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Funding to continue research into heart muscle regeneration

Heart attacks and most forms of heart disease cause muscle loss due to cell death in heart tissue. Enough cell death causes the heart muscle to weaken or quit functioning. And, unlike some other organs, heart muscle does not regenerate, or so it was believed until recently.

Research by Loren Field, PhD, professor of medicine, pediatrics, and of physiology and biophysics at IUSM, has proven in mouse models that heart muscle can be induced to regenerate following genetic stimulation. He is now focusing on various strategies to increase the muscle mass in human hearts.

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, a division of the National Institutes of Health, has renewed its interest in Dr. Field's research by awarding him a \$1.35 million, four-year grant to continue his research into the cloning of genes that regulate the proliferation of cells in the heart. His research at IUSM has been continuously funded by the NIH through grants since 1990.

Dr. Field is investigating ways to promote cell growth by introducing growth-regulating genes into the cells of a diseased heart in order to regenerate tissue and strengthen muscle mass.

Other research from his group has developed a method for the grafting of a healthy heart muscle cell into a diseased heart. It is hoped that these two approaches will ultimately provide a method for replacement of scarred, nonfunctional tissue in a diseased heart with viable, functional cells. Some day these procedures may be used as a less invasive alternative to some types of conventional cardiac surgeries.

BRIEFS

Alumni weekend

A seminar designed for primary care physicians and other health care professionals, discussing new approaches to the management and treatment of osteoporosis, stroke and antibiotic resistance, will be offered for credit during the Spring Medical Weekend May 14 to 16.

The seminar, "New Horizons in the Practice of Medicine" will be conducted in the Emerson Auditorium Friday, May 14, with registration beginning at 7:30 a.m.

For additional information or to register, contact the IUSM Division of Continuing Medical Education at 274-8353.

For additional information on Spring Medical Weekend activities, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 274-8928.

Web resource

The Ruth Lilly Medical Library has added Scientific American Medicine to its online web resources available to faculty, staff and students. SAM Online joins Harrison's, the 31 Stat!Ref textbooks and several pharmaceutical textbooks. For access information, point your browser to <http://www.medlib.iupui.edu/ref/texts.html>.

IUSM faculty to speak at second annual mental health symposium

"Mental Health in the Next Millennium: From Research to Treatment" is the title of the second annual mental health symposium for consumers and professionals. The symposium is presented by the IUSM Department of Psychiatry in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Mental Health Association in Indiana.

The event will be Thursday, May 6, at the Indianapolis Westin Hotel. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m., followed at 8:15 a.m. with welcoming remarks by Steve Bell, moderator; John Nurnberger Jr., MD, PhD, director of the Institute of Psychiatric Research at IUSM; and Stephen McCaffrey, JD, president of the Mental Health Association in Indiana.

Sixteen IUSM faculty members will deliver presentations during the symposium.

For additional information, call 317-638-3501.

Alzheimer's program planned by IUSM, NIFS

IUSM and The National Institute for Fitness and Sport are hosting a free conference entitled "Exploring Alzheimer's Disease" from 8 a.m. to noon, Saturday, April 24. The conference will be held at NIFS.

The keynote speaker will be Mary Guerriero Austrom, PhD, a clinical associate professor at IUSM and director of the Education Core of the Indiana Alzheimer's Disease Center. Her presentation is entitled "An Overview of Alzheimer's Disease."

Other speakers and their topics are:

- Carol Edelstein, coordinator of Reminiscence Programs, Sunrise Assisted Living, "Creating a Safe Environment,"
- Melanie Roberts, MS, director of the Fitness Center and Educational Services at NIFS, "Exercise and Alzheimer's: Surprising Benefits,"
- Heather Hedrick, MS, RD, assistant director of educational services at NIFS, "The Role of Nutrition in Alzheimer's Disease."

The conference is free but seating is limited. To register, call Dianne Wyman at 317-738-2609 or Vanessa Stiles at 317-274-3432.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, one in 10 persons over 65 and nearly half of those over 85 have Alzheimer's disease. A small percentage of people in their 30s and 40s develop the disease.

Historian to speak on search for cure for cancer

The phrase "house calls" will again take on a different meaning Saturday, April 17, when approximately 150 medical students descend upon the Haughville and Blackburn neighborhoods for IUSM's Spring House Calls project. Students will provide yard and home exterior maintenance work at 18 homes in the near west side neighborhoods. This is the fourth year for the event.

Spring House Calls is one of several projects sponsored by the Office of Medical Service-Learning to

provide students with opportunities to engage in community service activities. Director Patricia Keener, MD, organized the program to respond to the medical school's new competency based curriculum, which includes Social and Community Context of Health Care as a competency.

Submissions to Scope

Scope wants your news items.

There are three easy ways to submit story ideas or information to SCOPE:

- -- fax the information to 278-3502;
- -- e-mail the information to mhardin@iupui.edu;
- -- or mail the information to Mary Hardin, LO 401, IUPUI.

The deadline for copy is 8:30 a.m. Mondays, the week prior to publication.

<http://www.medicine.indiana.edu>
