LUNG-DISEASE EXPERT NAMED CRPRC DIRECTOR

Dallas Hyde, an authority on the biology of asthma and other lung diseases, was named in March as the new director of the California Regional Primate Research Center (CRPRC). Dr. Hyde has served as interim director of the center since 2000, and as associate dean for research and graduate education for the School of Veterinary Medicine since 1997.

In addition to his administrative role, Dr. Hyde maintains an active research program. He is part of a UC Davis team that has conducted pioneering studies on the relationship between air pollution, common allergies, and asthma, using the rhesus macaque monkey as a model.

In 2000, the team showed for the first time that occasional exposure to the air pollutant ozone can change how the lungs of young rhesus monkeys develop and lead to a disease similar to childhood asthma in humans. Dr. Hyde’s investigations focus on the role of white blood cells in injury and repair of the tissue that lines the lungs, especially in relationship to asthma, pulmonary fibrosis and infectious diseases.

“I am eager to move my research laboratory to join the team of superb investigators at the primate center and Center for Comparative Medicine,” Dr. Hyde said. “It is a true honor to provide leadership to programs of excellence in infectious diseases, like vaccine development to prevent HIV transmission; neurologic disorders, like autism and Alzheimer’s disease; and lung diseases, like asthma. Our new focus on childhood health research is aimed at providing the missing science in primates to enhance medical treatments of AIDS, autism and asthma in children.”

After earning a doctoral degree in anatomy from UC Davis in 1976, Dr. Hyde served in the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Florida, Gainesville, until 1979, when he joined the UC Davis faculty. He assumes permanent leadership of the primate center just as the 40-year-old research unit is poised for growth and improvements.

UC Davis is beginning to expand the CRPRC, which is slated to grow from its current population of 3,800 monkeys to about 5,000 monkeys. Plans call for construction of new field corrals and smaller outdoor enclosures, as well as a research office building and trailer, and a rodent facility for the Center for Comparative Medicine.

The CRPRC is one of eight regional primate centers supported by the National Institutes of Health to conduct research in selected areas related to human health. To support its research program, the center maintains a large primate-breeding program. The CRPRC also provides monkeys, mostly rhesus macaques, to research programs at seven UC campuses, as well as other institutions nationwide. The programs include studies of cancer, asthma, AIDS, osteoporosis, neurodegenerative diseases, and infant development and nutrition.

CCAH GROUNDBREAKING

HUMANS GET ASSIST FROM “BEST FRIEND”

A group of enthusiastic dogs was invited to help human representatives of the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine officially break ground for an expansion of the Center for Companion Animal Health.

Several dozen other canine, avian, feline and reptilian guests also attended the October 18 event with approximately 300 human friends of the school.

The privately funded Center for Companion Animal Health, established in 1992, supports research programs, the center maintains a large primate-breeding program. The CRPRC also provides monkeys, mostly rhesus macaques, to research programs at seven UC campuses, as well as other institutions nationwide. The programs include studies of cancer, asthma, AIDS, osteoporosis, neurodegenerative diseases, and infant development and nutrition.

The expanded 33,000-square-foot facility containing laboratories, clinical cancer treatment areas and teaching space was funded through private gifts.

A Center for Companion Animal Health Groundbreaking ceremony showcased the efforts underway to build several new school facilities. UC Davis Chancellor Larry Vanderhoef, School of Veterinary Medicine Dean Bennie Osburn, CCAH Director Niels Pedersen, and Maddie’s Fund Officer and Director Michael Duffield turned over the first shovelfuls of dirt followed by the digging dogs.

Scheduled for completion in 2003, the $17 million center will include the Paul C. and Borghild T. Petersen Radiation Oncology Unit, Maddie’s Fund Medical Oncology Unit, George and Phyllis Miller Feline Health Unit, Koret Foundation Comparative Genomics Laboratory, Ingrid and Reuben Hills III Canine Health Unit, Companion Animal Physical Therapy Unit, and Companion Animal Courtyard and Memorial Gardens.