The School at Columbia University Opens its Doors

BY ELIZABETH GOLDEN

Last week, The School at Columbia University opened its doors at Broadway and 110th Street to approximately 200 students. The school’s inaugural kindergarten through fourth grade classes are comprised of children of University faculty and neighborhood families. “We are very pleased that we have accomplished our goal to create an exemplary school in which neighborhood and faculty children participate together in an innovative learning experience—one that enhances their personal and academic growth, and encourages the practice of good citizenship,” said President Lee C. Bollinger. “These students will benefit not only from having great teachers in a unique community environment but also from the resources and facilities at Columbia University.”

Children attending The School at Columbia University will be immersed in an integrated curriculum that not only stresses academic excellence but also personal and moral development. Capitalizing on the enormous resources of the University, each teacher at The School at Columbia University will partner with a faculty member from the University in a collaborative effort to bridge the practitioner and academic worlds.

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A New Approach to Learning...

BY ANNIE BAYNE

The marine sea slug Aplysia may soon get star billing as Columbia Genome Center moves to the forefront of genetic research, bringing that research to its next level and towards the future of personalized medicine and new research paradigms in neurobiology.

The Center has just been designated one of the first Centers of Excellence in Genomic Science after the completion of the Human Genome Project in 2003. It will receive a three year, $11 million grant from the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) of the National Institutes of Health to create new paradigms in genome research and neurobiology. The emphasis at Columbia will be on genomic approaches to neuronal diversity and plasticity, and on the development of revolutionary technologies for the platform of personalized medicine.

Jingyue Ju, associate professor of chemical engineering and head of DNA Sequencing & Chemical Biology of the Columbia Genome Center, is the principal investigator of the new center grant. He will lead the project in collaboration with co-investigators Eric Kandel, university professor at Columbia and winner of the 2000 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, and Leonid Moroz, assistant professor of neuroscience at the University of Florida.

Ju and his interdisciplinary team of researchers were awarded the grant to develop new technologies and research approaches to increase the accuracy and reduce the time and cost of sequencing an individual genome, as well as new approaches for neurobiology research.

Now that a complete human genome sequence map has been completed, the challenge is how to harness this information to determine why some people develop certain diseases, such as cancer or AIDS, and others do not.

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