



## Why partnerships?

Because it's how we get things done.

Cancer is a complicated series of diseases. Research tools and databases require specialized skills and training. The new “National Institutes of Health Roadmap for Accelerating Medical Discovery to Improve Health” is filled with the word “interdisciplinary”—groups of researchers working together on the complex problems facing cancer research in the 21st century.

The Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center (JCCC) is uniquely suited to forming these novel partnerships for two reasons: The UCLA culture of collaboration and the venture philanthropy provided by the Jonsson Cancer Center Foundation (JCCF). Our first partnerships were formed inside the JCCC, both within and between our scientific program areas (See related story on page 4). Most

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of the program areas now have two directors—from two different disciplines.

Cancer center space is interdisciplinary—with members of basic science and clinical programs working side by side. Cancer center faculty recruitments are interdisciplinary and increasingly involve multiple departments and combinations of professional schools, centers, institutes and the college.

In 1996, we initiated the Interdisciplinary Seed Grant Program to fund discovery research by groups of scientists. This highly successful program contributed to the extraordinarily successful molecular imaging programs and two SPORE (Specialized Programs of Research Excellence) grants in lung and prostate cancer, to name a few.

In this issue of Discoveries we feature larger and more complex partnerships (See related stories on pages 4 and 9). Some of them are technology-based, harnessing the power of nanotechnology to make screening devices that can be used in rural areas of the world without ready access to laboratories. The JCCC partnership with the NASA-funded Institute for Cell Mimetic Space Exploration (CMISE) in the Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Sciences is just that. And it is “rocket science.”

Another brings together the fields of epidemiology, molecular biology, environmental health, toxicology, bioinformatics and clinical sciences. It employs state-of-the-art proteomics and microarray technology to begin to address the most fundamental questions about how the genes we inherit may interact with our environment to pre-dispose us to specific forms of cancer. The Molecular Epidemiology Program Area brings all of this expertise to the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control Research at JCCC.

To illustrate just how broad partner-

ships can be at UCLA, the Molecular Screening Shared Resource began as a collaboration between JCCC and Dr. Lenny Rome, senior associate dean for research in the David Geffen School of Medicine. It now includes resources from two departments, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the California NanoSystems Institute.

Over the years, the JCCF has been instrumental in funding these vital partnerships. Jonathan Page, the foundation's executive director, coined the term “venture philanthropy” to explain this process. The foundation provides the venture capital for partnerships that are too new to qualify for peer-reviewed support. In time, they develop a track record and obtain long-term support for their continued operation. Meanwhile the academic leadership and the foundation move on to fund newer ideas.

I would like to acknowledge the following members of the JCCF Board of Directors, who have stepped forward this past year to continue this outstanding tradition. Ken and Wendy Ruby are providing generous support for the visionary JCCC-CMISE partnership. The Anne Fitzpatrick Alper Program in Environmental Genomics formed the foundation for the Molecular Epidemiology Program Area through the generosity of Art Alper and the Ken Jonsson family.

We find ourselves at a time of extraordinary opportunity to have an impact in cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment. We will continue to invest in the fundamental partnerships both within the JCCC and the larger community of UCLA, Los Angeles and the oncology community.

*Judy Jonsson*