

Alcoholism in Montreal, Canada, from 70 to 39. The annual meeting of the American Society of Human Genetics, which ended this week in San Diego, went on without one-third of the 170 NIH people who had asked to attend. Dean Hamer of the National Cancer Institute says that one of his graduate students was permitted to go to a "premeeting" on gene linkage but was not allowed to stay on for the main affair. "It makes no sense whatsoever," Hamer says.

Scientists are now trying feverishly to overturn an HHS ruling that would allow only 550 of 761 researchers who requested permission to attend the Society for Neuroscience's annual meeting next month in San Diego. "Word keeps coming back to me that we are facing a stone wall," says one source. The wall appears to be the person of Ed Sontag, recently installed as assistant secretary for administration and management. Sontag, who has a Ph.D. in education and advised Thompson on educational matters when he was governor of Wisconsin, could not be reached for comment.

NIH officials thought they were making headway this summer after Thompson visited the Bethesda, Maryland, campus and heard from postdoctoral fellows upset at the prospect of being cut out of scientific meetings. "Thompson said, 'We need to fix this,'" reports an observer.

But nothing happened. In August, Michael Gottesman, NIH deputy director for intramural research, wrote to Thompson about the value of scientific meetings not just as a source of knowledge but also as a way to monitor grantees, recruit new talent, and nurture the careers of postdoctoral fellows. A visit by a contingent of institute directors headed by Francis Collins, director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, is also in the works. Their message will be simple, says one source: Meetings are the lifeblood of science.

—CONSTANCE HOLDEN

BIOMEDICAL PHILANTHROPY

Klausner Makes Case For New Foundation

Richard Klausner this month traded his biomedical research battleship for a speedboat, and he's looking forward to feeling the spray on his face. His transition from the \$3.7 billion National Cancer Institute (NCI)—the flagship of the National Institutes of Health—to the Case Institute of Health, Science and Technology, a small outfit in Washington, D.C., has left colleagues curious. Last week, in an interview with *Science*, the 49-year-old biologist for the first time laid out his

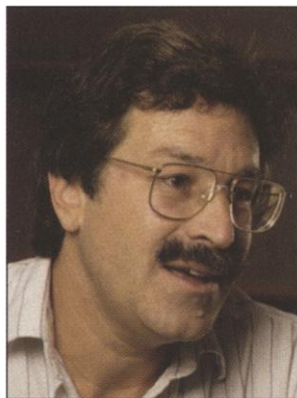
plans and how they will be funded.

Although the details are still being finalized, Klausner says the institute hopes to inject about \$100 million over the next few years in two areas. One is a life sciences informatics initiative, aimed at developing better computerized systems for organizing and analyzing data; this will be largely in-house research. The other is a "molecular monitors" program that will disburse grants to develop technologies for identifying and monitoring specific chemicals linked to particular diseases and biological processes. The two thrusts, he says, are the "logical next steps to the things I loved to do at the cancer institute: large projects oriented toward the linkage of science and technology" that connect researchers in many fields.

With the explosion of knowledge in the life sciences, Klausner isn't worried about stepping on other funders' toes. The institute's areas of interest fall within "crowded fields," he admits, but they offer "some novel niches."

The new institute is funded by America Online founder Steve Case and his wife, Jean Case (*Science*, 14 September, p. 1967). Rather than drawing on the interest from an endowment, the institute is likely to operate on a pay-as-you-go basis, with the Cases providing fresh funds each year. The budget "would be driven by the science," Klausner says. "I like that [approach], rather than having to worry about investing the endowment."

The institute will soon occupy five buildings in Washington's central Dupont Circle neighborhood, with room for administrators, visiting scientists, and a significant in-house informatics program. Klausner's first top hire is MaryAnn Guerra, his former deputy director for management at NCI, who was tapped this week to be a vice president.



Catching the wave. Richard Klausner says the Case institute will be agile.

letting him chart the institute's course.

As for the reason he left NCI, Klausner said he relished the opportunity to lead a new organization that could change direction quickly. He also noted that instead of having scores of political bosses, he now answers to "a board of two people"—the Cases. The couple, he says, have been "very supportive" of

—DAVID MALAKOFF

ScienceScope

Sanger Secure The future of the Wellcome Trust Sanger Centre, which sequenced one-third of the human genome, is looking pretty secure. On 12 October, the trust—Britain's mammoth biomedical charity—announced that the Hinxton, U.K., institute will get \$435 million over the next 5 years—enough money to take it soaring into the post-genomic era.

The new funds will be divvied up among a number of priorities, including \$123 million for sequencing new genomes such as those of the mouse and the zebrafish, and \$30 million for recruiting new scientists. Another big winner is the Sanger's 2-year-old Cancer Genome Project, which has already identified more than 80 genetic abnormalities implicated in human cancer. Wellcome originally awarded the project \$14.5 million for its first 5 years; that figure will now more than triple to \$52 million. The extra funds, says project co-director Richard Wooster, "will take us into full production scale."

Pediatric Research OK in Maryland

The Maryland Court of Appeals last week reassured worried researchers that a controversial recent decision was not intended to bar most studies in that state involving children.

Universities and biomedical groups feared that language in the 16 August decision—involving a home lead paint cleanup study by the Kennedy Krieger Institute (KKI) associated with Johns Hopkins University—would outlaw studies involving "any risk" to children (*Science*, 28 September 2001, p. 2367). KKI filed a motion asking the court to reconsider. On 11 October the court denied the motion but stated that "by 'any risk' we meant any articulable risk beyond the minimal kind of risk that is inherent in any endeavor." Several groups that filed an amicus brief, including Hopkins and the Association of American Universities, say the clarification puts Maryland law back in accord with federal regulations allowing pediatric studies involving "minimal risk."

The court was not asked to reconsider its overall ruling, which found that the lead study was unethical. The case will now go to a trial court.

