


UConn HEALTH

September 29, 2021

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Andrew Agwunobi, MD, MBA 
Interim President, University of Connecticut
Chief Executive Officer, UConn Health

RE: Reports of Endowed Chairs for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

That the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approve the Annual Reports for the following Endowed Chairs:

1. Infectious Diseases
2. Human Genetics
3. Transfusion Medicine

BACKGROUND:

The three endowed chairs referenced above were established during the Fiscal Year 1988 to 1989 as authorized by CGS 10a – 20a. Subsection (f) of the statute states the “Board of Trustees shall submit annual reports to the Board of Governors concerning their expenditures.” The reports presented today are for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

**State of Connecticut Board of
Governors for Higher Education
Chair in Infectious Diseases**

Kevin Dieckhaus, MD

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THANK YOU MESSAGE

I would like to express my gratitude to the donors that support the endowed chair. The funding provides material support for ongoing educational activities for infectious disease fellows, as well as students and residents pursuing research and interests in the field of Infectious Diseases.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING

This chair supports the development of trainees interested in infectious diseases at all levels of medical training. Specifically, it facilitates the on-site tropical medicine training provided to University of Connecticut trainees in Southwestern Uganda. This experience promotes acquisition of direct medical skills as well as valuable cross cultural and integrative skills important for any physician practicing in a multiethnic world. This past year, international travel has been on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Learner-related research activity was pivoted to rapidly develop COVID-19-related research in clinical care focusing on utility of convalescent plasma, development of a research database for secondary outcomes analysis, COVID-19 testing, and social impacts of COVID-19 on individuals and communities. Global Health Training was pivoted to online settings.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This past year was highlighted by the intense clinical and public health effort focused on the COVID-19 pandemic. The chair is supporting the UConn Health Annual Global Health Symposium which is addressing institutional policies in global health as it relates to equity, diversity, inclusion, and collaboration with international partners.

SERVICE AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

This fund assisted in the support of public health students evaluating the impact of COVID-19 via outreach through the UConn Drive-Through Testing Center.



Clinical COVID-19 samples in storage for research collaborations at UConn Health and across the University

LOOKING AHEAD

COVID-19 has unfortunately impacted the ability of students to travel to international community research sites to complete Global Health projects. We will engage medical students in the incoming class to adopt projects that have been developed by more senior medical students and work with a junior/senior partnership relationship to complete these important Global Health-related projects and reestablish relationships that were interrupted by the COVID pandemic. We will continue to accrue data and perform analysis of projects that were redirected towards the COVID-19 pandemic.

UConn Health
 Endowed Chair in Infectious Diseases/AIDS Research
 631129-10141-10

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
Beginning Cash Balance	\$36,703.75	\$29,724.75	\$31,410.28	\$40,387.28	\$55,364.16	\$67,944.17
Receipts :						
Interest Transferred from DHE:		3,327.03	13,237.81	17,433.88	26,250.38	5,887.00
Total Receipts	-	3,327.03	13,237.81	17,433.88	26,250.38	5,887.00
Expenditures :						
Salaries and Wages						
Fringe Benefits						
Purchased Services	6,979.00			285.00	3,919.98	2,047.00
Supplies				1,527.00	4,242.47	615.00
Equipment		1,641.50	4,260.81	645.00	5,507.92	
Change in accruals						
Total Expenditures	6,979.00	1,641.50	4,260.81	2,457.00	13,670.37	2,662.00
Ending Cash Spendable Balance	\$29,724.75	\$31,410.28	\$40,387.28	\$55,364.16	\$67,944.17	\$71,169.17

Health Net, Inc. Chair in Human Genetics

David W. Rowe, MD

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THANK YOU MESSAGE

I would like to express my gratitude for your support. The laboratory has seen a resurgence in grant support which brings both opportunity and responsibility to demonstrate that your science is cutting edge and productive. However, it became clear that our equipment and staffing was inadequate to take advantage of the grants we had assumed. Specifically, major pieces of equipment were non-functional to the point of needing replacement or major repairs and a sophisticated new microscope were required. Regarding personnel, it became evident that we were severely understaffed to carry out the workflow necessary to perform the experimental volume promised in the funded grants. Because these grants did not have the resources to meet these requirements, the Genetics Chair filled the gap. In some cases, equipment repair and replacement utilized the Chair account entirely, but in another case, the Chair's contribution was matched by the School of Dental Medicine and the Office of the Vice President of Research. New temporary staff were identified from post-college graduates fulfilling a gap year before entering Dental or Medical School. None of this would have been possible without the Chair support.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING

My research group obtained a \$1M two-year pilot project from the NIH Common Fund called HuBMAP. The goal is to develop technologies for mapping intracellular activity within individual cells from human tissues, which in our case is joint cartilage. Equivalent contributions from the Chair account, School of Dental Medicine, and Vice President for Research led to the purchase of a custom-built computer-controlled microfluidics and high-resolution microscope required for the HuBMAP grant. A supplement to the funding agency will recoup some of this expense, but more importantly, the instrument will make us competitive for major (\$15M) grant opportunities, one of which was submitted this month. Intracellular imaging at the single cell level in tissues will be revolutionary for biology and medical research, and UConn has the opportunity to lead the field as it relates to skeletal tissues.

PUBLICATIONS, CONFERENCES, AND AWARDS

The laboratory hosted a junior faculty member from China, Dr. Yueying Zhou, who worked on an aging project that examined the role of a drug that removes senescent cells which appear to be responsible for many of the maladies of aging. She demonstrated that when bone stem cells obtained from a severely aged mouse are grown in a laboratory dish and treated with one of these drugs, the cells regained the ability to form bone tissue and bone marrow as well as stem cells from a young mouse when transplanted into another mouse. This result, which was just published, has major basic science and therapeutic possibilities that we will continue to pursue, including a just submitted major grant to examine the intracellular activities of individual cartilage cells across the human age spectrum.

Endowment Report FY2021

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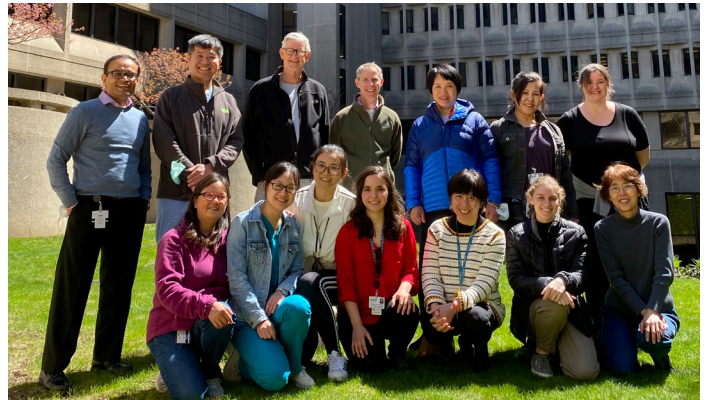


SERVICE AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

I have come to believe that selected students enrolled in the local area colleges should have as meaningful a research experience as students on the Storrs campus. Dr. Yingcui Li, a tenured Associate Professor at the University of Hartford and a previous postdoctoral fellow at UCH, completed a sabbatical leave in our laboratory this May and will continue her connection with the laboratory as an adjunct research faculty member. With this relationship, she will identify and train students from her biology courses who have an interest in pursuing Dental, Medical or Graduate School to utilize the resources of our laboratory to advance projects of mutual interest to Dr. Li and the Rowe laboratory. This experience may serve as an example of how UCH can enhance its research contribution to the colleges in the greater Hartford area as well as provide undergraduate students who can contribute to laboratory productivity and for identify outstanding students for our professional and graduate student programs.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

The fluorescence imaging core which I oversee within the Center for Regenerative Medicine provides heavily used instrumentation, highly specialized animal models, and surgical expertise to faculty members from UCH and Storrs. Some of the Chair's funds are used to subsidize the costs incurred for instrument upkeep and mouse colony maintenance. Because activity was curtailed this year by Covid, revenue was lower, but expenses remained the same, so the Chair funds were especially utilized.



Members of the multi-investigator laboratory suite within the Center for Regenerative Medicine and Skeletal Development at the going away lunch for Dr. Yueying Zhou, our visiting scientist.

LOOKING AHEAD

The coming year is crunch time for both our major research grants. We must show productivity and technological prowess. As of May 1, I have stepped down from the Directorship of the Center and will focus my entire effort in meeting this challenge.

UConn Health
 Endowed Chair in Human Genetics
 300041-10600-10

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21*
Beginning Cash Balance	\$277,187.31	\$186,903.31	\$172,657.41	\$174,872.63	\$231,368.95	\$252,898.25
Receipts :						
Interest Transferred from DHE:		5,992.10	5,581.85	8,968.00	18,720.97	
Interest Transferred from UCONN Foundation:	78,968.00	74,710.00	79,254.86	79,455.00	74,454.25	79,521.78
Total Receipts	78,968.00	80,702.10	84,836.71	88,423.00	93,175.22	79,521.78
Expenditures :						
Salaries and Wages	88,817.00	49,024.00	18,122.14	5,140.00	438.88	17,941.00
Fringe Benefits	37,155.00	26,287.00	47,749.40	3,019.00	429.75	1,383.00
Purchased Services	42,045.00	19,637.00	16,749.95	1,993.00	48,490.60	61,721.33
Supplies				1,895.68		8,854.00
Equipment	1,235.00			19,879.00	22,286.69	68,963.67
Change in accruals						5,446.58
Total Expenditures	169,252.00	94,948.00	82,621.49	31,926.68	71,645.92	164,309.58
Ending Cash Spendable Balance	\$186,903.31	\$172,657.41	\$174,872.63	\$231,368.95	\$252,898.25	\$168,110.45

* FY21 are not final and may change due to year end adjustments

UConn Health
 Endowed Chair in Transfusion Medicine
 300037-10149-10 (and 35021)

	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
Beginning Cash Balance	\$423,141	\$425,555	\$429,380	\$438,097	\$450,927
Receipts :					
Interest Transferred from UCONN Foundation:					
Interest Transferred from DHE:	\$4,107	\$3,825	\$8,717	\$12,830	\$2,944
Total Receipts	\$4,107	\$3,825	\$8,717	\$12,830	\$2,944
Expenditures :					
Salaries and Wages					\$32,921
Fringe Benefits					\$10,317
Purchased Services	\$1,693				
Supplies					
Equipment					
Change in accruals					
Total Expenditures	\$1,693	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$43,238
Ending Cash Spendable Balance	\$425,555	\$429,380	\$438,097	\$450,927	\$410,633

Note: this Endowed Chair is currently vacant.