

The new home for the JCI is . . .

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News

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Turka, a renowned physician-scientist working on transplantation immunology, has proposed an editorial board with three deputy editors and 19 associate editors. Together they hope to have the scientific expertise and experience required to understand the many manuscripts that the *JCI* receives. Deputy Editor Morris Birnbaum has made his mark on science through studying the serine/threonine protein kinase Akt in its regulation of cell size and glucose/insulin signaling. Deputy Editor Stephen Emerson's research has centered on stem cell biology and bone marrow transplantation. Rounding out the journal's proposed leadership is former ASCI president Gary Koretzky. Koretzky's research has focused on understanding the signal transduction pathways present in T cells as they combat infection and destroy cancerous tissues.

The *JCI* recently sat down with some of the proposed editors to ask them about their intentions, plans, and visions for the years ahead.

JCI: Dr. Turka, what made you want to be the editor in chief of the *JCI*?

Turka: I knew you were going to ask that question, and I've been thinking about it for the last week or two, wondering how I was going to answer it. And I still have no idea. It's a great journal, and I always thought editing a journal would be fun – but I would only do it for a journal I felt was well respected in the field and one that I really enjoyed reading. I thought this would be something I could contribute to, and it is an opportunity to work with an excellent set of colleagues here.

JCI: How did you choose the deputy editors?

Turka: I talked to several of the former editors in chief and asked them how they chose their deputy editors. They said that the *JCI* was really only worthwhile doing if I could get a group of deputy editors whose scientific accomplishments are respected and who I would enjoy working with. I looked down the list of faculty at Penn, and it was pretty obvious whom I wanted. I was delighted they all agreed to do it.

JCI: So, deputy editors, what made you want to be a part of this editorial board?

Koretzky: I've been part of the ASCI for quite a while now – I was on the council as president of the ASCI. In fact, I was president when the journal moved from Michigan to Columbia, and so I got to know a lot about the journal and the important issues relevant for the transition. The journal plays an absolutely essential role for the biomedical science community – the *JCI* has a very unique perspective and has become the most outstanding journal in the field.

Emerson: Larry didn't need to convince me. I'm delighted to be part of his effort, really.

Birnbaum: Guilt. Promises of enlightenment and intellectual expansion. Guilt. Peer pressure. Guilt.

Turka: See? Morrie is essential for comic relief.

JCI: Dr. Turka, we heard you stepped down as chief of the Renal Electrolyte and Hyper-

tension Division. Was that done to make more time for the responsibilities of the *JCI*?

Turka: Exactly right. I've been the division chief for eight years, and when I took the job, I thought that staying on for seven to ten years would be the right time frame. It was never my intention to stay in the job forever. Five years is about my limit – if the editorship was 15 years, I wouldn't have applied for the job.

JCI: Are the deputy editors concerned about the added time constraints the *JCI* will inevitably impose?

Emerson: In terms of other commitments, I will definitely reorganize to make room for the *JCI*, although I haven't precisely sorted all that out just yet. Committees, lots of journal reviews, work for the American Society of Hematology, even my current administrative role at Penn are all up for grabs.

Birnbaum: I am an associate editor of *Diabetes* now, and that ends during the summer, I believe, so that should free up some time. That experience provides my only information about what this is going to be like.

JCI: Dr. Turka, your wife, Barbara Weber, is the current ASCI president-elect. She recused herself from the editorship decision-making process, but now that you have the job, how supportive do you think she will be over the next five years, given that this will take up so much of your time?

Turka: As ASCI president-elect, she was very supportive of having the jour-



Koretzky, Birnbaum, Turka, and Emerson prepare to take the reins.



Proposed editorial board

Editor in Chief

Laurence Turka

Deputy Editors

Morris Birnbaum
Stephen G. Emerson
Gary Koretzky

Associate Editors

Jean Bennett
Ronald Collman
Robert Doms
Wafik El-Deiry
Jonathan Epstein
Harold Feldman
Alan Gewirtz
Stanley Goldfarb
Katherine High
Terri Laufer
Mitchell Lazar
John Monroe
Daniel J. Rader
Steven L. Reiner
Amita Sehgal
M. Celeste Simon
Richard Spielman
John Stanley

Senior Editors

William N. Kelley
Craig B. Thompson

Senior European Editor

Marc Feldmann

nal come to Penn. She was also very supportive of my candidacy as editor in chief because she knew that I was enthusiastic about this. I think she recognizes that this is going to be a serious time commitment, but I think one of the things that she's hoping is that this will keep me at Penn more and traveling less — which is probably true.

JCI: Do you have any major plans yet for the direction you want to take the journal?

Turka: It is always a challenge to take an enterprise that has done well and then change it to put your own stamp and vision on it because change *just* for the sake of change is never a good idea. The *JCI* is an excellent journal, and we have no intention of doing anything radical. On the other hand, a lot of the things you're going to see us try to do may not be major new direction changes but tweaks here and there that we think will make the *JCI* better in its current incarnation —

rest assured we're not going to try and reincarnate it.

One thing is that we would like to strive to have more international papers and authors than in the past. We plan on having Marc Feldmann, Imperial College, London, UK, be our European editor, in part to help us recruit papers to give us a bigger presence in Europe.

Koretzky: We want the best papers. It doesn't matter whether they come from the US or outside of the US. But our intention was to start with a European editor with the potential to extending this in the future to Asia. We couldn't think of a better choice than Marc Feldmann — there aren't many people who have made more significant contributions to basic science and medicine than him. We feel like he could help us very much make the journal better understood in Europe.

Turka: I think you can also look forward to seeing some changes in the electronic version of the journal, which we would like to expand, and not have as merely a replicate of the printed journal.

JCI: What scientific areas do you most want to develop in the journal?

Emerson: Given modern progress in targeted therapeutics, I would love to see the *JCI* publish more molecularly based translational and clinical studies.

Turka: We would like to emphasize a couple of topics that are outside the traditional internal medicine specialties that the *JCI* usually covers — areas like dermatology and ophthalmological diseases. We'd also like to take a look at things that are going on that relate to medicine but are not necessarily medicine specific, like bioinformatics and information technology and how they interplay in medical research.

We'd like to have ASCI members feel like this is a journal that they really want to publish their papers in. There are a large number of epidemiologists in the ASCI, and yet the *JCI* doesn't publish much epidemiological research. Having Harold Feldman as an associate editor will hopefully send a message that we really do want to see those papers.

Birnbaum: I supported the expansion to include an epidemiologist. The other area in which the quality of the research has been coming up to *JCI* standards is exercise physiology. I mean this much more in the sense of muscle biology or relationship to metabolism, but I think this field is much more mature and of substantial clinical relevance.

JCI: Are you prepared to receive angry letters from your colleagues whose papers you have rejected?

Turka: No, all that will go to Ushma! But I'm fully prepared that many of the decisions will be very unpopular and that people may not necessarily like me for it. I did not take this job to increase my popularity; I understand that I need to be responsible for my decisions, and I'll take it as part of the job.

Koretzky: As a former president of the ASCI, I received a few letters from those who didn't get in, so I'm used to it a little bit. I think that if we are careful about how we make our decisions, it won't be difficult to respond when people are disappointed.

JCI: Do you have any tactics for keeping the editorial board motivated? Cash? Gold stars? Editor-of-the-month awards?

Turka: The deputy editors and I want to set an example ourselves. We want our enthusiasm to be infectious, and all the associate editors have said they're enthusiastic about the *JCI*. We also anticipate that there may be some turnover — but that is healthy. I doubt that the editorial board at the end of our tenure will be identical to the one we start with. Having said that, a certain degree of continuity is key as well.

Koretzky: We chose a group of people that we thought would enjoy working together. If you get the right group of people together, it is much less onerous if you are enjoying each other. It is going to be a lot of work, and I think everybody recognizes that. But there are advantages — you get to read broadly about science, and you get to read it before everyone else does. You get to talk about good science, and you actually have the opportunity, by making careful choices, to influence how science moves forward. And if you can do that in a collegial environment, then enthusiasm will remain high.

Birnbaum: Well, cash is definitely a way to keep me motivated. I guess it has to be intellectually satisfying, or we will lose the best editors.

JCI: Are you excited to start?

Turka: Absolutely. Excited and frightened.

Koretzky: With trepidation. It will be a lot of work. We follow on the heels of outstanding editors, so the bar is pretty high. But I think we can do it.

Emerson: Absolutely.

Birnbaum: Well, if the sooner we start, the sooner we finish, then yes.

Ushma S. Neill