

Mouse Tales

Change is Good!

Welcome to the Spring 2007 edition of Mouse Tales. We've been busy these last few months getting settled into our new home in Austin, Texas. We moved the lab here from Houston at the end of February to complete the separation of MendelWorks, from our parent company, Identigene. The move was enormously beneficial because it allowed us to expand and improve our operation to better serve you.

Because of the new space, we were able to implement new automation, increase our lab staff, and implement several process improvements. The net result of these changes has been an improvement in our turnaround time. Prior to the move, our turnaround time for standard assays was 3 business days from receipt of samples. With the operational improvements, over 90% of orders are getting processed in 2 business days. Because we know that speed is essential to keep your cage costs low and allow you to proceed with your other experiments, our goal is to return 100% of standard orders in 2 days or less. We want to provide you with faster, better service and our commitment to continuous improvement is helping us accomplish this.

We want to hear from you. If you have any comments or suggestions on how we can better serve you, please let us know.

\$\$\$ Funding Opportunity \$\$\$

The National Institute for General Medical Sciences has issued a request for applications for researchers to study "the genetic mechanisms that underlie complex human phenotypes and how these different traits are encoded in DNA." The grants are for up to \$250,000 over 4 years. For more details, visit <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-GM-08-001.html>. Application deadline is September 24, 2007.

Current Events

Two recent announcements may soon have an impact on genetic testing and personalized medicine. First, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2007 (GINA), a bill in Congress, will make it illegal for employers or insurance companies to use a person's predisposition to a disease for insurance coverage or for hiring, firing, or promotion decisions. The bill has passed the House and is in debate in the Senate. To coincide with the bill, the Genetics and Public Policy Center at Johns Hopkins University has published a white paper on public opinion of genetic testing and who should have access to that information. For more information on the bill or a link to the white paper, visit <http://genome.gov/24519851>.

The second item is the announcement of a joint venture by several public and private firms to undertake a study to assess "what types of individuals choose to receive genetic testing, what influences their decisions, how these people interact with the health care system, and how individuals who undertake genetic testing may use this information to impact health care decisions in the future". For more information, visit <http://www.genome.gov/25521052>.



Client achievements

Professional: Dr. Jacqueline Hecht at the University of Texas Medical School in Houston recently received the 2007 Barbara Bowman Distinguished Texas Geneticist Award from the Texas Genetics Society for her extensive contributions to genetics in Texas. To read the full article about her research and award, visit <http://www.uthouston.edu/distinctions/archive/2007/April/Hecht.html>.

Congratulations, Dr. Hecht!

Culinary: Dr. Richard Finnell, Executive Director of the Texas Institute for Genomic Medicine and his staff won the 4th Annual Chili Cook-Off sponsored by BioHouston. The TIGM Knockouts beat out 25 other teams to earn the bragging rights. For more information, visit

<http://www.biohouston.org/common/page.asp?pageid=387>.

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