March updates: people and places

Göttingen minipigs agreement at Exemplar

Exemplar Genetics, a commercial provider of biomedical swine models based in Sioux City, Iowa, has announced an agreement with **Ellegaard Göttingen Minipigs A/S**, a Danish provider of the Göttingen minipig, one of the smallest swine options available to biomedical researchers. The pigs were originally developed at the University of Göttingen in Germany in the 1960s, a cross between the Minnesota minipig, the Vietnamese potbelly pig, and the German landrace pig. In 1992, Ellegaard established the first colony of barrier-bred, microbially defined animals.

Under the agreement, Exemplar will “develop and commercialize genetically modified Göttingen Minipigs as models of human disease on a target-by-target basis,” according to a press release.

Tar Heels to collaborate with Taconic

Rensselaer, New York-based mouse model provider **Taconic Biosciences** has announced a collaboration with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to commercialize animal models developed by UNC researchers. Efforts will be based primarily at the International Center for the Advancement of Translational Science at UNC-Chapel Hill. Initial project began late last year; the initial agreement was set terms for five years.

ToxTracker to Charles River

Charles River Laboratories has announced an agreement with **Toxsys** to provide North American users with access to the Dutch biotech company's ToxTracker assay, an in vitro genetic toxicology assay which can be used to help determine

the safety of a chemical in question. According to a press release, ToxTracker has shown 94% sensitivity and 95% specificity in making toxicity determinations, through validation with reference compound laboratories recommended by the US EPA's Toxicity Forecaster and the EU Reference Laboratory for alternatives to animal testing (EURL ECVAM).

Thinking about Denver

The 70th Meeting of the **American Association for Laboratory Animal Science** will take place this coming October in Denver, Colorado, with a Spotlight Forum on “One Health-Connections Between Animal, Human, and Environmental Health.” It may still be a few months away, but the Association is calling for topics, abstracts, and award nominations. Submissions for Topics for the National Meeting are due March 15 and should include a brief summary, target audience, and what the attendees will learn. Abstracts for either poster or platform sessions are due by June 1.

AALAS is also looking nominations for its annual awards: The Nathan R. Brewer Lifetime Achievement Award; the Charles A. Griffin Award; the Joseph J. Garvey Management Award; the Pravin N. Bhatt Scientific Investigator Award; the George R. Collins Education and Training Award; and the Technician of the Year Award. Nominations are due by April 3.

Visit www.aalas.org for more information and to submit materials. □

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Career updates

AAALAC International has appointed two new directors. **Helen Diggs**, currently the Attending Veterinarian and Director of the Laboratory Animal Resources Center at Oregon State University in Corvallis, OR, has been appointed AAALAC Senior Director. She received her DVM degrees from Oregon State University and Washington State University, and has served AAALAC in various capacities since 1994.

Diggs will replace **Gary Borkowski**, appointed as Senior Director in August 2017 and who will now serve as AAALAC International's Global Director.

Diggs will participate in AAALAC's education and outreach programs in North America and partner with the Global Director on AAALAC's accreditation program. As Global Director, Borkowski will now oversee the global accreditation program and assist the CEO Kathryn Bayne in implementing new policies and programs.

“We are thrilled that Dr. Borkowski has accepted the position of Global Director,” said Bayne in a press release. “During his time as Senior Director, Dr. Borkowski demonstrated tremendous leadership and stewardship of AAALAC's mission and work. This, combined with his deep knowledge of AAALAC's accreditation program and processes, will serve AAALAC extremely well in his new position as Global Director.”