January Updates: People & Places

Academy of Laboratory Animal Veterinary Technicians and Nurses officially recognized

The National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) has officially recognized the **Academy of Laboratory Animal Veterinary Technicians (ALAVTN)**, upon recommendation of the NAVTA Committee on Veterinary Technician Specialists and with the support of the American Association of Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS). ALAVTN is now the fourteenth specialty available to veterinary technicians and will be centered on promoting skills and knowledge relevant to laboratory animal medicine.

Philip Sullivan, President of ALAVTN commented, "We are very proud of the hard work that our organizing committee members have done to become recognized as an academy. We look forward to continue elevating the field of laboratory animal medicine." Applications will be available in January and the first exams are expected to be held at the 2017 National AALAS meeting. Interested technicians can visit http://www.alavtn.org for additional information about the new specialty.

2016 Global 3Rs Award winners announced

AAALAC International and the IQ Consortium have announced the three winners of the 2016 Global 3Rs Award, which recognizes the authors of recent publications that contribute to refining, replacing, or reducing animal use in biomedical research. This year's winners are: **Dr. Oliver Frey,** Product Manager for Microphysiological Systems, InSphero AG, Switzerland; **Dr. Madhav Paranjpe,** Director of Pathology at BioReliance, Rockville, MD; and **Dr. Benjamin Quah,** Research Fellow at the John Curtin School of Medical Research, The Australian National University.

Dr. Frey developed a multi-tissue assay chip platform for *in vitro* testing of drug interactions involving multiple tissue types. Dr. Paranjpe systematically tested federally mandated carcinogen doses; his recommendation to eliminate high doses will reduce animal use without compromising results. Dr. Quah developed a preclinical, multiparameter T & B lymphocyte screening for post-vaccination assessment; with the improved method, immune response data can be generated from significantly fewer animals.

The $5000 awards were presented to the three recipients during an award ceremony at the 2016 National AALAS meeting, held in Charlotte, NC.

JAX to partner with Wenzhou Medical University

The Jackson Laboratory has announced a collaboration in the works with Wenzhou Medical University in China to conduct clinical genomics research. Seventy-five to 100 new principal investigators and support staff are expected to be hired during the initial phase of the partnership. During the second phase, JAX anticipates establishing its own laboratory in Wenzhou with an additional 300 to 500 employees. Throughout the process, JAX will provide training for Chinese researchers in Wenzhou and at its facility in Farmington, CT.

According to COO Charles Hewett, "The JAX-Wenzhou collaboration represents a significant milestone in advancing our mission to discover precise genomic solutions for disease and empower the global biomedical community in the shared quest to improve human health." President and CEO Edison Liu remarked, "The unique aspect of this collaboration focused on functional medical genomics is the scale of the capabilities in both Wenzhou and at JAX. With such scale, we can resolve some of the most complex questions in genomic

medicine." Additional details have yet to be disclosed.

Drug discovery alliance extended

Charles River Laboratories and Genentech have extended their integrated drug discovery alliance, originally agreed upon in 2005. The alliance has grown from a single medicinal chemistry project; Charles River now provides early discovery services encompassing *in vitro* and *in vivo* biology, structural biology, computer-aided drug design, and medicinal chemistry to identify drug candidates for preclinical development. Charles River is "proud to work with Genentech to identify early-stage molecules that will ultimately result in innovative treatment for patients," according to John Montana, Executive Director, Integrated Drug Discovery at Charles River. The latest agreement extends the program for an additional three years.