

Faculty & Friends



President's Council on ethical dilemmas in medicine

Members of the CSHL President's Council who donate in support of the exceptionally talented and motivated young scientists known as CSHL Fellows gathered at the Banbury Conference Center facility on October 12–13 to explore topics in medical ethics. Experts addressed issues ranging from overdiagnosis by physicians and cancer profiling to research with incapacitated human subjects and the American eugenics movement. CSHL Director of Research David L. Spector and Associate Professor Lloyd Trotman headed the agenda, which also included DNA Learning Center Executive Director David Micklos. CSHL Trustee Andrew Solomon, acclaimed writer on politics, culture and society, discussed his new book, *Far from the Tree*, about raising children with exceptional physical, psychological, emotional and social challenges. Guest speakers included Drs. Gilbert Welch of Dartmouth, Jeffrey Berger of Stony Brook University and Hans Sauer of the Biotech Industry Organization. CSHL Trustee Howard L. Morgan and Cynthia R. Stebbins co-chaired this year's council retreat.

DuPont Pioneer, CSHL renew plant collaboration

CSHL and DuPont Pioneer have renewed another five-year multi-million-dollar collaboration to conduct plant biology research focused on meeting growing food demands worldwide. The agreement seeks to more fully understand the genetic basis of fundamental plant processes controlling growth, development and yield. According to Rob Martienssen, CSHL professor and Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator, "as scientists, we get excited about seeing our discoveries translated into real-world applications. It is clear that basic research in these areas has the potential to radically change the face of the agricultural industry." From the industry perspective, John Bedbrook, Vice President of DuPont Agricultural Biotechnology, contends that "the collaboration has increased our understanding of the basic genetic mechanisms controlling plant growth and development, which will contribute to global food security in the coming decades."



Pfizer and CSHL join forces to identify cancer targets

CSHL has announced a research collaboration with Pfizer Inc. to develop a next-generation human short-hairpin RNA (shRNA) library that will silence gene expression via the process of RNA interference (RNAi) and help identify new therapeutic targets in cancer. The agreement will bring the Laboratory's researchers together with Pfizer's scientists in both the technology development and training environments. "Pfizer is pleased to be involved in this partnership, which will marry cutting-edge shRNA technologies with our efforts in cancer genetics and complex tumor models toward the singular goal of identifying and validating novel targets for cancer therapeutics," said Bob Abraham, Pfizer's Oncology Chief Scientific Officer. CSHL is the birthplace of the first-generation shRNA library developed by HHMI Investigator and CSHL Professor Greg Hannon, who pioneered the use of RNAi techniques to study mammalian genes and developed synthetic shRNAs to silence the expression of most human, mouse, and rat genes.

