

11-15-1991

NEWS AND NOTES 1991, NOVEMBER 15

The Rockefeller University

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Recommended Citation

The Rockefeller University, "NEWS AND NOTES 1991, NOVEMBER 15" (1991). *News and Notes 1991*. Book 25.
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Luncheon honors long-time faculty and staff

The loyalty, dedication, and purpose of over 100 long-time Rockefeller faculty and staff were celebrated Tues., Nov. 12, at the Anniversary and Retirement Recognition Luncheon. The guests of honor included individuals retiring this year, as well as faculty and staff who have reached milestones in their careers at Rockefeller—10th, 20th, 25th, 40th, and 50th anniversaries.

"Anyone who has roots deep inside this university—as I do—will surely feel the same pride that I feel in looking over this distinguished gathering," President David Baltimore said, welcoming the guests of honor. "Even the newest employees that we are honoring in this room have at least 10 years of service to this university."

The luncheon was moved at the last minute from Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Hall to the seventeenth floor of the Tower building after the fire extinguishing system went off unexpectedly. The Abby Hall kitchen—and some of the food—was doused with chemicals. The food was replaced, the tableware moved, and the luncheon began in the new location with only a few minutes' delay. (See related story, this page.)

After lunch—which consisted of filet mignon in Madeira sauce or poached salmon in capered dill sauce, white wine, rolls, salad, green beans, and wild rice—Baltimore presented gifts and certificates to each of the guests of honor who were called up one by one to the podium. Especially notable were Nina Casciano—currently purchasing agent in Purchase and Supply—who has served Rockefeller for 40 years, and Professor Vincent G. Allfrey, who has served for half a decade. (See stories and list of those honored, page 2.)

In an impromptu speech, Allfrey reminisced about his half century at

Robert Reichert



President David Baltimore congratulates Nina Casciano of Purchase and Supply on reaching her 40th anniversary at Rockefeller.

Rockefeller. "I am grateful to Rockefeller for the opportunity to wash glassware while I went to college at night," he said. "I feel very lucky to have been trained by Alfred Mirsky and Theodore Shedlovsky. I never gave much thought to tenure. It never occurred to me that I would be here so long." He also passed on some words of wisdom: "Oliver Wendell Holmes said that a young 70 was a more inspiring and hopeful prospect than an old 40. Well I am still hoping and planning experiments."

After the award ceremony, the guests of honor were joined at a champagne reception by many

members of the community with more than 10 years of service.

This year, two traditional service programs, the Anniversary and Retirement Dinner and the Employee Recognition Program, were combined into a single event. The change was made primarily so that everyone—faculty and staff—could be publicly recognized for long service. In the past, faculty members were only honored for service beyond 25 years, or upon retirement. Other employees were honored as early as 10 years. In addition, the combination of the two events will save the university money.

Fire-extinguishing system cools lunch preparations—briefly

What would you do if you were planning to entertain 80, and your kitchen was destroyed shortly before the guests were due to arrive? That was the situation that Heath Braunstein, director of Food Services, faced Tuesday, one hour before the Anniversary and Retirement Recognition Luncheon.

Because of a problem with the vent system, heat built up above the stoves as the staff preheated the broilers in the Abby kitchen. The fire-extinguishing system went off, suddenly and with a vengeance, spraying an inch of fire-dampening chemical powder over the kitchen—including dozens of salmon filets and an assortment of rolls.

"Luckily the steaks and the rice were elsewhere," said Braunstein. "But the kitchen was blanketed. It looked like the first snowfall of the year."

Braunstein reacted quickly, running out to purchase 25 pounds of salmon (much to the delight of a surprised First Avenue vendor).

The custodial and grounds crews hurried to move furniture to the seventeenth floor of Tower. Food services staff rebaked the rolls from scratch and reset the tables. Personnel redirected the guests of honor to the new location. Media Resources moved the sound system. Amazingly, lunch began with only a few minutes' delay.

"Getting the event back on track

From RU to Wall St.

Discoveries lead to commercial diabetes drug

A new company whose diabetes-fighting drugs emerged from discoveries made at Rockefeller went public last week and became the most actively traded stock of the day on Wall Street's NASDAQ system.

According to William Griesar, vice president and general counsel, the company, Alteon, provides a good example of the successful transfer of a superb core technology. "While there is no guarantee of success even with the best science and a well-managed company, that combination provides a good basis to produce real results in the world," Griesar said.

"Thomas Edison could have been doing the best science anywhere, but if tungsten had not worked there would have been no light bulb," he added.

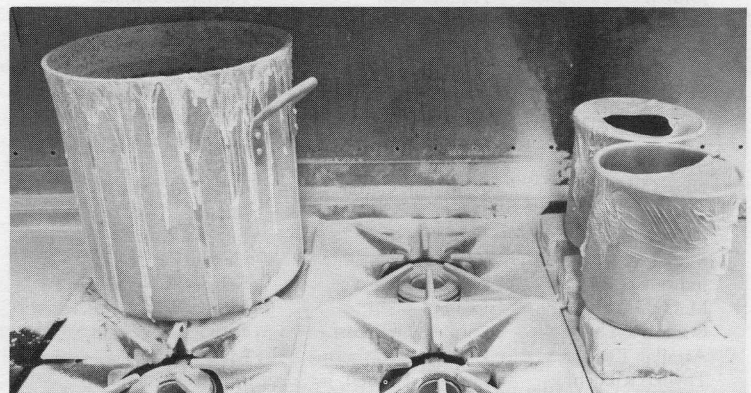
Alteon, a New Jersey-based developer of drugs to treat complications of diabetes and aging, emerged as the hottest new entrant into the biotechnology market and the university, with a minority interest in the company, saw its shares valued at over \$10 million.

Some financial experts on Wall

See *Discoveries*, Page 4

was really a joint effort of the all the staff involved—including the part-time people," Braunstein said. "Everyone really pitched in."

Some guests at the luncheon recalled a similar eruption of the Abby kitchen fire extinguishers about 12 years ago, as the first course was being served to some distinguished visitors. The staff rescued that dinner, too.



The Abby Hall kitchen looked as if a snowstorm had descended after the fire-extinguishing system went off unexpectedly last Tuesday.

Robert Reichert

2 Professor recalls 50 years at Rockefeller

3 RU researcher examines addiction

4 Lectures commemorate RU scientist

Professor looks back on half century at Rockefeller

by Mika Ono

Fifty years have passed since Vincent G. Allfrey began work at Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research as a lab helper. Now nearing the end of an illustrious career as a molecular biologist, his memories span much of Rockefeller's history.

"In 1941, there were five buildings here," Allfrey said. "The neighborhood children kept gardens on the rest of the grounds. There was only one portly guard who spent most of his time keeping the children out of trouble."

In 1949—after serving in WWII, pursuing graduate studies at Columbia, and working as a technician in Theodore Shedlovsky's lab—Allfrey accepted a position on the faculty.

Allfrey recalls that the institute was small enough in those days for everyone to know everyone else. "The old lunchroom was more than

a common place to eat," he said. "It was a place to meet new people and learn what projects they were working on in their labs."

After the institute became a university in 1954, graduate students began working in Allfrey's lab. "Bruce McEwen, now Rockefeller dean, was one of my early students—and a very good one at that," he recalled.

Allfrey witnessed explosive growth of the labs in the 1950s: "Outside funding boomed after 1954. Grants from the NIH and other institutions made it possible to equip the labs superbly, hire more technicians, and invite guest investigators from around the world.

"The money went further than it does now," he continued. "Research was cheaper and salaries, lower. For example, when I started working as lab helper we were paid \$64 per month—and that included working Saturdays."

Allfrey's career has spanned some

of the most exciting years in molecular biology, and he remembers critical research being conducted at Rockefeller. Albert Claude, George Palade, and Keith Porter developed techniques for using the electron microscope to study the deep structure of cells. Oswald T. Avery, Colin MacLeod, and Maclyn McCarty identified DNA as the genetic material in living things. Alfred Mirsky provided the first evidence that cells contain the same amount of DNA.

Allfrey's own interests in molecular biology have been remarkably consistent throughout his many productive years in the lab. His work has helped explain the mechanisms which control the activity of genetic material in a variety of systems: normal cells during embryonic differentiation, cells responding to hormones, and cells responding to carcinogens.

"In 1964 I hypothesized that the modification of DNA-binding



Vincent G. Allfrey

proteins controls the synthesis of DNA," he said. "One of those modifications is acetylation. In 1987, we discovered a method for separating active and inactive pieces of DNA with the proteins attached—and found that the proteins on the active DNA were highly acetylated; those on inactive DNA were not. It follows that the theory developed 25 years ago was correct. This discovery was very rewarding, and it makes it easier to consider the prospect of retiring."

Anniversary and retirement awards

Retirement awards

Vincent Allfrey
Girleen Bennett
Mowbray Clarke
Frank Courtney
Atlean Duncan
Ann Dupree
Angel Ferrer
Rudolf K. Franz
Mary Ellen Genthner
Leona George
John Gregory
Louise Johnson
Rudolph Josephs
Elizabeth Kellerhals
Josephine Lewis
Elco Machek
Lila Jane Magie
Rosemary McCabe
Leonard Mehciel
Norman Milkman
Sonya W. Mirsky
James Mortko
Louis A. Perez
Zenta Ramanis
Maria Roldan
Ludwig Senden
Madeleine Tierney
Regina Titus
Pedro Veiga
John Waffenschmidt
James R. Wilson
Hao Wang

50-year award

Vincent Allfrey

40-year award

Nina Casciano

25-year awards

Margarita Campbell
Judith E. Cuozzo
Marie Grossi
Erminio Gubert
Attallah Kappas
Toyoko Kikuchi
Josephine Lewis

Bruce S. McEwen
Fernando Nottetohm
Gregorio Rosario

20-year awards

Judy Adams
Hiroshi Asanuma
Cassilda Ashmeade
Günter Blobel
Josue Charles
Paul F. Cranefield
Bruce A. Cunningham
Newman Duhaney
Octavius Ferebee
Vincent A. Fischetti
W. Einar Gall
Mary Ellen Genthner
Edward L. Gershey
Konstantin A. Goulianos
Ann Ho
James M. Manning
Peter H. Model
Esmeralda Party
Jose Perez
Donald W. Pfaff
John L. Porter
George N. Reeke, Jr.
Michelangelo Rossetto
Shigeru Sassa
Peter H. Sellers
Aquilas Sosa
Ralph M. Steinman

10-year awards

Nicholas J. Bianchi
Milan S. Blake
Brendan F. Bolger
Ana C. Cardona
D. Martin Carter
Peter Cassidy
Brian T. Chait
Linda Champagne
Nam-Hai Chua
Joel E. Cohen
Gloria M. Coruzzi
David A. Cowburn
James E. Darnell, Jr.
George S. Drummond

Renell A. Duhaney
Jacqueline Friedman
David C. Gadsby
Margaret Geller
Linda A. Gottschalk
Hidesaburo Hanafusa
Teruko Hanafusa
Joan Evelyn Hofmann
Bernadette Hutchins
Meena Jhanwar-Uniyal
Louis Kabatnik
Nurit Kalderon
Ehud Kaplan
Simon Kidd
Lee-Ming Kow
Louis C. Krey
Joshua Lederberg
Rudolph L. Leibel
Timothy D. Marinetti
Regina Metz
Alan D. Miller
Frank O'Brien
Margaret E. Perkins
Francis Picart
Angela G. Piperno
Fred H. Pruslin
Nicholas Rosado
Daniel W. Rosenberg
Roger W. Rusack
Marjorie Russel
Marianne Salditt-Georgieff
Anthony I. Sanda
Stephanie Schillizzi
Marlene Schwanzel-Fukuda
Susan Schwartz-Giblin
John Sholtis
Charles V. Smith
James P. Tam
Eugene Tarasco
Cecilia G. Unson
Sebastian N. White
Margit Witmer-Pack
Samuel D. Wright
Meta C. Wyss
Michael W. Young
Vance Zemon

Letter to the Editor:

Disgrace; this is the only word that can describe the downgrading of what used to be a retirement dinner into a retirement lunch. The dinner was always a resplendent affair, with drinks and dinner in the evening, where spouses of the retirees and of those who put in long service to the university could congregate together. It was the premier social event of the university; it magnified the sense of community among the faculty and the supporting staff which is a hallmark of the Rockefeller. It was enjoyable; it raised self-worth; it raised spirits; it was an occasion to be remembered by all. To destroy this in order to save a pittance of money is almost criminal, particularly in these days of the already low morale existing among those who labor in this place.

Philip Siekevitz, Professor Emeritus

Reply:

The decision to have a luncheon recognizing retirees and employees with long service was carefully considered. The intention of combining the traditional retirement dinner with the annual employee recognition program was to foster increased community spirit by embracing more of our employees. This is the first time that faculty will be honored for service short of 25 years or retirement. Support staff with 10 and 20 years of service will now be acknowledged in the same forum.

Financial pressures were also a consideration in our decision. The two events were expensive and we needed to reduce costs.

Virginia Huffman,
Director of Personnel

Temporary job lasts 40 years

When Nina Casciano first arrived at Rockefeller on Dec. 18, 1950, there was snow on the ground and the trees were glistening.

"It was breathtaking," Casciano recalls. "I knew right away that Rockefeller was someplace special."

Ironically, Casciano thought she was reporting for a temporary job. Forty years later—thirty-three in the pharmacy and seven in Purchase and Supply—she has left her mark on the university.

"Rockefeller's been a home away from home for me," she said. "My years here have been happy ones."

Editor's Note:

Letters to the editor are welcome. Unfortunately, unsigned letters cannot be considered for publication.

News&Notes is published each Friday throughout the academic year by The Rockefeller University, 1230 York Avenue, New York, NY 10021. Phone: 212-570-8967.

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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.



RU investigator seeks biological roots of addiction

by Susan Blum

More than one million Americans are addicted to heroin, more than one million to cocaine, and eleven million to alcohol. The cost of these dependencies to addicts, their families, and society as a whole is incalculable. Drug addiction destroys personalities, shatters relationships, contributes to violent crime, and vastly increases the risk of contracting serious and fatal diseases such as hepatitis B, hepatitis delta, alcoholic liver disease, and AIDS.

Behind these compelling personal and social tragedies lies an equally compelling mystery: Why do some people become addicted, while others do not? Epidemiologic studies have shown, for example, that roughly a tenth to a fourth of those who are exposed to heroin or cocaine eventually develop an addiction to it. What distinguishes those who succumb from those who escape?

This is one of the questions driving Rockefeller researcher Mary Jeanne Kreek and her colleagues. According to Kreek, "All too often addiction has been viewed as a 'social' or 'environmental' problem rather than a biological and medical one. But the best current hypothesis is that these disorders have both a genetic and an environmental component."

Her conviction that addictions have a strong biological basis took root in the mid 1960s, when, as a first-year resident at New York Hospital, she began her career-long interest in addiction by participating in pioneering clinical studies conducted by Rockefeller Professor Emeritus Vincent Dole and Marie Nyswander, former RU scientist. These studies, the first to treat long-term heroin addicts with methadone, showed that the substance, a synthetic opiate, could restore the addicts to normal functioning. "If addiction were only a disease of society, then any type of pharmacotherapy would not be effective in turning the addict around. But methadone treatment worked, even without our being able to address many of the social and environmental problems that undoubtedly contribute to addiction," says Kreek.

Those early studies at Rockefeller were conducted before the revolution in molecular biological techniques. Now, with these techniques in hand, Kreek and her colleagues can pursue the biological bases of addiction in a variety of studies ranging from the molecular biological, to the level of the cell, to animal models, to clinical studies involving normal and addicted humans. In support of these studies, in 1987 Kreek was awarded one of

only four National Institute on Drug Abuse Center Grants, providing support of \$5.75 million.

Ultimately, Kreek believes, the combined force of studies conducted by her team and other researchers in the field may result in the discovery of particular genes that make a person susceptible to addiction. "The best guess is that there won't be just one gene involved, but rather multiple genes that contribute to vulnerability," she says. The picture will probably be complicated even further by the fact that "if and when a genetic predisposition is defined, it is not likely that the genes contributing to alcohol, cocaine, and heroin addiction will be identical, because the metabolic and physiologic effects of the addictions are in part different."

But certain intriguing similarities among the three addictions are beginning to emerge from studies at Rockefeller and elsewhere. According to Kreek, early clinical and research clues suggest that the endogenous opioid system may be perturbed in each of these addictive diseases.

The endogenous opioids are a fascinating class of peptides, or short amino acid chains, first found to be produced in the brain in the mid-1970s. (Kreek and others have since discovered that they are produced in the nervous tissue of certain other regions, such as the gastrointestinal tract, as well.) There are three classes of endogenous opioids: enkephalins, dynorphins, and endorphins. Each class is coded for by a single gene, yielding one precursor protein that is subsequently processed into a family of smaller peptides.

Like opiates produced outside the body, or exogenously, endogenous opioids can play a role in the modulation of pain. But Kreek believes the peptides' role as analgesics has been overplayed by nonscientists. At present, she reports, the most "incontrovertible" knowledge about opiates relates to the roles they play in the release of hormones involved in reproduction and in the stress response.

Complex neuroendocrine pathways link beta-endorphin, an endogenous opioid, with the stress response. In the pituitary, Kreek explains, the precursor protein called proopiomelanocortin (POMC) yields both beta-endorphin and ACTH, the hormone that drives the adrenal gland to make cortisol, a major stress hormone. Moreover, she adds, it appears that beta-endorphin plays a self-regulatory role, since release of the "POMC peptide potpourri" is suppressed when opioids like beta-endorphin bind to a major opioid receptor type, known as the mu receptor, in the pituitary.



Mary Jeanne Kreek with her colleague, Rudolph Spangler

Thé Rockefeller researchers are pursuing the hypothesis that a hyper-responsivity to stress may help explain why some people become addicted to heroin, cocaine, and alcohol, and why they may relapse after trying to conquer the addiction without the help of pharmacotherapy.

In normal, nonaddicted people, release of beta-endorphin and ACTH occurs in a regular, circadian cycle and is neither suppressed nor over-exaggerated. But this normal homeostasis, or equilibrium, is perturbed in heroin and cocaine addicts, Kreek reports. Previous studies conducted by her team demonstrated that heroin addicts have chronically suppressed levels of ACTH and beta-endorphin. But when heroin addicts go into withdrawal, or remain abstinent without the assistance of methadone, they pour out abnormally high amounts of ACTH and beta-endorphin when challenged with a chemically induced stress. Other studies by the group, still under way at The Rockefeller University Hospital, have shown that newly abstinent cocaine addicts also demonstrate a hyper-responsiveness to chemically induced stress. In addition, Kreek reports, some very preliminary clues suggest that the homeostasis of stress hormones and endogenous opiates is perturbed in alcoholics, as well.

In pursuit of a full understanding of the role of the endogenous opioid system in addiction, the Rockefeller researchers have recently made another exciting discovery.

To make the closest possible rodent model of human cocaine addiction, over the course of two weeks, the researchers administered cocaine to rats in a binge pattern, giving multiple doses for two hours, and then giving none for the next

twenty-two hours. When the scientists examined the brains of these rats, they found an "up-regulation" (an increase in activity or number) in mu receptors.

Significantly, this up-regulation occurred primarily in the *nucleus accumbens*, a brain region where nerve fibers release the neurotransmitter called dopamine. This region is known to be involved in "reinforcing," or perpetuating behaviors, including an animal's self-administration of drugs such as cocaine.

This discovery shakes up some long-held beliefs about cocaine addiction. Until now, Kreek explains, cocaine was thought to act only by means of its effects on neurotransmitters such as dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin. But the new findings suggest that any stimulant that intersects with dopamine may alter endogenous opioid function, as well. Studies are now underway to determine the effect of cocaine on the activation of genes that code for opioid peptides.

The recent discovery points the way toward further research, says Kreek. "As we begin to ask about the genetic basis of vulnerability to addiction, we will certainly direct our attention in parallel to all components of the endogenous opioid system, as well as to components of the dopamine system. My own hunch is that we'd probably better add on components of the serotonergic system, too, since this system is involved in compulsive behavior, and addictions have characteristics of compulsions.

"Life is not going to be simple," she says, clearly relishing the challenge. "A lot of work remains to be done." But with the personal and societal costs of addiction as high as they are, the rewards of such work are obvious.

Corners

Robert Reichert



The northeastern staircase of the library peeks out from behind a curtain of foliage.

Potpourri

Marathon runner

Angus C. Nairn, associate professor in the Greengard lab, was one of the runners from Rockefeller to cross the finish line of the New York City Marathon Nov. 3. Completing his seventh marathon in a row, Nairn made it in to the lab the next morning, in his words "a little stiff but otherwise O.K. and in time for an NIH site visit."

Reading to Children

President David Baltimore will read to a class of third-graders Nov. 21 as part of the New York City School Volunteer Program's 35th anniversary program. Other volunteers in the program include Barbara Bush, David Dinkins, Ruby Dee, Robert MacNeil, Christopher Reeve, Estelle Parsons, Maria Tucci, Mike Wallace, Sam Waterston, and Sigourney Weaver. The purpose of the program is to encourage reading aloud to children and to bring attention to children's literature.

Lunchtime Film

PBS's 60-minute documentary *Addictions* (1988) examines research on people addicted to heroin, alcohol, nicotine, food, and gambling. The film will be shown at noon Wed., Nov. 20, in Tower 305.

New York User's Manual

Claude Desplan is organizing a "New York User's Manual" for people on campus. He wants to hear suggestions for exciting, fascinating, or fun places to go—which could include good restaurants, funky places in the East Village, a Japanese grocery in New Jersey (or anything else in New Jersey), flea or farmer's markets, cheap travel agents, toy stores, or

peculiar move theaters. Suggestions, ideas, etc., should be sent Claude Desplan, box 151, x7965, fax 7966 or 7923. Submissions on an IBM or Macintosh diskette are appreciated.

Marriage

Francis Barany, a 1981 RU graduate and associate professor of microbiology at Cornell University Medical College, married Rachael Victoria Conescu, publications coordinator at Trinity School, Nov. 10.

Birth

Darlene Wiscovitch, secretary in Development, and her husband, Wilson Melendez, are parents of twin boys—Wilson Isaac and Kenneth Mark—born Oct. 25.

'Fast for a World Harvest'

The Rockefeller University chapter of Oxfam America is having its annual "Fast For a World Harvest" Mon., Nov. 18, through Thurs., Nov. 21. The group will set up an information table in the Tower Lobby, 11:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. In addition, the group is encouraging people to fast for a meal or a day and to donate the money they would have spent on food to Oxfam America. Oxfam America is a nonprofit international agency that funds self-help development and disaster relief in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Questions or comments should be directed to Mark Forman, x8209.

Seminar Series

The Junior Faculty-Student Seminar Series offers exciting talks every Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. Those who wish to invite speakers for the winter/spring schedule should send their proposals to Claude Desplan—

box 151, x7965, or fax 7966 or 7923—before Dec. 1. The committee will select topics and suggest dates before Dec. 9.

Noon Recital

The Guild Trio will perform works by Mendelssohn and Brahms today (Nov. 15) at noon in Caspary Auditorium. Patricia Tao will play piano; Janet Orenstein, violin; and Brooks Whitehouse, cello. In 1990 the Tanglewood Music Center awarded them the position of trio-in-residence. In 1991 they won the Annual Chamber Music Yellow Springs Competition.



The Guild Trio

Joanne Rile Artists Management, Inc.

RU discoveries lead to drug

(continued from Page 1)

Street cautioned that Alteon's meteoric rise was a result of the current feeding frenzy for biotechnology companies and was based on stock speculation. They believe that Alteon won't have earnings from product sales for several years.

But there is widespread belief that, if it proves safe and effective, Alteon's new drug, aminoguanadine, could be a boon to millions of people afflicted with diabetes and other health problems. A chronic, incurable disease, diabetes is a leading cause of death by disease and the number-one cause of kidney disease, blindness and amputation. Despite the use of insulin and other drugs to control blood glucose levels, about 1.3 million of America's estimated 14 million diabetics eventually develop complications such as kidney, nerve, eye, or blood vessel disease.

Alteon's scientists believe aminoguanadine inhibits the formation of advanced glycosylation end-products (AGEs) formed as a result of glucose in the body's circulatory system. AGEs, which form at an accelerated rate in diabetic patients, damage cells, tissues, and organs, leading to the progression of major diabetic complications in humans. AGEs also occur as a natural consequence of aging and there is hope of new treatments for some of aging's complications, such as atherosclerosis. Studies have already shown that aminoguanadine inhibits AGEs in animals. Human clinical trials will begin next year.

The AGE-related technologies behind Alteon emerged from discoveries made at Rockefeller in the laboratory of Anthony Cerami, a long-time professor here who left the university in September to start a research foundation. Cerami is currently chairman of Alteon's Scientific Advisory Board. Seed money for Alteon was provided by Telos, a subsidiary of Montgomery Medical Ventures, which sold rights to two drug companies, the Japanese giant Yamanouchi Pharmaceuticals, and Marion Merrel Dow.

Lectures commemorate RU scientist

Today and tomorrow (Nov. 15 and 16), RU will host a conference in honor of one of its most famous scientists, clinical immunologist Henry G. Kunkel. Kunkel—son of the noted Rockefeller botanist and plant pathologist Louis O. Kunkel and father of well-known professor of pediatrics and genetics Louis M. Kunkel—made Rockefeller his scientific home from 1940 until his death in 1983.

The conference will begin at 6:00 p.m. in Caspary Auditorium. After President David Baltimore introduces the program, Louis M. Kunkel will speak on "Molecular Genetic Approaches to Human Neuromuscular Disease." The conference will continue Saturday morning in Nurses Residence, room 110. The speakers will be H.J. Miller-Eberhard, Jacob M. Natvig, Ralph Steinman, and Maclyn McCarty.