

UCSD Awarded \$3.6 Million From State Stem Cell Agency

First step towards establishing collaborative stem cell "boot camp"

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The University of California, San Diego has been awarded \$3.6 million from the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine to expand the number of scientists trained to use stem cells in research and clinical settings to improve the understanding and treatment of a wide variety of human diseases. UC San Diego is calling this its stem cell "boot camp."

The three-year award is part of the first round of grants announced today from the state's stem cell agency to research institutions in California as provided by Proposition 71, the state stem cell initiative approved overwhelmingly by voters last November. UCSD will use its funds to provide interdisciplinary training in stem cell biology and medicine for 16 scientists-six doctoral students, four postdoctoral fellows and six clinical fellows-enrolled at UCSD's School of Medicine, Division of Biological Sciences, Skaggs School of Pharmaceutical Sciences or Jacob's School of Engineering.

The university intends to collaborate with three other research institutions along the "mesa" that also submitted proposals to the stem cell agency- The Burnham Institute, Salk Institute, and The Scripps Research Institute-to develop a comprehensive training program built on the strong, existing collaborations of all four institutions.

"A major goal of this program is to train a cadre of young scientists and clinicians who can apply their background in fields including biology, chemistry, materials science and engineering to solve problems in basic stem cell research and in the development of potential stem cell approaches to understanding and treating human diseases," said Lawrence S. B. Goldstein, a professor of cellular and molecular medicine at UCSD who will head the university's stem cell training program.

"Through this effort, UCSD and our collaborating institutions will make a major contribution towards stem cell research," said UCSD Chancellor Marye Anne Fox. "We will train the next generation of stem cell scientists who can lead our local biotechnology industries and our state's stem-cell research programs to develop future therapies for devastating human genetic diseases."

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