

Department of Genetics Townhall Meeting

20 APR 2020

General Stuff

- Rules for the meeting:
 - All participants will be muted
 - Send questions using the “CHAT” box in zoom
 - If you wish to ask a question, please unmute and introduce yourself
- Pay attention to updates from the university, the state and the CDC
- Practice social distancing
- Pay special attention to avoid infecting those at risk for serious disease: the elderly and those with pre-existing conditions
- Be kind

Productivity in the Department (March 2020)

- Papers published in March = 19
 - Nature Neuroscience 23:583-593 (2020) – Hyejung Won sr. author
 - Science 367 (6484), 20 Mar 2020 – Jason Stein sr. author
 - Nature Communications 11:1842 (2020) – Halvorsen first author, Sullivan and Szatkiewicz sr. authors
- Grant funding FYTD
 - Bev Koller awarded new R21 in March
 - Terry Magnuson awarded competitive renewal of U42 (MMRRC)

PPE – On Campus Mandatory

- UNC Healthcare is now asking all mandatory employees who work onsite to wear surgical masks, regardless of patient contact
- Please follow up with your department or center business managers to get PPE – they are providing one mask and one paper bag (to store the mask) per week to each mandatory employee
- Department plans to purchase masks for when UNC re-opens (for those who must wear, e.g., in animal facilities)

Department Seminars

- The following speakers will give a seminar in April:
 - Daniel Hollern (postdoc in Perou lab) – 4/22
 - Jason Whitmire – 4/29 (promotion seminar)
- PLEASE ATTEND (via Zoom)! Link included in weekly e-newsletter

Practical R for Scientists

- Zoom meetings on MWF until May 1
- If you would like to join, please email NaEshia at: ancalade@email.unc.edu
- Links to recordings are on department intranet

Art Competition Reminder

- The Department of Genetics has opened a competition to select an art piece to be located in the newly renovated Emeritus Conference Room (GMB 5094). The format is flexible but the piece should fit in the proposed space. Painting, sculpture, photography, collage, mixed media and other visual arts are welcome. The department seeks a highly original piece and the subject matter has no restrictions, but some connection (formal or subjective) to the mission of the department or its members is welcome. Pieces that are contrary to the values and strategic framework of the UNC School of Medicine (research, education, faculty, diversity-equity-inclusion, service and administration) will be disqualified.
- **ARTIST.** The artist(s) should have a connection to the department. Direct or indirect connections are acceptable (please ask if you qualify). Art pieces with team authorship that includes one or more members of the department will also qualify.
- **DIMENSIONS.** Maximum dimensions for the piece are: 8' tall, 30" wide (including frame if needed) and 14" deep. Size will not impact eligibility for the prize.
- **PRIZE.** A single prize of \$600.00 will be awarded to the winner. The stipulation for the winning piece is that it will be donated to the department for display in the conference room.
- **SUBMISSION PROCESS.** Artists should submit up to three high-quality photographs of the art (suitable for judging) and include the name of the artist, a short paragraph describing the piece, and the dimensions. Please send submissions by email to Cathy Cornett at: Catherine_cornett@med.unc.edu with the title: Art Competition – “last name”
- **REVIEW AND SELECTION.** Photographs of the submitted pieces will be posted online for review for a period of two weeks. The winner will be selected by popular vote of qualified members of the department using a survey tool that will be provided by email.
- **DATES**
 - Submission Window: May 18-June 1, 2020
 - Review Process: June 1-14, 2020
 - Voting Survey: June 15-19, 2020
 - Award: By June 26, 2020

Hiring During Reduced Operations - Reminder

- Hiring is limited to:
 - Critical recruitments needed in the current environment
 - Recruitments needed to fill vacant or soon to be vacant leadership positions that do not have an identified interim leader
 - Difficult to fill positions (i.e. positions that have been vacant for > 12 months)
 - Recruitments needed to fulfill specific requests made by the Dean or Executive Dean
 - Clinicians that provide ambulatory/elective services with a start date of 8/1/20 or later
 - Researchers not engaged in “critical research activities” with a start date of 8/1/20 or later
- Requires more robust justification – please contact Sam/Cara before initiating any new hires

Changes to Special Pay Provisions (effective until April 30)

- Mandatory Onsite Primary and Secondary (SHRA and EHRA non-faculty) will receive compensatory time only (not 1.5x pay)
- Graduate students, postdocs and non-student temporary employees will receive 1.5X pay for CDME-associated time on campus

Letter from Graduate and Professional Student Federation and Response from Chancellor

Requests made 4/3:

- Anonymous system for GRAs to report unapproved research activities
- Dedicated HR staff to investigate and respond to reports
- Mandatory workshop addressing abuse of power by advisors (once UNC re-opens)

Response provided 4/16:

- Accommodations related to financial challenges, progress toward degrees, health and well-being, how to register concerns, anonymous reporting outlets

Who can be on campus and for what purposes?

- Only CDMEs can be on campus
- Purposes
 - COVID-19 approved research
 - Critical research approved by VCR
 - Maintenance of vertebrate animals, cell lines or critical infrastructure
- Graduate students (CDME or not) cannot be forced to come to campus to perform any activity

COVID-19 Funding Opportunities

- COVID-19 related funding opportunities of interest to Department of Genetics scientists have been curated and saved to [website intranet folder](#) “COVID-19 Funding Opportunities”. This will be updated on a regular basis so please check back weekly.
- NEW SOM Office of Research Emerging Challenges Pilot Award Program - \$10-50K/one year, VCR-approved research and CDMEs, no significant overlap with aims of existing funding. Due 4/20
- See “Genetics Funding Opportunities” email sent on 4/20/20