Neurogenetics Workshop

NIAAA is organizing a workshop, “HapMap and the Neurogenetics of Alcoholism,” to be held at the Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting on November 11, 2005, at the Washington, DC Convention Center, Room 152.

NIAAA Director Dr. Ting-Kai Li will open the program, which will include National Human Genome Research Institute Director Dr. Francis Collins and other leading scientists.

For free registration and a workshop agenda, visit http://www.blsmmeetings.net/2482/. The deadline to register is November 4, 2005.

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NIH Moving to Electronic Grant Applications
New Electronic Submission Will Replace Paper Application Form

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is asking its grantees: NIH is ready for electronic submission. Are you?

NIH is planning to transition all competing grant mechanisms from paper to electronic submissions by May 2007. NIH is partnering with Grants.gov, the single access point for grant programs offered by Federal grant-making agencies.

NIH also will require a new form, switching from the PHS 398 to the SF 424 family of research application forms. Outside organizations may need to use new software for electronic submission.

According to NIH Program Officer Megan Columbus, “The transition to electronic receipt will be a huge change for us at NIH as well as for our applicant community.” Helping during the transition are NIH liaisons who will serve as a local resource and first line of support. NIAAA’s contact point is Dr. Lorraine Gunzerath (e-mail: lg72x@nih.gov).

Advance Registration Required
Advance registration is critical for electronic submission. NIH officials recommend registering 2 to 4 weeks in advance of submitting applications. There are separate instructions for applicant organizations and individual investigators.

Institutions—not investigators—must register with Grants.gov, the portal for electronic submissions. For instructions, visit http://grants.gov/GetStarted. Grants.gov also features a Contact Center hotline at 1–800/518–4726.

(Cont’d. on page 3)

NESARC Team Honored

On July 14, NIAAA’s National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC) team received the NIH Director’s Award for “outstanding national leadership.” The award recognizes superior performance directly related to fulfilling the NIH mission.

Left to right: NIH Director Dr. Elias Zerhouni with NESARC team leader Dr. Bridget F. Grant, Roger P. Pickering, Dr. S. Patricia Chou, and NIAAA Director Dr. Ting-Kai Li. NESARC team members Drs. Deborah A. Dawson and Frederick S. Stinson (not shown here), also received the group award.
Dr. Li Receives APA Presidential Citation

NIAAA Director Ting-Kai Li recently received a Presidential Citation from the American Psychological Association (APA). The prestigious award recognizes the contributions of individuals who have worked to improve and advance psychology. According to Dr. Steven Breckler, APA Executive Director for Science, Dr. Li received the citation because, “As NIAAA Director, Dr. Li’s forward-looking vision and leadership is deeply and widely appreciated by psychological scientists.”

Dr. Kunos Wins Cannabinoid Research Award

Dr. George Kunos, Scientific Director for NIAAA, received the 2005 Mechoulam Award from the International Cannabinoid Research Society. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to research on cannabinoids, chemicals—similar to those derived from marijuana—that stimulate the brain’s reward system by binding to cannabinoid–1 (CB–1) receptors.

Dr. Kunos is a leader in the field investigating endocannabinoids—naturally occurring (i.e., endogenous), lipidlike compounds produced by the brain and other tissues. Dr. Kunos’s work with knockout mice demonstrated that endocannabinoids acting on CB–1 receptors mediate the rewarding and pleasurable properties of alcohol, and contribute to alcohol dependency and abuse. NIAAA’s Intramural Research Program is examining whether a medication that blocks CB–1 receptors could potentially help heavy drinkers overcome their craving for alcohol.

The society presented the award to Dr. Kunos during its annual symposium in Clearwater, Florida, in June. The award is named after Raphael Mechoulam, an Israeli medicinal chemist renowned for discovering endocannabinoids and, earlier, for identifying delta–9–tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) as the psychoactive principle of marijuana.

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E-mail: NIAANewsletter@nih.gov

Dr. Gerald P. Koocher (right), member of the APA Board of Directors, presented the award to Dr. Li (left) during the APA’s annual convention in Washington, DC, on August 19, 2005.

Dr. Mechoulam (left) shakes hands with Dr. Kunos (right) after presenting him with the award.

Dr. Li Receiving APA Presidential Citation

Dr. Koons Wins Cannabinoid Research Award
The first applications to switch to electronic submission involve small business (SBIR and STTR) grants, which have a receipt date of December 1, 2005. The complete transition schedule for all funding mechanisms is available at http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/index.htm.

Officials will announce each transition in advance in the NIH Guide. For now, the message remains: Do not wait, register today!

Three States Join Collaboration to Address Rural Underage Drinking

Three States have joined an ongoing collaboration between NIAAA and the Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to address underage drinking in rural communities. California, Oregon, and Washington are the latest States to take part in the Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws (EUDL) Discretionary Program: Rural Communities Initiative.

Through this special collaboration, NIAAA grantee researchers will form partnerships with State and local officials selected for the EUDL grants. The NIAAA-funded researchers will assist in evaluating programming that aims to reduce the underage drinking problem in small towns and rural areas.

The new States represent an expansion of the NIAAA-OJJDP collaboration, which began in 2004. NIAAA researchers already are working in more than a dozen rural communities in Illinois, Nevada, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania through this initiative. Each State receives a 3-year EUDL grant administered by OJJDP.

NIAAA Updates Clinician’s Guide


The 2005 Guide simplifies the alcohol screening process to a single question about heavy drinking days. NIAAA Director Dr. Ting-Kai Li said, “The single screening question helps overcome a barrier that may have kept many practitioners from identifying and helping people who drink harmfully.”


In addition the Guide features the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) in English and Spanish, and a new section on medications.

To order a free copy, visit www.niaaa.nih.gov or call NIAAA at 301/443-3860.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Alcohol Alert

Alcohol Alert Number 65 provides a detailed look at screening people for alcohol abuse and alcoholism, including screening for alcohol problems in a variety of different settings—from primary care offices and prenatal care clinics to college campuses, emergency rooms, and within the criminal justice system. Alcohol Alert Number 66 describes the advantages and challenges of conducting interventions in these same settings.

To subscribe to the Alcohol Alert, visit the NIAAA Web site (www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications), or contact NIAAA at 301/443–3860, or write to: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Publications Distribution Center, P.O. Box 10686, Rockville, MD 20849–0686.

“Fall Semester—A Time for Parents to Revisit Discussions About College Drinking” is the latest in a series of Web-based fact sheets on underage drinking prevention. This one-page bulletin gives parents tips for talking with their college-bound students about alcohol. It summarizes current research, provides recent statistics on college-age drinking, and gives parents resources for more information—all presented in an easy-to-follow format. The fact sheet may be accessed via the NIAAA college drinking Web site (www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/Parents/collegefactsheet.aspx).
Calendar of Events

NIAAA will participate in or exhibit at meetings and conferences listed below. For additional information or updates on these events, consult the sponsoring organization.

**O C T O B E R**

- **October 27–29**
  ASAM State of the Art in Addiction Medicine Course
  Washington, DC
  American Society of Addiction Medicine
  Contact: www.asam.org

**N O V E M B E R**

- **November 3**
  Mark Keller Honorary Lecture
  “Adolescence: Neurobehavioral Characteristics, Differential Alcohol Sensitivities and Intake”
  Bethesda, MD
  Linda Spear, Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology, State University of New York at Binghamton
  Contact: Nancy Colladay, NIAAA, 301/443–4733; www.niaaa.nih.gov/newsevents/conferences.htm

- **November 11**
  HapMap and the Neurogenetics of Alcoholism—NIAAA Workshop at the Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting
  Convention Center, Room 152
  Washington, DC
  Contact: http://www.blsmeetings.net/2482/

- **November 12–16**
  Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting
  Nashville, TN
  Contact: Jason Lazarow, NIAAA, 301/435-8043

- **November 12–15**
  American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) 56th Annual Meeting
  San Francisco, CA
  Contact: www.aasld.org

- **November 17–18**
  NIAAA Steering Committee on Underage Drinking Research and Prevention
  Bethesda, MD
  Contact: www.niaaa.nih.gov/newsevents/conferences.htm

**D E C E M B E R**

- **December 1–3**
  National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Convention
  Nashville, TN
  Contact: Jason Lazarow, NIAAA, 301/435-8043

- **December 11–14**
  American Public Health Association Annual Meeting
  Philadelphia, PA
  Contact: www.apha.org/meetings/

**F E B R U A R Y**

- **February 2, 2006**
  National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
  Rockville, MD
  Contact: Ida Nestorio, NIAAA, 301/443–4376; nestorio@mail.nih.gov

- **February 14–16, 2006**
  CADCA National Leadership Forum
  Washington, DC
  Contact: http://cadca.org/

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