

From the Director



Back to Basics in Jonsson Cancer Center Laboratories

of powerful technological platforms and enhanced computational abilities, we are all moving toward a more collaborative, team-based approach. No single investigator will have the requisite knowledge and skills to attack a problem as complex as a cancer cell without joining forces with colleagues.

We have an advantage at the Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center (JCCC), because the necessary colleagues are already part of our organization. We are fortunate to be on one campus where the JCCC has members from the David Geffen School of Medicine, the colleges of Life Sciences and Physical Sciences and the schools of Engineering, Dentistry, Nursing and Public Health. We have a long history of collaboration, in part funded by the Jonsson Cancer Center Foundation's Interdisciplinary grant program dating back to the mid-90s. Our 12 scientific program areas integrate faculty from diverse backgrounds into groups addressing critical themes in cancer research. Seven of our shared resources strive to meet the ever changing technological challenges associated with generating more and more data, at faster and faster rates.

Everything we do at JCCC is focused on one goal - improving the way cancer is prevented, detected, treated and the quality of life of the survivors. We have tremendous depth and breadth in all of these areas.

So, it's back to the basics.....

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Jonsson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

As a basic scientist myself, I have always emphasized the importance it plays in providing the strong foundation on which much of cancer research is built. A series of laboratory observations leads to the formulation of an idea (a hypothesis). Experiments are designed to test the validity of the hypothesis. Results are analyzed and the hypothesis is supported or, as is often the case, not supported and a new hypothesis is generated. This is the way basic science cancer research has been conducted for decades. I always enjoyed the excitement that came with seeing results for the very first time. It gives one the sense of knowing something for a brief moment that no one before has ever known.

As you'll read in the accompanying issue of UCLA Cancer Discoveries, basic science research is changing. With the sequencing of the entire human genome, availability