Commencement Features Speaker
David R. Walt

David R. Walt, Robinson Professor of Chemistry and Professor of Biomedical Engineering at Tufts University, will be the keynote speaker at Keck Graduate Institute’s commencement on Saturday, May 15, at 11 am.

Walt is the scientific founder and a director of both Illumina, Inc. and Quanterix Corp. His laboratory is renowned for its pioneering work that applies micro- and nano-technology to urgent biological problems. He has received numerous national and international awards and honors for his fundamental and applied work in the field of optical sensors and arrays. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering, a fellow of the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering, and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

“We are looking forward to the interesting perspective on entrepreneurship that Dr. Walt will be able to provide the KGI community on this special occasion,” says KGI President Sheldon M. Schuster.

Forty-one students will be awarded their degrees during commencement exercises: 38 with a Master of Bioscience, two with a PhD, as well as the first student to receive KGI’s Postdoctoral Professional Masters in Bioscience Management.

Also speaking during the commencement will be alumnus Darren Leva MBS (’05), president of the KGI Alumni Board and regional sales associate at Althea Technologies.

A tradition of KGI’s annual commencement is the class gift presented by the graduating MBS students. This year, Mike Hoang, chair of the 2010 Legacy Class Gift, will present KGI with a wood patio set for the east lawn, for the enjoyment of students, faculty and staff.

Each year the graduating class also inscribes an embossed bronze plaque for the alumni pathway. This year’s plaque will read, “When we say ‘science’ we mean ‘business.’” (Jerry Sanders)

Following the ceremonies, a reception will be held on the east lawn. Other commencement weekend events include an awards luncheon, wine tasting, and an alumni barbeque on Friday, May 14.

By Carol Sorgen
Keck Graduate Institute welcomed Stella Marks in January to the position of assistant vice president for academic affairs and associate dean of faculty. Marks is responsible for institutional accreditation and will work directly with James D. Sterling, PhD, vice president for academic affairs and dean of faculty, to help ensure KGI’s academic programs prepare students to become leaders in the life sciences industry.

“We are very pleased that Stella has become a member of the KGI team,” says Sterling. “Her extensive experience in university administration will help us deliver our professional-degree programs for students who aspire to work in companies that develop therapies and technologies to improve the health of all.”

Prior to joining KGI, Marks served as assistant dean and chief of staff at UCLA’s Anderson School of Management and executive assistant to the executive vice chancellor and provost at UC Riverside. She earned her JD from the University of Houston Law Center where she was an associate editor of the Houston Law Review and earned her Bachelor of Arts in history from Texas Tech University.

“I am very happy to be a member of the KGI family and am proud to be of service to such a unique and important organization,” says Marks. “I look forward to working with the terrific students, faculty and staff at KGI, and contributing to our continued academic excellence.”

Faculty News

Steve Sommer, MD, PhD, has joined the KGI faculty as professor of research. Sommer, president of MEDomics, will lead KGI’s new Laboratory of Personalized Genetics. The holder of 13 patents and author of more than 300 published papers, Sommer has been called “one of the most prolific researcher scholars we have at KGI,” says James D. Sterling, PhD, vice president for academic affairs and dean of faculty.

Steven Casper, PhD, Henry E. Riggs Professor of Management, published a profile on the Southern California bioscience industry, sponsored by Southern California Edison. Casper examined 240 research-intensive bioscience companies headquartered in the region, along with 29 subsidiaries of major companies, and found “that Southern California has a really strong biosciences industry-more vibrant than commonly assumed.”

Angelika Niemz, PhD, has been named the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation Professor. The honor follows Niemz’s appointment late last year as director of research, putting her in charge of working with faculty, staff, PhD students and postdoctoral researchers to support and expand KGI’s research programs.

M. Ian Phillips, PhD, Norris Professor of Applied Life Sciences, was named a Fellow by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), an elite group of scientists that includes Nobel Prize winners and members of the National Academy of Sciences. Phillips was selected for his “distinguished contributions to physiology, neuroscience, hypertension, particularly anti-angiotensin drugs, gene and stem cell therapy for cardiovascular disease, and for outstanding teaching and research administration,” according to AAAS. Phillips described the honor as the “capstone to my career.”
As many of you know, we are nearing the end of our seven-year Keck Matching Challenge Grant. Next year, 2011, is the last year our donors’ contributions will be matched by the W. M. Keck Foundation. We hope you will choose to be a part of this tremendous commitment to building a great program and legacy. By making a gift to the annual fund you will help KGI reach its matching goal while providing support for student fellowships. Consider this:

- **100% of KGI students rely on fellowships, need-based grants, or loans to attend KGI.**
- KGI’s financial aid to students in the current academic year totaled more than $1.7 million. Support from donors and the Keck Foundation enabled dozens of students to benefit from the KGI experience.
- KGI has raised $28 million toward the goal of $30 million that we need to collect from other donors to meet the Keck Foundation’s Matching Challenge. Every gift is critically important as we strive to reach the finish line!

The Keck Foundation’s Matching Challenge Grant has given KGI students great opportunities ... and so can you. Please make your gift before June 30 at https://supportkgi.org or by sending your check in the enclosed envelope.

Kerry Howell, Vice President for Advancement

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**TMP Day Showcases 13 Projects**

Thirteen teams will present the findings of their Team Masters Project (TMP) to the KGI community, as well as to academic and corporate guests during the annual Presentation Day on Wednesday, May 5.

As the capstone for second-year Master of Bioscience students, TMPs consist of teams of three to five students working with a sponsoring company to address a real-world problem or opportunity. Advised by KGI faculty and industry liaisons, teams provide opportunities for students to learn project management, teamwork and communication skills.

“TMP Day 2010 will feature public presentations from each of the 13 projects underway at KGI,” says Diana Bartlett, director of corporate partnerships at KGI. “This day really showcases the breadth and depth of our projects and demonstrates that our students are adept at both scientific and business challenges.”

**This year’s lineup of TMPs and sponsors are:**

- **Allergan:** Biologics development capacity modeling and analysis
- **Amylin:** Orphan drug market overview
- **Beckman Coulter:** Launch support for the next generation automation product line
- **BioMarin:** Protein purification processes for biotherapeutics
- **Clear Springs Land Company:** Economic assessment of biofuels
- **Gilead Sciences:** Business analysis of biologics and fermentation technologies
- **Illumina:** Opportunities in consumer genomics
- **Kinetic Concepts:** Methodologies for wound-healing diagnostics
- **Life Technologies:** Methods to maximize value using contract research organizations in China and India
- **PBS Biotech:** Characterization of a novel single-use bioreactor system
- **Pioneer Hi-Bred:** SNP genotyping in plants utilizing a microfluidic platform
- **Sigma-Tau:** New product opportunities in rare disease therapy
- **Veracyte:** Product launch strategy and market opportunity assessment

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Louis Shamel (MBS ’09)
One day each spring and fall, Keck Graduate Institute’s campus fills with prospective students, eager to learn more about the innovative Master of Bioscience (MBS) program and what it entails.

“They may have narrowed down their choice to three or four graduate programs,” says Sofia Toro, director of admissions, who oversees the MBS visitation days. “This is our day to shine and to help applicants decide if KGI is the right place for them. They can see first-hand that we’re a small, close-knit community, and what a congenial, collaborative environment they will experience here.”

The day begins with a welcome from KGI President Sheldon M. Schuster and Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Daniel Chatham. Next, Steven Casper—KGI’s Henry E. Riggs Professor of Management and MBS program director—shares an overview of the cross-disciplinary curriculum. His presentation is followed by a student-led campus tour.

A panel of current first- and second-year MBS students, and a second panel of alumni, provide insights into the program itself, as well as what to expect after graduation. Participants also get to mingle with faculty and staff at lunch, and with current students over dinner. On average, 30 students attend each of KGI’s visitation days. Students admitted to the program are even reimbursed up to $500 toward their travel expenses to attend a visitation day.

“Attending a visitation day at KGI allowed me to experience what a brochure could not convey — the enthusiasm of the admissions staff for the program, the testimonies of current students, and the passion of the teaching staff,” said Christina Lai (MBS ’11). “It wasn’t the Southern California campus or the laboratories that won me over that day but the people that I met and the way their expressions changed when I asked them to speak about their school. The earnest sparkle in their eyes was something I couldn’t get from a webinar, and it communicated everything I needed to know.”

While the admissions office encourages applicants to come to one of the official visitation days—where they also have the chance to meet potential classmates—those unable to attend can schedule a campus tour and visit at a more convenient time by signing up through the website or calling the office.

With the advent of new academic programs at KGI, the admissions office recently added “preview days”—modeled on the MBS visitation days—for the Postdoctoral Professional Masters in Bioscience Management (PPM) and the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Certificate (PPC) programs. Toro says the preview days for each of these new programs will be offered two to four times a year. The PPM sessions are held concurrently with KGI Board of Trustees and Advisory Council meetings to give prospective students the opportunity to engage with industry contacts—underscoring one of the key advantages of attending KGI.

By Susan Wampler
At some point, there is going to be a very large network of people in the same industry. Once we get up to the executive management level, we should be able to capitalize on that relationship stemming from our unique educational experience,” said Leva, a regional sales associate for Althea Technologies.

Relationships are what the alumni board is trying to foster.

“We are trying to make sure that everyone is easily connected to the alumni, the Advisory Council and the KGI community as a whole.”

The alumni board’s March meeting coincided with meetings of the Advisory Council and the Board of Trustees.

One great thing that came out of that meeting, Leva said, was the realization that members of the Advisory Council wanted stronger connections between the two groups.

“The Advisory Council said they want direct access to our alumni. They want to be able to contact alumni when they’re needed for jobs and they want to be contacted as mentors and for job opportunities. They’re there to help.”

Merlene Singleton, director of alumni relations, said it was really an accomplishment to have the alumni board participate in the meetings with the Advisory Council and the Board of Trustees.

“This was a goal we’ve had since the alumni relations program began, to grow and mature the alumni base and volunteer commitment to the point where they would be viewed by the Advisory Council and the Board of Trustees as an entity to be listened to and respected.”

The alumni board has formed three committees: Admissions, Academics, and Alumni and Student Networking.

Ravneesh Sachdev (MBS ’06), chairman of the Admissions Committee, said his committee’s goal in the first year is to participate in at least two admissions events.

“We’re going to help the admissions team basically by giving them an alumni perspective in terms of what to look for in prospective students,” said Sachdev, senior manager of corporate development for Onyx Pharmaceuticals. Committee members also will have a chance to interview prospective students about the KGI experience and to share their success stories with them.

Matt Grunseth (MBS ’08), chairman of the Alumni and Student Networking Committee, said his group is working on establishing an accessible map of all alumni and Advisory Council members by location, industry and job function to make it easier to get in contact with each other. Grunseth is manager of technology licensing at the City of Hope.

The Academics Committee, chaired by Garry Seid (MBS ’03), is concentrating on identifying gaps in the current KGI curriculum and what alumni and faculty can do to fill them. Seid is a project manager for Amgen, Inc.

The Alumni Board will be hosting a barbecue the night before commencement to socialize with new graduates and potential Alumni Association members.

By Elaine Regus
Michael Friedman
Joins Board of Trustees

Michael A. Friedman, MD, president and chief executive officer of City of Hope, is enthusiastic about his recent appointment to Keck Graduate Institute’s Board of Trustees.

“I have worked with President Schuster for a number of years on a variety of issues and have not only been inspired by his leadership but have found the mission and activities of KGI to be most interesting and innovative,” says Friedman, who also directs City of Hope’s cancer center.

KGI President Sheldon M. Schuster is equally as enthusiastic about Friedman’s joining the board. “We are very happy that Dr. Friedman has agreed to share his talent and experience with KGI,” says Schuster, adding that KGI has long had a strong relationship with City of Hope. “Having Dr. Friedman on our board is an opportunity for us to further strengthen that relationship.”

Before joining City of Hope in 2003, Friedman was a senior vice president of research and development, first at Searle and then at Pharmacia Corporation. Following the events of September 11, 2001, he served as chief medical officer for biomedical preparedness at the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

His other professional experience includes serving at the Food & Drug Administration as deputy commissioner (1995-1997) and as acting commissioner (1998-1999). From 1983-1988 Friedman directed the Division of Cancer Treatment at the National Cancer Institute. Before joining the NCI, he spent nearly a decade at the University of California San Francisco as an associate professor of medicine directing the Cancer Research Institute.

Friedman received his BA degree, magna cum laude, from Tulane University, and a Doctorate in Medicine from the University of Texas. He completed postdoctoral training at Stanford University and the National Cancer Institute, and is board-certified in internal medicine and medical oncology.

Friedman is looking forward to working with KGI on such issues as the development of new, innovative ways of solving biomedical problems as well as becoming more involved with current programs and activities.

“I’ve found KGI to be a community of good and thoughtful people,” says Friedman.

By Carol Sorgen

NEW ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

KGI has welcomed eight new members to its Advisory Council in recent months. The council provides insight, feedback and support for KGI’s corporate outreach.

NEW MEMBERS:
Robert Baltera,
CEO, Amira Pharmaceuticals
Raymond Cohen,
CEO, CardioPolymers, Inc.
Chris Garabedian,
Vice President Corporate Strategy,
Celgene Corp.
John Gerace,
Vice President and General Manager,
PCR Systems, Life Technologies Corp.
Allan Harris,
Director Corporate Strategic Planning, Beckman Coulter, Inc.
BJ Hull,
Site Director (San Dimas),
Gilead Sciences, Inc.
Randy Schatzman,
Co-Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer,
Alder Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Stephen Zweig,
President and CEO,
Clinisense
A week of shared experiences led to enlightenment and empowerment for participants in the third annual Next Generation Bioscience Leaders (NGBL) conference for women hosted by Keck Graduate Institute.

The conference, offered in partnership with Smith College, focuses on training women for executive roles in life sciences companies. It is designed for middle-level managers and senior directors who have been identified by their employers as having high management potential.

“One of the great things about this program for the women is being in a room with their peers where they can share their thoughts and experiences and discovering that other women have the same thoughts and experiences as they do,” said Diane Lim, KGI’s program manager of Corporate Education.

One of the most popular sessions this year was on Career Management Strategies. A panel of women, all CEOs of their companies, shared how they got to where they are today, the lessons they learned along the way, the challenges they encountered and how they dealt with them.

“The participants were empowered to know that even though they are females in a male-dominated industry, they can go back to their companies and live up to the full potential that their supervisors know they have,” Lim said.

In response to feedback from previous conferences, Lim said this year’s conference included sessions on emotional intelligence and negotiations from the female perspective.

Another new segment featured a panel of representatives from pharmaceutical, biotech, and the medical devices/diagnostics industry who gave an industry overview of the current marketplace and what they are expecting in the future.

Lim said she received very positive feedback from this year’s participants.

Diana Bartlett, director of corporate partnerships, said the conference is part of KGI’s comprehensive portfolio of educational programs for managers and executives working in the life science companies.

“As the life science industry matures, it will require more leaders who understand both the technology side and the business side of enterprise success. This program provides a framework to enable senior women managers to do just that,” Bartlett said. “By enlisting industry experts from pharma, biotech, medical device, diagnostic, and related sectors, this conference enables rising executives to gain a comprehensive picture of success factors as well as to network with peers.”

Bartlett said future life-science company leaders will emerge from the mid- to upper-level managers for whom the program has been developed.

“We target the female executives who have been identified as being capable of leading their companies in the near term,” says Bartlett. “There is still a shortage of women in executive roles in life science companies and we hope to be able to fill that pipeline.”

By Elaine Regus
Orphan Drug Workshop at KGI Deemed ‘Historic, Innovative’

The Center for Rare Disease Therapies (CRDT) at Keck Graduate Institute recently partnered with the U. S. Food and Drug Administration to host a historic two-day workshop.

For the first time, officials from the FDA offered a workshop on orphan product designation, meeting with pharmaceutical and biotech companies, academics and patient advocates to walk them through the application process step-by-step. The event was co-sponsored by the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) and Genetic Alliance, both patient advocacy organizations.

The workshop grew out of a relationship that Dr. Ian Phillips, the CRDT’s director, developed with Dr. Tim Coté, director of the FDA’s Office of Orphan Products Development, who is on the advisory board of the CRDT.

“We’re very satisfied with the way it worked out. I’d give it an ‘A.’ All the way around, it was historic, innovative and brand new,” Coté said. “Hopefully, this will do something positive for people with rare diseases.”

Hosted at KGI, the goal of the workshop was to simplify and demystify the orphan designation application process to encourage development of more therapies for people who are suffering from rare diseases. Nearly 50 people representing 29 different organizations were in attendance.

“In just two days, we increased the number of applications for orphan drug designations.”

Some attendees were pharmaceutical companies while others were start ups working on initial product development or patient advocates.

“The FDA has never before met with companies outside Washington, DC, to assist in actually preparing orphan drug designation applications,” said Phillips, who added the workshop also helped accomplish one of the center’s primary goals. “In just two days, we increased the number of applications for orphan drug designations.” The 14 applications submitted at the end of the workshop totaled more than 5% of the total number of applications received by the FDA in 2009.

By Elaine Regus