Each week, the Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will feature hashtags and/or tweets (follow us at @fundNIH) suggested by members of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) advocacy community. We encourage all readers who are active on social media to use these messages, and we welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here is this week’s featured tweet:

American Physiological Society @APSPhysiology – January 11
Learn how your office may be different when you go back, how the #coronavirus variant spreads and what's new in @APSPublications’ coronavirus-related collection on our #COVID19 Resources page.

Georgia Senate Run-offs Create 50-50 Senate, Possible Power Sharing Plan
Following Democrats' two victories in last week's runoff elections in Georgia creating a split Senate between Democrats and Republicans, Senate leadership may consider a power-sharing agreement established in 2001 to guide establishing rules and committee memberships in the 117th Congress, reported in BGOV on January 8 (subscription required). Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) will likely first discuss options for power sharing with Senate Democrats. “They haven't really been allowed to participate and put legislation on the floor,” Schumer said of Democrats. “All that talent that's been bottled up for so long will be unleashed, and you'll see amazing things coming out of our new chairs and subcommittee chairs,” Schumer added.

Schumer is likely to become the next Senate Majority Leader following Georgia’s certifications of the elections won by Democrats Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff, the swearing in of the new Senators, and the inauguration of Vice President-elect Kamala Harris who would then be able to preside over the Senate and break the tie in the vote for the Majority Leader in the 117th Congress.

WaPo: NIH Director on the Path Forward for COVID-19
NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, participated in a January 8 Washington Post Live event to discuss the latest updates on COVID-19, including the NIH’s role in developing treatments and vaccines. Highlighted topics from the discussion include risks associated with halving the COVID-19 vaccine doses, estimates at achieving herd immunity, and the risks associated with new mutations discovered in the circulating coronavirus.

Office of Nutrition Research Established within the NIH Office of the Director
During the week of January 4, the NIH officially began to transfer the Office of Nutrition Research (ONR) from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) to the Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives (DPCPSI) in the NIH Office of the Director, said NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, in a January 8 statement. A request for public comment showed overwhelming support for the move of ONR to the Office of the Director, where it will be upgraded to a trans-NIH effort. ONR was originally established within NIDDK in 2015.

**NEJM: 50 Years of Important Advances in Human Genetics and Genomics**

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, joined Nobel laureates and NIH officials in outlining 50 years of progress in molecular genetics in a January 7 “Perspective” in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The piece highlights the Human Genome Project, which greatly advanced DNA sequencing and genomic technology, “transform[ing] the nature of medical discovery.” The authors note the progress already made towards diagnosing and treating genetic diseases and work still left to be done on human genetic variation, inclusion of underrepresented groups in genetic research as researchers and participants, and further development of editing technologies such as CRISPR. The series of “Perspective” pieces aim to celebrate 50 years of the National Academy of Medicine.

**Stem Cell Treatment Regenerates Skull Deformity in Mouse Model of Childhood Disorder**

The NIH described research results from an NIH-funded study showing stem cells were able to regenerate parts of the skull of mice with craniosynostosis, a skull defect seen in approximately 1 in 2,500 infants in the U.S., in a January 7 news release. Researchers implanted stem cells from healthy mice into spaces in the skulls of young mice with the genetic condition, showing that the healthy cells were able to regenerate both healthy skull formation and protect against decreased brain function normally seen in the genetic disorder. “This is a pivotal study demonstrating both structural regeneration and functional restoration in an animal model of craniosynostosis … [that] holds great potential for translation to treatment of the human condition” said Lillian Shum, PhD, director of NIH’s National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research’s Division of Extramural Research.

**Upcoming Events**

**Apply for HIV Clinical Training Opportunities – January 19**

The HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA) and the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) Foundation are accepting applications for the 2021 HIV Clinical Fellowship Program. For the first time, the program is supporting one year of HIV clinical training for full or half-time effort awards to allow greater flexibility for physicians to train in community-based settings. The award supports a stipend of $33,000 for half-time training or $65,000 for full-time, plus funding to cover fringe benefits. Physicians whose communities are underrepresented in medicine or who interested in working in the Southeastern United States are strongly encouraged to apply. Program and application requirements are on the HIVMA website, including recommended competencies for HIVMA Clinical Fellows. The deadline to apply is Jan. 19, 2021. For more information, please email HIVMA.

**NEW FASEB Webinar: Careers Beyond Academia – January 28**
The Federation of American Societies of Experimental Biology (FASEB) is hosting a webinar on January 28 from 2-3 pm EST on scientific careers beyond academia. Speakers from the National Academies, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will discuss ideas on how institutions and PIs can better support trainees seeking non-academic career paths. Please visit the webinar series website for additional information and to register.

**Apply for Medical Student HIV, Infectious Diseases Research Grants – February 5**

The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) Foundation and HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA) seek applications for the [G.E.R.M (Grants for Emerging Researchers/Clinicians Mentorship) Program](#) for the 2021-2022 cycle. The program provides grants to medical students to support a mentored clinical learning and/or research project for up to a year, on infectious diseases and HIV related topics under the mentorship of an IDSA or HIVMA member. Applicants must be medical students (first, second or third year) from an accredited allopathic or osteopathic medical school in the U.S. Application information is available from the [IDSA Foundation website](http://www.idsa.org). Awarded receive a $4,000 stipend to complete their project. The deadline to apply is **February 5, 2021**. Please email [HIVMA staff](mailto:hivma@idsa.org) with questions.

**SOBC Capstone Conference – February 22-23**

This capstone research conference will celebrate ten years of the [NIH Science of Behavior Change (SOBC) Common Fund Program](#). The goal of the SOBC program is to advance behavior change research through a focus on mechanisms of change and the integration of basic research with applied/interventional research. The capstone conference will highlight innovative examples of behavior change research consistent with SOBC principles, from use-inspired basic research to mechanisms-focused intervention science. The [capstone conference on February 22-23](#) will be virtual, open to the public, recorded, archived, and proceedings summarized in a publicly accessible report. The agenda, speaker information, and a link to registration will be available on this website in the coming months.

**Apply for the Sarcoidosis Research Fellowship Grant – February 26**

Applications for 2021-2023 Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research's Fellowship Grant in the amount of $75,000 per year per fellow are due February 26. Additional details and a link to apply are on the [Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research website](http://www.sarcoidosisbasis.org). 

**NIH COVID-19 Resources**

[NIH COVID-19 resource for applicants and grantees](http://www.nih.gov) including guidance for various aspects of research and grant application processes, as well as FAQs and COVID-19 funding opportunities.

[COVID-19 “Updates History” webpage](http://www.nih.gov) that details relevant updates for applicants and grantees by date.

[FAQ document on COVID-19 flexibilities](http://www.nih.gov) related to policies and programs affecting the grants process.
Funding opportunities specific to COVID-19 lists active and expired funding opportunities across NIH related to SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 research.

HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations.

Combat COVID website including information for those who have never had COVID-19, have been infected, have recovered, and for health care providers.

Job Postings

AAMC Seeks Senior Science Policy Analyst
The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) seeks a Sr. Science Policy Specialist, to work closely with leadership in the Scientific Affairs team to provide up-to-date information on policy developments affecting biomedical research at member medical schools and teaching hospitals, prepare presentations and communications, and assist in the development of positions and responses to federal requests, especially on National Institutes of Health (NIH) matters. Key issue areas include medical/clinical research infrastructure, training and workforce development and on the issues promoting diversity and combatting sexual harassment in the STEMM workforce. Please visit the full job post for more information and to apply.

Please Note: If you have information of interest to the NIH advocacy community that you would like to share with the Ad Hoc Group, please forward it to Christa Wagner at chwagner@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.