Greetings from the Chair

I am pleased to send you this thirteenth annual Department of Human Genetics Newsletter, albeit somewhat delayed.

After a national search I am delighted that we have appointed Beverly Yashar, Ph.D., M.S., as Clinical Assistant Professor of Human Genetics and Director of our Graduate Training Program in Genetic Counseling. Bev received her Ph.D. in molecular genetics from the University of North Carolina, and following postdoctoral work, joined our Graduate Training Program and received her M.S. in genetic counseling in 1997. Since graduating, she has organized and developed clinical genetics research in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, directing a clinical study on age-related macular degeneration. She will continue to hold a joint appointment in Ophthalmology, and this will serve as a focus for continuing research activities. The Graduate Program is undergoing significant changes with expansion in numbers of students admitted and, importantly, expansion to a five-semester academic program with a significant research component.

We are also delighted that Friedhelm Hildebrandt, M.D., has joined our Department as a joint appointee. He is the new Frederick G. L. Huetwell Professor for the Cure and Prevention of Birth Defects, and a Professor of Pediatrics and of Human Genetics. He received his M.D. degree from Heidelberg and came to us from the University of Freiburg. His research interests are in the genetics of renal disease.

The Department continues to be very strong in the research arena and for FY 2001, the latest year for which we have data, the Department ranked fourth nationally in NIH awards to medical school departments of genetics.

During the past year Tom Glaser was promoted to Associate Professor of Internal Medicine, with tenure, and Associate Professor of Human Genetics, and Anand Swaroop was promoted to Professor of Human Genetics; Anand is already Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. Ko Kunachi became Emeritus Professor of Human Genetics and fully moved his laboratory to The National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), which he directs, in Tsukuba, Japan. Phil Gage left the Department to take a position in the Department of Ophthalmology, and Karen Johnson Meister moved to Virginia after so ably directing the Genetic Counseling Program during the interim between permanent directors. Kathy Kies, Ph.D. (Sing laboratory), and Jennifer Kearney, Ph.D. (Meister laboratory), were appointed Research Investigators, as was Donna Martin, M.D., Ph.D. (Camper laboratory). Donna's primary appointment is now Assistant Professor of Pediatrics.

The Phase III renovation of the Department's research space in MSII is now complete, and John Moran's lab has moved from MSRBI to join the rest of the Department.

Last June Professor Luca Cavalli-Sforza, from Stanford University, delivered the Second Annual James V. Neel Lectureship on "Genes, People, and Languages."

Last Fall saw another successful retreat at the Howell Nature Center. Tom Glover, the administrative staff, and students collaborated to put on another excellent program. Ed Goldman, the Hospital attorney, was the featured speaker on ethical issues in genetics. The summer picnic was also a successful event, directed by John Moran's booming voice and energy.

Awards and Honors

Linda Peasley received the Distinguished Administrator Award from the Office of the Vice President for Research, as well as the Distinguished Service Award from the University's Workplace 2002 Program! She had previously received the Medical School's top administrative honor two years ago. Linda was also selected, among thirty women across campus, to participate in the new Millennium Leadership Series. Sally Camper was selected for a MERIT Award from the NIH, the fourth Human Genetics faculty member to be so honored (Tom Gelehrter, Jeff Trent, and David Ginsburg were previous awardees). Anand Swaroop was named the Harold F. Falls Collegiate Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences and will be installed in May. John Moran was selected to receive a Henry Russel Award, which
honors assistant and associate professors for exceptional scholarly achievements. David Ginsburg delivered the International Society for Fibrinolysis and Proteolysis Prize Lecture in Munich, and was elected a Fellow of AAAS. John Moran's research was featured on the cover of Cell; can a centerfold be far behind? Tom Gelehrter received a Medical Student Award for Teaching Excellence, and Sue Kellogg and Jill Karolyi were honored for twenty years of service to the Department. Jill has also been awarded the 2003 Science Educator of the Year Award from the Michigan Society for Medical Research (MISMR).

Numerically Speaking

Our faculty numbered twenty-seven in 2001-02, including thirteen professors (five joint), five associate professors (three joint), three assistant professors (two joint), three primary research faculty, and three clinical instructors. Four emeritus faculty complement this group. Our twelve tenure track faculty with primary appointments in Human Genetics were awarded $7.3M in direct cost funding during this past year and have another $1.4M pending. As noted earlier, the Department ranked fourth nationally in NIH funding. During the 2001-02 fiscal year the primary faculty supported, on average, 60% of their salaries on external funds.

The Department had forty graduate students during the past year, including four in MSTP, four in the Graduate Program in Genetic Counseling, and one masters student. Expenses for student tuition, stipends, and GradCare totaled close to $300,000. In addition to Human Genetics students, we have six CMB students, including one in the MSTP, one Neuroscience student and one Physiology student performing thesis research in Departmental laboratories. Seven undergraduates worked in Human Genetics primary faculty labs and there were twenty-eight postdoctoral fellows in Departmental primary laboratories during this past year.

Graduate Education

Under Didi Robin's direction, seven students successfully completed their preliminary exams. Seven students from the Program in Biomedical Sciences, plus one student from ULAM, have chosen Human Genetics for their thesis research. We also have one new masters student. The 2002 James V. Neel Fellowship Award has gone to Tom Williams, and the Anita and Howard Cramer Family Award to Melissa Williams. Both students are in the Innis lab.

One of the three 2002 Excellence in Research and Service Awards, sponsored by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies in the Medical School, was received by Tammy Morrish in the Moran lab. We are delighted to have three students selected for Rackham awards in 2003, including Anne Casper, Mike Glynn, and Tammy Morrish.

Three of our students completed their doctoral training during this past year. Debra Breuer (Swarcoop lab, "Understanding the Mechanism of Retinal Degeneration in X-linked Retinitis Pigmentosa") has taken a postdoctoral position to study retinal protein complexes using proteomic techniques with Dr. Robert Molday at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. Kristen Coulter (Glaser lab, "A Subtractive Screen for Pax6 Target Genes in P19 Embryonal Carcinoma Cells") has gone on to her third year of medical school in the Medical Scientist Training Program and is currently involved in clinical rotations. Igor Nasonkin (Camper lab, "Targeting Prophet of Pit 1 Gene and Designing Mouse Lines for Cre-Mediated Gene Targeting in Somatotrophs") has begun a postdoctoral fellowship with Dr. Rudolf Jaenisch at the Whitehead Institute and Biology Department of MIT.

Four genetic counseling students graduated in December 2002. Kari (Haag) Branham is working at the Kellogg Eye Center as a genetic counselor and clinical director of the AMD Family Studies Core. Angie Lanie is working at Children's Hospital in Detroit in pediatric genetics. Dana Knutzen is in Seattle also working in pediatric genetics at Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center. Karen (Hannon) Ahn has moved to San Francisco and is working on breaking into a tight job market there.

The Medical School will be introducing a revised new curriculum beginning August 2003. Tom Gelehrter has been selected to chair the committee designing the first month of that curriculum, "Patients and Populations." This section will introduce incoming students to the principles of genetics, biostatistics, epidemiology and general pathology, with an emphasis on accessing and evaluating information and on decision-making.

Administration

Linda and her staff processed 24 new and competing grants during FY02, and managed 126 accounts. They assisted three new faculty in establishing their programs, helped facilitate the Kuchars' lab move to Japan, the Moran move to MSII, and the renovation of incremental space for Didi Robin's.
In Closing...

I am very pleased with the continuing excellence of our faculty, students, and staff in research and training. We are delighted to have Bev Yashar as the new director of our Graduate Training Program in Genetic Counseling.

On a personal note, after more than fifteen years as the chair, I have decided to step down, hopefully by September 2004. A search committee has been formed and the search process begun. This is a terrific Department, and I believe the chairmanship will be an extremely attractive opportunity.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Thomas D. Gelehrter, M.D.
Professor and Chair

Faculty Activities

George Brewer gave the opening lecture at the "Metals in Biology" Gordon Research Conference in Ventura, California. He continues as 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. George is also the recent past president of the International Society for Trace Element Research in Humans and has finished a four-year term on the council for the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine.

David Burke was an invited speaker for the University of Michigan's Life Sciences, Values, and Society Lecture series and was a speaker for the Henry Russel Lecturer Award Dinner in 2002. David is an associate editor of Genome Research and participated this past year in the planning meetings of NHGRI's Strategic Planning and Technology Development.

Margit Burmeister was a workshop speaker at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem, Israel, and chaired an invited session at ASHG's annual meeting. She was a member of the CDRC Study Section of the NIDCD. She serves on the editorial boards of Mammalian Genome and Human Molecular Genetics, and has been elected to a three-year term on the University of Michigan Medical School's Advisory Committee on Promotions and Tenure.

Sally Camper gave the 7th Annual Schreffler Memorial Lecture at Washington University and was a speaker at the symposium honoring the scientific legacy of Shirley Tilghman at Princeton. She was also an invited speaker at the Mouse Initiative III Meetings at The Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor. Sally gave the convocation for the biochemistry and chemistry graduates at her alma mater, the University of Delaware. She continues on the editorial boards of Mammalian Genome and Genomics, and recently completed her terms on the Editorial Board of Molecular Endocrinology, as well as on the Mammalian Genetics Study Section.

Julie Douglas is a member of the Mathematical and Theoretical Biology Institute at Cornell University where she prepared and taught a three-day short course in statistical genetics. Julie is also a member of the Methods Working Group of the Haplotype Map Project.

Eric Fearon was an invited speaker at the American Association for Cancer Research International Conference on Molecular Mechanisms of Gastrointestinal Cancer Development and Its Clinical Implications in Seoul, Korea, and at a Keystone Symposium in Taos, New Mexico in March 2002. Eric continues as editor of Cell Growth and Differentiation, as consulting editor on the Journal of Clinical Investigation, and on the editorial boards of Genes, Chromosomes, and Cancer, Human Molecular Genetics, and Cancer Research. He is also a member of the NIH Pathology B Study Section and was the chair of the 2002 Gordon Research Conference on Cancer.

Thomas Gelehrter presented the Montie Block Lecture at his alma mater, Oberlin College. He is a member of the NIH Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee, a member of the Council of the International Society of Fibrinolysis and Proteolysis, and a member of the Ethical, Legal, and Social Issues Committee of the American College of Medical Genetics.

David Ginsburg presented the 9th William C. Moloney Lecture at Brigham and Women's Hospital, the Hymie Rossell Memorial Lecture at Columbia University, and the 2002 Sol Sherry Distinguished Lecture of the American Heart Association. David serves on the editorial boards of The American Journal of Medicine, Thrombosis and Haemostasis, and Molecular Medicine. He is a member of the Board of Scientific Counselors of NHGRI, was chairman of the 2002 Gordon Research Conference on Hemostasis, and was the president of the American Society of Clinical Investigation for 2001-02. He is currently enjoying his first sabbatical.

Thomas Glaser was an invited speaker at the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins and was a grant reviewer for the Wellcome Trust in London.

Thomas Glover was an invited speaker at the University of Pittsburgh and at the ASHG meeting in Baltimore, and serves on the Research Advisory Board of the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation. Tom was elected to the Medical School's Executive Committee for a three-year term.

Jerome Gorski serves as the director of the Division of Pediatric Genetics and is an associate editor of Genetics in
Elizabeth Petty presented lectures at the University of Wisconsin and at the American Society of Clinical Oncology annual meeting. Liz serves as medical director of the Department's Genetic Counseling Training Program and is an ad hoc reviewer for the Mammalian Genome Study Section at NIH.

Diane Robins is a member of the American Cancer Society Council for Extramural Grants and represents ACS on the Council for the Union Internationale Contre le Cancer in Geneva. She is a member of the NIGMS Biomedical Research and Research Training Subcommittee B and the Research Advisory Committee of the Population Council in New York. In addition, Didi is an associate editor of Genetics and serves on the editorial boards of Steroids, Endocrine Reviews, and Molecular Endocrinology. Didi continues as the director of Graduate Studies.

Jane Schuchter is a member of the State of Michigan's Genetic Advisory Committee. Jane continues as the coordinator of the Summer Science for Middle School Girls with the U of M Women in Science and Engineering Program.

Charles Sing was an invited speaker at the 4th International Meeting on Single Nucleotide Polymorphism and Complex Genome Analysis in Stockholm, Sweden, at the Genetics and Nutrition (ITEST) Workshop in Belleville, IL, and at NHI and NIGMS. Charlie continues on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Molecular Medicine and is a consulting editor for Atherosclerosis, Thrombosis, and Vascular Biology. He hosted the Second International Meeting on Biotechnology and Complexity in Agriculture and Medicine in Bozeman, Montana.

Anand Swaroop was an invited speaker at Harvard Medical School Department of Genetics and gave the Lois and David Rich Lecture in Visual Science at the University of Alabama. Anand received a 2001 Inventor Recognition Award from U of M and continues on the editorial boards of Molecular Vision and Investigative Ophthalmology and Visual Science.

Wendy Uhmann gave presentations at The Given Institute of the University of Colorado, at Oberlin College, and at the National Society of Genetic Counselors 29th and 31st Annual Education Conferences. Wendy was elected to the Genetic Alliance Board of Directors and continues to serve on the American Society of Human Genetics Social Issues Committee.