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ANNUAL EVENT FOR TEACHERS A HUGE SUCCESS

As part of our commitment to engaging the public in our work and furthering science education, we once again hosted a one day course for A Level Biology teachers on Gene Technology on Friday 21 June 2013.

The event gave the 43 teachers who attended an insight into the science behind cancer research and included sessions on genetic biomarkers, genetic engineering and gene therapy, genetic markers of disease (such as SNPs), miRNAs and next generation sequencing.

One teacher who attended the course said: "It is always very difficult to teach DNA and gene related topics because it is current and changing all the time and you want to impart this to students but we are not at the forefront of research, so a day like this is so important."

The course is closely aligned to the current CCEA and AQA syllabus for AS/A level Biology. The day included talks from leading scientists, Professor Dennis McCance and Professor Patrick Morrison as well as practical demonstrations and a tour of the labs in the Centre for Cancer Research & Cell Biology at Queen's.



CCRCB PhD students with teachers attending a one day course on gene technology



Professor Laura Machesky

CANCER RESEARCH UK CENTRE LECTURE

The Cancer Research UK Centre Lecture took place in CCRCB on 16 May 2013. The lecture was given by Professor Laura Machesky from the Beatson Institute for Cancer Research.

The title of Professor Machesky's lecture was "The role of the actin bundling protein fascin in pancreatic cancer invasion and metastasis."

During her visit Professor Machesky met with several of the Principal Investigators in CCRCB and had the opportunity to talk to the post doctoral research fellows and postgraduate research students about their research programmes.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

Congratulations to Dr Joy Kavanagh and Dr Simon Horn who have been awarded Young Scientist Awards to attend the European Radiation Research Society meeting (ERR2013) being held in Dublin in September 2013.

Congratulations to Mr Ryan Hutchinson who has won several awards:

- Pathology Informatics Travel Award
- Cancer Translational Research Group Travel Award
- School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences Travel Award for attendance at the American Society of Clinical Pathologists Annual Meeting.
- Ryan Hutchinson was also a Sylvia Lawler Oncology Prize finalist at the Royal Society of Medicine, and has been invited to join the Moffitt Cancer Centre Translational Pathology and Imaging Research Group as an international member (Florida, USA).
- Ryan also obtained a certificate in Definiens Advanced Training in March 2013.



Congratulations to the winners of the CCRCB Postgraduate Student Symposium which took place on Wednesday 8 May 2013. Pictured with Dr Karen McCloskey are Aidan Cole (Third Year), Naomi Dickson (Second Year) and Conor Bradley (First Year).

ATHENA SWAN SILVER AWARD



Professor Patrick Johnston (Dean SMDBS), Professor Dame Julia Higgins (SWAN Patron) and Dr Karen McCloskey (Director, SMDBS Gender Equality Office)

The School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences has been awarded an Athena SWAN Silver Award. Athena SWAN awards recognise and celebrate good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) in higher education. Professor Patrick Johnston and Dr Karen McCloskey accepted the award on behalf of the School at the Royal Society of Edinburgh on 6 June 2013.

FLAME OF HOPE AWARD

On Friday 25 May Ruth Boyd, our CRUK Senior Research Nurse based at the Cancer Centre, received a "Research Engagement – Flame of Hope" award to recognise her dedication and passion for raising awareness of cancer research in Northern Ireland. This Award is given to an outstanding ambassador for Cancer Research UK; someone who has shown exceptional commitment to raising awareness of our pioneering research and who has been an inspiring spokesperson for the work that we do.

Ruth received this award because of the time, energy and enthusiasm she puts into attending public events within the Belfast CRUK Centre and out in the community to raise the profile of the Belfast CRUK Centre. She is a familiar and friendly face amongst CRUK supporters and can always be relied on to give inspiring talks about the research taking place here in Belfast and at the

Cancer Units across the region. The Award also recognises the amazing work Ruth has done in setting up the Northern Ireland Cancer Research Consumer Forum – a panel of people affected by cancer who help shape the cancer research taking place here in Northern Ireland. Supported by Sharon Dunwoody, Ruth has set up a fabulous training programme for Forum members to ensure they are able to successfully champion the voice of cancer patients in the development of research proposals and trial protocols.

Ruth's dedication to her work is summed up by Professor David Waugh, who said: "Her compassion for patients and her dedication to ensuring the patient voice is always heard and represented when we set our research agenda, is true testimony to her dedication and leadership."



Ruth Boyd with her Flame of Hope Award

LEADING QUEEN'S SCIENTIST RECOGNISED WITH INTERNATIONAL CANCER AWARD



Professor Patrick Johnston

Leading Queen's University scientist, Professor Patrick Johnston, has been named as recipient of the 2013 Bob Pinedo Cancer Care Prize.

The award recognizes Professor Johnston's pioneering work in translating discovery science for the benefit of cancer patients. His determination and leadership in establishing a Comprehensive Cancer Care and Research Programme in Northern Ireland is testament to his dedication to improving both clinical outcomes and quality of life for cancer patients.

This year's Pinedo Prize of \$50,000 will be presented at the Society for Translational Oncology's (STO) Fourth Annual meeting, to be hosted by the VU University Medical Center (VUmc) Cancer Center Amsterdam (CCA) at the ING House in Amsterdam on 1 October 2013. Professor Johnston will deliver the

keynote lecture at the meeting which will be published by The Oncologist, STO's official journal.

Speaking about the award, Professor Johnston said: "I am delighted and humbled to have been awarded the Pinedo Prize. It is a great honour to have my work and that of my research team recognised by the international cancer research community in this way." Queen's University's President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Peter Gregson, said: "Queen's is bringing some of the finest minds in clinical and scientific research together to take medical translational research to new levels. It is developing a new £175 million Institute of Health Sciences. This is happening under the leadership of Professor Patrick Johnston who has devoted his life to improving the lives of others. The Society's award is testimony to his foresight and commitment and is recognition of the work he is undertaking on a global scale."

Professor Johnston's research has focused on understanding the cellular signaling pathways in gastrointestinal tumors (with a particular emphasis on colorectal cancer), and using this information as a foundation to identify novel prognostics and diagnostic biomarkers, and molecular targets to rationalize and improve patient care. His many significant papers on both

cytotoxic and targeted therapies have expanded knowledge of the treatment of colorectal cancer and provided new insights on mechanisms of drug resistance.

Professor Johnston currently sits on the Cancer Research UK Scientific Executive Board. His other professional roles include being a member of the Medical Research Council (MRC) Strategy Board and Chair of the MRC Translational Research Group. He is a Founder and Director of Almac Diagnostics. He is a member of the American Society for Clinical Oncology Scientific Program Committee, Chair of the International Academy for Advanced Oncology, Japan, and Board Member of Medical Schools Council UK. As a Senior Editor for The Oncologist, Co-Editor of The Oncologist European Edition, and Co-Chairman of the Society for Translational Oncology, Professor Johnston advocates for ways to speed the discovery and translation of important new treatments in the field of cancer medicine to the practice of global oncology.

The Pinedo Cancer Care Prize honours Professor H.M. (Bob) Pinedo, founder of the VU University Medical Center (VUmc) Cancer Center Amsterdam (CCA), who weds world-class cancer research with a devotion to his patients and their families.

VISIT FROM US NURSING STUDENTS

On 5 June 2013, 25 nursing students and 5 academic staff from the United States visited the Northern Ireland Cancer Centre and CCRCB. The students, from Salve Regina University, Newport and Rhode Island and Valparaiso University, Indianapolis, were given a tour of the Cancer Centre and had an opportunity to listen to informative talks which gave them a useful insight into cancer nursing.



Nursing students during their visit to CCRCB

CANCER WORKSHOP FOR SCHOOL PUPILS

CCRCB hosted a Cancer Workshop for ninety Year 9 pupils from schools in the Magherafelt Area Learning Community on 5 June 2013. The event was part of a University RCUK grant for engagement with schools, "Inspiring lives, Creating futures", led by Dr Karen McCloskey in CCRCB.

School pupils participated in four exciting, interactive sessions facilitated by our research scientists and clinicians and learned about the biology of cancer from molecules to patients. Extraction of DNA from strawberries and modelling the DNA double helix with jelly babies illustrated the importance of understanding the science underlying cancer as we research the cure. The meet-the-pathologist session gave pupils a unique insight of how cancer is clinically diagnosed and why personalised medicine is a key development in cancer treatment.



Dr Pamela Maxwell demonstrating DNA modelling to Year 9 pupils with Jelly Babies

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL CLINICAL TRIALS DAY

On 20 May 2013 Cancer Research UK funded Clinical Research Nurses from across Northern Ireland joined forces to run simultaneous events at Cancer Units across Northern Ireland to celebrate International Clinical Trials Day. International Clinical Trials Day was created in memory of James Lind who pioneered the fair testing of treatments for healthcare. Each year it is held on or near his birthday.

Events were held in the Cancer Centre in Belfast, as well as Antrim Area Hospital, Craigavon and Altnagelvin hospitals. The

nurses engaged with staff, patients and their families, carers and friends using a fizzy drinks game to explain to people why placebos are used in some clinical trials. Special posters were also created for the day to showcase cancer trials activity in Northern Ireland. Members of the NI Cancer Research Consumer Forum also added their voice to the day, featuring stories about their involvement in trials on posters and attending the stand at the Cancer Centre to talk to patients.

The UK leads the world in the proportion of cancer patients recruited to clinical trials.

Around 17 per cent of cancer patients now take part in trials – that's a greater proportion than in any other European country or the USA.

Since the early 1980s, CRUK has taken over 120 new drugs into early clinical trials, and we have also played a key role in the development of many important cancer treatments used around the world today. CRUK currently supports around 200 cancer trials, with over 30,000 volunteers taking part to help develop new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer.

RESEARCHERS SUPPORT CRUK'S FLAGSHIP BELFAST EVENT

Researchers from CCRCB turned out to show their support, once again, at this year's Race for Life event. Every year women from across Northern Ireland are invited to join forces and walk, jog or run the 5km course around Stormont. This year over 6,000 women took part in the event.

The event is hosted by Cancer Research UK (CRUK) to raise funds for its life-saving research. Every year CCRCB researchers go along to show their support for participants and thank them for raising funds for cancer research and raise the profile of CRUK's work in Northern Ireland.

CRUK funded Clinical Research Nurses, Ashlene Alexander and Kirsty McKay, from Antrim Area Hospital also got on stage to tell participants about the pioneering research taking place at the Belfast CRUK Centre.



CCRCB PhD students Philip Burn and Naomi Dickson at Race for Life

WEAR A HAT DAY AT CCRCB



Dr Shahnaz Al Rashid, Mrs Sandra McKillop (Chairperson, Brainwaves NI) and Dr Tom Flannery

On 28 March 2013, the CCRCB wore their coolest hats and joined the rest of the UK to raise awareness and funds for Brainwaves NI, part of the Brain Tumour Research family of charities. Sweeties and coffee were served to all and successfully raised a total of £536.85. We take our hats off to everyone who donated their wonderful pastry creations, time, tummies and donations for a fun morning!

BRAINWAVES NI NEURO-ONCOLOGY INFORMATION EVENING AT CCRCB

CCRCB and Brainwaves NI hosted an Information Evening in partnership with the Northern Ireland Regional Neuro-Oncology Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) on Thursday 13 June 2013. The event was a follow-up to last year's successful Brain Tumour Research Information Event.

This year, patients affected by a brain tumour, their carers, family and friends,

learned more about the organisation and management of the Northern Ireland Regional Neuro-Oncology service including the role of the MDT and how it operates.

Several key health care professionals talked about the pathway of care and management, and new and emerging techniques on the treatment of brain tumours. Speakers included Dr Steven

McKinstry, Ms Medb Bradley, Dr Brian Herron, Dr Jackie Harney, Ms Gillian Trimble, Ms Jo Rickett and Dr Tom Flannery.

To find out more about the support available from Brainwaves NI or how you can get involved in raising vital funds for local research, go to **www.brainwaves-ni.org** or call **028 9335 3995**.

SLIEVE DONARD MOONLIT TREK

On Friday 7 June 2013, eighteen NI Leukaemia Research Fund supporters set off at 8.00 pm to climb Slieve Donard. As they stood at the summit of the highest point in Northern Ireland, the sun was setting across the horizon and then with torches in hand they trekked back down in the dark.

This was the first time NI Leukaemia Research Fund has run the unique fundraising event and it has so far raised in excess of £4,000. NI Leukaemia Research Fund would like to thank everyone who took part! To find out more about NI Leukaemia Research Fund and its events see our website: **www.leukaemia-ni.org**.



Participants of the Moonlit Trek at the top of Slieve Donard

RECENT GRANTS AWARDED

Investigator(s)	Sponsor	Title	Amount	Start Date	End Date
El-Tanani, Mohamed	Invest NI - POC	Development of antibodies to detect RAN (breast and lung cancer)	£106,000	01/05/13	30/04/14
Hamilton, Peter	Invest NI - PathXL	Cancer predictive biomarker discovery and development programme	£492,853	01/06/13	31/05/16
Harkin, Paul Savage, Kienan	MRC	Functional characterisation of a novel BRCA1-mRNA splicing complex that is mutated in multiple cancers.	£669,626	01/09/13	31/08/17
Kennedy, Richard	Invest NI - POC	Development of a predictive assay to guide prostate cancer therapy decisions	£105,993	01/07/13	30/06/14
Kennedy, Richard Mullan, Paul Jain, Suneil	Cancer Research UK	Functional characterisation of a novel subgroup of prostate cancer with distinct metastatic biology (Clinical Research Fellowship)	£256,817	01/10/13	30/09/16
Irvine, Sandra	BCH Charitable Funds	Development of sensitive active-site dependent ELISAs for profiling proteasome subunit activities	£100,752	01/08/13	31/07/15
Irvine, Sandra	Northern Ireland Leukaemia Research Fund	Support for Post Doctoral Research Associate (Dr Lisa Crawford)	£15,050	01/04/13	31/07/13
Borghesi, Marco* Prise, Kevin Zeph, Matthew* Kar, Satyabrata* *School of Mathematics and Physics	EPSRC Programme Grant	Advanced laser-ion acceleration strategies towards next generation healthcare	£2,203,843	01/05/13	30/04/19
Salto-Tellez, Manuel Coyle, Vicky Wilson, Richard	Sean Crummey Memorial Fund	Establishing personalised medicine in the treatment of rectal cancer: predictors of response to preoperative chemoradiotherapy and radiotherapy, and description of therapy-related genomic changes (PhD studentship)	£60,000	01/10/13	30/09/16
Waugh, David Williams, Rich Wilson, Richard Harkin, Paul Johnston, Patrick Kennedy, Richard Longley, Dan Mullan, Paul O'Sullivan, Joe Prise, Kevin Salto-Tellez, Manuel	Invest NI - Almac	Establishment of an integrated Almac/ QUB Drug Discovery Unit at CCRCB	£5,491,910	01/05/13	30/04/16
Waugh, David	Medical Research Foundation	Training and Skills Development Award	£1,707	01/04/13	31/03/14
Williamson, Kate Emmert-Streib, Frank Stevenson, Michael Hamilton, Peter O'Sullivan, Joe	Invest NI Randox (collaborating partner)	Development of protein based algorithms for the detection of bladder cancer in haematuria populations.	£805,188	24/04/12	31/12/15
Wilson, Richard Kennedy, Richard Robson, Tracey Waugh, David Salto-Tellez, Manuel	Invest NI	Phase I/II clinical trial for ALM201 for the treatment of solid tumours	£403,432	01/04/13	31/03/16

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OBITUARY – DR JENNIFER QUINN (1974-2013)



The sudden and tragic death of Jenny Quinn shocked and saddened all who knew her. Jenny was a member of the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences from October 1997 when she joined the former Department of Oncology as a PhD student. Jenny was an outstanding student (evidenced by the number of awards she received and the numerous times she featured in previous CCRCB bulletins) and quickly progressed to a postdoctoral research fellow position in 2001.

In 2007 Jenny was awarded a personal Breast Cancer Campaign Research Fellowship and was appointed to a lectureship position in CCRCB in December 2012. Jenny was tireless in her support of the Breast Cancer Campaign organising many 'Wear it Pink' coffee mornings in the Centre to raise funds for the charity. She was a great role model for the postgraduate research students and postdocs within the School.

Jenny was focused on a career in medical research and concentrated particularly on breast and ovarian cancer research. She was instrumental in the establishment of BRCA Link NI, a support group for families affected by the BRCA gene mutation. Not only was Jenny an expert scientist she was also a gifted lecturer, receiving excellent reviews from her students.

Jenny will be remembered as a devoted wife, a loving mum, a great colleague who set the highest personal standards, and was great fun to be with. Jenny will be greatly missed and never forgotten by her colleagues and friends in CCRCB.

CCRCB EVENTS

Summer School in Computational Biology

16–18 September 2013
Health Sciences Building,
Queen's University Belfast
For further information contact:
Dr Frank Emmert-Streib:
f.emmert-streib@qub.ac.uk

Conference in Computational Biology

19–20 September 2013
Riddel Hall,
Queen's University Belfast
For further information contact:
Dr Frank Emmert-Streib:
f.emmert-streib@qub.ac.uk

EpoCan EU Workshop

6–9 October 2013
Riddel Hall,
Queen's University Belfast
For further information contact:
Professor Terry Lappin:
t.lappin@qub.ac.uk

Mitchell Lecture 2013/14

20 February 2014 at 4.00pm
CCRCB Building
Professor Michael Stratton
Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Welcome to the following new staff who have recently joined the Centre:

Clinical Research Fellows:

Dr James Beirne

Research Staff:

Dr Susannah Gray
Dr Alberto Martin

Technical Staff:

Mr Marc-Aurel Fuchs
Ms Claire Lagan
Dr Tatiana Panova

Visiting Researchers:

Dr Graham Cotton
Dr Robert Grundy
Ms Elise Marini
Miss Danielle Mervyn
Ms Zahra Narimani
Dr Martin O'Rourke
Mr Lee Quinn
Ms Elena Sebastin
Dr Graham Trevitt

STAFF PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to Dr Chris Scott who has been promoted to Professor and to Dr Frank Emmert-Streib who has been promoted to Senior Lecturer.

Congratulations to Katie Scott who has been promoted to CRUK Senior Research Engagement Manager (REM) and although Katie will be leaving CCRCB she will now line manage the new Belfast CRUK Centre REM, Ms Margaret Carr.

Comments on the CCRCB Bulletin or suggestions for future editions should be forwarded to katie.stewart@qub.ac.uk



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