NIH Award from the National Institute on Aging

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- **Project:** Drug Discovery Training in Age-Related Disorders
- **Start Date:** May 1, 2009
- **Total Award Amount:** $382,125

**How the results of this project will benefit society:**
This program addresses a national need for training in translational science, and produces independent investigators prepared to address unmet needs in age-related disorders.

**The problem the project is trying to solve:**
This award will continue an interdepartmental training program for Drug Discovery Training in Age-Related Disorders — a program devoted to providing pre-doctoral and post-doctoral scholars with rigorous interdisciplinary training in drug discovery and exposure to multidisciplinary drug development, with a particular focus on age-related diseases. The program is part of the educational activities of the established and successful academic-based Center for Drug Discovery and Chemical Biology. A pioneering aspect of the training program is its emphasis on research training at the interface of structural biology, chemistry, and life sciences, with a strong basic science/clinical interaction. The facilitation of multidisciplinary activities enhances understanding and diagnosis of disease processes as well as the development of fundamental knowledge and tools for intervention.

**How this project will work:**
The training program includes 30 basic science and clinical faculty members with an established record of cooperation, collaboration, and commitment to mentoring trainees. In addition to a primary preceptor, trainees select a secondary preceptor in a different discipline to provide for an enhanced training experience. The program has a structured curriculum that includes a quarter-long Advanced Topics in Drug Discovery course, training in ethics, a visiting lecture series, annual symposium, and summer undergraduate research program. Trainees are given opportunities for interaction with individuals from biotech and pharmaceutical companies through program sponsored lectures and workshops, collaborations, participation in the annual symposium and appropriate national scientific meetings. There are also opportunities for international experiences through exchange visits and formalized institutional liaisons. The program provides trainees with a firm foundation to develop their skills as independent scientists with an understanding of the process of drug discovery, and a realistic perspective for how to translate scientific discoveries into clinical applications for age-related disorders.

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