Dr. Rikihisa Awarded NIH Grant to Study Ehrlichia

Dr. Yasuko Rikihisa was recently awarded four years of funding from the National Institutes of Health for her competitive renewal of a grant entitled "Comparison of Human Ehrlichiosis Agent Genomes". Ehrlichia chaffeensis infects monocytes and macrophages and causes human monocytic ehrlichiosis (HME), a potentially fatal disease. The study will combine genome sequence analysis with comparative pathogenesis studies of multiple E. chaffeensis isolates to provide valuable insights into virulence determinants and new intervention targets. Her study seeks to identify polymorphic genes or genomic regions of E. chaffeensis strains by “tiled microarray methods” and confirm these results by DNA sequencing. Dr. Rikihisa’s group will then determine biological properties of these strains in animal models. She will also determine temporal "transcriptome profiles" and selected cytokines and signaling molecules of hosts in response to E. chaffeensis infection. Overall, the proposed study will identify novel E. chaffeensis virulence determinants and their pathogenic mechanisms critical information to develop potential chemotherapy, chemopreventive and vaccines against human ehrlichiosis. Best of luck to Dr. Rikihisa and her lab in this important research!

Dr. Kathleen Boris-Lawrie Elected as AAAS Fellow

Congratulations to Dr. Kathleen Boris-Lawrie who was elected as a Fellow of the American Association of the Advancement of Sciences (AAAS). The Association is the world's largest federation of scientists, works to advance science for human well-being. The association manages projects, programs, and publications in the areas of science policy, science education, and international scientific cooperation. Members of the AAAS are elevated to the rank of fellow for their efforts in advancing science or fostering scientifically or socially distinguished applications. The election of Dr. Boris-Lawrie brings the total number of AAAS fellows in the Department of Veterinary Biosciences to seven, one of the highest numbers of any Department at OSU. Dr. Boris-Lawrie was recognized for her distinguished contributions to the field of molecular virology, particularly for defining post-transcriptional control of proteins and RNA elements that modulate retrovirus replication and cell growth. Dr. Boris-Lawrie will receive a certificate and rosette in a presentation in Boston, MA in February of 2008 during the AAAS Fellows Forum as part of the AAAS Annual Meeting.
Events and Programs

While the 2007 Your Plan for Health Incentive Program has ended, the deadline to take the Personal Health Assessment (PHA) online questionnaire has been extended to Dec. 14 to allow faculty and staff to obtain the $10 monthly or $4.62 biweekly health plan premium discount beginning in 2008. Faculty and staff may get their free health screening at locations around campus. To register, visit yourplanforhealth.com/pha or call 292-1050.

Tips on Reducing Workplace Stress (Alabama Career Center):
1) Review work priorities for the day and clarify projects with your manager.
2) Find a few minutes to energize.
3) Get enough sleep! Sleep deprivation negatively affects work and increases stress.
4) Plan fun activities to look forward to outside of work.

Reminder: Thursday, November 22 – Thanksgiving Day, Offices Closed.

Selected Recent Grants/Publications/Presentations/Awards/Appointments

- Dean Thomas Rosol was appointed to represent the American Colleges of Veterinary Medicine on the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board for three years. The Board provides advice to the Secretary of Agriculture and land-grant colleges and universities on priorities for agricultural research, education, extension and economics.

- Dr. Tracey Papenfuss was selected as the OSU nominee for the 2007 Pew scholars program in the biomedical sciences.


Staff Profile: Maria Anderson

Maria Anderson is the new Business Manager for the Department of Veterinary Biosciences. She comes to the Department from the OSU Department of Surgery where she was a senior accountant since 2001, managing a department with finances of over $30 million. She has a BS in Mechanical Engineering from OSU. In her new position, Maria will provide fiscal and operational oversight and support to the Department. She will plan, manage and oversee departmental daily fiscal operations and actively plan strategic initiatives and business activities. This will include management of renovation projects, financial operations, and new corporate relationships. Her office is in Goss 207. Welcome to the VBS family, Maria!