Greetings from the Chair

I am pleased to send you this eleventh annual Department of Human Genetics Newsletter. I enjoyed seeing many of you in Philadelphia during the ASHG meetings.

The major news during this past year was the death of James V. Neel, M.D., Ph.D. on February 1, 2000, at the age of 84. Jim established the Department of Human Genetics at Michigan in 1956 and served as its chair for 25 years. He was a pioneer in medical and human genetics, and made major contributions to our discipline and to the world of science. A memorial service was held at Rackham on May 22, 2000, at which Jack Schull, Francisco Salzano, Gene Major, and James V. Neel Jr. spoke on facets of Jim's life and career. A James V. Neel Memorial Lectureship has been established to honor Jim's memory.

As many of you are aware, Jim has recently been the target of scurrilous and unsubstantiated accusations made by two anthropologists in a widely-circulated e-mail and by a journalist in a forthcoming book. These allegations are readily refuted by the publicly-available published record. Some of these materials are summarized on the University's web site http://www.umich.edu/~urel/darkness.html.

In May, our administrative offices moved to the newly renovated Buhl Building. State-of-the-art mouse facilities occupy the basement, and Departmental offices, conference rooms, classroom, and library/media center occupy the fourth and fifth floors, along with lab space for Charlie Sing and an additional quantitative geneticist to be recruited. A wonderful new Departmental lounge with skylight has been created from the unused space between Buhl and Medical Sciences II. In addition, Miriam Meisler has moved into new laboratory space on the fourth level of MSII, and renovation of new laboratory space on the third and fourth levels of Medical Sciences II has begun.

A year ago we celebrated the Tashian Fest honoring Dick Tashian's long career on our faculty. An excellent scientific symposium was coupled with a delightful reunion of students, postdocs, colleagues and friends.

In May of this year, George Brewer was installed as the first Morton S. and Henrietta K. Sellner Professor of Human Genetics in a lovely ceremony at the Gerald Ford Library.

Wendy Uhmann served as President of the National Society of Genetic Counselors during this past year. Her active presidency included testifying before the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Genetic Testing, and representing NSGC at President Clinton's issuance of an Executive Order banning genetic discrimination.

Sally Camper was promoted to Professor of Human Genetics, and Liz Petty to Associate Professor of Internal Medicine and of Human Genetics. Diane Baker was appointed Associate Professor in Clinical Track II.

Finally, the Medical School has finished its year-long celebration of its Sesquicentennial. Construction of the Life Sciences Initiative buildings has begun, and, on Zina Pitcher, where the bank and food store had been familiar landmarks, a new Biomedical Sciences Research Building will appear.

Comings and Goings

After more than a decade of distinguished service, two of our tenured faculty will be leaving during the coming year. Jeff Chamberlain has accepted a position at the University of Washington, Seattle, as Professor of Neurology, and will be departing at the end of this year. Jeff joined the faculty in 1990 and is currently Director of the Center for Gene Therapy at the University of Michigan. Koko Kurachi has accepted the Directorship of a newly established Gene Discovery Research Center in Tsukuba City, Japan, supported by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Japan. Ko will leave in April, after 15 years on our faculty, although his laboratory will continue for another year. Jeff and Ko have established international reputations with their outstanding research programs. We wish them both success in their new endeavors, and we will be recruiting outstanding new faculty who will become the Chamberlains and Kurachis of the future. Leslie Sprunger, Research Investigator, has taken a position in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Washington State University, and Andrew Escayg has been appointed a Research Investigator, working with Miriam Meisler.
Numerically Speaking

Our faculty numbered twenty-seven in 1999-00, including eleven professors (four joint), seven associate professors (four joint), four assistant professors (three joint), two primary research faculty, one lecturer and two clinical instructors. Three emeritus faculty complement this group. Our eleven tenure track faculty with primary appointments in Human Genetics were awarded over $7 M in direct cost funding during this past year and have another $9 M pending. All of our faculty are funded and during the 99-00 fiscal year supported, on average, 59% of their salaries on external funds.

The Department had thirty-four graduate students during this past year, including two in the MStP, eight in the Graduate Program in Genetic Counseling, and two masters students. Expenses for student tuition, stipends, and GradCare totaled almost $600,000. In addition to Human Genetics students, we have five CMB students, including one in the MStP, and one Neuroscience student performing thesis research in Departmental laboratories. Twenty-eight undergraduates worked in Human Genetics faculty labs and there were forty-four postdoctoral fellows in Departmental laboratories during this past year.

Administration

Despite all the disruption of renovations and moves, day-to-day operations continue at an excellent level. A recent survey completed by Medical Administration clearly shows the Human Genetics Department well above average in the areas of communications, team building, respect and trust, and opportunities for growth and development. Our fine administrator, Linda Peasley, was the recipient of two awards this past year. She was selected by the University of Michigan Medical School for the 2000 Staff Recognition Award for Outstanding Service and was runner-up for the University's Workplace 2000 Distinguished Service Award. In addition, Julie Jones, a Senior Research Associate in Miriam Meisler's lab, received the Medical School's Research Staff Award for her contributions to the tradition of excellence in the Medical School.

Linda and her staff processed 33 new and competing grants, as well as 25 non-competing renewals, and organized workshops for laboratory staff and postdoctoral fellows in leadership skills. In addition, our computer support staff configured and implemented a new Department-wide e-mail system and installed a new server. In January, the Department began an annual tradition of hosting a reception to honor staff receiving 10-, 20- and 30-year service awards. This year we recognized Joanne Heaton (Gelehrter lab) for 30 years of service, Linda Peasley (Administration & Robert Dick (Brewer lab) for 20 years of service, and Karen Grail & Jane Sierra (Administration), Virginia Johnson & Sima Keshavarzi (Brewer lab), and Suniko Kurachi (Kurachi lab) for 10 years of service.

Awards and Honors

David Ginzburg was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, is the President-Elect of the American Society for Clinical Investigation, and was the recipient of a Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award from the University of Michigan. John Moran received a Damon Runyon-Walter Winchell Scholar Award, as well as being named a Kroc Foundation Distinguished Young Scholar in Medical Research. Diane Baker was selected as the American Society of Human Genetics-American Association for the Advancement of Science Congressional Fellow for this year, which will afford her a year in Washington, working in the area of health care policy. She has also been elected Chair of the Association of Genetic Counseling Program Directors. Liz Petty was selected to receive the Regent's Award for Distinguished Public Service, and Diane Robins has joined the American Cancer Society's Council for Extramural Grants. George Brewer received a Masters Award from the American College of Nutrition, the highest honor given by the College, for a lifetime of research in the field of nutrition. Sally Camper received the 2000 Boczi Award for Distinguished Alumni at the Michigan State University, and David Burke's "lab on a chip" was selected for the permanent collection of the United Kingdom's Museum of Science and Technology in London. Mike Levine was honored for his many years of service as Director of the Cell and Molecular Biology Program by the naming of the keynote lecture at the annual CMB Symposium as the Myron Levine Lectureship. Ko Kurachi was the recipient of an Excellence in Research Award from the Hemophilia Foundation of Michigan.

Graduate Education

After 22 years of distinguished service, George Brewer has turned over the reigns as Director of the Genetics Training Grant to Miriam Meisler. The Training Grant has supported more than 175 Ph.D. trainees from five departments, and began the popular "short courses." Thank you, George!
The first year of the new Joint Recruitment/Joint Admissions Program, the Program in Biomedical Sciences (PIBS), has yielded a bumper crop of students selecting Human Genetics for their thesis research. Twelve new students will enter as second-year students in the Human Genetics Program this fall. Two of them, Anne Loeb and Heidi Rotschafer, have won NSF fellowships.

Four of our students completed their doctoral training during this past year. Kristin Douglas (Camper lab, "Identification of genes expressed during pituitary gland organogenesis") is staying in the Camper lab to do postdoctoral training. Wei_Lu (Meisler lab, "Mutations of the collagen genes COL4A3 and COL4A4 and the novel semaphorin SEMA4F in the mouse") is a postdoctoral fellow in Bioinformatics at Pfizer in Ann Arbor. Matthew Nelson (Sing lab, "A combination partitioning method to identify multi-genic multi-locus models that predict quantitative trait variability") is an Information Scientist at Eserion Therapeutics, Inc. in Ann Arbor. Anne Jackson (Burke lab, "A mouse model system for quantitative genetics of age-sensitive traits") will continue working with Dave Burke and Richard Miller.

We are pleased that Karen Johnson, a genetic counselor in the U-M Cancer Genetics Program, has been recruited to serve as Acting Director of the Graduate Training Program in Genetic Counseling during Diane Baker's Congressional Fellowship. Four genetic counseling students graduated in December and have taken professional positions: Jenna Antonelli at the Jewish Medical Center in Hyde Park, New York, Kristie Morrell at Saint Peters Medical Center and the Institute for Reproductive and Perinatal Genetics in New Brunswick, New Jersey, Amanda Saler at the Children's Hospital of the Medical Center of Akron, Ohio, and Anne Madeo at the National Institute on Deafness and Communication Disorders.

In Closing...

This past year marked not only the end of the century, but also the end in the Department's history with the passing of Jim Neel and the departure of two outstanding faculty. It is also a time of new opportunity; we will be recruiting at least three new faculty members and will continue to try to attract the very best students and trainees. During this coming year, the Department will undergo a five-year review. The Internal Self-Study Committee, chaired by Mihran Meisler, has begun its deliberations. I am sure she and the Committee would welcome any comments that you have about the activities of the Department in research, training, and service.

Finally, we very much appreciate your continued support. Your financial support is helping to launch the Neel Memorial Lectureship and providing funding for graduate education through the Neel and Cramer Fellowships. Your support is also needed to help guide the very best students, trainees, and faculty to Michigan.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Gelehrter, M.D.
Professor and Chair

Faculty Activities

Diane Baker was a speaker at the University of Michigan Women in Science and Engineering Student Leadership Conference, and a participant in outreach programs, including the Pipeline Program for Minority Undergraduates and the Summer Science Academy at the Medical School.

George Brewer continues as President of the International Society for Trace element Research in Humans and on the Council of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine. He is the Associate Editor of the American Journal of Hematology, and serves on the Editorial Boards of Progress in Clinical and Biological Research, The Journal of Trace Elements in Experimental Medicine, and Biochemical Genetics.

David Burke was an invited speaker at the National Human Genome Research Institute. He continues to serve on the Genome Research Review Committee of the NHGRI and is Associate Editor of Genome Research and of the Journal of Gerontology-Biological Sciences.

Margit Burmeister, while on sabbatical in Berlin, presented seminars in Europe and Israel. Margit serves on the Editorial Board of Mammalian Genome, and has become an Associate Member of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology.

Sally Camper was an invited speaker at the 1999 ASHG meetings in San Francisco and at the Ernst Schering Research Foundation in Germany. She is a member of the NIH Mammalian Genetics Study Section, and serves on the Editorial Boards of Molecular Endocrinology, Mammalian Genome, and Genetics. Sally is the Associate Director of the Program in Biomedical Sciences (PIBS) and continues to direct the Transgenic Animal Core Facility.

and a member of the Board of Directors of the American Society for Gene Therapy.

Eric Fearon serves on the scientific advisory boards of four cancer centers and joined the Pathology B Study Section at NIH. He is also Associate Editor of the *Journal of Clinical Investigation, Cancer Research*, and *Clinical Cancer Research*.

Philip Gage continues to serve on the Advisory Committee on Primary Research Appointments, Promotions, and Titles.

Thomas Gelcher presented invited lectures at Schering in Berlin and at the University of Florence. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, a member of the Council of the International Society of Fibronolysis and Proteolysis, and of the Social, Ethical, and Legal Issues Committee of the American College of Medical Genetics.

David Ginsburg was an invited lecturer at the XVIIIth Congress of the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis in Washington, D.C., and was the Fourteenth Annual Oscar Ratnoff Lecturer at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. He is Deputy Editor of the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, as well as a member of the Editorial Boards of the *American Journal of Medicine*, *Thrombosis and Haemostasis*. He is a member of the Board of Scientific Counselors of the NHGRI and the National Hemophilia Foundation.

Thomas Glasser served as a member of the MDCHG Study Section at NIH and was an ad hoc reviewer for the March of Dimes.

Thomas Glover serves on the Research Advisory Board of the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation and on the NIH Mammalian Genetics Study Section. Tom has served as the Interim Director of the Clinical Cytogenetics Laboratory in the Department of Pathology.

Jerome Gorski is an Associate Editor of *Genetics in Medicine* and a member of the Michigan State Department of Public Health Genetics Advisory Committee. Terry also continues as the Director of the Division of Pediatric Genetics in the Department of Pediatrics.

Jeffrey Innis presented a talk at the Complexity Research and Biotechnology in Agriculture and Medicine Symposium in Bozeman, Montana. Jeff is a Consulting Editor of *Pediatric Research* and Director of the University of Michigan's Medical Genetic Residency Program.

Dave Kohrman serves on the Medical School's Planning Committee for the Research Responsibility Course.

Kotoku Kurachi presented invited seminars at the University of Vermont, the University of Washington, and several in Japan, including one at the National Institute of Life Sciences and Technology. He is a member of the Editorial Boards of *Bioscience, Biotechnology and Biochemistry* and *Gene Therapy/Molecular Biology*.

David Kurnit served as Chair of the special NIDDK Study Section on gene expression during embryogenesis.

Miriam Meisler presented invited lectures at SUNY Buffalo, Yale, University of Connecticut, and at the University of Utah. She serves on the Executive Board of the International Mammalian Genome Society and as a member of the External Advisory Committee of the Mammalian Genome Database at the Jackson Laboratory. Miriam also is a member of the Advisory Council of the National Institute on Deafness and Communication Disorders and is an Associate Editor of *Genomics and* on the Editorial Board of *Mammalian Genome*.

John Moran was an invited speaker at the Transposable Elements and Evolution Conference in Athens, Georgia and at a Keystone Conference on Transposition in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has joined the editorial boards of *Analytical Biochemistry* and *Biomedicine and Biotechnology*.

Gilbert Omenn, Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs, keynoted the 3rd Annual Conference on Genetics & Public Health, and moderated a panel at the Government University Research Partnership meeting hosted by Columbia University for the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. He remains heavily involved in the University's Life Sciences Initiative and is a member of the Michigan Life Sciences Research Corridor Steering Committee.

Elizabeth Petty spoke at the University of Vermont and in the Clark College Lecture series in Iowa. Liz continues as Medical Director of the Graduate Program in Medical Genetics and has developed a senior medical student rotation in Medical Genetics.

Diane Robins was an invited speaker at the University of Vermont, at Mount Sinai School of Medicine and at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Center. Didi is a member of the NIH/NIGMS Biomedical Research and Research Training Subcommitte B Study Section and serves on the Research Advisory Committee for the Population Council of New York. She also serves on the Editorial Boards of *The Journal of Biological Chemistry, Steroids, and Genetics*.

Jane Schuette is a member of the Genetics Advisory Committee for the state of Michigan and was a presenter at the Cranbrook Institute of Science for Expanding Horizons for Girls in Science and Math. Jane was also the Coordinator of the summer science program for middle school girls for the U of M Women in Science and Engineering Program.

Charles Sing was an invited speaker at the 12th International Symposium on Atherosclerosis in Stockholm, and in Aarhus, Denmark. He serves on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Molecular Medicine*, and is a consulting editor for *Atherosclerosis, Thrombosis, and Vascular Biology*.

Anand Swaroop is on a sabbatical at the Salk Institute. Anand was a guest speaker at the Mouse Retinal Degeneration Symposium and Workshop at The Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor and is a member of the Editorial Review Board of *Molecular Vision*.

Wendy Uhmann has joined the Social Issues Committee of the American Society of Human Genetics and continues on several NSCG committees including the Executive, Finance and Awards Committees.