

News at a Glance

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CEG

Center for Environmental Genetics



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Shuk-Mei Ho, Ph.D., Jacob G. Schmidlapp Professor & Chair of the Department of Environmental Health and Director of the Center for Environmental Genetics, has announced her resignation from the University of Cincinnati (UC) to start as the **Vice Chancellor for Research** at the **University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences**, effective next month.



Dr. Ho joined the UC faculty and became chair of the Department of Environmental Health in 2005; she became director of the Center for Environmental Genetics in 2007. (The CEG had been founded in 1992 when Daniel W. Nebert, M.D., now a UC professor emeritus of environmental health, obtained the university's first NIEHS environmental health sciences center award and re-named the Center for Study of the Human Environment the Center for Environmental Genetics.) CEG Deputy Director **Susan M. Pinney, Ph.D., F.A.C.E.**, will succeed Dr. Ho as principal investigator on the NIEHS P30 ES006096 award. **Aimin Chen, M.D., Ph.D.**, will become Deputy Director of the CEG.

Under Dr. Ho's [award-winning leadership](#), the Center for Environmental Genetics has grown to become a 91-member, nationally and internationally recognized leader in the study of gene-environment interactions and their implications for human development and health. Over the past three funding cycles, the Center has seen an average 12:1 return on investment in its pilot study program and career development initiatives – a return twice as large in certain cases and years. During the past five years alone, the CEG has provided more than \$1.2 million in pilot grants and career development awards and directly helped to generate more than \$14 million in additional funding support for work being conducted by our full, clinical, affiliate and associate members at UC and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.

An outstanding example of the CEG's track record in leveraging its research cohorts toward high-impact translational research is the work of Dr. Pinney and the [Fernald Community Cohort](#) (FCC), one of the Center's 11 human cohorts. In a 5-year R01 study newly funded in 2018, Dr. Hong Sheng Wang is studying FCC urine samples obtained on day of electrocardiogram (EKG) testing among 600 subjects to estimate the effect of bisphenol-A exposure on heart muscle conduction (NIEHS R01 ES0027855; 02/01/2018–01/31/2023; \$1,974,426 total funding). In 2018 alone, Pinney received three major research awards exceeding one half million dollars, including a 5-year NIEHS award for ongoing work with the FCC (R24 ES0285271, 09/30/18–06/30/23), as well as the following R01 and R03 projects: Longitudinal Study of Endocrine Disrupting Chemical Exposure and the Early Hormonal Milieu of Girls around the Time of Thelarche (NIEHS R01 ES029133; 8/15/18–06/30/19) and Headaches and Migraines: Pubertal Parameter and Hormone Predictors in Adolescent Girls (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, R03 HD094236, 08/07/18 –07/31/19). Pinney's work is a model of high-impact, translational research involving community stakeholders as well as bench scientists and clinicians (Cf. NIEHS Strategic Plan Theme 2, Goals 1 and 2).



As it embarks on this new season, the Center for Environmental Genetics and its cores continue to boast nationally and internationally respected leaders in environmental health science research: Standing with Dr. Ho in this photo are (left to right) Community Engagement Core co-leader Nicholas Newman, D.O., M.S., F.A.A.P.; Bioinformatics Core Director Mario Medvedovic, Ph.D.; then CEG-leader Erin Haynes, M.S., Dr.PH. (now at the University of Kentucky); CEG Associate Director Alvaro Puga, Ph.D., Fellow AAAS, ATS; Integrative Health Sciences Facilities Core Director Susan Pinney, Ph.D., F.A.C.E.; Ricky Leung, Ph.D., Director, Integrative Technologies Support Core; new CEG Deputy Director Aimin Chen, M.D., Ph.D.; and Jagjit Yadav, Ph.D., Director of the CEG pilot projects program (2017 image).

