



# Howell Highlights

A Quarterly Publication by the Doris A. Howell Foundation for Women's Health Research

## Howell Scholarships Empower Students



Nearly 130 research projects have been funded by the Doris A. Howell Foundation for Women's Research over the past 10 years. Each research scholarship means that an undergraduate student has an opportunity to test an individual hypothesis and get involved in a medical lab in a substantive way. Howell scholarships empower students at a critical time in their lives. Consider Teresa Pan, a senior at UCSD who is planning to become a medical doctor.

Shown above with Dr. Howell and Cher Conner, her sponsor and a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors, Teresa is *Examining the Role of the Ventral Hippocampus in Memory Storage Using the TetTag Mouse*. Scientists understand how this happens in a general way; Teresa is examining brain tissue on a neuronal level. (Note to the non-scientifically trained reader: she is analyzing the postpartum brain tissue of specially engineered mice to learn more about where memories are stored.) Her findings may help identify targeted treatment for those with Parkinson's Disease, which would be particularly helpful for women as current treatments involve the application of combined hormone therapy and can cause serious side effects. A more precise treatment might eliminate such side effects through the targeting of specific groups of neurons.

Most undergraduates have to read scientific magazines to keep up with the latest news — Teresa is actually helping science progress. Her enthusiasm for her project is palpable. She walks with confidence through the Mayford Lab at The Scripps Research Institute, clearly articulates her objectives and tactics and describes how her work builds on the rest of the lab's research, headed by Primary Investigator, Mark Mayford. We're sure to hear much more from Teresa Pan over time. Right now, she's grateful to Cher Conner, Dr. Howell and the Howell Foundation for the opportunity to conduct this research.

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Thank you to our Honorary Luncheon Hostesses for two wonderfully successful events!



Dr. Howell and July's Hostess Jean Kauth McGrath



Dr. Howell and September's Hostess Marilynn Boesky

**"To see how disease affects so many and to know that my research will somehow contribute to the treatment of (cancer) is very gratifying."**

**-Ashley Handlery  
'07 Howell Scholar**

## Recent Howell Luncheon Speakers

DR. ANDREW DILLIN ON *AGING AND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE*

Scientists have long observed a strong correlation between calorie restriction and long life (at least in worms and mice) but they didn't understand *why*. Using a tiny roundworm, Dr. Dillin, associate professor in the Molecular and Cell Biology Laboratory at the Salk Institute, has identified a gene instrumental to the process. He is also exploring the role insulin plays in aging and dementia. His findings could lead to the development of drugs that might allow the body to behave as though calorie deprived to attain longevity benefits without actually having to reduce food intake.

DR. CHRISTOPHER C. GLEMBOTSKI ON *HOW TO TREAT A WOMAN FOR HEART DISEASE*

Dr. Glembotski, professor of Biology at SDSU and director of the SDSU Heart Institute, provided relevant, practical information about heart disease, its causes, important preventive measures, how the disease differs in men and women, and current research that may result in better diagnostic tests.

## I.R.S. Allows New Way To Donate

Effective immediately, seniors can make donations directly from their IRAs without having to pay federal income tax on the withdrawal. This new provision benefits affluent seniors who do not itemize and also those who can be adversely affected by the law's limitations on itemized charitable donations. Here's how it works: Taxpayers age 70½ or older can now donate directly from a traditional or Roth IRA to tax-exempt charities by having their IRA trustee forward contributions *directly* to a qualified public charity (certain donor-advised funds are excluded). This means that *as long as the donation does not pass through your hands, the "qualified charitable distribution" is federal-income-tax-free to you*. The new rule applies for 2006 and 2007, though you may not donate more than \$100,000 in either year. Tax-free treatment equates to a 100% write-off, so you may not also claim an itemized deduction for the amount given or you would be double counting. Contact Alan D. Smith, (858) 729-5021, alan.d.smith@morganstanley.com with questions.

## New Howell Circle Members

Thank you to all new and renewing Howell Circle members. Your support encourages undergraduates to pursue independent research.

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Barbara Bailey    | Cristull Hasson   |
| Joan Bowes        | Iris Masotti      |
| Anne Caprioglio   | Bonnie Mendenhall |
| Helen Dillahunty  | Jan Pierce        |
| Esther Fischer    | Naomi Thomas      |
| Rosemary Freiburg | Carol Wootton     |

## Notes From Dr. Howell... Medical Highlights

*Dear Readers:*

### VITAL ORGANS

As respect for heart disease as the leading cause of death in women has grown, researchers have noted that heart disease and chronic kidney disease share the same risk factors of elevated blood pressure, diabetes and calcification of arteries. Unfortunately, these conditions usually are asymptomatic until far advanced.

It should not come as a surprise that these 2 vital organs are intimately related and disease in one should automatically trigger investigation of the other. A positive family history of disease in either organ is critical information for your physician. Cholesterol plaques in the arteries of both organs lead to hypertension, which, in turn, is aggravated by obesity and smoking.

Silent, diminished kidney function will lead to hypertension with inevitable strain on the heart resulting in failure. These 2 critical organs deserve mutual concern and a question to your physician.

*Sincerely,  
Doris*



### Howell Scholar Alumni News

Ashley Eastham (formerly Bell) received the Howell Award in 2001 as an undergraduate student at California State University, Bakersfield for research with the common horehound, *Marrubium vulgare*. She received her BS in Chemistry/Biochemistry in 2005 and currently lives near Seattle, working as a research associate in the mass spectrometry proteomics facility at the Institute for Systems Biology in Seattle, WA ([www.systemsbiology.org](http://www.systemsbiology.org).)

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**The Doris A. Howell Foundation  
for Women's Health Research Presents...**

**Take a Nap, Change Your Life?**

**Dr. Sara C. Mednick**

**January 24, 2008**

**12:00 noon (11:30 registration)**

**La Jolla Country Club**

**\$40 for Howell Circle Members**

**\$50 for Prospective members /guests**



Imagine a product that increases alertness, boosts creativity, reduces stress, improves stamina and decision-making, reduces the risk of heart attack, elevates mood, and strengthens memory. Oh! It is also nontoxic and carries no side effects. Guess what -- it's a nap: the right nap at the right time. Sara C. Mednick, Ph.D., a researcher at UCSD and the leading authority on the study of the nap, will talk about her scientifically-based program to fight the fatigue epidemic, which afflicts an estimated 50 million Americans. The secret is a custom designed nap.

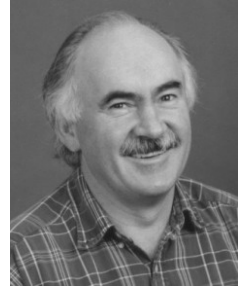
**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**April 24, 2008**

**Dr. John P. Pierce**

**Professor**

**Moore's UCSD Cancer Center**



Do you know someone who has had breast cancer, or are you a survivor yourself?

Are you interested in learning how to improve survival rates by as much as 50%?

Dr. Pierce will present the first-wave of results on UCSD's Women's Healthy Eating and Living (WHEL) clinical trial of the role of diet and physical activity in breast cancer survival.

**Seating for these events is limited. Call (858) 454-7797 to make a reservation or for more information.**

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