



*Breaking news as we go to press. . .*

## Hope Center Awarded Significant NIH Grants

A National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant for the "Washington University Neuroscience Blueprint Core" will provide \$8.3 million over the next five years to establish state-of-the-art research core facilities for translational neuroscience at Washington University. Dr. David Holtzman, Chairman of Neurology, is Program Director, and the Hope Center will administer the grant. Washington University was one of only four neuroscience centers in the country to receive such funding in a very competitive process.

A second NIH grant provides \$6.4 million over five years for research on how neurons and other brain cells interact to cause injury in diseases such as stroke. The project continues very successful research collaboration among seven Hope Center investigators under the leadership of Dr. Mark Goldberg, Scientific Director of the Hope Center.

The founding and funding of the Hope Center by Hope Happens was instrumental in obtaining these NIH grants. Because of the support provided by the NIH grants, more of the funds contributed by Hope Happens will be directed to specific research projects. See the next article on the research projects we are funding now.

*. . . Much more on these grants soon!*

### Your Gifts Are Leveraged!

Donations to Hope Happens have created and continue to support the Hope Center. Now the Hope Center is attracting even larger sources of support on a national scale for pioneering research in neurodegenerative disorders.

## Hope Center Awards Special Research Grants

The Hope Center recently awarded grants to three promising one-year research projects in translational neuroscience. All the projects are led by Hope Center member faculty and involve at least two labs. Funds for the grants came from Hope Happens and the McDonnell Centers for Higher Cognitive Function and Cellular and Molecular Neurobiology.

"We received eight excellent submissions, and selected three for funding," said Dr. Mark Goldberg, Scientific Director of the Hope Center. "These outstanding projects address our programmatic goals for interdisciplinary, translational neuroscience and offer great potential for scientific discovery and human therapeutics."

Current Hope Center themes are (1) axon injury/regeneration and (2) disorders of protein aggregation. All three projects are closely related to the common problem of protein aggregation. "There is growing appreciation that the primary problem in many neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Huntington's diseases and possibly ALS, is not dysfunction of mutated proteins, but rather abnormal processing, folding, and accumulation of these proteins. Therefore discovery of new approaches to reducing protein aggregation in one disease may have immediate therapeutic benefit in other conditions as well," said Dr. Goldberg.

### "Unraveling the amyloid fibril with polyphenols"

Polyphenols are natural substances found in vegetables, fruits, roots, flowers, tea, and wine. These micronutrients have antioxidant properties and may play a role in disease prevention. Five investigators, with a remarkable range of experimental techniques from high resolution atomic force microscopy to mouse behavior, are working to discover whether specific polyphenols can reverse the pathological aggregation of amyloid protein and amyloid plaques of

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## From the Executive Director

### Hope Happens hires new Executive Director - Dennis O'Brien



Dennis O'Brien

Dennis O'Brien, MA, LCSW, has been appointed Executive Director of Hope Happens. O'Brien has extensive leadership experience in non-profit organizations. Most

recently he has worked in health education research and grant writing at Washington University.

O'Brien founded Logos School and grew it into the pioneering educational resource it is today. He currently serves as board president of Community Service Public Relations Council and American Dance Troupe. He also serves on advisory committees for the Charity Information Service of the Better Business Bureau and for CHARACTERplus, a division of the Cooperating School Districts.

"Dennis brings the experience and skills that will enable him to play a strong leadership role in our fundraising efforts," said Hope Happens Board President Mike Wolff. "We feel very fortunate to have him on board."

The Hope Center's Scientific Director, Dr. Mark Goldberg, agrees. "I am delighted that Dennis O'Brien has been recruited to this important leadership position."

O'Brien is equally positive about the new responsibilities he has undertaken. "I am thrilled to join the dedicated team at Hope Happens supporting the collaborative approach among researchers at the Hope Center."

### Research Grants (continued from Page 1)

Alzheimer's Disease: Carl Frieden, PhD, Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics; John Heuser, MD, Cell Biology and Physiology; Jin-Moo Lee, MD, PhD, Neurology; Rohit Pappu, PhD, Biomedical Engineering; and David Wozniak, PhD, Psychiatry.

### "In vivo labeled proteomics in human CSF"

Dr. Randall Bateman, MD, Neurology, has developed a new method for measuring the production of brain proteins by sensitive measurement from human cerebrospinal fluid. This technique has been used for pioneering studies of Alzheimer's disease and now offers potential for use in early diagnosis and treatment of a range of neurological conditions. Donald Elbert, PhD, Biomedical Engineering, and Alison Goate, PhD, Psychiatry, are also part of this team. To learn more, visit <http://mednews.wustl.edu/news/page/normal/7348.html>.

### "Use of hybrid mammalian-yeast prions to identify factors that inhibit protein aggregation"

Prion proteins are involved in fatal neurodegenerative brain illnesses such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease and "Mad Cow" disease. These diseases are like some other neurodegenerative diseases in that the primary pathology starts with abnormal accumulation of proteins within brain cells. An established prion neuroscientist (David Harris, MD, PhD, Cell Biology and Physiology) and a yeast cell biologist (Heather True, PhD, Cell

Biology and Physiology) have developed an innovative technique using yeast to screen many thousands of genes to find those genes which potentially inhibit protein misfolding and aggregation.

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## Second Annual Evening Of Hope featured Christine Brewer



Christine and Ross Brewer

World-renowned soprano Christine Brewer, pianist Orli Shaham (wife of Saint Louis Symphony conductor David Robertson), and concertmaster David Halen were featured at our spring benefit on May 3rd at the Sheldon Concert Hall. Thanks to these amazing artists who donated their performances, the event was a huge success and raised over \$150,000 for the Hans Vonk Fund at the Hope Center. More than 300 people attended and enjoyed a wonderful evening of cocktails, dinner and music.

Maestro Vonk died in 2004 after a long struggle with ALS. His widow, Jessie Vonk, established this fund after his death and has been instrumental in making these events possible. We are very thankful and excited that she has joined us in our mission here at Hope Happens.



Julius Hunter and Jessie Vonk

Edward Jones was the Principal Sponsor of the event. Honorary Co-Chairs were Sandy and Pris McDonnell. Jessie Vonk and Jean Hobler were the Steering Committee Chairs. Susan and David Sherman and Kathleen and Sandy Rogers were Patron Sponsor Co-Chairs.

Hope Happens  
President  
Mike Wolff,  
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**TAX NOTE:** Are you 70 1/2 years or older with an IRA from which you must make a taxable distribution? By making that distribution to Hope Happens, you may be able to avoid paying any income taxes on the distribution, as well as helping Hope Happens. Ask your tax advisor about Section 1201 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 and whether you can benefit from that provision. NOTE: This special benefit is available ONLY in 2006 and 2007.

## Ladue News StyleFile Benefit

Ladue News Magazine held its inaugural Stylefile fashion event on September 11 to benefit Hope Happens. The event, held at Busch's Grove Restaurant, treated more than 200 guests to a gourmet lunch and spirits, followed by two



Lester and Alexa Miller; Susan Sherman, Linda Raclin, and Pedro Beltrahena

special keynote speakers. Virginia Kerr of KMOV served as moderator, and professional models displayed 72 different outfits from a variety of vendors.

Carole Wilson, a 17-year MS survivor and a member of the Hope Happens Board of Directors, told how inspiring her visit to the Hope Center was and encouraged guests to tour the Center and see for themselves. "I'm committed to this because I see real research and real progress being made," she said. "This is very important to people with a neurological disorder."

Dr. Mark Goldberg, MD, Scientific Director of the Hope Center, said as many people are diagnosed with a neurological disorder **every day** as those who perished in the 9/11 terrorist attacks. **Over fifty million Americans** have a permanent neurological disorder that limits their daily activities and may be progressive or even fatal.

Hope Happens is grateful for everyone who helped to make this event a reality.

Special thanks to publisher Lauren Rechan and the rest of the Ladue News staff, and co-sponsors Bentley St. Louis and Elleard Heffern Fine Jewelers.



Mary Strauss and Ladue News Publisher Lauren Rechan

*(Photos for this article by Margaret Rambo of Ladue News)*

# HOPE HAPPENS

for Neurological Disorders

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## Charter Members of The Hope Society

Forty-six members pledged \$1,000 or more in the inaugural year of the Hope Society. “This pledge of ongoing support is crucial to our progress,” said Hope Happens Executive Director Dennis O’Brien. “Knowing that there is a committed stream of revenues each year makes it possible for us to seek out new sources of support to provide the Hope Center with the resources it needs to serve as a cutting-edge research facility developing new treatments and cures for neurological disorders. “Our immediate goal is to double the number of Hope Society members by the end of 2006.”

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Then make hope happen by including Hope Happens in your estate plan. Our team of professional wealth advisors can help you plan your giving in a way that will benefit you, your heirs and Hope Happens.

Call us at (314) 289-5660 to learn more.