

## Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – February 11, 2019

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:

### **National Institutes of Health @NIH**

Translation is a team sport! Learn how [@ncats\\_nih\\_gov](#) establishes innovative collaborations that foster the translation of basic discovery to demonstrated improvements in [#PublicHealth](#). [#ThisIsNIH](#) <http://bit.ly/2sybJZD>

#### **1. Senate Labor-HHS Subcommittee to Hold Hearing on Ebola Outbreak**

The Senate Appropriations Committee Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies subcommittee Feb. 14 [will hold](#) a hearing to examine the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other emerging health threats. NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD, is expected to testify, among other witnesses.

#### **2. President's State of the Union Address Includes New Health Initiatives**

President Trump Feb. 5 delivered his [State of the Union Address](#), which highlighted two initiatives and President Trump first noted that "in recent years, we have made remarkable progress in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Scientific breakthroughs have brought a once-distant dream within reach." This new initiative, co-led by HHS, CDC, HRSA, and NIAID, aims to eradicate new HIV/AIDS infections by 2030. HHS Secretary Alex Azar released a [statement](#) and HHS published a [fact sheet](#) on the initiative, and agency leaders, including NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD, described the plan to end the HIV epidemic in a [perspective in JAMA](#).

Additionally, President Trump announced an initiative to fight pediatric cancers stating, "Many childhood cancers have not seen new therapies in decades. My budget will ask Congress for \$500 million over the next 10 years to fund this critical lifesaving research."

#### **3. House Budget Committee Holds Hearing on FY 2020 Budget Caps**

The House Committee on the Budget Feb. 7 held a [hearing](#) titled to discuss the discretionary spending caps for fiscal year (FY) 2020 and FY 2021 as laid out in the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA, [P.L. 112-25](#)). In his [opening statement](#), Chairman John Yarmuth (D-Ky.) called on his colleagues to reach another bipartisan agreement to raise discretionary spending caps and avoid \$126 billion in cuts to both defense and nondefense programs imposed by the BCA for FY 2020, including a \$55 billion cut to nondefense discretionary programs.

#### **4. NDD United Sign-On Opportunity**

Sequestration will again become a part of the appropriations discussion as the temporary and partial relief of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 expires at the end of FY 2019. In the 116th Congress, threats to nondefense discretionary programs face a steep, \$55 billion funding cliff that would reverse many of the funding gains made in the last few years.

In an effort to protect NDD programs from further cuts and to end sequestration, NDD United is circulating a sign-on letter urging lawmakers to negotiate a new budget agreement providing relief from the discretionary spending caps in FYs 2020 and 2021. The Ad Hoc Group has signed on to the letter, and we encourage individual organizations to do so as well. You can review the letter [here](#) and [complete the sign on form here](#). Deadline to sign on is Feb.14.

#### **5. NIMHD Special Issue of *American Journal of Public Health***

NIMHD has just published an American Journal of Public Health special issue, [New Perspectives to Advance Minority Health and Health Disparities Research](#), which presents 30 strategies to chart a new course for the next generation of research in minority health and health disparities. The supplement represents a two-year science visioning effort that engaged many staff working in minority health and health disparities along with external experts.

The special issue includes analytic essays and editorials that cover harmonizing health disparities measurement, leveraging the data-rich world, addressing social determinants of health; designing structural, behavioral, and multilevel interventions; and building an evidence base to adapt interventions for health disparity populations. Other covered topics include methodologies to understand causes, the importance of a life course perspective, and key biological mechanisms that link social exposure to chronic diseases.

#### **6. HHS OIG Responds to Grassley Letter Regarding Foreign Threats to Research**

HHS Inspector General David Levinson Jan. 31 [sent a letter](#) to Senator Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) in response to the Senator's Jan. 17 letter inquiring about foreign influences in US research. In the letter, General Levinson noted that his office "recently received 12 referrals from NIH" with allegations of foreign interference at US universities but noted that OIG has only conducted one investigation regarding failure to disclose funding from a foreign government in the last five years.

#### **7. NIH Seeking Input on In-depth Adult Stem Cell Characterization**

The NIH Feb. 7 posted a [Request for Information](#) (RFI) on "in-depth cell characterization of human adult stem cells which are not of embryonic or fetal origin, including induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) and mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs)." Specifically, participating Institutes and Centers aim to address knowledge gaps in characterization of adult stem cells, "and inform future avenues of scientific inquiry [by] ... analyz[ing] adult stem cells for key cell characteristics that can be correlated to the cells' biological function, potency, and clinical efficacy." Responses must be submitted via email to [Joel Islam](#), PhD, by April 15.

#### **8. STAT Interview: Sean Parker Discusses Importance of Research Funding**

STAT Feb. 11 [published an interview](#) with philanthropist Sean Parker where he shared his opinion that the US government should be investing more in medical research and healthcare. Specifically, Mr. Parker shared concerns about China's growth in life sciences research noting, "If we don't start thinking about where the country is going to be in 2050 and what the needs will be, we will fall behind countries like China that have a regulatory system that will allow drugs to reach market faster, [and will] give their scientists more latitude to conduct experiments." He continues, "What we should be doing is doubling down on scientific research and we should be doubling the budget of the NIH and the NCI. This is the engine that's fueling American innovation."

## Upcoming Hill Briefings and Other Events

### 9. NAM Webinar on Action Collaborative Countering Opioid Epidemic – Feb. 13

The National Academy of Medicine (NAM) is hosting a [free webinar](#): “An Introduction to the Action Collaborative on Countering the US Opioid Epidemic” on February 13 from 4:00-5:00pm. The webinar will describe the Collaborative's work towards better coordination, information-sharing, and evidence-based practice of the many efforts being taken to fight the opioid epidemic. The overview will be followed by updates from the Collaborative's four working groups and a Q&A.

### 10. AdvaMedDx and ACS CAN Congressional Briefing – Feb. 14

AdvaMedDx and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) invite you to a congressional briefing titled “Accelerating Global Elimination of Cervical Cancer: A Call to Action.” The briefing will cover how, with U.S. investment and leadership, we can accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer death globally, saving hundreds of thousands of lives. The briefing will take place from 12-1:30pm on Feb. 14 in 2017 Rayburn House Office Building. Please [RSVP by Feb. 12](#) and see attached for additional information.

### 11. AAMC/FASEB Webinar on NAS’s Next Generation of Researchers Report – Feb. 19

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) are hosting the fourth webinar in their 2018/2019 National Academies reports [webinar series](#). Program Officer Lida Beninson, PhD, of the National Academies, will unpack the key findings of the report “[The Next Generation of Biomedical and Behavioral Sciences Researchers Breaking Through](#).” The webinar is being held on Feb. 19, 1:00-2:00 PM ET and free [registration](#) is required.

### 12. Research!America Rare Diseases Panel Discussion and Reception – Feb. 26

Research!America will host a Feb. 26 panel discussion titled “Rare Diseases: Perspectives on Progress” at the Washington Court Hotel from 5:00-6:00pm, followed by a networking reception. Please [register here](#) or see the online flyer for [more information](#).

### 13. Friends of NIDA Congressional Briefing – Feb. 27

The Friends of NIDA are co-hosting a congressional briefing titled “Opportunities and Challenges in Cannabinoid Research.” The lunch briefing includes remarks from NIDA Director Nora Volkow, MD, and will take place on Feb. 27 from 12:00-1:30pm in 2043 Rayburn House Office Building. Please [click here to RSVP](#) or [click here to view flyer](#).

### 14. NCATS Hosting Rare Disease Day – Feb. 28

The NIH's National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) with the NIH Clinical Center is hosting [Rare Disease Day](#) on Feb. 28 on the NIH campus in Bethesda, MD. The annual event is intended to raise awareness about these diseases, the people they affect, and new research opportunities through panel discussions, posters, artwork, tours, and networking opportunities. Speakers include NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD; NCATS Director Christopher Austin, MD; and NIH Clinical Center CEO James Gilman, MD. Admission is

complimentary and open to the public. On February 22, NIH will host a Twitter chat on rare diseases from 1-2 PM ET featuring Drs. Collins, Austin, and Gilman as well as representatives from the rare diseases advocacy community.

### **15. AEVR Congressional Briefing – Mar. 6**

The Alliance for Eye and Vision Research is co-hosting a Congressional briefing titled “Understanding the Genetic Basis of Glaucoma to Develop Vision Loss Prevention Strategies.” The lunch briefing will take place on Mar. 6 from 12:00-1:15 pm in 2168 Rayburn House Office Building. Please see attached flyer for additional information.

### **Job Postings**

#### **AACR Seeks Director, Congressional Relations**

The American Association for Cancer Research seeks a [Director of Congressional Relations](#) to: provide specialized expertise and support to AACR leaders, including the Science Policy and Government Affairs Committee, its relevant subcommittees, and broader partners in the community to further the goals of the AACR’s Strategic Plan and policy priorities. To apply, please submit your cover letter and resume [humanresources@aacr.org](mailto:humanresources@aacr.org).

#### **Academy for Radiology & Biomedical Imaging Seeks Director of Communications and Membership**

The Academy is seeking an experienced professional for a Director of Communications and Membership, to maintain and improve organizational branding and messaging for internal and external communications. This position will work with a two-person communications staff to create and execute a range of activities intended to raise awareness of our mission and work, as well as the state of policy and grassroots efforts to our membership. Please see attached for additional information. Applications can be sent to [ETownley@acadrad.org](mailto:ETownley@acadrad.org).

#### **ALS Seeks Associate Director, Grassroots Advocacy**

The Associate Director, Grassroots Advocacy will report to the Vice President, Public Policy and work as part of a team with the Associate Director for Government Affairs and the Public Policy Manager. The successful candidate will design and direct nonpartisan grassroots activities, including managing an annual Fly-In and the National ALS Advocacy Conference and working with ALS chapters and volunteer leaders. [Apply here](#).

#### **PCORI Seeks Associate Director, Public Policy**

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute seeks an Association Director, Public Policy. Position responsibilities include: supporting the Director for Public Policy and Government Relations, Chief Engagement and Dissemination Officer, and the PCORI Board of Governors and executives in representing PCORI with Congress; and more. Please visit the [job posting](#) to apply.

#### **FASEB Seeks Senior Science Policy Analyst**

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology seeks a Senior Science Policy Analyst. Primary functions of the role include analyzing science policy issues and independently managing committees, projects, reports, and seminars/workshops pertaining to the training and development of the biological and biomedical workforce and more. Please visit FASEB’s [employment opportunities](#) site for [additional information](#).

#### **ASHG Seeks Two Policy and Advocacy Positions**

The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) seeks a Policy & Advocacy Assistant to help fulfill the Society's advocacy role by helping to develop advocacy resources for members; supporting the development of policy statements; and coordinating policy and advocacy-related events and other administrative duties. Please visit FASEB's [employment opportunities](#) site for [additional information](#).

ASHG also seeks a Policy & Advocacy Manager help fulfill the Society's policy and advocacy functions by tracking, analyzing and drafting material on policy issues; staffing volunteer bodies to develop policy material and advocacy programming; helping to build and then manage advocacy activity of Society's leadership and membership; and strengthening relations with Congress. Please visit FASEB's [employment opportunities](#) site to learn more and to apply.

### **University of Florida Seeks Assistant Director of Federal Relations**

The University of Florida Seeks an Assistant Director of Federal Relations for the Washington, D.C. office. Essential job functions include: manage and execute the government relations program for a portfolio of the University's federal interests; anticipate, monitor and analyze federal policy; and more. Details and application instructions are available on the [job posting site](#).

### **American Heart Association Seeks Regulatory Affairs Manager**

Under the direction of the Vice President of Federal Advocacy, the [Regulatory Affairs Manager](#) would be responsible for monitoring, analyzing, and drafting responses to a prescribed set of federal regulatory and reimbursement-related issues that impact the association's public policy agenda. The primary focus of the AHA's regulatory work is with the Department of Health and Human Services and its key agencies.

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](mailto:chwagner@aamc.org) or Tannaz Rasouli at [trasouli@aamc.org](mailto:trasouli@aamc.org).