

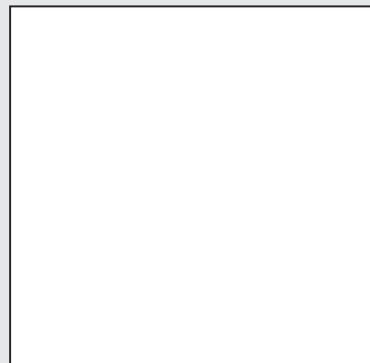
Crane, Jez and Johnson named HHMI professors



CRANE



JEZ



JOHNSON

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute has awarded \$1 million each to three members of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

Brian Crane of Cornell University, Joseph Jez of Washington University and Tracy Johnson of the University of California, Los Angeles, were among the 15 people named as the 2014 HHMI professors. The awards, which will be dispersed over five years, are intended to support the integration of research with undergraduate teaching.

In a statement, HHMI said: “HHMI professors are accomplished research scientists who are making science more engaging for undergraduates. By providing HHMI professors with the funds and support to implement their ideas, HHMI hopes to empower these individuals to create new models for teaching science at research universities.”

The honors resulted from a competition for professors at the 106 research universities deemed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as having “very high research activity.” In the end, there were 173 proposals judged by a panel of scientists and educators. Finalists were called to make presentations at HHMI in May. *Images courtesy of Paul Morigi of HHMI.*

Bassler and Dikic win Vallee Foundation visiting professorships



BASSLER



DIKIC

Bonnie Bassler of Princeton University and Ivan Dikic of Goethe University have won Vallee Foundation visiting professorships, which allow senior scientists to spend four weeks in other labs around the world.

Bassler is the chair of Princeton’s molecular biology department and

a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator. Dikic is the director of the Institute for Biochemistry and scientific director of the Buchman Institute at Goethe. They were among six honorees chosen this year for the program.

All of the winners will be supported by the foundation as they embark upon various pursuits of intellectual exchange at institutes worldwide. Dozens of researchers, about a third of them ASBMB members, have won Vallee professorships over the years. The program will begin accepting nominations again in October. Recipients are allowed up to two years to take advantage of the visiting professorship.

Ortiz named editor-in-chief of BAMBED



ORTIZ

Phillip Ortiz, the assistant provost for undergraduate education at the State University of New York, has been named edi-

tor-in-chief of the journal *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education*, commonly known as BAMBED.

In a letter to readers, Ortiz said he, along with the editorial board, will “determine areas that the journal might explore so that it can continue to meet the needs of educators throughout the world.”

He continued: “For example, it might be appropriate to focus some attention on emerging pedagogies in distance education, continuing refinements in professional and medical education, strategies for overcoming the challenges faced by underserved students, and the emergence of under-recognized educational committees.”

Ortiz is a past member of the ASBMB Minority Affairs Committee.

Belfort, Cuervo and Gierasch named to NIH Council of Councils



BELFORT



CUERVO



GIERASCH

Three ASBMB members were named earlier this year to the National Institutes of Health’s Council of

Councils, an advisory body that counsels the NIH director. They were Marlene Belfort of University at Albany, Ana M. Cuervo of Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Lila

Gierasch of the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

The Council of Councils has 27 members, all of whom are nominated by the NIH institutes, centers and an advisory committee to the director. The councilors are called upon to provide insights with regard to scientific policy and make research recommendations about lines of research that are emerging or deserving of special emphasis.

Nonprofit invests in Gerton’s work on Cornelia de Lange syndrome



GERTON

The Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Foundation selected Stowers Institute for Medical Research investigator Jen-

nifer Gerton as the recipient of a research grant. Gerton will use the funding to study Cornelia de Lange syndrome in a zebrafish model of the disease and to determine whether some developmental defects can be ameliorated through treatment with the amino acid L-leucine.

Cornelia de Lange syndrome is a developmental disorder that affects males and females equally across all human populations. Although the

symptoms can range from mild to very severe, most affected individuals have similar physical characteristics: stunted growth; small hands and feet; thin eyebrows that meet in the middle; long eyelashes; upturned noses; and thin, downturned lips. Common medical problems include gastroesophageal reflux, bowel malrotation, hearing loss and congenital heart defects.

Gerton and her team recently linked a dampened growth signal to Roberts syndrome, a related condition that responded well to treatment with L-leucine in RBS zebrafish. “Both RBS and CdLS are caused by mutations that affect cohesin, although the molecular basis of CdLS is less well understood,” she says. “A logical next step was to determine whether our work on RBS has any relationship to CdLS.”

Founded in 1981, the Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Foundation is a national family support organization that exists to ensure early and accurate diagnosis of CdLS, to promote research into the causes and manifestations of the syndrome, and to help people with a CdLS diagnosis and their families to make informed decisions throughout their lifetimes.

A version of this article appeared in the Stowers Report, published by the Stowers Institute for Medical Research. It has been adapted here with permission.

■ PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE CONTINUED

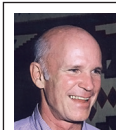
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Damn the fool who does not attend these meetings: The consequence is failure to maintain club membership. And why is club membership of such vital importance? Yes, precisely, there is nearly a one-to-one correspondence between these clubs and CSR study sections. To think that a grant applicant would have even a prayer of winning a fundable

score from a study section wherein the applicant is not a club member is to be equated with idiocy.

Whether clubs came from committees or vice versa matters not – that is where evolution of our biomedical enterprise has taken us. Upon closing out his presidency in 1960, Dwight Eisenhower offered the cautionary statement, “beware of the military industrial complex.” I close with a

similar warning: Beware of the biomedical industrial complex. In subsequent essays, I will offer ideas on how we might reverse untoward trends.



Steven McKnight (steven.mcknight@utsouthwestern.edu) is president of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and chairman of the biochemistry department at the University of Texas-Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.