



**Dr. Judah Denburg**  
Scientific Director and CEO



**Dr. Diana Royce**  
Managing Director and COO

## *Network Newsletter January 2011*

### **Innovation from cell to society<sup>6</sup>, Vancouver, B.C.**

In just a few weeks, AllerGen researchers, collaborators, trainees and new professionals, along with their research partners and Network stakeholder organizations will be reuniting at AllerGen's sixth annual research and knowledge mobilization conference.

Over 200 conference delegates have registered to date! If you or your trainees have not yet registered, please visit the website at [www.allergen-nce.ca](http://www.allergen-nce.ca) to do so. The Conference Planning Committee, led by Dr. Kelly McNagny and the HQP Planning Committee, led by Dr. Darryl Knight, have been hard at work over the past 6 months and they have put together an outstanding conference program for us this year.

In addition, AllerGen has increased conference opportunities for trainees to present their research by introducing a new "lightning" presentation format. This format offers each trainee with a poster entered into the adjudicated program with an opportunity to provide conference delegates with a concise "elevator pitch"/synopsis of their research. This format creates an ideal opportunity for students to hone their business/professional presentation skills. The draft conference programme is posted on the AllerGen website at [www.allergen-nce.ca](http://www.allergen-nce.ca)



### **Going Global Germany: AllerGen Fosters Collaborative German-Canadian R&D and Capacity Building Opportunities**

In October 2010, a delegation of AllerGen researchers, business advisors and executives (Judah Denburg, Diana Royce, Petra Arck, Jeff Brook, Terry Delovitch, Kelly McNagny, Andrew Sandford, Catherine Laprise, Malcolm Sears) travelled to Berlin, Germany supported by a Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade *Going Global Program* grant.

Over a four day period, beginning with a facilitated research workshop, followed by multiple German university site visits focusing on collaborative research project planning, and culminating with a joint Germany – AllerGen/Canada meeting at the Canadian Embassy in Berlin with German research funding organizations and Canadian Embassy and Foreign Affairs Officers, AllerGen representatives, with their German research collaborators, assembled a comprehensive research program and trainee exchange plan.

Representatives from both the Canadian and German delegations are actively seeking financial support to launch this research and capacity building collaboration. As a follow-up to this initiative, we are delighted to inform you that **Dr. Linus Grabenhenrich**, MD, MPH, Charité Berlin - Institute for Social Medicine, Epidemiology and Health Economics, Charité University Hospital, is joining us at the Vancouver conference. We encourage you to get to know Dr. Grabenhenrich and continue to build upon our ongoing discussions regarding collaborations with our German colleagues on joint research initiatives in

the areas of birth cohorts, gene-environment interactions and biomarkers.

### **Commercialization, Intellectual Property (IP) and Knowledge Translation (KT) Funding Available to March 31, 2011**

This year, AllerGen has made available \$600,000 to support four strategic initiative funding programs on a “first-come/first-serve” basis:

1. Strategic Research Initiatives
2. Strategic Knowledge Transfer Initiatives
3. Strategic IP Initiatives, and
4. Strategic Commercialization Initiatives.

Each year, the \$150,000 *Strategic Research Initiatives* fund, which provides timely support in amounts up to \$50,000 per project for in-year research opportunities arising from currently funded research that are time-sensitive and/or offer new, originally unanticipated avenues of research that appear highly fruitful to pursue, is exhausted well before the fiscal year-end (March 31 in any given year). Again this year, funding for this program has already been fully subscribed.

However, the funding for KT, IP and Commercialization initiatives has typically been undersubscribed, year over year and there is currently more than \$350,000 available to the end of this fiscal year for such initiatives.

It is extremely important that AllerGen research teams take a hard look at the IP, KT and commercialization potential of their research and identify and apply for support from the related strategic initiative programs, so as to fully realize AllerGen’s NCE mandate. We encourage AllerGen teams to work closely with the Technology Transfer Offices at their respective institutions, AllerGen’s Network-Supported Intellectual Property Advisory Committee and Mark Mitchell, Manager, Research and Partnerships at the Administrative Centre to identify any *Network-supported Intellectual Property* arising from AllerGen-funded research and development

projects that should be patent-protected or copyrighted in order to optimize the commercial/economic and social benefits accruing to Canadians and the Canadian economy.

Funding can be applied for at any time throughout the year. Program descriptions are available on the AllerGen website, or by contacting Mark Mitchell at [mitchemd@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mitchemd@mcmaster.ca).

### **AllerGen’s New Communications and Knowledge Mobilization Team**

AllerGen is pleased to welcome **Marta Rudyk**, HBComm, to the AllerGen Administrative Centre Team as Manager, Communications and Knowledge Mobilization.

Marta is a communications, marketing and public relations professional, with extensive experience in project management, fundraising and event planning. Most recently, Marta provided corporate



**Marta Rudyk**, Manager, Communications and Knowledge Mobilization

communications and marketing support to the Human Resources Professionals Association in



**Debra Ramdath**, Communications and Knowledge Mobilization Coordinator

Toronto. Marta also spent three years with Science & Medicine Canada Inc., where she was responsible for marketing, event planning and account services.

After a lengthy search, and with extensive input from

AllerGen’s Policy, Ethics, Law and Society (PELS) Advisory Committee, we are pleased to welcome **Debra Ramdath**, MPH, as AllerGen’s first Communications and Knowledge Mobilization Coordinator. Debra is a health promotion specialist with international experience in knowledge translation, dissemination, transfer, exchange and brokering. Most recently, Debra

promoted healthy weights among school children in collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Education and University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago.

Together, Marta and Debra are developing an updated Communications Plan for AllerGen's Board of Directors that will include a Knowledge Mobilization Strategy 2012-2019 for AllerGen Board of Directors approval in February 2011.

If you have any communications, media or public relations opportunities, Marta can be reached at: [rudyk@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rudyk@mcmaster.ca)

Should you wish to discuss any knowledge translation or knowledge mobilization initiatives, please contact Debra at: [ramdath@mcmaster.ca](mailto:ramdath@mcmaster.ca)

## **Two New Strategic Training Partnerships Broaden AllerGen Capacity Building**

AllerGen recently concluded partnership agreements with both the Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec (FRSQ) and the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) in British Columbia, whereby AllerGen will co-fund graduate and post-graduate trainees meeting the academic standards for excellence of the partners, where the applicants are conducting research in areas aligned with AllerGen's research mission and mandate.

*MSFHR Research Trainee Program, Post Doctoral Fellowship Award: LOI Applications due March 1, 2011, Full Applications due April 1, 2011*

The recently issued MSFHR Research Trainee Program, Post Doctoral Fellowship Award, will support highly qualified Post Doctoral trainees to prepare for careers as independent health researchers. All awards consist of an annual stipend and a research and travel allowance.

We encourage AllerGen researchers in B.C. to identify AllerGen trainees that can apply for this award and who would be eligible for the AllerGen-partnered award in this category. AllerGen will contribute up to \$30,000 per year towards MSFHR

partnered trainee awards. For more information about the current MSFHR competition, see <http://www.msfhr.org/funding/Current/Trainee>

### *FRSQ- AllerGen Clinical Research Scholars – Junior 1 Career Award (Letter of Intent was due August 2010)*

This award will be granted to up to two of the top ranking candidates in the FRSQ Clinical Research Scholar - Junior 1 competition for the year 2011-2012, who meet the following criteria:

1. Candidates must be eligible to apply and must have applied to the aforementioned FRSQ program.
2. The candidate's application must have been approved for relevance by AllerGen.
3. Following peer review, the candidate must have met FRSQ's required score for funding in the regular FRSQ Career Award competition.

All FRSQ Junior 1 Clinical Research Scholars, in addition to their career award, also receive an "Establishment of young researchers — Juniors 1 Award."

This award is a Research Grant to help young investigators at the beginning of their careers to acquire the independence necessary to secure funding to carry out their research projects and quickly become productive in their research environment.

The "Establishment of young researchers — Juniors 1 Award" is awarded for a maximum of three years. AllerGen will contribute a maximum of \$30,000, (\$10,000 per year).

## **Towards a New Strategic Training Partnership with Australian Allergy and Asthma Research Centres**

The University of Newcastle, Australia seeks applications from Canadian Post-Doctoral Fellows (PDF) interested in joining Associate Professor Phil Hansbro's team in the Microbiology, Asthma and Airways research group to work on NHMRC/ARC funded projects.

Dr. Hansbro's group is involved in basic and translational research in the area of infection, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD, emphysema). There will be substantial research assistant support and there is the potential for PhD student supervision.

The School of Biomedical Sciences and Pharmacy at the University of Newcastle is one of four Schools within the Faculty of Health and has a major research focus. A major research strength of the school is the Priority Research Centre (PRC) for Asthma and Respiratory Disease. This strong research focus has been enhanced by the development of the Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) and Dr. Hansbro's group forms a major part of the Viruses, Infection, Viruses and Asthma (VIVA) section of HMRI.

AllerGen views this as a significant opportunity, especially given the Network's continued focus on developing international collaborations now and beyond NCE renewal in 2012. Additionally, Australia has been identified as a strategic target for international collaboration given the strength of its research capacity and capabilities in the area of allergic and respiratory disease.

Consequently, it would be much appreciated if you could please forward this opportunity to anyone whom you believe could be considered for this role.

In addition, if you have a candidate, please contact us for a letter of support for trainees who have actively participated in Network research projects, AllerGen trainee professional development events and AllerGen conferences, workshops and poster competitions.

International experiences, gained by AllerGen trainees participating in the AllerGen - Karolinska Institute Exchange Program over the past three years, have proven extremely beneficial as well as transformational for all involved.

For more information, contact: A/Prof Phil Hansbro: Philip.Hansbro@newcastle.edu.au, or phone 02 4913 8819.

## **Science-Metrix Engaged to Conduct Analysis of AllerGen Research Productivity and Impact**

In December 2010, the AllerGen Administrative Centre engaged Science-Metrix of Montréal, Quebec, to provide an assessment of the national and international impact of AllerGen's total research output (2006-2010) in the field of allergy and asthma, and to provide an assessment of the pre- and post-Network impact on the publications of Network investigators.



If you have any major research publications coming out before the end of

January, please

**Mark Mitchell,**  
Manager, Research and Partnerships

contact Mark Mitchell immediately, at 905-525-9140 x 26092 or email him at [mitchemd@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mitchemd@mcmaster.ca) about your publications and we will endeavour to have it included in this upcoming analysis.

## **NCE Renewal – Update**

Planning is well underway for AllerGen's September 2011 full NCE review, which will determine the Network's eligibility for its second seven years of NCE funding from 2012 to 2019. The renewal effort will require input from everyone in the Network.

To date, a strategic planning for research workshop was held in July 2010, followed by a Board of Directors – Research Management

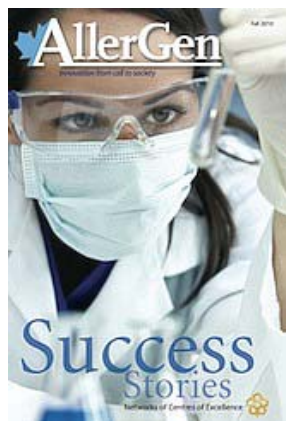
Committee Joint Strategic Planning Retreat in November. In addition, partner organization consultation meetings are being held across the country to identify areas of strategic alignment with current and potential partner organizations' interests and AllerGen's research priorities, and future research needs and gaps that AllerGen could address in its next strategic plan. Meetings in Ottawa and Montreal with research partners, stakeholder organizations and professional groups have been completed. Meetings in Vancouver and Edmonton will occur in February 2011, and two meetings in Ontario will follow in March 2011.

In addition, key informant interviews are being undertaken with AllerGen research partner organizations to identify the strengths and areas for improvement in AllerGen's partnering strategies.

The first draft of the strategic plan for research has been delivered to the research leaders for discussion. We hope that during the conference each programme team and the large research project participants will find time to meet and continue to refine AllerGen's research vision to 2019.

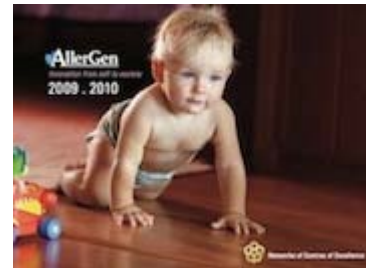
### AllerGen Success Stories Available

The first issue of AllerGen's Success Stories is now available in hard copy and from the AllerGen web-site. This is the first of an ongoing series of articles intended for a lay audience, to make AllerGen's research projects and their outcomes accessible and transparent to the Canadian public.



### AllerGen Annual Report 2009-10

AllerGen's 2009-10 Annual Report will be distributed in French and English at the Annual Conference in Vancouver in February. It is also available for download on the AllerGen website.



### AllerGen's 2<sup>nd</sup> Café Scientifique

On February 8, 2011, AllerGen will host its 2<sup>nd</sup> Café Scientifique, in downtown Vancouver, B.C. from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the *Steamworks Brewing Company*, 375 Water Street. The theme for this public debate is: *Don't worry – breathe happy! Can controlling stress and our environment reduce allergies and asthma?* The evening will be moderated by Susan Elliott, PhD, University of Waterloo. Other AllerGen participants include:

- Chris Carlsten, MD, MPH;
- Anita Kozyrskyj, PhD;
- Donald Stark, MD;
- Stuart Turvey, MD, PhD; and
- Michael Kobor, PhD.

A wide range of stakeholder organizations have been engaged in the dissemination of this opportunity across the greater Vancouver region.

*We welcome your feedback. If you have specific issues you would like us to address in future issues, please let us know. All comments or enquiries should be sent via email to [execsec@mcmaster.ca](mailto:execsec@mcmaster.ca)*