Suhrud Rajguru, Ph.D., participated in a CTSA-supported program that allowed him to refine and test his hypothermia device in a rat model of cochlear implantation. (Angie Del-Llano/University of Miami)

In 2011, Suhrud Rajguru accepted a position as an assistant professor in the University of Miami Departments of Biomedical Engineering and Otolaryngology and continued his work on cochlear implants. Efforts in his laboratory involved addressing a problem with current cochlear implant surgeries: Inserting the device can damage inner ear cells and impair patients' residual hearing. Preserving residual hearing is critical, as it enables patients to benefit from supplemental hearing aids and other therapies. Rajguru knew that exposing nerve cells to low temperatures - termed "mild therapeutic hypothermia" - after trauma and injury could protect them from damage. Initial studies in his laboratory suggested that using this approach with inner ear cells during cochlear implant surgery might have a similar effect, possibly preventing residual hearing loss. Through a collaboration with Lucent Medical Systems in Seattle, Washington, and researchers at the University of Miami, Rajguru developed a device to deliver hypothermia during surgery. However, he needed additional funding to continue testing this innovative technology.

While attending a research "boot camp" offered through the University of Miami's Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), funded through NCATS' Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program, Rajguru learned about the range of CTSI research resources available to scientists. NCATS' CTSA Program supports a national network of medical research institutions, called hubs, through which researchers work together to improve the translational research process to get more treatments to more patients more quickly.
Fred P. Ognibene, MD

research-oriented students for the 2016-2017 Medical Research Scholars Program (MRSP). A year-long residential program, the MRSP introduces medical, dental and veterinary students to cutting-edge research, and is part of NIH’s goal of training the next generation of clinician-scientists and biomedical researchers. The program places students in NIH laboratories and patient care areas, including the NIH Clinical Center, to conduct basic, translational, or clinical research in areas that match their career interests and research goals.

"This year-long research enrichment program is very often the starting point for a successful research-oriented career. These 52 scholars clearly represent future academic leaders and biomedical researchers in this country," said Frederick P. Ognibene, M.D., NIH Clinical Center Deputy Director for Educational Affairs and Strategic Partnerships.

See the full story and list of selected scholars on the NIH website.

From the NIH Director:
Single IRB Policy to Streamline Reviews of Multi-Site Research
June 21, 2016 | Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., Director, National Institutes of Health

Accelerating clinical research studies benefits researchers, research participants, and all who stand to gain from research results. Today, the time it takes to go from a sound research idea to the launch of a new, multi-site clinical research study is too long. A major contributor to the delay is that too many institutional review boards (IRBs) are reviewing the protocol and consent documents for the same study, often with no added benefit in terms of the protections for research participants. To address this bottleneck, NIH has issued a new policy to streamline the review process for NIH-funded, multi-site clinical research studies in the United States. The NIH Policy on the Use of a Single Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Multi-Site Research sets the expectation that multi-site studies conducting the same protocol use a single IRB to carry out the ethical review of the proposed research. See the full announcement here.

Translational Science Today
Controversial Research Brings Possibility of Ending Organ Shortage

Researchers from the University of California, Davis believe hybrid embryos could develop into seemingly normal pigs that house human organs.

USA Today reported that currently, scientists are terminating the pregnancies to study the tissue after the embryo has developed for 28 days inside the female pigs.

NPR quoted Pablo Ross, a reproductive biologist at UC, Davis, saying, "We’re not trying to make a chimera just because we want to see some kind of monstrous creature. We’re doing this for a
Nature 527, 152-154 (12 November 2015)

Monstrous creature, we're doing this for a biomedical purpose."

Share your thoughts on this subject by adding comments to this story here.

Journal of Clinical and Translational Science

Reminder: JCTS Submissions Now Open!
Reminder that submissions are now open for Journal of Clinical and Translational Science (JCTS). Submit by following this link: journals.cambridge.org/cts/submit.

Journal of Clinical and Translational Science is an international peer-reviewed journal that will publish papers capturing the spectrum of research from T1 (translation from research lab bench to bedside) through to T4 (translation to populations). JCTS aims to provide a forum for the rapid communication of relevant topics of interest to the large and diverse community of clinical and translational scientists. The ultimate goal of JCTS is to improve the efficiency with which research and new diagnostics, therapies, and preventive measures, informed by health needs, are able to reach the public.

Specifically, JCTS will highlight outstanding work in the following areas:

- Basic Translational Research
- Clinical Research
- Education
- Research Methods
- Implementation
- Policy and Community Engagement
- Translational Research Design and Analysis

News from The Hill

Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science
Dale Dirks and Dane Christiansen

On June 9th, the Senate Committee on Appropriations approved the chamber's fiscal year (FY) 2017 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education (L-HHS) Appropriations Bill with strong bipartisan support. The measure provides a meaningful funding increase for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) along with modest cuts to many other medical research and public health programs. The House of Representatives has yet to put forward a FY 2017 L-HHS Appropriations Bill.

To follow, please find a summary of key funding items here.

Grants and Grant News
Lasker Clinical Research Scholars Program

The NIH is accepting applications for the 2017 Lasker Clinical Research Scholars Program. This is a competitive opportunity for early-stage physician-scientists to conduct independent clinical and translational research as tenure-track investigators at the NIH and in academia.

The program was established in 2011 to create career research opportunities for physician-scientists (it also includes dental and nurse scientists) and is targeted to outstanding post-fellowship physicians and other clinicians with strong research interests and credentials. Funding provides full research and salary support for 5+ years at the NIH followed by three years in academia (up to $500,000/year) or continued appointment in the NIH intramural program. This program also allows for the opportunity for academic institutional affiliation while at the NIH.

The deadline for applications is August 26, 2016.

The general start date for the positions is summer 2017, but this is flexible. More information can be found at the NIH website, http://www.nih.gov/science/laskerscholar/ or by email to Dr. Chuck Dearolf at LaskerScholar@nih.gov.

New to the Grant World? The National Institute of General Medical Sciences shares Tips for new NIH Grant Applicants here.

New Grant Opportunities

Limited Competition: NIDCR Supplements to NCATS CTSA Programs for Scholars Pursing Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Clinical and Translational Research Career Development (Admin Supp)
RFA-DE-17-008
KL2 Mentored Career Development Award
National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)
The purpose of the NIDCR Administrative Supplement to National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) supported Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) program is to develop a pipeline of qualified investigators conducting clinical and translational research to improve dental, oral, and craniofacial health.

Nutrigenetics and Nutrigenomics Approaches for Nutrition Research (R01)
Reissue of PAR-13-375
R01 Research Project Grant
National Cancer Institute (NCI)
The purpose of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is to promote application of nutrigenetics and/or nutrigenomics approaches to nutrition research through collaborative interaction among nutrition researchers and experts in omics technologies.

Countermeasures Against Chemical Threats (CounterACT) Research Centers of Excellence (U54)
PAR-16-329
U54 Specialized Center Cooperative Agreements
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)
This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) requests research applications seeking support for research on the optimization of small molecule or biologic compounds that are excellent candidates for therapeutic development. A previously identified lead compound is required to be
candidates for therapeutic development. A previously identified lead compound is required to be eligible for this funding opportunity. In this regard, lead compounds are defined as biologically active compounds or hits where affinity, potency, target selectivity, and preliminary safety have been established. The scope of research supported by this FOA includes development of appropriate human-relevant animal models and generation of in vivo efficacy data consistent with the intended use of the product in humans.

Member Highlight Stories

Do you know someone who deserves to be recognized for outstanding or groundbreaking work? Send ACTS your story to be highlighted in future versions of ACTS Connection. Submit stories to: info@actscience.org

Save the Date: Translational Science 2017

Translational Science 2017 will be held **April 18-21, 2017** at the **Washington Marriott Wardman Park** in Washington, DC. Registration for TS17 is expected to open in December 2016.