

Scholars' Stories Continued

Melody Duvall

OXCAM Scholar Melody Duvall traveled beyond the US and the UK in search of opportunity to accelerate her AIDS research. Her quest took her to the Gambia, West Africa, where she aimed to characterize the immune response of patients infected with HIV-2 (the rarer form of HIV, which accounts for around 10 per cent of cases).

Ogechi Ikediobi

A passion for pharmacology and genetics led Ogechi Ikediobi from Florida A & M University to study the relationship of gene mutations in cancer cell lines commonly studied for anticancer drug discovery. This led to a collaborative project between the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute for genomics research at Cambridge University and the National Cancer Institute at NIH. She defined, for the first time, the pattern of oncogenic mutations in 60 major cell lines which can now guide researchers in pathways with promising molecular targets for new therapeutic agents. See <http://mct.aacrjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/1535-7163.MCT-06-0433v2>. Her work led to the completion of a Ph.D. in approximately 3 1/2 years and directly to a faculty position at the University of California, San Francisco where she is now establishing a research group.

Jonathan Roiser

As an undergraduate and graduate student at Cambridge University, Jon Roiser became interested in how the serotonin system affected human behavior resulting in several interesting projects in neuropsychopharmacology. As an Advanced Scholar, he pursued collaborative studies between the Psychiatry Department in the Clinical School at Cambridge and the National Institute of Mental Health at NIH trying to understand the molecular basis of mood and anxiety disorders. This has led to interesting insights into depression and illicit drug use. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/4315305.stm>. He has completed his Ph.D. in four years and is now beginning as a group leader and University lecturer (equivalent of an Assistant Professor) at the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, University College London.

Paul Tesar

Paul Tesar, a Scholar from Case Western University, pursued a collaboration in pioneering studies of stem cells. Within the first two years of his graduate work, he published a sole author study on a new approach to deriving stem cells from mouse preblastocyst embryos. See <http://www.pnas.org/cgi/content/full/102/23/82390>. He then continued his collaborative studies with Professor Richard Gardner at the Department of Zoology, Oxford, and Dr. Ronald McKay at NINDS (NIH) with a ground-breaking comparative study of mouse and human stem cells <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v448/n7150/abs/nature05972.html>. He is now completing his Ph.D. in 4 years and looking for the next opportunity to continue his exciting work on stem cells.

Andy Johnson

Andy Johnson's project has utilized the collaborative nature of the program to include a third location, the Australian National University in Canberra in addition to his NIH and Oxford University labs. When it was decided Andy would work in Australia, his primary aim was to access mice. At NIH he had developed multiple high-throughput screens to test lymphocyte function.

Eric Freundt

Had Eric Freundt graduated from college and gone into a traditional biomedical research doctoral program, he would have begun his training by engaging in 1-2 years of coursework and rotations. Instead, as an OXCAM Scholar, Eric traveled to China to meet with scientists at the forefront of the SARS investigation. His collaboration resulted in the discovery of a protein unique to the

SARS coronavirus which contributes importantly to the virus' ability to kill cells during infection. Eric has submitted his thesis in just under 4 years, is preparing for his defense, and looking at postdoctoral opportunities.