

HEW grants Biology Dept. \$19,078 for gerontologists' program

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A federal contract to underwrite a novel training program for research workers in the field of aging has been granted to UCSD's biology department, Dr. Herbert Stern, department chairman, announced today.

The \$19,078 contract was awarded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for a program titled "Molecular Biology for Gerontologists." Under it, up to six specialists will be brought to UCSD from various parts of the nation for intensive training.

Grantees, selected by the sponsoring institute with the concurrence of UCSD, will spend from one to three months working with members of the UCSD biology faculty "with the aim of acquiring competence in one or more molecular and cellular techniques," Stern explained.

The new program is an outgrowth of a workshop on aging held earlier at UCSD. The workshop, subsidized by the National Science Foundation, attracted the attention of officials at HEW.

"The upshot was this 'custom-made' program," Stern said. "In a sense, the program is unique. Normally, grants or contracts are awarded for training graduate students or postdoctoral fellows, or for workshops. This program will be specially tailored to the individual needs of mature, doctoral-level investigators who have been unable otherwise to obtain the required training."

Two trainees already have been selected, said Stern, and will begin their work at UCSD in the near future. Dr. Janice McHale, of the Veteran's Administration Hospital, Martinez, Calif., will conduct research on "the aging of cells in tissue culture." Dr. Robert Herrmann, associate professor of biochemistry at Boston University's School of Medicine, is scheduled to do special work on "changes of DNA in cells."

Selection of UCSD for this unique contract was "quite clearly a recognition of the excellence of our biology program," according to Stern.

"They were very impressed by the general quality of the department's operations" he said. "They also were attracted by the open, warm environment found in the department, which is highly conducive to fruitful research."

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