's New York Business*, acted as moderator for the discussion. Townsend said that biomedical research, an important part of New York City's economy, is insufficiently appreciated and inadequately supported.

The Biomedical Commission

John W. Rowe, president of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine and Mount Sinai Medical Center, discussed New York City's competitiveness from his vantage point as chair of the Commission on Biomedical Research and Development, funded by the Carnegie Commission of New York and the New York Community Trust under the aegis of the New York Academy of Medicine, and later also by the Urban Development Corporation.

Rowe said that diminished funding for biomedical research was the biggest problem for New York. While the city is still doing well—it is currently number two in the nation in terms of grants received from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other federal agencies—for many decades New York was number one. (The Boston area now has this honor.) Rowe pointed out that between 1987 and 1990, NIH funding increased 21 percent nationwide and only 6 percent in New York City. In the last

10 years, New York's growth rate in NIH research has been the lowest of the top 20 cities in the nation.

Rowe listed a number of possible reasons for this decline: 1) inadequate laboratory space; 2) hospitals that are financially distressed; 3) the high cost of research; 4) concerns about the quality of life for new recruits; 5) the serious shortage of affordable housing; and 6) the lack of growth in support for the biotechnology industry compared to other cities and states which have developed magnets to attract and nurture biotechnology corporations.

Rowe expanded on this last point: "There's been a lack of accessibility on the part of the universities here to biotech and *vice versa*; they seem to have different cultures, speak different languages, and not trust each other. The policies and procedures for technology transfer in New York City seem to be archaic in that our institutions have taken a much less liberal, much less flexible approach to commercialization of biological discoveries or inventions by faculty."

Rowe said the commission had recommended the establishment of a New York council on biomedical research and biotechnology which would facilitate interactions among various sectors and serve as a partnership for strategic planning.

750,000 jobs in the region

Stanley Brezenoff, executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and former first deputy mayor, spoke about the major impact of the biomedical complex on the regional economy and the critical need to maintain and strengthen this area.

According to the Port Authority, more than 750,000 jobs are directly or indirectly associated with the biomedical complex in the New York-New Jersey region. "To give you an idea of how that stacks up, the banking, credit, and securities industries—major forces of employment in the region—together provide 420,000 direct jobs, fewer than the more than 500,000 jobs provided by the complex," Brezenoff said.

With rising competition from other regions and countries, the complex faces significant new challenges. In addition to some of the factors cited by Rowe, Brezenoff mentioned the inefficiencies created by government regulation and the uncertainty of new health care policies. He questioned how the complex would be affected by new competitive forces and whether the industries that make up the complex would continue to be a driving



President Torsten Wiesel (right) welcomes participants in the seminar "The Business of Science: Can New York Be Competitive?": (from left to right) Christopher Hill, senior policy analyst at RAND Critical Technologies Institute, Stanley Brezenoff, executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, John Rowe, president of The Mount Sinai School of Medicine and Mount Sinai Medical Center, and Alair Townsend, publisher of *Crain's New York Business*.

force for growth.

"What is needed are new strategies that capitalize on the opportunities and diminish the threats to help provide the region with the highly skilled jobs and industrial dynamics that are so important to a growing economy," Brezenoff said. To this end, the Port Authority, in cooperation with many other groups, is about to begin a thorough analysis of the biomedical sector within the region. Brezenoff hopes the results of that analysis will help policy makers identify areas that encourage growth, enhancing the role of the complex for the regional economy in the years ahead.

New Federal policies

The new Federal policy on science and technology was outlined by Christopher Hill, a senior policy analyst at the Rand Critical Technologies Institute, a group established to advise the president on science and technology issues.

Hill said the technology policy emerging from the Clinton administration focuses on technology-generation and technology-transfer. The government is no longer willing to argue that supporting basic research—and depending on spin-off from government research—is the secret to technological change. According to Hill, "It's not that there is no commitment to basic research, but rather there is a new commitment to doing things in addition to basic research."

The new Federal policy has been formulated very early in the administration, Hill said. Jack Gibbons was nominated for science advisor and has already served in the cabi-

net for several months. His predecessor D. Allan Bromley was not even nominated at this point in the Bush administration. Hill pointed out that science and technology policy is much closer to the center of governance than in past administrations.

Hill suggested that the administration wants to create a technology policy that is more integrated across agencies. This policy would focus not only on technology development, but also on technology diffusion—on trying to overcome the barriers among the laboratory, the scientific literature, the recent Ph.D. graduate, and the practical use of information. This policy is also concerned with more diverse national goals than in recent years, such as the environment, health, and other quality-of-life issues.

Hill concluded by speaking about the "cultural barriers" that prevent people in different fields from seeing ways to produce economic good from scientific strength. "I think bridging the cultures would be a useful thing to do," he said.

Following the presentations, a spirited 45-minute public discussion ensued in which members of the audience stood up and spoke to the panelists and other audience members, sharing their perspectives from the worlds of business, government, and science. Wiesel thanked the participants and said he hoped to keep the doors open to future cooperation with other sectors: "I think we should look forward to keeping New York a great city and to making it not only a fun place to be, but also a creative, productive, and lucrative center for all of us."

Potpourri

Reception

The Rockefeller University Library will host a reception today (Apr. 23) from noon to 3:00 P.M. on the second floor of Welch Hall in celebration of National Library Week.

Tri-Institutional Noon Recital

There will be no Tri-Institutional Noon Recital concert this week.

Spraying

Weather permitting, the trees and shrubs on campus will be sprayed Sat., Apr. 24, from 6:00 A.M. to noon. The Grounds Department recommends that those on campus that day stay out of direct contact of the spray, close windows, turn off air conditioners, and keep pets inside. The rain date is Sat., May 1. For more information, call James Sullivan, x8001.

Children's School benefits

Two benefits for The Rockefeller University Children's School are approaching. Ken Levy will put on a magic show at 2:00 P.M. on Sat., Apr. 24 in Caspary Auditorium. Admission is \$4; children under two years old are admitted free. Joyful Noise Singers and Musicians will perform songs from many countries at 5:00 P.M. on Sat., May 1, in Caspary Auditorium. Tickets may be purchased in advance at the Children's School for \$5; admission at the door is \$6. Those purchasing tickets in advance for both events may do so for \$8.

Reservations for barbecue pit

Starting Mon., Apr. 26, a sign-up calendar for the barbecue pit, formally known as Berlin Garden, will be posted on the bulletin board outside the Deans' Office.

Concert Series

The Guarneri String Quartet will perform an all-Beethoven program in the final concert of the Rockefeller University Concert Series this season on Wed., Apr. 28 at 8:00 P.M. in Caspary Auditorium. With this concert,



The Guarneri String Quartet will perform an all-Beethoven program at 8:00 P.M. on Wed., Apr. 28 in Caspary Auditorium.

the quartet will have performed 29 consecutive years in the series. Admission is \$17 per person, \$7 for Tri-Institutional graduate and post-doctoral fellows. Advance reservations are necessary for non-subscribers. Call Cathy Rogers, x8971 for information or reservations.

Reading with Children

The Employee Assistance Program Consortium (EAPC) is offering workshops on reading with children. The workshops, which are free, will be held from noon to 1:00 P.M. on May 3, 10, 17, and 24 and June 7, at 411 East 69 St., Room 229. Bring lunch. To register, call EAPC, 746-5890.

AIDS Walk

Those interested in participating in the annual AIDS Walk New York—to be held at 9:00 A.M. on Sun., May 2 in Central Park—should contact Darryl Williams, x8297, Kerry Harvey, x8302, or Mary Ann George, x8301.

Azalea festival

The Public Affairs Office is asking for volunteers to help with an Azalea Festival at the university

Fri., May 14, Sat., May 15, and Sun., May 16. Contact Sandi Walsh, x8072.

Corporate Challenge

Members of The Rockefeller University can test their speed and community spirit against employees of other New York City institutions in a 3.5-mile road race, the annual Chemical Bank Corporate Challenge, to be held in Central Park Wed., Jun. 16 and Thu., Jul. 8 at 7:00 P.M. To register, call Robin Maloney, x7736.

Seitz Day

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is honoring President Emeritus Frederick Seitz today (Apr. 23). The university is renaming one of its buildings the

Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory and is holding an all-day seminar in his name.

Honors

Professor Emeritus Abraham Pais recently lectured at the Sorbonne in Paris to mark the publication of the French translation of his biography of Einstein. During the same trip, he was presented with the Science Medal of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences and was a speaker at the American Physical Society's celebration of the 100th anniversary of *The Physical Review*.

Presentation

Marlene Schwanzel-Fukuda, assistant professor in the Pfaff lab, presented a paper, "Luteinizing Hormone Releasing Hormone (LHRH) Neurons in Kallmann's Syndrome: A Disorder of Neuronal Migration," at a conference in Bethesda, Maryland last month. The conference, which focused on Kallmann's Syndrome, was jointly sponsored by the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders and the National Institute of Child Health and Development.

Computer wanted

The Children's School is requesting a donation of a used IBM AT or a compatible model. Call Marjorie Goldsmith, x8580.

Twins

Twins—a girl, Charlotte, and a boy, Maxime—were born to Associate Professor Claude Desplan and his wife, Danielle, on Feb. 26.

RU researcher to lecture on cell cycle

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Cross received a B.A. from Swarthmore College in 1978 and a Ph.D. from The Rockefeller University in 1984. He did post-doctoral studies in the Department of Genetics at the Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle. In 1989, he returned to Rockefeller to direct his own laboratory. Cross was a

National Science Foundation Fellow from 1978 to 1981, a Helen Hay Whitney Fellow from 1985 to 1988, and a Lucille P. Markey Scholar from 1988 until the present.

The lecture, which is free and open to the public, will be held at 3:45 P.M. in Caspary Auditorium. Tea will precede it at 3:15 P.M. in Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Hall.



Peg Swanson of Food Service was one of the Rockefeller University secretaries who received flowers on Wednesday, National Secretaries Day.