OFFICE OF LABORATORY ANIMAL RESOURCES (OLAR)

I am happy to announce that we have obtained approval from Finance to release the per diem rates for FY15-16.

We have stated in the past that we would do our best to keep per diem rate increases to between 2-5% per year going forward in an effort to keep research cost increases minimized. I am happy to announce that we have been able to keep per diem rate increases on the CU Denver (Downtown) and CU Anschutz Medical Campus within this range, with most of the rate increases staying below 3% and the benchmark Mouse Ventilated rate rising 2.4% or $0.02 per cage per day to $0.87. Due to a significant drop in census at Denver Health, rates increased more than the 2-5%, but it should be noted that the rodent rate is still in line with rates for similar cage styles at the CU Anschutz Campus and the CU Denver (Downtown) campuses.

You can access the per diem rates for FY15-16 anytime on our website - http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/research/AboutUs/animal/OLAR/Pages/BillingRates.aspx

Please feel free to contact Jori Leszczynski (jori.leszczynski@ucdenver.edu) with any questions regarding this or any other comments or concerns.

OFFICE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION (ORDE)

New NSF CAREER Award Toolkit

The Office of Research Development and Education (ORDE) has developed the National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER Award) Toolkit. This Toolkit is designed to give early career investigators an in-depth overview of the CAREER Program - providing background, strategies for proposal development, insights on the NSF peer review process and helpful tips from past CAREER Award recipients. Deadlines for the 2015 CAREER Award competition are July 21, 22 or 23 - depending on the NSF directorate to which you are submitting. The CAREER Toolkit is available on the ORDE website at http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/research/AboutUs/ORDE/Resources/Pages/ProposalDevelopment.aspx.

Senate panel approves $2 billion raise for NIH in 2016

Finally, we biomedical researchers may be getting some relief. A Senate panel today approved a bill that would bestow a generous $2 billion increase on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 2016, or what appears to be a 6% raise, to $32 billion. Although a House of Representatives panel approved a lower figure, it seems the agency may be on track to its first significant increase in more than a decade.

The draft bill approved by the Senate appropriations panel that oversees NIH's budget would give the agency twice the $1 billion proposed by the Obama administration and $900 million more than the corresponding House panel.

The National Institute on Aging, which the panel notes funds Alzheimer’s disease research, would receive $350 million more, or a roughly 25% increase.

The Senate measure matches the president’s request of $200 million for a Precision Medicine Initiative, and $100 million in new funding for NIH’s part of a transagency antibiotics initiative. The BRAIN brain-mapping initiative would receive $135 million, nearly twice the $70 million requested by the president. The Institutional Development Awards for states with relatively little NIH funding, which the president’s budget flat funded at $273 million, would receive a $27 million increase.

Since Congress completed a 5-year doubling of the NIH budget in 2003, the agency’s funding level has fallen more than 20% below the 2003 level after taking into account the rising costs of biomedical research. That has led to fierce competition and record-low success rates for researchers applying for NIH grants.

The bill goes to the full Senate Appropriations Committee and normally heads to the Senate floor next, but that may not happen any time soon because of a political dispute between Republicans and Democrats over long-term budgeting issues. Eventually, the House and Senate will need to reconcile the numbers in the two bills; usually they meet somewhere in the middle. Any final NIH spending number for the 2016 fiscal year that begins 1 October may not be clear until late this year.

The Senate mark is obviously the best subcommittee action we have seen for NIH in more than 12 years. It shows that there is real momentum on a bipartisan basis in the House and the Senate that the restoration of NIH funding is priority.

A measure called the 21st Century Cures Act that is awaiting a vote by the full House would give NIH an additional $2 billion a year through 2020 from funds that are separate from the usual appropriations process.
RESEARCH CORNER

Nancy Hadley Miller is a Professor in the Department of Orthopedics. She serves as the Director of Research in the Department of Orthopedics and as Medical Director of the Musculoskeletal Research Center at Children's Hospital Colorado. After receiving her undergraduate and medical school degrees at Harvard University and the University of Maryland respectively, Nancy Hadley Miller, PhD she subsequently completed her orthopedic residency at Boston University and a fellowship in pediatric orthopedics at the University of Iowa.

Idiopathic scoliosis is a lateral structural curvature of the spine, affects 3% of children, and has an unknown etiology. Severe disease progression can lead to significant life-long morbidity and considerable public health costs. Idiopathic scoliosis is a complex genetic disorder with multiple genes contributing to its expression in any one individual or family. To date, limited progress has been made in the identification of idiopathic scoliosis genes.

Dr. Miller's interest in the etiology of idiopathic scoliosis began during her fellowship while working with orthopedic surgeons Drs. Stuart Weinstein and Ignacio Ponseti. The Miller laboratory has collected over 700 families (2500 individuals) with this disorder. Early genetic linkage studies identified significant regions of interest within this familial population, and were subsequently replicated in independent populations. Dr. Miller has used exome sequencing in her familial population and identified a rare genetic variant in the HSPG2 gene in a multigenerational family. This variant was overrepresented in a larger cohort of idiopathic scoliosis cases, and additional rare variants were identified in this cohort (Baschal et al. G3. 5(2):167-174. 2015). Therefore, rare variants in the HSPG2 gene potentially contribute to the idiopathic scoliosis phenotype in a subset of individuals.

Future work in the laboratory will focus on exome sequencing in additional families and follow-up of the HSPG2 discovery, including on-campus collaborations to study animal models. The overall aim of Nancy’s research is to identify genes that contribute to the idiopathic scoliosis phenotype and provide entry points for the investigation of the mechanisms underlying disease susceptibility and severe progression of the deformity. This will hopefully aid in our advancement of personalized therapeutic interventions for idiopathic scoliosis.

Nancy’s research has been funded over time through grants from the NIH, Fondation Yves Cotrel-Institut de France, Scoliosis Research Society, Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America, and Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation.

OFFICE OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ANNOUNCING…..

UCD 2015 Conflict Of Interest Disclosure Collection

The 2015 Conflict of Interest Disclosure collection period will commence on Monday, August 17, 2015. You can access the disclosure form at https://era.cu.edu. Detailed instructions for completion of your disclosure can be found on the COI website. For more information on these regulations, please see the Office of Regulatory Compliance-Conflict of Interest website at:

http://ucdenver.edu/academics/research/AboutUs/regcomp/conflictofinterest/Pages/default.aspx

Please complete your 2015 COI disclosure as soon as possible. If you have a current COI disclosure on file, it will need to be updated on or after August 17, 2015 until you have updated your COI Disclosure for 2015, you will not be able to:

- Submit a PHS or NSF grant or receive approval of a PHS or NSF human subjects protocol
- Obtain approval for a new protocol or continuing review, when receiving minor modifications to renew your COI Disclosure.

Questions? Please contact the Office of Regulatory Compliance at COI@ucdenver.edu, (303) 724-0034.

REMININDER: Annual COI Disclosures must be submitted by October 31, 2015.

INSTITUTIONAL BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE (IBC)

Recruitment of Technical Members and Community Members

We are currently recruiting additional members for the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). The IBC provides review of all recombinant DNA research conducted at UC Denver. We are particularly recruiting Technical Members to assist with the review and approval of research involving recombinant DNA. Technical members consist of Lab Managers and PRAs that are knowledgeable in rDNA research. The time commitment for members is a monthly 2 hour meeting and review of approximately 3-4 protocols/month. Approval from your PI for this time commitment is required. The IBC meets once per month; treats are provided! If you are interested in this opportunity for University community service, please contact Mark Douse at 303-724-1057.