NEWS:

NCATS Tox21 Data Challenge 2014

The Challenge:
The 2014 Tox21 (http://www.ncats.nih.gov/research/reengineering/tox21/tox21.html) data challenge is designed to help scientists understand the potential of the chemicals and compounds being tested through the Toxicology in the 21st Century initiative to disrupt biological pathways in ways that may result in toxic effects.

The goal of the challenge is to “crowdsource” data analysis by independent researchers to reveal how well they can predict compounds’ interference in biochemical pathways using only chemical structure data. The computational models produced from the Challenge could become decision-making tools for government agencies in determining which environmental chemicals and drugs are of the greatest potential concern to human health.

All Challenge winners will receive the opportunity to submit a paper for publication in a special thematic issue of Frontiers in Environmental Science and recognition on the NCATS website and via social media.

Key Dates:
- August 18, 2014 NCATS begins accepting submissions
- November 14, 2014 Registration and submission deadline
- January 12, 2015 Winners announced

Full details and to register: https://tripod.nih.gov/tox21/challenge/

DID YOU KNOW?

UMMS Master Clinical Trial Agreements

One way institutions such as UMass Medical School expedite industry sponsored clinical trial startup is through use of Master Clinical Trial Agreements. Master Clinical Trial Agreements (MCTAs) allow the institution, study team and sponsor to focus on the budget and feasibility for a particular project without having to spend time re-negotiating standard contract language.

At UMMS, we currently have MCTAs in place with multiple sponsors and are working with sponsors on an ongoing basis to establish new relationships to help study teams bring projects up and bring the research to participants faster. You should let potential sponsors know about existing masters, since it may enhance the selection of UMass as a participating site.

A consortium of Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) institutions, including UMass (through the Medical School) have been working on an initiative with select industry partners to establish a central MCTA. The goal of the central MCTA is to allow participating institutions and sponsors to: 1) significantly speed study startup time by eliminating the need to negotiate agreement terms for each individual project; and 2) establish a uniform set of expectations regarding sponsor/site responsibilities. We will keep you updated about this important initiative.
Active MCTAs at UMMS include:

**Industry Sponsor**
- Abbott Vascular
- Amgen
- Ardea Biosciences
- Bayer
- C.R. Bard*
- Biogen Idec
- Celgene
- Cook
- Dupont
- Gemin X
- Genzyme
- GSK
- ILEX
- Merck Sharp & Dohme
- Millenium
- Novartis*
- Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics
- Novo Nordisk
- Parexel
- Pharmacyclics
- Philips
- Precision Therapeutics
- Sanofi-aventis
- Sepracor
- Serono
- Schafer
- Sunesis

**Cooperative Groups**
- Alpha Oncology (PRECOG)
- BrUOG
- Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)
- NMDP (CIMBTR)*
- SC Liver Research Consortium
- Rapid Start Network/Duke
- CORE Science Solutions/AMyC/AGICC
- UAB
- University of Florida

*New in 2014

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Small Business Innovation Research / Small Business Technology Transfer Opportunities

NCATS seeks to increase small business participation in federally supported research and development as well as private-sector commercialization of technology developed with federal support. The Center achieves this through the federal government’s Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. NCATS is interested in the development of innovative tools, technologies and intervention (drug, device, diagnostic) platforms that would support the creation of novel therapeutics or diagnostics, especially for rare and neglected diseases. The application may address any stage of translation, from target validation, through pre-clinical and clinical evaluation and intervention implementation and dissemination.

**Areas of current activity and interest include:**
- Innovative platforms for identification and prioritization of targets for therapeutic intervention with clear clinical impact*
- Technologies to determine alternative uses for existing therapeutic interventions*
- Tools and technologies to enable assaying of activities of compounds on currently “non-druggable” targets*
- Phenotypic assay development, including stem cell technology platforms for human “disease-in-a-dish” applications and the evaluation of toxicity*
- Co-crystallization high-throughput screening techniques*
- Small molecule and biologics analytical characterization*
• Tools and technologies that increase the predictivity or efficiency of medicinal chemistry, biologic or other intervention optimization*
• Accelerate bioengineering approaches to the development and clinical application of biomedical materials, devices, therapeutics and/or diagnostics*
• Protein-protein interaction assays for high throughput screening of rare disease related projects
• Fluorescence probes to replace antibodies for determination of cellular protein translocation
• Use of continuous flow manufacturing technology to address therapeutics shortages
• Small autonomous devices for real-time detection of metabolites involved in metabolic and endocrine disorders
• Computational or Web-based health research methods including:
  o Platforms for generally applicable and scalable multi-disease registries and natural history studies
  o Clinical trials designs and analyses (e.g., for pragmatic clinical trials)
  o Use of patient data in comparative effectiveness studies and in identifying efficient interventions
• Tools and technologies that increase the efficiency of human subjects research, including development of technologies that facilitate rapid diagnosis and/or clinical trial recruitment and subject tracking, IRB evaluation, and/or regulatory processes*
• Educational tools for clinical and translational research
• Novel platforms, technologies and tools to enable clinical and translational research, particularly those with mechanisms for inclusion of patient reported data*
• Educational tools or materials for engaging communities to participate in research studies
• Mechanisms that improve dissemination and implementation of effective health interventions by physicians, patients, and public
• Increased efficiency of clinical research conduct including, but not limited to, regulatory decision support, appropriate study site selection, patient eligibility analysis, and recruitment tracking
• Searchable access to information about researchers and their expertise, including but not limited to their publications, published data sets, methods, patents, clinical trials, partnerships, collaborators, and clinical specialty/expertise (if applicable)*
• Tools for meaningful sharing of research data with low barrier for provision and user-friendly access*
• User-friendly mechanisms for voluntary donation by patients of their clinical data from their electronic medical record for research purposes
• Searchable access to information about research resources, facilities, methods, cells, genetic tests, molecules, biologic reagents, animals, assays, technologies with links to their use in published research studies*
• Other topics within NCATS’ mission will be considered

*Please note that NIH has received approval from the Small Business Administration for the topics listed above for budgets greater than $225,000 for Phase I SBIR/STTR awards and greater than $1,500,000 for Phase II SBIR/STTR awards for the PHS 2014-2 SBIR and STTR Omnibus grant solicitations (see PA-14-071; http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-14-071.html). NCATS strongly advises applicants to discuss this option with their SBIR program officer prior to submitting any award budget in excess of these amounts.

Applicants also are required to follow the NIH Institute and Center-specific budget guidance found in PHS 2014-2 SBIR/STTR Program Descriptions a Research Topics for NIH, CDC, FDA and ACF; http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbirsttr1/2014-2_SBIR-STTR-topics.pdf).

EVENTS:

_Worcester Department of Public Health, UMass Medical School, Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center, UMCCTS Community Engagement and Research Section, UMass Worcester Prevention Research Center, Common Pathways, and partners presents:_

**SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT FOR HEALTH COMMUNICATION**

_Thursday, September 11, 2014_
_10:00 – 11:30 am_
_Worcester Public Health_
_Room 109_
How can health and community organizations use social media to not only communicate health information, but also produce outcomes and influence behavior?

Join a live webinar to learn about both the potential impact and limitations of social media as a tool for health communication.

Two experts will present their research findings on the usage of social media for health organizations:

Shoba Ramanadhan, ScD, MPH
Shoba is a Research Scientist in the Viswanath Lab at the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center at the Harvard School of Public Health. Her research interests center around dissemination and implementation, capacity-building, and social networks.

Sherry Pagoto, PhD
Sherry is an Associate Professor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Her research is focused on obesity and cancer prevention, and she initiated a movement on Twitter with the hashtag #PlankADay to promote fitness and health.

This event is free, but registration is required:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/18y0Ui3f6Y ZyioVZQe_s6hD3rys2l7SG8V4lvoX79qg/viewform

Questions? Problems? Phone: 508-459-9664 Email: commonpathwaysonline@gmail.com

UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science Community Engagement and Research Symposium

“Building on Partnership Strengths to Improve Health in Communities”

Friday, November 7, 2014
8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Albert Sherman Center
University of MA Medical School

Goal of the Symposium: To build our shared capacity to address health issues in communities throughout Massachusetts by creating opportunities for people to:
• Meet each other
• Learn more about each other’s work and interests
• Make connections and plan for future collaborative work

Audience: Community leaders, faculty and staff from all 5 UMass campuses and other organizations and institutions interested in partnered research.

➢ Call for Breakout Session Proposals – Deadline: September 5, 2014
➢ Call for Poster Abstracts – Deadline: September 15, 2014

Complete information regarding submitting Breakout Session Proposals and/or Poster Abstracts:
www.umassmed.edu/ccts/community
To Register (free) for the Community Engagement and Research Symposium:  
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Wsn4LAefK7-dpAznKp4l2fkkdYGJL0-O0vq2-Syuwo/viewform?c=0&w=1  
Deadline to register is October 24, 2014.

Questions? Please contact Amy Borg by email at communityengagement@umassmed.edu or phone at 508-856-4685.

~Mark your Calendars~

UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science  
Seminar Series 2014-2015 Schedule  
12:00-1:00 pm (lunch served)  
Faculty Conference Room, S1-342  
University of Massachusetts Medical School

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<td>Wednesday, September 24</td>
<td>Nate Hafer, PhD</td>
<td>UMCCTS 2015 Funding Opportunities</td>
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<td>Thursday, October 30</td>
<td>Hong Yu, PhD</td>
<td>“TBA”</td>
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<td>Wednesday, November 19</td>
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<td>Wednesday, December 17</td>
<td>Julia Hua Fang, PhD</td>
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If you are interested in presenting at one of our upcoming UMCCTS Seminars, please contact, Dr. Nate Hafer, Director of Operations, UMCCTS, at nathaniel.hafer@umassmed.edu

Duke Translational Medicine Institute  
2014 Community Engagement Conference

National Conference on Engaging Patients, Families and Communities in all Phases of Translational Research to Improve Health

Thursday and Friday, August 21 and 22, 2014  
Bethesda, MD

Registration and complete details at: https://www.dtmi.duke.edu/ce-workshop

Request for Applications for Innovator Presentations at the  
6th Annual 2014 Partnering for Cures Meeting

November 16-18, 2014  
Grand Hyatt – New York  
http://www.partneringforcures.org/

Each year, 30 innovative, cross-sector R&D collaborations are awarded 25-minute presentation slots at Partnering for Cures Annual Cures Meeting. This platform, based off of an investor conference model, is
designed to help engage potential funders, partners, and/or collaborators in moving their existing initiatives forward and/or amplifying the impact of their approach.

Collaborations should be aimed at reducing the time and cost of getting new medical solutions (drugs, devices, diagnostics, etc.) from discovery to patients; and should involve partners from **two or more** of the following sectors – NGOs/nonprofit foundations, industry (pharmaceutical, biotechnology, device and diagnostic companies), research institutes, universities, government agencies, investors, and private philanthropists. Partnerships should be **established, not merely proposed**, at the time of presentation, and should be able to provide evidence of outcomes/progress against their goals.

**Aspiring presenters must submit a brief, online application through the Partnering for Cures website by August 22, 2014.**  [http://www.partneringforcures.org/program/innovators/](http://www.partneringforcures.org/program/innovators/)

### FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

**UMCCTS Small Conference Grants**

**Funding Opportunity**

**Introduction**

The University of Massachusetts Center for Clinical & Translational Science (UMCCTS) is pleased to announce a funding call for **Small Conference Grants**. This funding opportunity is designed to leverage the convening capacity of the UMCCTS to create new, multidisciplinary teams to address a pressing health need. For the purpose of this award, a conference is defined as a symposium, educational program, seminar, workshop, or any other organized and formal meeting.

**Purpose**

The UMCCTS supports projects that are inter-campus in orientation and directed toward life sciences projects related to clinical and translational research. This fund serves to spur inter-disciplinary collaboration and strengthen the University's research portfolio in clinical and translational research. By providing seed funding to outstanding faculty members, this fund facilitates the development of faculty-to-faculty networks within the University system, thereby leveraging the considerable expertise and resources that exist on the individual campuses. It is assumed that successful conferences will serve as a springboard to attract additional funding from extramural sources.

All UMass faculty (Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth, Lowell, Worcester) with an interest in clinical and translational science may apply. **Project awards of up to $1,000 can be requested.**

**Proposals will be accepted on a “rolling basis” (no due date). Investigators will be notified of award approximately 2-3 weeks post submission.**

**Complete details, criteria to apply, and the application process** are available at the UMCCTS website: [http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/research/grantopps.aspx](http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/research/grantopps.aspx)

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**Indianapolis-based Women’s Fund of Central Indiana NEXT Initiative**

The Indianapolis-based Women's Fund of Central Indiana is seeking applicants for the NEXT Initiative to support the development and implementation of comprehensive solutions helping women ages 18 to 24 achieve economic stability.

Invited entrepreneurs will spend the first one to two years incubating a solution that the Women's Fund will launch and fund for the subsequent eight to nine years. It is the intention of this initiative to select two to three entrepreneurs who will each receive a salary of $90,000 and full benefits, during the incubation phase, as an employee of the Central Indiana Community Foundation. (The Women's Fund is a special-interest fund of CICF.)
The NEXT Initiative aims to address the gap in culturally appropriate services for vulnerable women in this age group -- women who have been mired in economic insecurity and are seeking a path to economic stability.

Letters of intent are due: Tuesday, September 2, 2014.

For more information on the NEXT Initiative, visit http://womensfund.org/next

Please remember to cite the CTSA Grant # UL1TR000161 in all supported journal publications.

Visit our website for all the latest news, funding announcements, seminars, educational training, sign-up for membership, etc., http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts