



SCN prepares for Renewal

In preparation for NCE Renewal this coming year, the web-based NCE



Reporting system will be launched on January 1, 2007.

All investigators will receive a notification email complete with dates and login information by December 22, 2006.

This year investigators are required to submit data on staff and publications (commercialization data is not required).

We ask that publications are submitted in a formatted end note file.

It is essential that every investigator complete the reporting as soon as possible.

Please contact Lori Barron (lori@stemcellnetwork.ca) if you have any technical questions, or contact Sophie Chargé (sophie@stemcellnetwork.ca) if you have specific questions about reporting requirements.

Key Dates for Renewal

January 31, 2007:

Deadline for NCE data submission

March 28, 2007:

Board approval of renewed projects

May 9 - 10, 2007:

Red Team Review

June 4, 2007:

Board approval of Renewal Document

July 10, 2007:

Renewal Application Submission

Sprott Centre opens its doors

Donors, patients, board members and a growing group of researchers gathered in the newly constructed research facility, housed at the Ottawa Health Research Institute (OHRI), as renowned philanthropists Eric and Vizma Sprott officially opened the 30,000 square foot centre.

"Eric and I are thrilled to be a part of this wonderful adventure in medical research," said Vizma Sprott, who along with her husband Eric donated \$7 million to create a permanent endowment to support the new Centre. "The thought that scientists at this Centre could one day discover a cure for some of the many diseases that are afflicting people around the world is very exciting. We are confident that our investment will pay enormous dividends some day."

The idea and vision for the Sprott Centre came from Dr. Ronald Worton, former Scientific Director



Left to right: Dr. Michael Rudnicki, Giles Partry, University of Ottawa, Eric Sprott, Vizma Sprott, and Dr. Ron Worton.

of the Stem Cell Network, and current CEO and Scientific Director of the OHRI.

"I knew from my research that stem cells held the best hope for replacing and regenerating tissues lost due to genetic muscle disorders, and it quickly became clear that stem cells had the potential to

treat and even cure many other diseases as well," said Dr. Worton.

The first funding for the construction of the Sprott Centre for Stem Cell Research came from the Canada Foundation for Innovation in 2000. This was followed by a number of other grants from federal and provincial agencies, and

see *RESEARCHERS* on page 2

Miller and Rudnicki named international research scholars by Howard Hughes Medical Institute

SCN Scientific Director, Michael Rudnicki, and SCN Investigator, Freda Miller were among thirty-nine outstanding scientists awarded

the Howard Hughes Medical Institutes international research awards.



Michael Rudnicki

The five-year awards, totaling nearly \$500,000 each, were awarded to researchers who are recognized as pacesetters in their fields.

Rudnicki and Miller were chosen from over 500 researchers in 8 countries.



Freda Miller

In this Issue

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- Job opportunities in Piret Lab
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Sprott centre to house 120 researchers

unprecedented \$8.6 million in donations from the community through The Ottawa Hospital Foundation.

"Our hope is to create a fertile environment where new and exciting therapies can be developed"

- Michael Rudnicki

The Sprott Centre for Stem Cell Research will eventually house more than 120 researchers and staff. It contains state-of-the-art equipment to visualize stem cells and unlock their molecular secrets. It also contains a special laboratory capable of producing highly purified therapeutic materials for clinical trials in patients.

"By bringing such scientists together, our hope is to create a fertile environment where new and exciting therapies can be developed", said Dr. Michael Rudnicki, SCN Scientific Director, and Director of the Sprott Centre for Stem Cell Research.

Brain Repair Centre receives over \$8 million

The Atlantic Innovation Fund

recently announced that \$3 million dollars would be awarded to Halifax's Brain Repair Centre, headed by SCN researcher, Ivar Mendez.



Ivar Mendez

The Brain Repair Centre, which is the largest medical initiative in Atlantic Canada, was also awarded \$5.5 million by Canadian Foundation for Innovation.

The primary objective of the BRC is to integrate basic and clinical research scientists who are united in their common goal to develop strategies to treat neurological and

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Left to Right: Paul Wolf, Stem Cell Technologies, Daniel Kirouac, Sergei Doulatov, Rahul Sarugaser, Afshin Raouf, Trudi Stickland, Bahareh Ajami, Loen Hansford

Record participation in this year's AGM

The Stem Cell Network held its most successful annual meeting to date at the Westin Hotel in Ottawa November 3 to 5.

This year's AGM included over 300 participants, along with 36 talks, including talks from 7 international speakers.

The *Professional Development Trainee Workshop* with its multi-disciplinary panel was extremely well received.

Researchers had an excellent opportunity to network and discuss their work, as face-to-face project meetings were held in all themes.

This AGM saw a record-high

level of trainee participation with 140 posters presented, and 12 oral presentations.

Judges remarked at the quality and variety of the research presented. Awards were presented as follows:

Two awards were given for oral presentations, to Sergei Doulatov of Norman Iscove and John Dick's labs, and Bahareh Ajami of Fabio Rossi's lab

Poster awards were handed out to Trudi Stickland of Sam Weiss' lab, Loen Hansford from Freda Miller's lab, Afshin Raouf from Connie Eaves' lab, Daniel Kirouac, Peter Zandstra's lab, and Rahul Sarugaser from Bill Stanford's lab.

LOI deadline approaching

The deadline for applications for the next round of NCE funding is January 15th.

Any team of investigators eligible to receive CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC funding who wish to participate in the SCN during this second funding cycle may participate.

Applications from new investigators are particularly encouraged in the public policy program, and the Network expects to fund a total of \$1 million over 3 years to several smaller grants in this area

rather than to a single project.

- The LoI should be completed on the SCN Core Grant application forms which can be found on the Stem Cell Network website (www.stemcellnetwork.ca/funding).

- LoIs must be sent electronically by midnight (senders' time) January 15, 2007 to applications@stemcellnetwork.ca.

For more information, please visit the SCN website at www.stemcellnetwork.ca/funding

Thank you to this year's AGM Sponsors



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Basecamp: Frequently Asked Questions

As we approach the one-year anniversary of the implementation of Basecamp, it is an appropriate time for me to share with you some of the most frequently asked questions regarding Basecamp, and my responses.

What is Basecamp?

Basecamp is a web-based, centrally hosted project management tool that allows Core Project teams to keep their conversations, ideas, schedules, milestones, working files, and to-do lists in a secure, password-protected central location. In addition to several internal SCN initiatives, Basecamp is supporting twelve Core Projects, and has a user base of 276 (as at 31 Oct 06).

Basecamp provides Core Project team members with a simple and organized way to communicate project progress through an authenticated and secure repository for their documentation and messages.

Why Basecamp?

Project management is an integral element of SCN-funded Core Projects. Project management effectiveness is strongly influenced by the broad application of appropriate tools. Basecamp is an intelligent compromise between expensive, "heavy-weight" products such as Microsoft Project Server, and ad-hoc, project-specific and labour-intensive solutions such as mailing lists and do-it-yourself web sites.

Importantly, multi-year projects have people joining and leaving on a regular basis. Basecamp allows new members to review existing membership, and prior interactions and documents, facilitating a rapid "read in" to the project's history and current state.

How do I get access Basecamp?

It is the responsibility of the Project Leader or Project Manager to advise the Basecamp Administrator when a team member joins a Core Project. Once advised, the team member is added to Basecamp, and a system-generated "Welcome" email is sent to the team member, providing a username and password. It is strongly recommended that this email be saved. Please note that

Basecamp credentials are different from those used to access the Stem Cell Network Member's web site.

What's with all of the strange "Do Not Reply" email I keep receiving?

When new content is added to Basecamp (in particular, messages and/or files), the individual posting the content may optionally notify other team members of the new content via email. The active links within the email will take the user directly to the content (via the Basecamp login screen).

What if I reply to the "Do Not Reply" email?

An email is sent to the originator of the Basecamp posting. However, in order to ensure your response is shared with other team members, it is necessary to post your comment (reply) on the Basecamp web site. The preferred process for responding to a Basecamp message is as follows:

1. Click on the active link in the email
2. Log in to Basecamp
3. (you are immediately taken to the message, and an open comment box) Enter your response to the message
4. Click the "Submit" button

Note that replying to a Basecamp message via email would be a three-step process.

OK, I'm trying to reply via Basecamp, but I can't login - help!

If a user has forgotten their password, and is unable to find their "Welcome" email, it may be requested via the link on the opening screen (see Figure 1). If the user has forgotten their username (unlikely, as it is the same as their primary email account name - i.e. wread for wread@stemcellnet-



Figure 1

work.ca), they are asked to email the Basecamp Administrator for their credentials (see Figure 2).

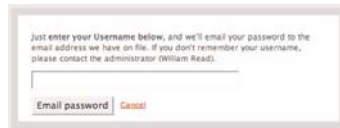


Figure 2

I've made a comment on a Basecamp posting, and I no longer want to receive email notifications of new comments. What do I do?

Basecamp is designed to facilitate communication, and its features



Figure 3

lend themselves to participation and keeping others informed. The "reply to all" effect, where everyone is sent everyone else's comments, is a relatively harmless side-effect of this design choice.

That said, users may easily remove themselves from the Comments Notification list when reading messages, or making comments on messages.

This adds an additional, optional step to the response process described above:

1. Click on the link in the email
2. Log in to Basecamp
3. (you are immediately taken to the message, and an open comment box) Enter your response to the message
4. [Optional] Remove yourself from the Comment Notification list by clicking the "remove" link (see Figure 3).
5. Click the "Submit" button

The downside of removing oneself from the Comments Notification list is that the user no longer receives email notices of new, relevant comments (for example, if the date/time of the meeting changes).

I've received an email that a new

file has been posted to Basecamp. I've clicked on the active link and logged in to Basecamp, but I am being prompted for another password (Figure 4). What is going on?

The Basecamp service provider will not host project files. As a consequence, another secure and managed file server had to be found. Dr. Miguel Andrade and the OGIC Bioinformatics Team generously volunteered to support Basecamp file hosting.

As such, another, common username/password (necessarily different from the user's access credentials) is required. These credentials are posted in the message "Welcome to Basecamp", and are of course available from the Basecamp Administrator upon request.

What resources are there to help me use Basecamp?

Several are available, depending on the user's specific need:

1. The Basecamp web site - Provides a product overview, tour and case studies of successful



Figure 4

Basecamp users

<http://www.basecampHQ.com/>

2. Everything Basecamp - Support, tips and tricks, and frequently asked questions

<http://everything.basecampHQ.com/>

3. The Stem Cell Network's Research Program Manager is the lead Basecamp administrator:

William Read

613-737-8899 x76627

wread@stemcellnetwork.ca

4. The backup Basecamp administrator:

Gareth Palidwor

(613) 737-8899 x73255

gpaldwor@ohri.ca

AGM: Trainee Professional Development Day: Jobs in Stem Cell Research: Academia, Industry and Policy.

Thanks to strong attendance and participation by Stem Cell Network trainees, this year's one day workshop event organized by the Training Advisory Committee was a great success.

The theme "Jobs in Stem Cell Research" was driven by requests from trainees from last year's workshops. To address this theme, we brought in speakers from academia, large and small companies and government policy areas.

The day started with a presentation by Dr. Mick Bhatia who talked about his own experiences as a researcher, and more recently as head of the Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute at McMaster University. He discussed the many challenges of balancing the administrative and scientific sides of research and director position and the surprising amount of time the administrative side of the jobs can take up.

Dr. Jonathan Chesnut from Invitrogen was our next speaker, focusing about the challenges and advantages of working for a large, publicly traded company. He noted that educational requirements are not as stringent and specific in the private sector as they are in academia. Though an MBA, for example, can be useful in the business side of things many people at Invitrogen have "come up through the ranks" to work in Sales and Marketing with no formal training. The ability to learn is more important than any particular qualification.

Dr. Chris Russel from Stem Cell Technologies then spoke about the experience of working for a small,

privately held and rapidly growing company. He emphasized the great degree of mobility within small companies. As with Invitrogen,



there are MScs and PhDs in the Sales and Marketing departments. The down side of the private sector is that changes of directions can happen abruptly in the private sector terminating and changing projects. A researcher has to accept that projects they may be attached to can end that way and be able to move on. In addition, much of the work is proprietary, so publication may not be an option.

Finally, Dr. Zubin Master spoke about working on stem cell related policy. Completing a doctorate in Molecular Biology, Dr. Master chose to pursue a career in Bioethics. With a job history that includes work at American policy institutes and the CIHR, he now works at Health Canada as a Senior Policy Analyst for the Assisted Human Reproduction Implementation Office. He discussed the cultural difference

between lab science and field of policy development, and emphasized the importance of writing skills in policy work. For those

The career paths of the four speakers couldn't have been more different, illustrating the many roads to success in a diverse field. There was general agreement during the panel session that that no single skill will guarantee success in any of the positions discussed, and that adaptability and a diverse skill set are critical. All predicted a bright future for stem cell research and associated industries.

The second half of the afternoon was a rapid fire series of 10 minute speed presentations by trainees on their own research, prompting many audience question and follow-up discussions in the poster sessions and hallways. This gave many trainees their first taste of a conference presentation.

Thanks to the many people who participated the Trainee Professional Development Day: panel members, presenters and attendees. Based on your feedback, the TAC is already starting to plan for next year's Annual General Meeting.

If you have any ideas, suggestions, comments or questions, please contact us at TAC@stemcellnetwork.com

Do you have a story idea for *CELLlines*?

*Have a job ad to post?
Want to announce a training event?
We want to hear from you.*

Contact Lori Barron at: lori@stemcellnetwork.ca



On behalf of the Stem Cell Network, best wishes for a very happy holiday season.

Back row from left, Sophie Chargé, Eileen Emmonds, Lee Freeman, Drew Lyall, Cathy Campbell, James Price, Will Read, Jennifer Masek. Front row from left, Tia Moffat, Lori Barron

Training Advisory Committee 2007

The Training Advisory Committee (TAC), a group of graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and research staff from the Stem Cell Network is seeking new representatives.

The goals of the TAC are threefold:

- (1) to develop new innovative training initiatives within the SCN,
- (2) to be the voice of trainees within the Network and to encourage communication between all members of the Network
- (3) to facilitate communication with the research community, industry, and the public.

New members are selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- (1) need for representation of all strategic programs;
- (2) need for representation of most geographical sites associated with the Network;
- (3) individual motivations behind joining the TAC
- (4) need for trainees to be committed for a minimum of 1 year with the TAC (*however, for continuity, TAC members are encouraged to remain on the committee for a minimum of 2 years*).

If you are interested in being a representative on this committee, contact the current TAC Chairperson, Barb Murdoch at bmurdoch@interchange.ubc.ca.

Forward your CV along with a short letter explaining your vision for the Network (in particular, trainees) and how your addition would be beneficial to the TAC in particular and to the Stem Cell Network in general.

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Investment to improve lives

psychiatric disorders. The specific disorders of initial focus are Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury, and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

The financial investments in the centre is key to bringing the necessary elements together for results that will have a major impact in improving the lives of patients.

"The Stem Cell Network has been a catalyst for the development of the centre," said Mendez.

"The support of the cutting-edge research infrastructure has transformed Canada's research landscape and increased the country's international competitiveness," said Dr. Eliot Phillipson, President and CEO of the CFL.

Partnership Award

SCN / Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
Post-doctoral Fellowship Award

Deadline for application: January 12, 2007.

Provides a salary and additional support for post-doctoral fellows to work on a research project related to Type 1 Diabetes with clear relevance to stem cells.

Each SCN/JDRF fellowship has a total value of \$100,000 as follows:

\$40,000 per annum for up to 2 years towards the cost of the post-doctoral fellow stipend,
\$5,000 per annum for up to 2 years towards the cost of consumables associated with the research project, and \$5,000 per annum for up to 2 years in encumbered funds towards the cost of the fellow attending scientific conferences, SCN AGM, and SCN workshops.

A maximum of 3 SCN / JDRF PDF awards are available for this round of competition.

For more information or to download a copy of the application form or guidelines, please visit:
www.stemcellnetwork.ca/training/partners/jdrf.php



Job Opportunity:

Postdoctoral Position,
Michael Smith Laboratories, UBC

A postdoctoral award opportunity is available in the Piret bioengineering group (<http://www.michaelsmith.ubc.ca/faculty/piret/>) exploring alternative tissue sources for the transplantation treatment of type 1 diabetes.

Our main interests include optimization of cultures to promote the formation of glucose responsive insulin producing cells from adult pancreatic progenitors, expansion of adult pancreatic progenitor populations, image analysis of cells for high-content screening to discover effective small molecules, and understanding how culture-generated and beta cell physiology compare. This project is associated with a team of diabetes researchers led by Dr. Kieffer, in a Stem Cell Network funded project. Qualified applicants will be encouraged to apply their own expertise to develop a collaborative project complementary to the ongoing research of 3 Ph.D. students.

This Piret group position will be

located in the Michael Smith Laboratories at the University of British Columbia, a facility that offers exceptional new space and multidisciplinary resources.

Applicants must hold a PhD and have excellent abilities to work as part of a team. Successful candidates are expected to have a strong background in any or a combination of the following: cell biology, stem cells, culture optimization or expertise in diabetes research.

Please email a cover letter indicating research skills and interests, along with a complete CV and contact information for **3 referees** to chaudhry@chml.ubc.ca

The University of British Columbia hires on the basis of merit, is committed to employment equity, and encourages all qualified individuals to apply.

The closing date for applications is January 1st, 2007