

## **SOM General Medical Faculty Meeting**

**Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

### **Theme: Vision Towards a Translational Medical Research Enterprise**

Meeting started at 5:00 PM

#### **Agenda**

Dr. Mondal welcomed the attendees. He informed the GMF that there will be four speakers, Dr. Laura Levy (HSC), Dr. Luann White (TSPH), Dean Nicholas Altiero (Engineering), and Dr. Michael O'Brien (HSC).

#### **Dr. Levy: Office of Research Support for SoM Faculty in a Challenging R&D Environment**

Dr. Levy provided a brief overview of the importance of translational and interdisciplinary research in today's tough and challenging funding environment. Her talk was focused and emphasized the following:

- Availability of intramural funding from TU Office of Research to support faculty and enhance their competitiveness for extramural funding.
- TU research funding portfolio is 81%, 6.2% and 11.9% from federal agencies (~50% NIH), State and Foundations, respectively.
- Overall trend of funding generally declined after Katrina, spiked in 2011/12 and declined in 2013 due to sequestration. The SOM elicited a sharp decline in funds between 2011-2013.
- Availability of funds to support faculty productivity, including funds for infrastructure, bridge funding and critical needs funds.
- Other available supports include professional scientific writing/editing services and support for external review of grant proposals and facilities for trans-disciplinary research.
- The role of university research compliance office is to ensure that research conducted at the university adheres to the government regulations and accreditation standards.
- The Tulane office of Research is supported by many other entities to support faculty research endeavors, including Sponsored Project Administration (proposal and budget preparations); Office of Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property Development; Human Protection Office (IRB); IACUC (Uptown/downtown), Department of Comparative Medicine (Veterinary/technical support); Office of Biosafety (IBC protocols).

#### **Dr. White: Translational Epidemiology: From Molecules to Population Health**

Dr. White provided a brief overview on the importance of epidemiology in underscoring the importance of translational medical research. She also discussed how Faculty from the School of Public Health can assist in Statistical data analysis and in analysis of available public databases. Her talk emphasized:

- Translational epidemiology (TE) is critical to determine disease occurrence in populations, elucidate risks/etiology, disease processes and to develop evidence-based policies and interventions.
- TE also provides tools for application of analytical methods in human genetics.
- Health services are essential to test effectiveness and health impact in a large population.
- To promote trans-disciplinary collaboration, the SPHTM (Epidemiology/Biostatistics/Bioinformatics) has resources of computational infrastructure to analyze data of various disciplines (clinical, behavioral, cardiovascular and biomarker). These include data collection and management tools and statistical analysis

### **Dr. Altiero: The Convergence of Science, Engineering, and Medicine**

Dr. Altiero provided a brief overview on the importance of Biomedical Engineering and nanotechnology in Translational Medical Research and how faculty from the School of Science and Engineering can assist in designing strategies for drug delivery, bioavailability and pharmacokinetics. His talk was focused on the following points:

- Emphasized the need for convergence in science, engineering and medicine.
- Despite the fact that 350 schools offer engineering degrees, only a handful has combined schools of engineering and medical sciences.
- Convergence of life science with engineering, physical science and computation is accelerating in the past few years.
- Tulane School of Science and Engineering has been transformed since its inception in 2006 (170 faculty) and is geared towards interactions with Faculties at the SOM, in various disciplines including nanotechnology and others.
- Several of the SSE Faculty currently have laboratories in the JBJ Bldg. and this provides tremendous opportunity for collaborations with TUHSC/SOM Faculty.
- To further bridge the gap and strengthen such collaborations and communications, Dr. Altiero stated that there is a real need for the development of interactive sessions between the two schools. This could also be achieved by providing financial packages to support joined interdisciplinary Ph.D. projects (graduate students) between uptown and down-town campuses.

### **Dr. O'Brien: AAMC CFAS Updates: the future of Academic Medical Centers**

Dr. O'Brien provided a brief overview of the key points discussed at the CFAS (Council of Faculty and Academic Societies) meeting regarding the above topics. CFAS has more than 350 faculty representatives appointed by members of medical schools and academic societies. It is a strong voice for academic faculty within the AAMC's governance and leadership structures. He emphasized how CFAS meeting provided an opportunity to:

- Learn from mid-career and established investigators to serve as a liaisons between AAMC and academic medical centers, as well as for professional development, networking and recognition with relevance to CFAS members.
- Bring forth specific ideas/concerns needed to be addressed and implemented in the future.
- How to pay for higher education
- Describe a need for programs with excellent scientists and clinicians to come up with innovative solutions for costs of higher education and funding

- Reflect the challenges of the current federal funding environment and how this challenge may increase the risk of losing brilliant scientists and decrease the quality of research
- Understand how to advance the health system of the future by providing:
  - o Transparency in quality, performance and financial information.
  - o Establish more efficient operating models
  - o Develop skills in population health
  - o Assessment of strengths and weaknesses
  - o Articulation plans by leadership towards future endeavors
  - o New learning techniques (problem solving, online tutorials, modules, etc.)
  - o Financial support for low income students

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Sincerely Yours,

---

Asim B. Abdel-Mageed, DVM, MS, Ph.D.  
Professor of Urology & Pharmacology  
Zimmermann Endowed Professor of Cancer Research, Tulane Cancer Center  
Director of Molecular Oncology Research, Department of Urology  
Email: [amageed@tulane.edu](mailto:amageed@tulane.edu)