

**RESEARCH
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

Thursday, January 23, 2020
4:00 to 5:00 pm
CINJ Boardroom 2003

Attendees:

Eileen White, Elisa Bandera, Chang Chan, Adam Berger, Zhiyuan Shen, Linda Tanzer, Edmund Lattime, Shridar Ganesan, X.F. Steven Zheng, Sharon Manne, Cristine Delnevo (WebEx), Paul Novembre, Gina Londino-Greenberg

Agenda

1. Strategic Planning Process (Tanzer)

- Focus groups are being organized to develop the components of the new Strategic Plan. The leaders at the cancer institute might need to weigh in on these various components.
- Succession planning will be one of the components of this new Strategic Plan.
- The Officers Cabinet and Associate Directors meetings will be used to provide overviews of the new Strategic Plan.
- It was agreed that a separate retreat should also be planned, to facilitate contributions to the Strategic Planning process.
 - o The retreat can cover the more high-level aspects of the Strategic Plan, while the focus groups could be used to determine the specific details relating to the components of the Strategic Plan.
 - o All of the retreat attendees should be advised that they will be expected to present on their plans for their part of the Strategic Plan. They will receive their Strategic Plan components in advance of the retreat.
- It was noted how RWJ-Barnabas Health System has its own Strategic Plan.
 - o Rutgers Cancer Institute's Strategic Plan will be research-focused.
 - o The cancer institute's administration will see what aspects of the health system's Strategic Plan could possibly dovetail into the one being developed for Rutgers Cancer Institute.

2. P01/SPORE Updates (White)

- The P01 application put in by Shen, Ganesan, Xia, and Bunting received a score of 28. They are waiting to get in touch with their Program Officer, as there is still a chance it could be funded. They want to get the reviewers' comments first and then present to the Research Leadership Council for feedback.
- The P01 application being planned around sun safety is progressing. The team has gotten feedback and revised the cores and direction. They are working on integration. The plan is to submit this application in the Fall of 2020.
- There was discussion of whether the recent changes in the NIH R01 pay lines might also impact large-scale grants. It was noted that retaining the prior NIH R01 pay lines could have been detrimental to the future of cancer research.
- The question was raised of what other areas could be developed to pursue a large-scale grant.
- Because the recent P20 (SPORE) application was related to a specific RFA, it might not be possible for it to be revised and resubmitted. However, if it can be revised/resubmitted, Sharon Pine should be brought into it, as she was recently awarded a disparities grant.

- There will need to be parallel efforts to decide on the next P01 application as well as engaging some clinical researchers to focus on a SPORE application.
- Rutgers Cancer Institute will need to assess where there is established clinical research capacity, as well as with whom we would compete based on those research areas.
- Previously, Shridar Ganesan and Janice Mehnert had been considering preparing a thematic SPORE application. However, the translational and clinical pieces were weak.
- Eileen White will be requesting some significant funding in her Deputy Director budget over the next few years, in order to be able to seed work that would support efforts towards applying for these large-scale grants.
- The question was raised of whether anyone has participated in a P01/SPORE review. Joseph Aisner may have been on a review committee. Several Population Science faculty have also reviewed some, but they were all focused on Population Science.
- It will be necessary to look into what SPORE applications were funded, and with which institutions these SPOREs are affiliated. The number of thematic SPOREs should also be investigated.
- It was noted that a challenge in obtaining a disease-specific SPORE is that clinical leaders are needed for them, and Rutgers Cancer Institute currently lacks them.
- Rutgers Cancer Institute's Heme division has some strong clinical leaders, and there are several Basic Research faculty who do work in Heme.
- Some future brainstorming sessions focused on how to best pursue SPOREs might be needed.
- Other nearby institutions, such as NYU, could perhaps be engaged as a partner on one of the necessary projects.
- A future RLC meeting should be devoted to planning to pursue a SPORE.
 - o The DSG Leaders and other appropriate clinical leaders recommended by Shridar Ganesan and Janice Mehnert should be invited to attend.
 - o An NIH Program Officer should also be consulted on the best course of action for pursuing a SPORE. Such consultation would best give insight on what could be available.
 - o A brainstorming session would still be helpful, since it could reveal the need for faculty recruitment.
 - o It will also be necessary to look at what clinical opportunities exist across the RWJBarnabas Health System.
- Rutgers Cancer Institute is in a unique scenario where it has the capacity of the Basic Researchers, but is lacking in the research expertise of Clinical Faculty. Typically, the opposite is true of cancer institutes.
 - o The Parker protocol is doing well.

3. Upcoming Educational Retreats (Lattime)

- There is a T32 grant submission planned for May 15, 2020.
- The Education and Training department is looking for NCI R01-funded faculty with strong training records, i.e. postdoctoral trainees who went on to academia or leadership in pharmaceutical companies.
- The resident faculty have been asked for their CVs. A database of training records is being built. Publications lists from the past CCSG competing renewal application are also being reviewed.
- The focus of the grant is on postdoctoral trainees, as the guidelines only allow 1 predoctoral trainee for every 4 postdoctoral trainees.
- T32 application themes are still being reviewed, with the plan to start with cancer metabolism.
- It was noted that a mechanism to improve recruitment of postdoctoral trainees is needed, and that funding would be needed to support this mechanism.

- Rutgers Cancer Institute has many competitors in the New York City and Philadelphia areas for postdoctoral candidates. Many of these institutions also go to great lengths to recruit postdoctoral candidates, such as offering elaborate retreats.
- It was noted that Rutgers University does not appear to emphasize pursuit of T32 grants. It just lost one, and overall does not have many, while other institutions hold many T32 grants.
- The Annual Retreat on Cancer Research in New Jersey will be held on May 13, 2020. Elaine Fuchs, Rebecca C. Lancefield Professor of Mammalian Cell Biology and Development, Rockefeller University will be the Keynote Speaker.
- It was agreed that there should be efforts to get clinical faculty to attend the Annual Retreat on Cancer Research in New Jersey.
- There is still discussion over whether there will be a Public Forum at the retreat this year.
- There will not be a Governor's Conference this year. Instead, there will be a Programmatic-focused retreat at Princeton University. It will be a significant meeting aimed at promoting the consortium.
- The question was raised of how to improve attendance to Grand Rounds events.
 - o One suggestion was to hold them around lunchtime with meals provided. While the current practice of holding these events at the end of the day was to accommodate the schedules of clinicians, it has been found that clinical faculty are still not attending. Holding the events earlier in the day could be easier for potential attendees and the speakers.
 - o It was also suggested to hold the Grand Rounds events less frequently, especially since recruitment events will be happening. The tentative decision was made to move to a schedule of 2 Grand Rounds events per month, with one a month being a Distinguished Lecture. This decision will go into effect in a few months.
 - o Joint lectures could be another possibility to consider.
- It was agreed that the current Friday afternoon schedule and practice of offering pizza should continue for the Trainee Seminar Series.

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 13, 2020 (4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Director's Boardroom)