

BURNING ISSUES

TRDRP Newsletter



Volume 5, Number 3, November 2002

TRDRP's AIM 2002

WOMEN AND SMOKING: Smoking Has No Glass Ceiling

by M.F. Bowen

On December 4-5, 2002 TRDRP will hold its 7th Annual Investigator Meeting (AIM 2002) at the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose. The theme of this year's meeting is "Women and Smoking: Smoking Has No Glass Ceiling." The conference will start off on Wednesday, December 4 with workshops organized in conjunction with the American Cancer Society, the California Breast Cancer Research Program, the American Heart Association, the Tobacco Control section, the National Cancer Institute and the American Lung Association. Topics include smoking and breast cancer, cardiovascular disease in women, women and smoking in California, transdisciplinary research, cutting edge issues in COPD, and environmental tobacco smoke and adverse pregnancy outcomes. These workshops will be followed by a Town Hall Meeting on "Harm Reduction" (see page 2). The first day will end with a reception at the nearby San Jose Art Museum. Thursday, December 6 will open with a plenary session on women and smoking moderated by Rosemarie Henson, Director of the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health. Speakers for this panel are: Cheryl Heaton, President and CEO of the American Legacy Foundation; Virginia Ernster, Professor emerita of Epidemiology at UCSF and Senior Scientific Editor of the Surgeon General's Report on Women and Smoking; Jill Siegfried, Professor of Pharmacology & Co-Director, of



the Lung Research Program, University of Pittsburgh; and Sherri Watson Hyde, Executive Director, National African American Tobacco Prevention Network. The plenary session will be followed by lunch with keynote speaker Dr. Diana M. Bontá, the Director of the California Department of Health Services.

Lunch on Thursday, December 5 will be followed by a session called "TRDRP Listens" from 2:30 to 4:30 pm. This is a critical meeting in which Scientific Advisory Committee members and program staff will listen to the concerns, comments and suggestions of TRDRP stakeholders regarding the program's past performance, future directions, goals, and priorities given our fiscal constraints. As reported in our previous newsletter (see "The Realities of Fiscal Constraint": Vol. 5, No. 2, July 2002 and "Future TRDRP budgets": Vol. 4, No. 2, July 2001) TRDRP's revenues have been dropping and will continue to drop due to a decrease in tobacco consumption. The program's revenues have also declined in recent years due to the increased allocation from the Research Account to the California Cancer Registry. Given the resulting ever-tightening budget, we need to evaluate where we have been and where we need to go in the future. We are soliciting input from all our stakeholders – including researchers from all tobacco-related disciplines and the tobacco control community – on how TRDRP can most effectively meet California's tobacco-related research needs and stay on the cutting edge of tobacco-related disease research in this era of declining revenues. This is an important opportunity to make your voice heard on where TRDRP should go from here.

Please attend "TRDRP Listens" – we value your input!

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AIM 2002's Town Hall Meeting asks "What's the Harm?"

by Margaret Shield

Never known to shrink from challenging issues in tobacco research, the TRDRP staff selected Harm Reduction as the featured subject at this year's Town Hall meeting. In the past five years, harm reduction has emerged as a critical issue in tobacco control. A harm reducing product is one that "lowers total tobacco-related mortality and morbidity even though use of that product may involve continued exposure to tobacco-related toxicants" according to the Institute of Medicine's comprehensive report on this topic in 2001. (1) The recognition that many people cannot or will not stop using tobacco leads to the premise that a harm reduction approach - encouraging tobacco users to switch to a less dangerous method of nicotine consumption - would benefit these individuals and potentially benefit the overall public health.

The theoretical feasibility of tobacco harm reduction may have broader support than the much more debatable issue of whether any existing tobacco products qualify as "harm reducing." Whether snus snuff can be credited with a decrease in tobacco-attributable mortality in Sweden and presents less of a health threat than cigarettes is a hot topic for disagreement. The increasing number of untested and unregulated new tobacco products entering the U.S. market that claim to contain reduced levels of certain toxins



present additional challenges. Are modified cigarettes - like Advance Lights - and new smokeless nicotine products - like Ariva - more or less dangerous than existing brands? Should researchers, public health professionals and doctors recommend any tobacco products as harm reducing? What assays and studies are needed to demonstrate that a product is harm reducing? What is the effect of harm reduction on cessation efforts? Can harm reduction work without stricter regulation of new tobacco products, and even traditional tobacco products, and their safety claims?

These and other scientific and ethical dilemmas of Harm Reduction will be laid out and examined at the Town Hall meeting on Wednesday December 4th from 5:00 - 6:30 pm. Kathy Sanders-Phillips from the TRDRP Scientific Advisory Committee will moderate the session. Featured speakers who will set the stage for the discussion will be: David Burns (UCSD), Neal

Benowitz (UCSF), and Richard Hurt (Mayo Clinic). You and the other AIM attendees will be the key participants - so bring your questions, your comments, your challenges to the Town Hall. After the Town Hall concludes, we'll move next door to the San Jose Art Museum for a reception, where you can continue the discussion or mend fences over a beverage with those you've disagreed with.

Participants in last year's Town Hall discussion on tobacco industry funding of research gave TRDRP staff lots of positive feedback about the event. We hope this year's Town Hall at AIM 2002 in San Jose will be equally stimulating. *See you there!*

1. Clearing the Smoke: assessing the science base for tobacco harm reduction. K. Stratton et al. Editors, Committee to Assess the Science Base for Tobacco Harm Reduction, Institute of Medicine. National Academy Press. 2001. Report available online at: <http://www.nap.edu/books/0309072824/html/>

12th Funding Cycle Application Deadline Approaches

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 16, 2003, 5:00 PM

Please allow enough time for delivery of your application(s) to our office. Late applications will not be accepted!

by M.F. Bowen

Research Priorities for 2003

TRDRP's Call for Applications has been distributed. TRDRP continues to support tobacco-related research in biomedical science, neuroscience, social and behavioral science, epidemiology, public health, policy and economics. TRDRP will consider all relevant research proposals on tobacco use or tobacco-related diseases for funding. We also encourage applicants to consider the high priority research topics that TRDRP has identified as especially important in addressing tobacco research needs in California. High priority research areas for 2003 include: research that addresses specific California needs with regard to understudied populations in all areas of investigation; sex- and gender-based differences in tobacco use and disease; biomedical research addressing the health needs of current and/or former smokers; development of more relevant animal models for tobacco-related diseases; examination of next generation tobacco products, prevention of tobacco use across the tobacco control continuum; research on tobacco and tobacco smoke constituents, in addition to nicotine, that contribute to tobacco-related diseases and to addiction; evaluative research on the

impact of state and local public policies and programs; and studies examining all aspects of second-hand smoke exposure.

The complete Call for Application describing TRDRP's mission and research priorities is available on our new website at: <http://www.trdrp.org>.

Changes to the Application Process

To assist our reviewers in evaluating New Investigator, Postdoctoral Fellowship and Dissertation Awards applications, the Letters of Support forms for these application mechanisms have been modified. We hope these changes will provide the review committees with more complete and useful information about the candidate's training and/or research environment. For New Investigator awards, Department Heads should complete Form 16 to clarify how this award would allow the candidate to begin an independent research career. Dissertation award applicants: please include your graduate school transcripts.

Increases in Some Award Mechanism Budget Caps

Good news for those thinking outside the box! In an effort to encourage seminal and creative research relevant to its mission, TRDRP is raising the cap on its

Innovative Developmental and Exploratory Awards (IDEAs) to a total maximum of \$100,000 direct costs and increasing the maximum project duration to 2 years. The budget cap for New Investigator Awards has been raised to \$90,000 per year.

Adjustments to the Funding Decision Process

Our ever-tightening budget means that our application process will be just as competitive as last year. Regrettably, many highly-scored and worthy projects went unfunded last year. Many meritorious applications that would have been funded in previous years will not be funded this year. TRDRP has become more competitive than the national funding agencies: our payline for research project awards was 20% last year as compared to 31% at NIH.

In light of the very difficult choices presently facing the program, the funding decision process will include additional elements as compared to previous years. As always, the primary criterion for determining funding of all award types will be the scientific merit score determined by peer review. New this year, the TRDRP Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) will

See "12th cycle" page 4

12TH cycle

Continued from page 3

not only examine these merit ratings, but the committee will also review the abstracts and relevance statements from applications above and below the possible payline in each study section. In deciding which of these proposals should be funded, the SAC will consider the extent to which a proposal addresses a TRDRP priority area and the extent to which the research proposed is duplicated in the portfolios of other agencies. As in previous years, the SAC will recommend applications for funding to the University of California's Executive Director for Special Research Programs, who will make the final funding decision.

Applicants: Given TRDRP's current fiscal constraints, the relevance of proposed research to TRDRP's mission and research priorities will be more critical than ever for a successful application. Please pay close attention to the content of both your Scientific Abstract (Form 3) and Statement of Relevance to TRDRP's Research Priorities (Form 5) in your application this year. These documents could make the difference between a fundable and a non-fundable application. Questions? Click <http://www.trdrp.org> on your web browser to find contact information for all of TRDRP Research Administrators.

Facing Fiscal Realities: TRDRP's Budget

by M.F. Bowen

Clearly it has been a very difficult budget year for California and many state programs have undergone budget cuts that will seriously hamper their ability to deliver public services. While TRDRP has avoided the cuts plaguing many state programs this year, tobacco revenue in the Proposition 99 Research Account can be expected to decline in coming years as tobacco sales continue to drop. For the third consecutive year, almost \$5 million was allocated from the Research Account to the California Cancer Registry in 2002-2003, resulting in TRDRP's budget being 20.2% less than it otherwise would have been (i.e., \$19,434,000 vs. \$24,364,000). While we applaud any and all declines in tobacco consumption, we are hopeful that full funding can be found for both TRDRP and the California Cancer Registry. Improvements in health care cannot be realized without the knowledge and insight gained through scientific research. TRDRP has been working with the Tobacco Education and Research Oversight Committee (TEROC), state voluntary health organizations (i.e., American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and American Lung Association) to obtain adequate funding for tobacco-related disease research, tobacco control and education, and cancer surveillance.

As many of our applicants already know, TRDRP's limited funds left us unable to support many excellent applications last year. Regrettably, this will likely be the case again this year. The painful reality of having to place a funding cut-off line between essentially equally meritorious proposals has caused the program to adjust how our funding decisions are made. To this end, TRDRP has made some adjustments in the application process and the funding decision procedure to assist the Scientific Advisory Committee and the staff in making the best possible funding recommendations. Please see "12th Funding Cycle Application Deadline Approaches" (page 3) for details.

TRDRP UPDATE

Staff Changes

It is with immense regret that we announce *Susanne Hildebrand-Zanki's* resignation as Director of the TRDRP. Susanne has taken the position of Director of Operations for the Immune Tolerance Network at UCSF. She has been with the TRDRP for twelve years and has been our director for the past seven years. She successfully guided the program through many difficult times and challenges with an outstanding combination of expertise, administrative skill, diplomacy, and organizational acumen. We miss her greatly. The good news is that Susanne will continue to represent the TRDRP on the Tobacco Education and Research Oversight Committee (TEROC). You may also see her at the Annual Investigator Meeting. Please join us in wishing Susanne the very best of luck in her new position. The search for a new director is underway and we expect the position to be filled by the end of the year.

Margaret Shield, the Biomedical Research Administrator for Cancer and General Biomedical Sciences is resigning to return to her previous home base: Seattle, Washington. Margaret's dedication, boundless energy, quick-wittedness, and intellectual acuity made her a great asset to the program in the short two years that she was with us. Her many contributions to the program will be greatly missed. Fortunately, Margaret will be attending AIM 2002 so you will all have the opportunity to bid good-bye and wish her well.

New Members of Our Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)

Please join us in welcoming four new additions to our Scientific Advisory Committee:

Representing our community-based providers is *Patricia Spratlen Etem, MPH*, Chief Strategic Officer for CIVIC Communications in Long Beach. Until recently Ms. Etem was the Executive Program Director of the Los Angeles regional Tobacco Control Community Linkage Program (L.A. LINK).

Michael Goran, Ph.D. is our new representative of USC. Dr. Goran is a Professor of Preventive Medicine and Physiology & Biophysics. He also serves as the Associate Director of the Institute for Prevention Research at USC.

Our new representative of the American Heart Association is *Ronald Krauss, M.D.* He is the Director of Atherosclerosis Research at Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute, Head of the Lipoprotein and Atherosclerosis Research Group at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and adjunct professor of Nutritional Sciences at UC Berkeley.

Geraldine Padilla, Ph.D. represents California's medical organizations. She is Professor and Associate Dean for Research at UCSF's School of Nursing.

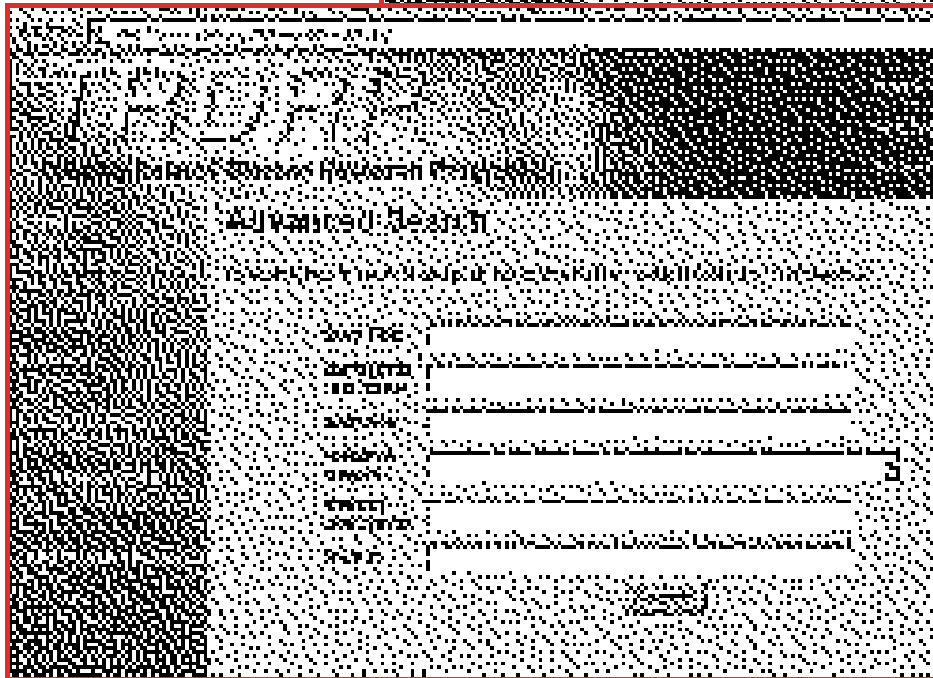
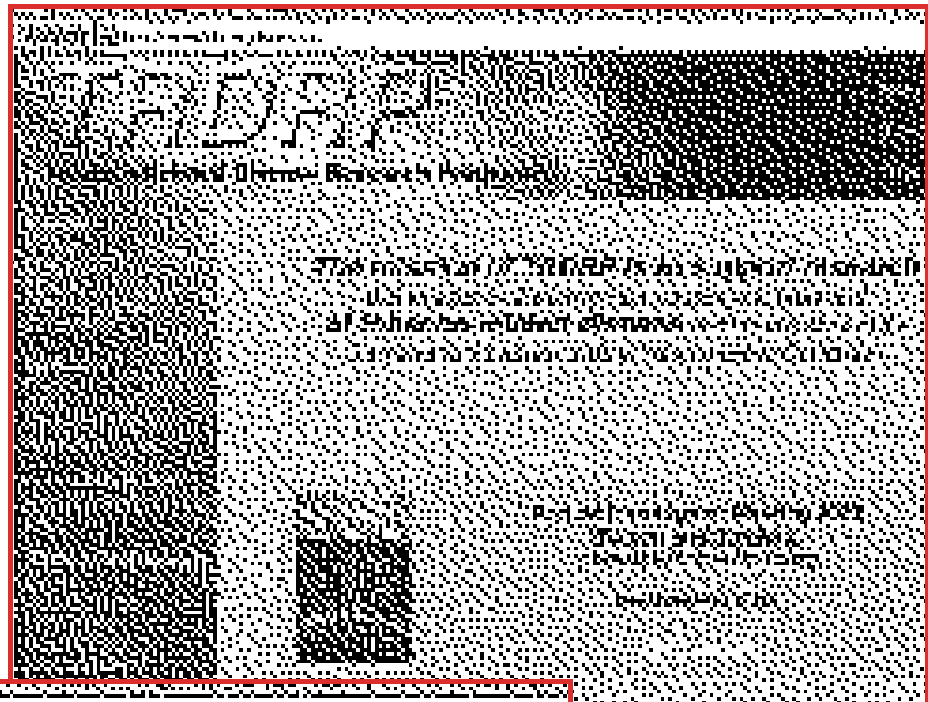
TRDRP gratefully acknowledges the following retiring SAC members for their outstanding service to the program:

Frederic B. Kraemer,
M.D., Stanford University

Debrah S. Oto-Kent,
Executive Director, Health Education Council, Sacramento

Malcolm C. Pike, Ph.D.,
University of Southern California

**New!
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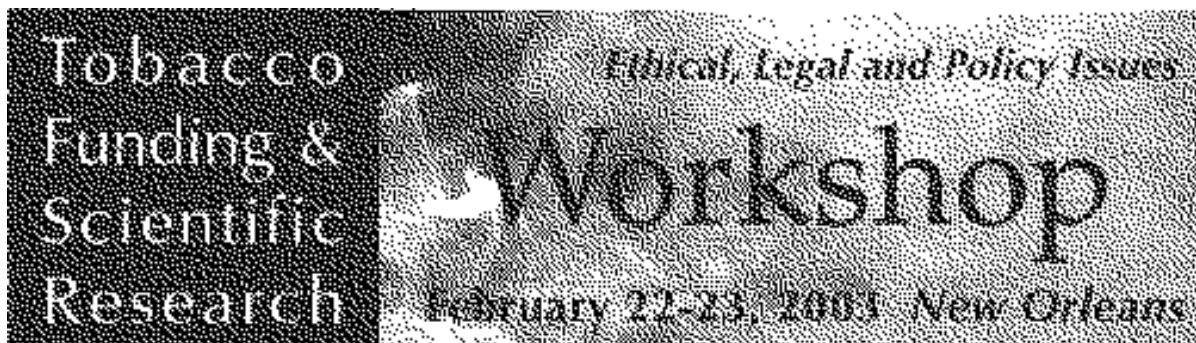
*More information on funded research
Search Grant abstracts by Title, Subject Area,
Investigator and Institution*

www.trdrp.org

SRNT Meeting Workshop

February 22 (5 – 8 pm) and February 23 (8 – 5 pm)
The Sheraton – Downtown New Orleans

Following the SRNT Annual Meeting in New Orleans, Please Join Us For A Workshop On:



TOBACCO INDUSTRY FUNDING AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH: ETHICAL, LEGAL AND POLICY ISSUES

Sponsored by the American Legacy Foundation, the California Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program, the U.S. National Cancer Institute, and the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco.

A workshop on the ethical, legal and policy issues raised by the offer and acceptance of research funding from the tobacco industry. The goal of this meeting is to provide a framework from which members of the tobacco control community and academic and funding organizations can make informed decisions about what kinds of scientific dialogue or funding arrangements with the tobacco industry, if any, they may consider acceptable.


On Saturday, February 22, a reception and keynote address will be held in the evening at the Sheraton Hotel immediately following the SRNT meeting. The keynote address will focus on issues around trust and the scientific community and will be given by a nationally respected speaker.

On Sunday, February 23, an all day meeting will include sessions on:

- Ethical and Legal Issues Panel Discussion: “Is the Tobacco Industry Different?” and “Perspectives on Conflicts of Interest.”
- Funding Arrangements Panel Discussion: “Universities and Tobacco Industry Money: Scientific Participation in Industry-Funded Initiatives.”
- Socratic Dialogue: “Rules of Engagement with the Tobacco Industry.” A professional moderator skilled in public Socratic dialogues will guide an in-depth discussion among a panel of prominent experts in tobacco control, research ethics and the nature of academic institutions.

Although the registration for this workshop is complimentary, space is limited and pre-registration is required. You can register for the workshop at the SRNT Web site: <http://www.srnt.org>.

For more information, please email the workshop organizers directly at: tobacco@pyramidcommunications.com or call us at (206) 792-0420.



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NOVEMBER 2002 NEWSLETTER

The Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program (TRDRP) supports innovative and creative research that will reduce the human and economic cost of tobacco-related diseases in California and elsewhere.

HOLD THESE DATES

December 4-5, 2002

TRDRP 7th Annual Investigator Meeting: "Women & Smoking"
San Jose, CA.

<http://www.trdrp.org>

February 19-23, 2003

Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco: 9th Annual Meeting
New Orleans, LA

<http://www.srnt.org>

February 23, 2003

"Scientific Research Funding & the Tobacco Industry: Ethical, Legal & Policy Issues" sponsored by the American Legacy Foundation, the California Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program, the National Cancer Institute, and the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco
New Orleans, LA

<http://www.srnt.org>

March 19-22, 2003

Society of Behavioral Medicine: 24th Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions
Salt Lake City, UT

<http://www.sbm.org>

April 5-9, 2003

American Association for Cancer Research: 94th Annual Meeting
Toronto, ON, Canada

<http://www.aacr.org>

April 7-10, 2003

California Tobacco Control Section Project Directors Meeting
Newport Beach, CA

<http://www.dhs.cahwnet.gov/tobacco>