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Researcher Receives Competitive Grant

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Dr. Jean-Pierre Saint-Genet, who joined the faculty last year as assistant professor of developmental biology, was awarded a three-year Focused Giving Grant by Johnson and Johnson. Dr. Saint-Genet studies cell differentiation in embryonic tissues. He received the grant for his project "Patterning Function of Wnt Signaling in the Central Nervous System."

He works with embryos of *Xenopus laevis*, a South African frog. The animals are easy to maintain in a colony and lots of embryos can be obtained. Specific tissues of these are isolated and examined for the potentiality of differentiation. Some in this cell group are committed to a specific lineage and others can be manipulated at this stage.

Dr. Saint-Genet plans to inject messenger RNA for Wnt into specific embryonic cells and then test for the function of the corresponding protein. Wnt, a growth factor, is a member of a molecule group of which one, Wnt1, has been identified as inducing mammary tumors in mice. "A central problem in the study of vertebrae development is defining the cellular and molecular mechanisms responsible for the patterning of embryonic tissues and the differentiation of specific cell types," said Dr. Saint-Genet. "Secreted molecules that provide recognition signals between cells are believed to play a major role in promoting cell identity. The purpose of this project is to

evaluate the function of a class of signaling molecules (Wnt) in the steps that lead to cell diversity along the dorsoventral axis of the spinal cord."

Dr. Saint-Genet received support for related work from the Thomas B. McCabe and Jeannette E. Laws McCabe Fund and from an internal grant by the University of Pennsylvania.

He received his Ph.D. in developmental neurobiology from Paul Sabatier University, Toulouse, France and did post-doctoral work at the Ecole Normal Supérieure, Paris, France and at NIH in Bethesda, MD.



Dr. Saint-Genet receives the check for the grant from Dr. Stephen Prouty of Johnson and Johnson while Dean Alan M. Kelly looks on.

New Director of Development and Alumni Relations

Martha L. Naylor joined the School of Veterinary Medicine as director of development and alumni relations. She is responsible for overseeing the fund raising efforts at both campuses, alumni relations and communications.

Ms. Naylor comes to Penn from Barnes & Roche, Inc., a national fundraising consulting firm, where she was senior vice president-executive search. Prior to joining Barnes & Roche, Ms. Naylor had been working in the development office at Bryn Mawr College. In her more than ten years there she held the following positions: director of annual giving, director of the National Identification Project (a nationwide prospect screening effort), director of regional campaigns during the Campaign for Bryn Mawr, director of major gifts, and acting director of development.

Ms. Naylor is a summa cum laude graduate of Bryn Mawr College and holds an M.Ed. in Counseling and Consulting Psychology from Harvard University Graduate School of Education. She has three cats and a dog and lives in Chester County, PA.

The William R. Newman, M.D. Large Breed Examining Room

The latest addition to VHUP is the William R. Newman, M.D. Large Breed Examining Room, located on the first floor of the hospital. Dr. Newman, a mastiff breeder, felt that the existing exam rooms at VHUP were too small for giant breeds. He made funds available to combine space and create a room with plenty of floor space for canine giants, their owners and the clinicians. Through his generosity the room was equipped with a bank of x-ray viewing boxes and a special hydraulic table that can handle a heavy dog, eliminating lifting it. The room was dedicated during a ceremony following the 29th Annual Canine Symposium. Shown here are Dean Alan M. Kelly and Dr. Newman after the ribbon cutting.

