

**From:** Vice Chancellor, Health Sciences/Dean, School of Medicine Announcement  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2014 8:32 AM  
**To:** All - Faculty  
**Subject:** MSTP Leadership

## **UCLA** *Office of the Vice Chancellor and Dean*

---

Dear Colleagues:

It is with both excitement and some sadness that I announce a leadership transition for the UCLA-Caltech Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP). After directing the MSTP for the past eight years, Professors Kelsey Martin and Stephen Smale are stepping down as Directors to take on other administrative challenges. Specifically, I have asked Drs. Martin and Smale to lead efforts to organize research activities throughout the School of Medicine in their areas of expertise (Neuroscience for Kelsey and Immunology, Infection, Inflammation, and Transplantation for Steve). This is part of a broad initiative to organize research from diverse basic science and clinical departments around scientific themes and to eliminate silos that often limit the progress in biomedical research. Ming Guo will also step down from her position as Associate Director of the MSTP to assume other time-consuming responsibilities at UCLA and nationally.

To ensure the continued success of the UCLA-Caltech MSTP, I am very pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Siavash Kurdistani and Dr. Carlos Portera-Cailliau as the new Co-Directors. Siavash and Carlos both have extensive knowledge of the MSTP, as both have served on the MSTP Admissions Committee for several years. In addition, Siavash has served as Associate Director for the past year and Carlos has served on the MSTP Executive Committee. I would also like to announce the appointment of Dr. Leanne Jones, Dr. Michael Teitell and Dr. Joel Braslow as Associate Directors of the MSTP; Leanne will take the lead in Admissions, Mike will serve as Associate Director for Clinical Integration and Joel will establish an MSTP Social Sciences Track. A brief bio on each new Director is attached.

We are fortunate to have such a remarkably accomplished new MSTP Leadership Team. Each brings a sterling record of excellence in scholarly pursuits, and unwavering commitment to the goals of the MSTP. As a group, their outstanding expertise and experience will help to ensure that our MSTP continues to excel as one of the very best in the nation.

Please join me in welcoming Siavash, Carlos, Leanne, Michael, and Joel to their new MSTP leadership positions.

Sincerely,

**A. Eugene Washington**  
Vice Chancellor & Dean



David Geffen  
School of Medicine

## Medical Scientist Training Program

### **Kurdistani, Siavash – Co-Director**

Siavash obtained his Bachelor's degree from UCLA, where he worked with Don Cram in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. After receiving his M.D. from Harvard Medical School, he returned to UCLA to complete an internship in Pathology while performing postdoctoral research with Michael Grunstein in the Department of Biological Chemistry. Siavash joined the Department of Biological Chemistry as an Assistant Professor in 2004 and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2010. Since joining the faculty, Siavash has received a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Early Career Award, a Beckman Young Investigator Award, and an NIH New Innovator Award. His research focuses on the dynamics of chromatin and its links to metabolism in cancer development and progression.

### **Portera-Cailliau, Carlos – Co-Director**

Carlos received his Bachelor's degree from UC San Diego and his M.D./Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. He then completed his residency in neurology at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Brigham and Women's Hospital, where he was Chief Resident, followed by a movement disorders fellowship and a post-doctorate at Columbia University and a second post-doctorate at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. Carlos joined UCLA's Departments of Neurology and Neurobiology as an Assistant Professor in 2005 and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2012. Since joining UCLA, Carlos has received a Dana Foundation Award, an RC1 Challenge Grant from the NIH, a March of Dimes Award, and was elected to the American Neurological Association. His laboratory studies the assembly and plasticity of cortical networks during development and circuit defects associated with a variety of neurological diseases.

### **Braslow, Joel – Associate Director, Social Sciences Track**

Joel received his Bachelor's degree from Stanford University and his M.D. degree from Loma Linda University School of Medicine. Following his residency training in Psychiatry, he joined the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program at UCLA, where he earned a Ph.D. in History. He became a faculty member in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences and the Department of History at UCLA in 1996. He is currently Professor in both Departments, and holds the Francis O'Malley Endowed Chair in the History of Neuroscience. Joel's research examines the social, cultural, historical, and scientific context of treatment practices for severe mental illness, ranging from early twentieth-century American psychiatric practices to contemporary issues around mental health policy.

**Jones, Leanne – Associate Director, Admissions**

Leanne received her B.S. degree from Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. She then received her Ph.D. degree in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics from Harvard University, where she worked with Karl Münger in the Department of Pathology on the role of the human papillomavirus E7 oncoprotein in cervical carcinogenesis. She then went to the University of Sheffield, UK and Stanford University School of Medicine to learn genetics and developmental biology in the laboratories of Philip Ingham and Margaret Fuller, respectively. After her postdoctoral work, Leanne became an Assistant Professor in the Laboratory of Genetics at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in San Diego, CA. In 2013, Leanne moved her lab to UCLA, where she is an Associate Professor in the Department of Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology. In addition, she remains an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Salk Institute. Leanne received an Ellison Medical Foundation New Scholar in Aging Award, as well as a New Faculty Award from the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM). She also holds leadership positions within the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR). Her work currently focuses on characterizing mechanisms that influence stem cell behavior, using both *Drosophila melanogaster* and human pluripotent stem cells as model systems.

**Teitell, Michael – Associate Director, Clinical Integration**

Mike received B.S. and M.S. degrees as a Departmental Scholar in Biochemistry from UCLA in 1985 and M.D./Ph.D. degrees in Molecular Immunology from the UCLA MSTP in 1993. He performed postdoctoral fellowships with Mitchell Kronenberg at UCLA studying immune system function, with Richard Blumberg at Harvard, studying genetics with Joe Gray at UCSF, developing microarray platform technologies for gene expression profiling. He trained in Anatomic Pathology at Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School, in Clinical Pathology at UCSF, and was a fellow in Pediatric Pathology at Los Angeles Children's Hospital. Mike joined the faculty in the Departments of Pathology and Pediatrics at UCLA in 1999 as Chief of the Division of Pediatric and Neonatal Pathology and has a joint appointment in the Department of Bioengineering. He received the Harrison and LyaLatta Endowed Professorship Chair in Pathology in 2012. Mike is Director of the Cancer Nanotechnology Program in the JCCC and Director of the UCLA Tumor Immunology Training Program. He has received the David Paul Kane Scholar Award, the Lymphoma Research Foundation Junior Faculty Award, the FOCIS/Millennium Pharmaceuticals Young Investigator Award in Genomics Research, and was named a Stohlman Scholar from the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. His research focuses on mechanisms in lymphoma, stem cell metabolism, mitochondrial function, and biotechnology, which has led to multiple patents and a new startup company.