



Partnership Hub

SNAPSHOT

September 2013

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A Note from Jennifer

Dear WIPO Re:Search Members and Friends,

I am pleased to announce that BVGH will be hosting the second annual **WIPO Re:Search Member Workshop** on **November 13, 2013**, which is timed to coincide with the 2013 American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene Annual Meeting in **Washington, DC**. Similar to last year's event, the 2013 Workshop will feature breakout sessions that will provide attendees with the opportunity to discuss specific global health research topics. We have obtained feedback from several Members to help us design interesting and relevant session topics. Please see our special "Save the Date" Snapshot section for more information.

Last month, several scientists from African research institutions began their three month- to year-long visits at participating international WIPO Re:Search Member institutions. This month's Snapshot features three of these hosting opportunities - Christian Agyare from Kumasi, Ghana will spend ten months at the **University of California, San Francisco**, and Wellington Oyibo, from Lagos, Nigeria, and Fidelis Cho-Ngw a from Buea, Cameroon, will each spend three months at **Novartis'** facilities in Basel, Switzerland.

I'm extremely pleased to welcome our newest member, **Tulane University**, to WIPO Re:Search.

Read more about these and other topics in this month's Snapshot.

As always, please forward this Snapshot to your colleagues and reach out to us with any partnering requests or ideas.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Dent
President, BVGH



Save the Date - 2013 WIPO Re:Search Member Workshop

When: November 13, 2013 11am - 4pm

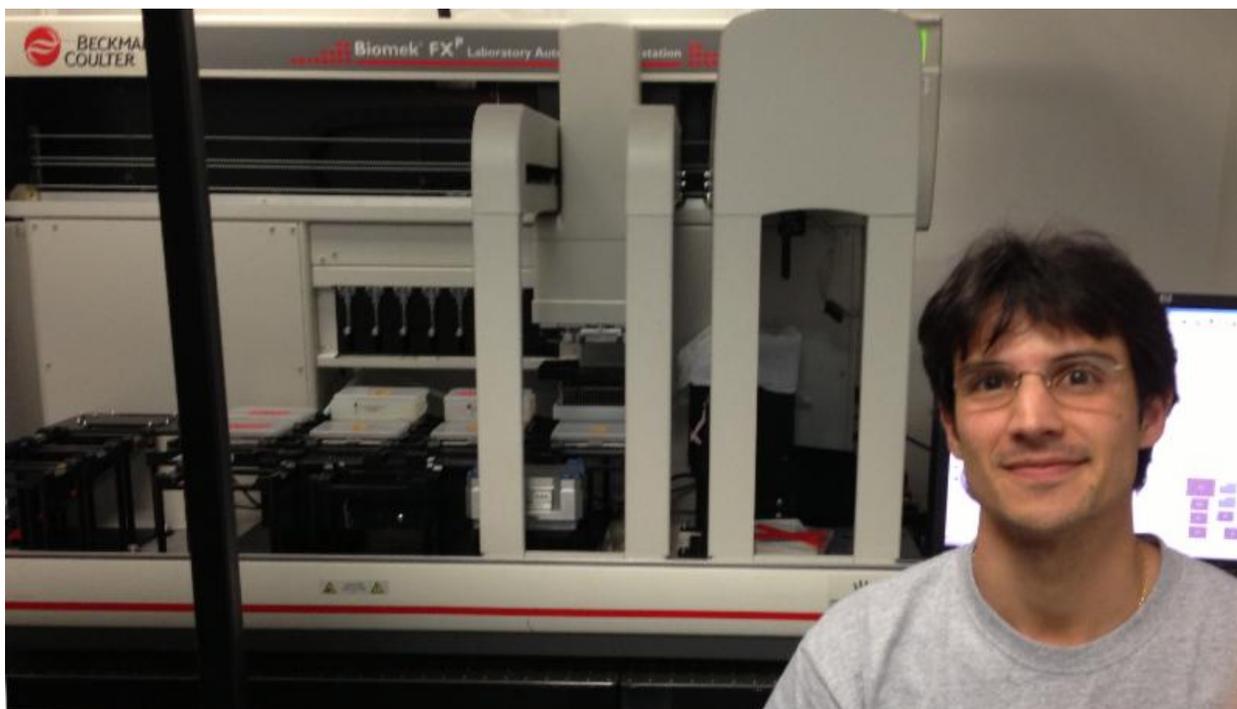
Where: Hotel Palomar, Washington DC - 2121 P Street, NW

How: If you would like to attend, please email Katy Graef

Transportation: Hotel Palomar is located less than 2 miles from the location of the ASTM meeting (Marriott Wardman Park Hotel). Both hotels are located within walking distance of the Washington DC Metro subway Red Line.

Cornerstones of Collaboration

Roopa Ramamoorthi met with Jair Lage de Siqueira Neto, Kinetoplastida Core Director, during a visit to the Center for Discovery and Innovation in Parasitic Diseases (CDIPD), directed by Jim McKerrow at the **University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)**. Jair showed Roopa the Small Molecule Discovery Center's (SMDC) automated platform, which has been used to run assays co-developed with Steven Chen, High-throughput Screening Specialist, and Michelle Arkin, Associate Director, SMDC. Jair mentioned that the automated platform is "equipped with robotic arms, liquid handlers and a microscope and allows for the high-content screening of 15,000 compounds per week". The robotic station is being used to screen compounds for hits against Chagas disease, leishmaniasis, and human African trypanosomiasis, among others.



Jair Lage de Siqueira Neto sits in front of the Biomek FX robotic station at the Center for Discovery and Innovation in Parasitic Diseases, UCSF

Roopa and Katy Graef met with Tanya Parish, Vice President, Drug Discovery, and Joshua Odingo, Director, Chemistry, at the **Infectious Disease Research Institute (IDRI)**, to discuss IDRI's nascent collaboration with the **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**. IDRI and the NIH signed an MTA that will allow IDRI to gain access to approximately 5,000 natural products for a pilot study screen against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.

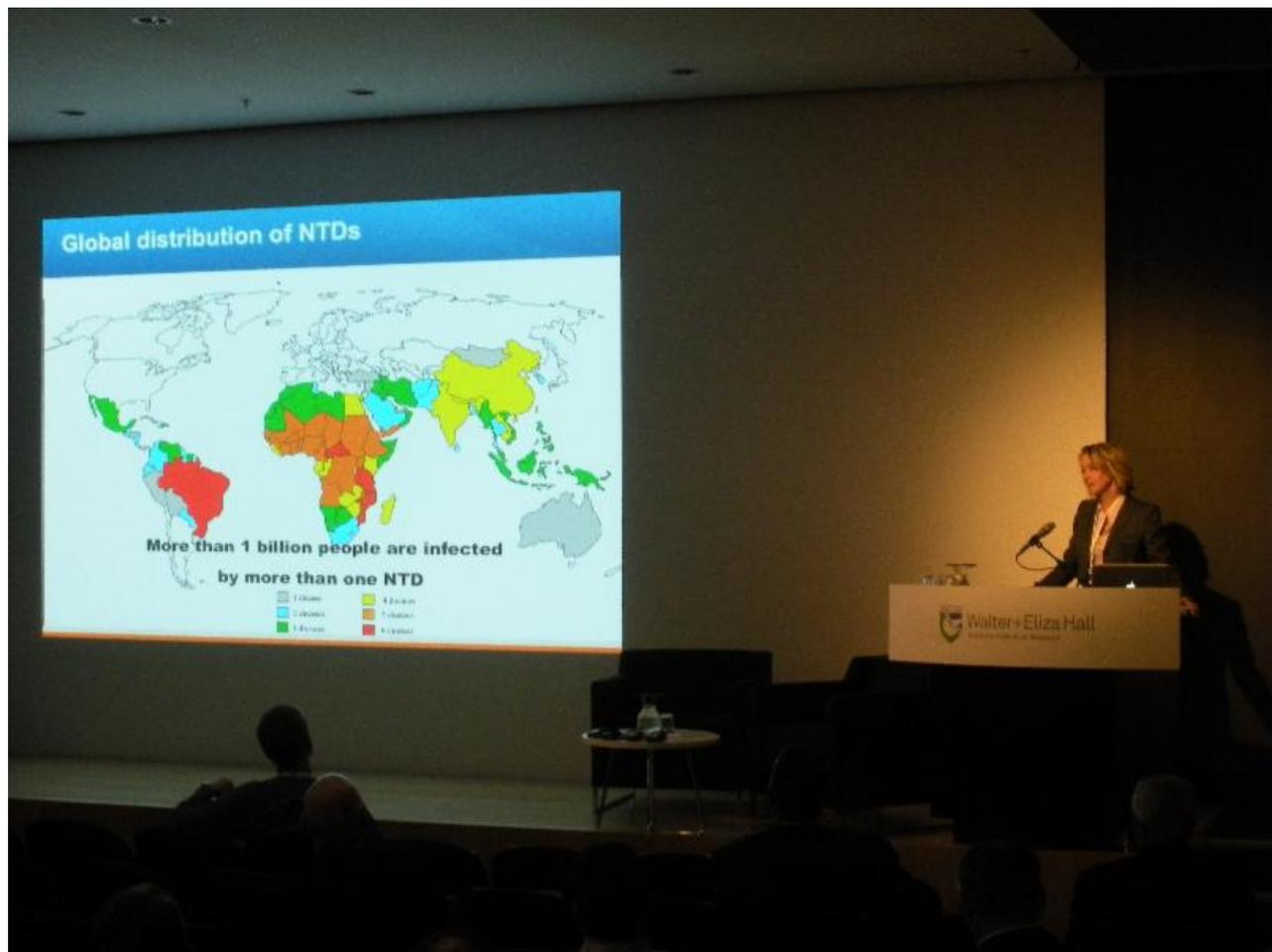




Roopa, Tanya Parish, and Joshua Odingo at IDRI

Jennifer Dent presented WIPO Re:Search as the keynote speaker at the 2013 **Technology Transfer Summit (TTS)** Australia meeting held at the Walter+Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne, Australia. While in Australia, Jennifer met with and discussed WIPO Re:Search with several academic leaders who expressed interest in joining the Consortium.





Jennifer presents her keynote address at the TTS Australia meeting earlier this month

New Member Announcement

This month we are pleased to announce that **Tulane University** has joined the WIPO Re:Search consortium.

Founded in 1834, Tulane University is a highly regarded and selective independent research university, located in New Orleans, Louisiana. Tulane's Department of Tropical Medicine within the School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine has a long history of contributions to the parasitology and tropical medicine fields and is one of the oldest tropical medicine departments in the world. Faculty members in its Department of Tropical Medicine focus on various aspects of malaria, including vector-parasite interactions and genetics of malaria drug resistance. John Christie, Executive Director of the Office of Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property Development at Tulane University stated, "we are excited about the new opportunities for collaborations that the WIPO Re:Search consortium can offer us and are looking forward to actively participating in this global health endeavor." More information can be found on Tulane University's [website](#).



Partnership Hub Central

With the financial support from the Australian government, BVGH worked with WIPO to arrange research sabbaticals for scientists from African research institutions. This past summer, several of these hosting opportunities successfully began.

In August, Christian Agyare, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, **Kwame Nkrumah**

University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana, began his research visit at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), hosted by Conor Caffrey, Center for Discovery and Innovation in Parasitic Diseases (CDIPD). Christian will spend ten months working with Conor's group. During this time, he will participate in drug discovery screens of small molecules and natural products, as well as gain experience in animal models for a number of parasitic infections. Christian hopes to "get new experiences, and if possible, transfer some of that experience back home." Conor agreed with Christian, stating, "bearing in mind the resource constraints at Christian's institute in Kumasi, it would be possible for Christian to maintain *C. elegans* as a model system for nematode worms. *C. elegans* is easy to maintain on agar plates. Schistosomes and African trypanosomes, with some training, are also relatively easy to maintain, but only if BSL2 facilities can be arranged."



Christian brought with him several natural products originating from Ghanaian medicinal plants with which he hopes to "have some interesting research findings against the organisms here at the CDIPD, including *Brugia*, *C. elegans*, schistosomes, and trypanosomes."



Conor Caffrey and Christian Agyare at the [CDIPD](#), UCSF

In August, Wellington Oyibo, Associate Professor, College of Medicine, **University of Lagos**, Nigeria, and Fidelis Cho-Ngw a, Associate Professor of Biochemistry, **University of Buea**, Cameroon, travelled to Basel, Switzerland where they will spend three months at **Novartis'** headquarters.



Wellington will gain exposure to Novartis' processes in innovation and industry dynamics, governance of R&D innovation, development policy, and knowledge management. Wellington noted that, "my sabbatical in Novartis offers yet another catalyst for my career as I see myself in another microcosm of knowledge and robust technology that I ever imagined. There is really so much to be gained for this academy-industry collaboration."



Fidelis will gain broad experience in drug discovery and development from a pharmaceutical industry perspective. Fidelis stated that, "we are happy; extremely happy with WIPO Re:Search because the initiative is creating the right kind of serious partnerships that will help in getting badly needed healthcare products for the neglected tropical diseases more rapidly, or in getting candidates to a point where the interests of the big pharmaceutical companies for take-over can be aroused."



In WIPO Re:Search Member funding news, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the **National Institutes of Health** (NIH) recently awarded support to Conor Caffrey, UCSF, who is collaborating with Merck, to investigate statins as drugs to treat schistosomiasis.



Highlighted Contribution

Featured this month are two contributions submitted by the **Theodor Bilharz Research Institute** (TBRI) to the [WIPO Re:Search Database](#).

Availability of schistosome biological material

The schistosome biological supply center at TBRI has made a wide range of schistosome biological material (alive, fresh, frozen, and as antigens) available to researchers for testing anti-schistosomal compounds. The center has supplied the biological material to TBRI researchers and to more than 20 international research institutes.



Expertise in drug discovery and evaluation of anti-schistosomal compounds/drugs

Professor Sanaa Botros' laboratory has the ability to screen anti-schistosomal compounds using an *in vitro* schistosome worm killing assay and *in vivo* using a *Schistosoma mansoni* infected animal model. Professor Botros' laboratory is also able to conduct efficacy, resistance, and bioavailability testing on anti-schistosomal drugs, as well as drug evaluation involving different parasitological, immunological, and histopathological parameters.

For more information or to discuss potential collaborations regarding this technology, please contact [Roopa Ramamoorthi](#).

WIPO Re:Search in the News

Check out BVGH's latest publication in the [September 2013 issue](#) of the *Pharmaceutical Patent Analyst* journal. The article, co-authored with Johannes Wichard, Deputy Director General, Global Issues Sector, **World Intellectual Property Organization** (WIPO), summarizes the history of WIPO and the WIPO Re:Search consortium, and highlights a few of the partnerships and agreements that WIPO Re:Search's eight founding pharmaceutical members have engaged in since the Consortium's establishment.



Upcoming Global Health Events

Dates	Event Title	Location	Web Link
Sept. 16-19	International Leprosy Congress	Brussels, Belgium	Website
Oct. 6-11	6th MIM Pan-African Malaria Conference	Durban, South Africa	Website

*Are you attending a global health event?
Do you have a Research Request to highlight in the Snapshot?*

We want to hear from you! Please send feedback and suggestions via [email](#).

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