

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The UAB Center for Metabolic Bone Disease (CMBD) has been awarded a five-year NIH T32 Institutional Training Grant entitled Comprehensive Training Grant in Bone Biology and Disease that provides three predoctoral and three postdoctoral fellowships. Currently, we are accepting applications for one postdoctoral position.

The External Advisory Committee for the UAB Center for Metabolic Bone Disease (CMBD) met April 9-11, 2002 to review the Center, assess its progress, and suggest ways that it might be strengthened. Members of the committee, who also gave scientific presentations at the CMBD Scientific Symposium, were: Dr. Charles H. Chesnut, III, University of Washington Medical Center; Dr. Keith A. Hruska, Washington University; Dr. Kenneth W. Lyles, Duke University Medical Center; Dr. Mark S. Nanes, Emory University; and Nicola C. Partridge, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. The Committee was impressed with the numerous accomplishments of the CMBD since its last external review in 1999, stating: "...the CMBD is obviously a vibrant component of the academic environment at UAB. The administrative success of the CMBD is remarkable, redefining in reality the concept of the centers at UAB." Committee members also agreed that the CMBD is poised to join the elite metabolic bone disease programs in the country. Below is a brief summary of the Committee Report. Please contact me if you would like a copy of the entire report.

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SUMMATION OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

The External Advisory Committee noted a number of strengths including the following:

- The Osteoporosis Clinic Program under the leadership of Dr. Sarah Morgan has many strengths, including its multidisciplinary nature, dedication to the health of the population of Alabama and its spirit of community service. Dr. Saag was commended for his leadership in clinical research, especially in quality performance and outcomes.
- The basic research enterprise of the CMBD has experienced considerable growth, improved quality, and enrichment by bright young faculty since the previous site visit. Dr. Xu Cao was cited for his leadership of the Human Bone Cell Production Core, his effective leadership of the Basic Research Committee and his national prominence in basic research of bone diseases. Additional strengths in basic research include the addition of several high quality junior faculty and a highly successful pilot study program.
- The scientific cores were viewed as functioning at a "high level of excellence." These cores include: 1) Human Bone Cell Production Core (Dr. Cao), 2) Histomorphometry and Molecular Analyses Core (Dr. Siegal), 3) Small Animal Phenotyping Core (Dr. Nagy).
- The leadership of the CMBD under the direction of Dr. McDonald was noted as being very strong. The organizational structure that fosters the productive multidisciplinary relationships among the various schools and departments was evaluated as "remarkably effective". The rapid growth in quantity and quality of scientific programs since the 1999 site visit was mentioned as being impressive.

There were three recommendations made regarding the CMBD's long-term goal to become one of the elite skeletal disorder centers in the nation. These recommendations involve the recruitment of senior faculty.

- Recruit an endowed professor in bone metastasis to interface the CMBD and the Comprehensive Cancer Center.
- Recruit through partnering with biomedical engineering a senior level scientist in the area of orthopedic tissue engineering.
- Recruit a translational research investigator to bridge the basic research and clinical activity.

Edited by: Samuel Brown, Jr., Ed.D.