



Leaders' Update

A message from Director Gordon Ginder

Dear colleagues,

I am delighted to share that in February the National Cancer Advisory Board affirmed the NCI review panel's evaluation of Massey. We are anticipating an official award notice for renewal of our NCI-designating Cancer Center Support Grant in May of this year.

Thank you all for your important contributions to Massey's strongest CCSG application and site visit to date. Because of your collective efforts, we were given the best evaluation and recommended for the largest level of funding that the Center has ever received at a competitive renewal.

Our Scientific External Advisory Board met at Massey last week to advise our senior leaders on matters of scientific program structure and research and overall Center planning and management in response to the feedback received from the NCI review panel. As scientists and senior leaders from other major cancer centers, these board members offered constructive criticism and suggestions about our strategic plans and scientific program organization, and I am pleased to share that their overall reaction to Massey's trajectory was positive.

As I announced earlier this month, Dr. Sarah Spiegel, Ph.D., has stepped down as co-leader of the Cancer Cell Signaling (CCS) research program after six years of dedicated service in this role. She and Andrew Larner, M.D., Ph.D., have co-led the program well since its inception in 2011, helping to increase the program's high-impact publication rate, strengthen intra- and inter-programmatic collaborations and focus the program toward cancers prevalent in our community. Dr. Spiegel will remain actively involved in Massey as a productive research member of the CCS program.

CCS member Charles Chalfant, Ph.D., has been appointed as the program's new co-leader. He will serve alongside Dr. Larner to develop and guide the strategic direction of the CCS program, grow its membership, foster transdisciplinary collaborations among its members, increase its cancer-focused grant funding and facilitate translational research.

By now you have likely heard the news that Donna Berrier, M.P.A., associate director for administration and chief administrative officer at Massey, will be departing in early April for the Medical University of South Carolina's Hollings Cancer Center. In her nearly eight years of service to Massey, she provided outstanding administrative management, fiscal oversight and leadership over research administration, facility operations, information technology, human resources, outreach, public relations and marketing communications, and fundraising that were critical to supporting Massey's research and education endeavors.

A national search will be underway very soon to identify a highly qualified person for Donna's position. Additionally, strong candidates are currently being interviewed for the senior director of research administration, which was recently vacated by Robert Houlihan, D.H.A. We have a solid coverage plan in place to meet the Center's administrative needs while we work to fill these important positions.

A number of other leadership recruitments are underway as well. National searches are being conducted for associate director for basic research, which has been held in the interim by Charles Clevenger, M.D., Ph.D., since the retirement of Richard Moran, Ph.D.; co-leader of the Cancer Molecular Genetics research program to fill the role held by Jolene Windle, Ph.D., who after many years of excellent leadership has expressed a desire to step down upon the appointment of her successor; and a nationally recognized researcher to lead our new cancer immunotherapy initiative. We are also planning to initiate a search for a translational basic scientist co-leader for our Developmental Therapeutics research program as Deputy Director Steve Grossman, M.D., Ph.D., transitions out of his current acting co-leadership role. If you have any good leads for these open recruitments, please let me know. More information about these positions is available at vcujobs.com.

Please join me in thanking Sarah Spiegel and Donna Berrier for the excellent leadership they provided at Massey. It has been an honor and pleasure to work with both of them. And please join me in congratulating Charles Chalfant on his new appointment.

Regards,

Gordon D. Ginder, M.D.
Director