



ACTS ASSOCIATION FOR CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE

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ACTS Member News

Research Goal: Catch the Interferons that Cause Lupus, One Cell at a Time



Mark Walter, Ph.D., professor of microbiology in the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine, is seeking a way to detect — at the level of individual immune cells — exactly which interferons and which cells provoke the disease. This ability would help develop blood tests to diagnose the disease and also measure the effectiveness of lupus treatments. If Walter is able to finger the prime interferon culprits, it will help guide the design of more precise interferon inhibitors to treat lupus, a disease that affects at least 1.5

million Americans.

This level of detection requires a difficult leap in cutting-edge technology. Walter's research is one of 11 high-risk, high-payoff Novel Research Grants recently awarded by the Lupus Research Institute to push the boundaries of discovery and advance innovative new therapies.

To read this full story from the University of Alabama, please [click here](#).
Story written by Jeff Hansen, University of Alabama

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View the NCATS Advisory Council Video

On Thursday, September 3rd, the Advisory Council of the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) convened for a joint meeting with the Cures Acceleration Network Review Board. The meeting was led by Chris Austin, M.D., Director of NCATS.

To view the full video, [click here](#).

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News From the Hill--ACTS Advocacy News Robert Califf, MD, Nominated as the Next Commissioner of the FDA

President Barack Obama announced his intention Tuesday, September 15, to nominate FDA deputy Robert Califf, who is a cardiologist and a former Duke professor, to head the agency. Califf has been serving as deputy commissioner for medical products and tobacco since February, and he also oversees the agency's Office of Special Medical Programs. In his current positions he directs FDA efforts covering precision medicine, combination products, orphan drugs, pediatric therapeutics and the advisory committee system.

September 24, 2015

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The ACTS mission is to advance research and education in clinical and translational science to improve human health. For more information, visit actscience.org

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Before joining FDA, Califf was a professor of medicine and vice chancellor for clinical and translational research at Duke University. According to FDA, Califf is a “nationally and internationally recognized expert in cardiovascular medicine,” and has led many landmark clinical trials. Dr. Califf has long been a powerful advocate for the value and importance of clinical and translational science, and the Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science applauds the administration’s decision to nominate him for FDA Commissioner.

Read more details by [clicking on the ACTS Advocacy page](#).

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Milstein Medical Asian American Partnership Foundation Grant Opportunity in Translational Medicine

The MMAAP Foundation invites the submission of applications for the following awards:

1. The Fellowship Award to support one year of fellowship training in clinical or basic research at a prominent sponsor institution in the US for one Chinese scholar in translational medicine.
2. The Project Award to support one research project with potential for immediate impact on improving translational medicine studies in China.

To read more about this opportunity, please [click here](#). Direct questions specifically regarding this opportunity should be sent to [the MMAAP Office](#). ph: 212-850-4505.

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NIH K12 Grant Opportunity

On September 18, grant details for the NINDS Child Neurologist Career Development Program (CNCDP) were posted. The purpose of the NINDS Child Neurologist Career Development Program (CNCDP) is to facilitate and support the research career development of child neurologists, at educational institutions or professional organizations, who have made a commitment to independent research careers. The CNCDP is a single national program, implemented by either a single PD/PI or multiple co- directors (at least one of whom is the PD/PI), together with an advisory committee composed of basic and clinical investigators who have a strong record of funded research and successful training of clinician scientists.

The CNCDP will generally provide three consecutive years of support to individuals to provide them with the knowledge, tools and research experience that will enable them to develop a significant research project funded by an individual career development award or research grant.

To read more about this NIH opportunity, please [click here](#).

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News from ACTS

ACTS Member Highlight: Share Your Exciting News Stories with Us!

Share Your Exciting News Stories With Us! Does your institution have news you want to share with the *ACTS Connection* readership? Do you have an investigator doing something innovative? Let us know! From innovative projects, star scholars and trainees, to award winning faculty, help us share the news that is important to you by submitting it through our [online form](#).

Your news may be shared on the ACTS website, and other ACTS social media sources!

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Save the Date Now for Translational Science 2016

Mark Your Calendars! Translational Science 2016 will take place April 13-15 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. Registration for Translational 2016 is expected to open in December 2015.

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Translational Science News

Bipartisan Group of Senators Introduces Bill to Speed Development of Rare Disease Drugs

A bipartisan group of senators has proposed a bill to speed up the development of drugs for rare diseases, such as Duchenne muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, and some cancers. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), a co-sponsor of the measure, said the bill would clarify the Food and Drug Administration's authority to consider research supporting previously approved targeted treatments. The Advancing Targeted Therapies for Rare Diseases Act of 2015 would affirm the agency's authority to "allow innovators to use their own data supporting the approval of a targeted therapy to help facilitate additional targeted therapies to treat patients with the same rare disease," and would not change current approval standards, the senators said. Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) added that the bill would help remove many barriers to conducting conventional trials for genetic subgroups of many rare diseases and would incentivize new drug development.

From "Bipartisan Group of Senators Introduces Bill to Speed Development of Rare Disease Drugs"

Regulatory Affairs Professionals Society (09/16/2015) Brennan, Zachary

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Undiagnosed Diseases Network Launches Online Application Portal

The Undiagnosed Diseases Network (UDN) has unveiled an online patient application portal called the UDN Gateway, which will help the network advance its core mission of diagnosing patients who suffer from unknown conditions. All applications for the UDN will go through the Gateway, which replaces a paper-and-mail application process for the National Institutes of Health's (NIH's) Undiagnosed Diseases Program. "The UDN Gateway will provide patients and their families access to the nation's leading diagnostic teams and sophisticated diagnostic tools," said Dr. James M. Anderson, director of NIH's Division of Program Coordination,

Planning, and Strategic Initiatives. The UDN is also adding six clinical sites to the original program, and each new site expects to accept about 50 patients annually by summer 2017.

From "Undiagnosed Diseases Network Launches Online Application Portal"
NIH News (09/16/15)

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Not Enough Funding in 'Cures' Bill, FDA Chief Warns

Acting Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Stephen Ostroff said recently that the 21st Century Cures Bill, which was passed by the House of Representatives in July, includes many useful provisions but may not include enough funding. Speaking at a Sept. 10 forum sponsored by ResearchAmerica, Ostroff said, "We were certainly happy with the fact that there were funds dedicated for FDA; our estimation is that the funds available are not necessarily going to cover everything we're expected to do." The Senate's version of the bill is expected in October.

From "Not Enough Funding in 'Cures' Bill, FDA Chief Warns"
MedPage Today (09/11/15) Frieden, Joyce

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Grant Opportunities

Planning for Regional Centers of Research Excellence in Non-Communicable Diseases in Low and Middle Income Countries (P20)

The National Cancer Institute will award two to four grants to aid the planning, design, and initial research focus of Regional Centers of Research Excellence for non-communicable diseases, including cancer, in low and middle-income countries. Research activities under the grant should demonstrate that the collaborators can work together to answer non-communicable disease questions that are relevant and timely for the concerned region. The grants will correspond to a total of \$2 million, and application budgets are limited to no more than \$200,000 in direct costs in any single year, with a maximum project period of two years. Applications are due by Dec. 10, 2015.

From "Planning for Regional Centers of Research Excellence in Non-Communicable Diseases in Low and Middle Income Countries (P20)"
NIH Grants (09/14/15)

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AIDS-Science Track Award for Research Transition (R03)

The National Institute on Drug Abuse has issued a funding opportunity announcement that seeks to facilitate the entry of newly independent and early-career investigators to research on the intersection of drug abuse and HIV/AIDS. The AIDS-Science Track Award for Research Transition encourages Small Research Grant (R03) applications to support research projects on drug abuse and HIV/AIDS that can be conducted with limited resources over a short period of time. The number of grants depends on the number of applications and National Institutes of Health appropriations, but budgets for direct costs of up to \$100,000 per year may be requested, with projects limited to two years. Applications are due by Jan. 7, 2016.

From "AIDS-Science Track Award for Research Transition (R03)"
NIH Grants (09/09/15)

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NHLBI Career Transition Award for Intramural Fellows (K22)

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) has announced that it will distribute grants under the NHLBI Career Transition Award program. The program seeks to enable outstanding postdoctoral individuals to obtain research training experience in the NHLBI Division of Intramural Research and to transition to an extramural environment as independent researchers. The NHLBI Career Transition Award will support two phases of research: a mentored intramural phase of up to two years, and a three-year extramural phase. The number of awards depends on National Institutes of Health appropriations and the number of applications.

Applications are due by March 12, 2016.

From "NHLBI Career Transition Award for Intramural Fellows (K22)"
NIH Grants (09/03/15)

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