

# KU Discovery & Innovation

News from KU Research

December 2014

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Vice Chancellor Candidates to Visit, Present at KU
- 1 Warren Award to Jean Hall
- 2 New Role for Smith at KUMC
- 2 Next SIG Deadline: Feb. 16
- 2 Nominations Sought for KU Scholarly Achievement Award
- 2 BTBC Holds Open House
- 3 Provost Recognizes 43 with "Leading Light" Award
- 3 KU Research Notes
- 4 Texas Company Licenses KU Diabetes Technology
- 4 Give a Higgs Boson Doll!
- 4 *Multidimensional* Artwork Unveiled at the MRB
- 5 RA-101 Graduates Recognized
- 5 UPCOMING EVENTS

## Vice Chancellor Candidate Meetings Announced

Three candidates for the position of vice chancellor for research will visit the university in December. The itinerary for each candidate will include a one-hour public presentation at the Lied Center Pavilion. These sessions are open to all, and members of the KU research community are especially encouraged to attend. Dates and times are as follows:

- **Thursday, December 11, 4 p.m.**
- **Tuesday, December 16, 11 a.m.**
- **Thursday, December 18, 11 a.m.**

Each candidate will speak on the topic of "Strategies for Raising Research Stature during an Era of Declining Funding." All presentations will be recorded on video and available online after the last presentation is completed.

Information about each candidate will be posted at the [Office of the Provost website](#) two days prior to each visit. There will also be an opportunity to submit feedback about each candidate at the conclusion of their campus interview.

The search for a permanent successor to Steve Warren has been under way since mid-summer. Mary Lee Hummert is currently serving as interim vice chancellor. The search committee is chaired by Danny Anderson, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

## Jean Hall to Receive KU's Warren Research Award



Jean Hall, left, a leading scholar and public advocate on issues involving disability, employment and health, is the **2014 recipient of KU's Steven F. Warren Research Achievement Award**. The award is the highest honor given annually to a full-time academic staff researcher working in a department or research center on the Lawrence campus. The recognition includes a plaque and \$10,000 in research funds.

Hall is an associate research professor and director of KU's bi-campus Institute for Health and Disability Policy Studies. She will be recognized at a 3:30 p.m. ceremony on Wednesday, December 17 in The Forum at

Marvin Hall. Friends and colleagues are invited to attend, and a reception will follow.

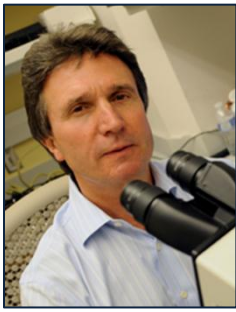
"Jean is an enormously productive researcher and role model for students," said Mary Lee Hummert, interim vice chancellor for research. "She has ties to KU's Medical Center as well as the Center for Research on Learning in the Life Span Institute and is making extraordinary contributions to her profession. She's a most deserving recipient."

The award, established in 2006, is administered by the Office of Research. It was renamed earlier this year in honor of Warren, who led KU's research office from 2007 to 2014.



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## New Role for Peter Smith at KUMC



Peter G. Smith, left, professor and interim chair of the Department of Molecular and Integrative Physiology at the KU Medical Center, has been **named senior associate dean for research**. He succeeds Paul Terranova, who will retire in January.

In his new role, Smith will serve as a key advisor to the executive dean and will assist in matters relating to research, including operations, infrastructure, recruitments and evaluations.

Smith is currently co-director of the Kansas Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center, founding director of the Institute for Neurological Discoveries, and director of Pilots and Collaborative Research Awards for Frontiers: Heartland Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (Kansas CTSA).

## Deadline: Level I Strategic Initiative Grants

Mary Lee Hummert, interim vice chancellor for research and chair of the Research Investment Council, has announced the next deadline for Level I Strategic Initiative Grant proposals: 5 p.m., Monday, February 16, 2015.

Information about the program, including the components of the application, is **available online**. The site also links to the secure, online application form. **Level II Strategic Initiative Grant** proposals are evaluated separately and can be submitted at any time.

## Call for Nominations: University Scholarly Achievement Award

Each year, KU recognizes up to four mid-career faculty members as recipients of a **University Scholarly Achievement Award**.

To be eligible, a faculty member must be an associate or full professor; be within 10 years of appointment as an associate professor; have completed three years at KU; and not have received a prior major KU award for the work being cited.

Please send an e-mail to Debra Bia at [dbia@ku.edu](mailto:dbia@ku.edu) by December 19 indicating your intention to submit a specific nomination. Full **details are available online**.



**The Bioscience & Technology Business Center (BTBC) held a campus-community open house November 20** in the newly completed Main Facility Phase II. More than 150 people attended. Above, Joe Heppert of the KU Office of Research talks with Wayne Carter, president and CEO of the Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute. Below, State Rep. Tom Sloan talks with Kansas Department of Commerce officials Randi Jack, international business recruitment manager, and Steve Kelly, deputy secretary for business development. The new building is also the Lawrence location for the bi-campus KU Innovation and Collaboration technology commercialization office.

## Remember: United Way Campaign

"Live United" is the theme of the **2014 United Way campaign** at KU. This once-a-year appeal invites faculty and staff to support many local programs that affect the education, health and self-sufficiency of the community.

## Provost Recognizes Leading Light Award Recipients at December 2 Luncheon

Forty-three Lawrence campus researchers were honored recently for their role as the PI or co-PI on a \$1 million-plus external award received during FY 2013 or FY 2014.

**Leading Light Awards** were presented by the Office of the Provost on December 2 to the following persons. It was the third such ceremony since the award was established in 2012. Past recipients are listed in the [online KU Profiles](#).

- **Becci Akin**, Social Welfare
- **Perry Alexander**, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
- **Katherine Shirley Bourque**, Life Span Institute
- **David Braaten**, Geography
- **Jay Buzhardt**, Life Span Institute
- **Kaela Byers**, Social Welfare
- **Raghunath Chaudhari**, Chemical and Petroleum Engineering
- **Gregory Cheatham**, Special Education
- **Jerome Dobson**, Geography
- **Kandace Kay Fleming**, Life Span Institute
- **Laird Forrest**, Pharmaceutical Chemistry
- **Estela Gavosto**, Mathematics
- **Andrew Gill**, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
- **William Gillispie**, Speech-Language-Hearing
- **Rick Goscha**, Social Welfare
- **Richard Hale**, Aerospace Engineering
- **Peter Herlihy**, Geography
- **Cheryl Holmes**, Social Welfare
- **Stephen Ilardi**, Psychology
- **Rick Ingram**, Psychology
- **Julian Ivanov**, Kansas Geological Survey
- **Stephen Kapp**, Social Welfare
- **Prasad Kulkarni**, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
- **Brian Laird**, Chemistry
- **Mark Landau**, Psychology
- **Jilu Li**, Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets
- **Rose Mason**, Life Span Institute
- **Amy McCart**, Life Span Institute
- **Amy Mendenhall**, Social Welfare
- **Radu (Alex) Moise**, Pharmacology and Toxicology
- **Terry Moore**, Social Welfare
- **John Paden**, Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets
- **Marianne Perie**, Achievement and Assessment Institute
- **William Picking**, Pharmaceutical Chemistry
- **Fernando Rodriguez-Morales**, Ctr. for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets
- **Jerry Schultz**, Life Span Institute
- **Julia Shaftel**, Achievement and Assessment Institute
- **Barbara Thompson**, Special Education
- **Ward Thompson**, Chemistry
- **Anthony Walton**, Geology
- **Paul Willhite**, Chemical and Petroleum Engineering
- **Howard Wills**, Life Span Institute
- **Jie (Stephen) Yan**, Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets

Also: prior-year recipient **Wendy Picking**, Pharmaceutical Chemistry



Researchers recognized at the Leading Light Award luncheon were invited to speak briefly about their work. Above, Andy Gill of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. Below, Becci Akin of Social Welfare, left, and Wendy Picking, Pharmaceutical Chemistry.

## KU Research Notes

### Personnel News from the KU Office of Research

- KU Research is searching for an assistant director for budgets and financial services. The position description and application are [available online](#).
- **Amy Patty** joined the Award Processing Services Team in Post-Award Services on December 8. She was previously a grant specialist at the Life Span Institute but was at KU Research from 1999 to 2010 in Pre-Award Services, advancing from grant specialist to grant officer and team lead.
- **Jim O'Malley** has joined the Award Processing Services Team in Post-Award Services as a grant specialist.

## Texas Pharmaceutical Company Licenses KU Diabetes Treatment Technology

KU and Reata Pharmaceuticals of Irving, Texas, have **completed a major licensing agreement** for a portfolio of drug technologies invented by Brian Blagg, professor of medicinal chemistry, and Rick Dobrowsky, professor of pharmacology and toxicology.

“This is a very significant development for KU,” said Rajiv Kulkarni, director of KU Innovation and Collaboration. “Our goal always is to see drug research developed into treatments that help patients. Reata translates innovative science into medicines for difficult-to-treat diseases, so the agreement is a good fit for them and for KU.”

Blagg and Dobrowsky are exploring the potential use of “novologues” for treating a common complication of diabetes: diabetic peripheral neuropathy (DPN). Symptoms of the condition include muscular weakness and numbness and tingling in the arms and legs.

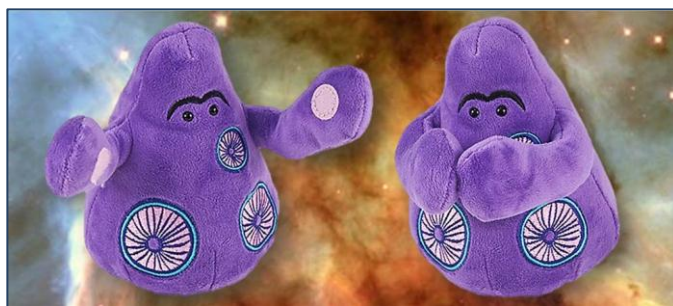
Novologues, developed by Blagg, are a broad group of compounds that show promise in treating cancer and neurodegenerative diseases. In 2010, he and Dobrowsky reported on the use of the novologue KU-32 in treating DPN. Subsequent development of their work led to a number of patented discoveries and the licensing agreement with Reata.

“Reata’s resources and experience will help advance novologues toward testing in clinical trials aimed at treating DPN,” Blagg said. “There aren’t many treatments available to patients with certain forms of this disease. Novologues would represent a ‘first-in-class’ approach toward treating a condition that affects 60-70 percent of diabetic patients.”

Early phases of this research were supported by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Subsequent support was provided by the National Institutes of Health.

Reata is working with Blagg and Dobrowsky on a strategy for collaboration with KU. The company expects to fund new research at Lawrence while it develops the existing technologies it has now licensed.

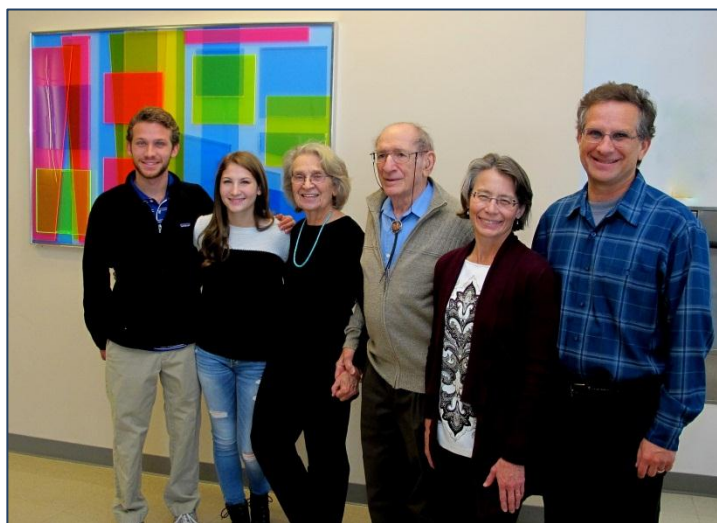
The agreement with Reata reflects KU’s commitment during the past decade to secure patent protection for the novologue discoveries. “It’s an expensive process,” Kulkarni said, “and we are selective, based on the likelihood of future success. In this case, the investment was more than worth it.”



### Holiday Gift-Giving Made Easy in 2014!

A new Higgs Boson plush doll, above, was developed by the **KU Quarked!** team of physicists, museum educators and designers, aided by KU Innovation and Collaboration. It is now **available online at the KU Bookstore** and at the KU Natural History Museum store.

The Higgs Boson is a sub-atomic particle. The six-inch doll (\$12) comes with printed information about the Higgs field and its importance, i.e., without it “atoms and molecules would not be able to form, and the world of matter as we know it would not exist.” It’s a great stocking stuffer, too.



**Multidimensional**, a colorful plexiglas sculpture by noted artist **Hilda Appel Volkin of Albuquerque**, third from left, was unveiled November 25 during a reception in the third floor lobby of the Multidisciplinary Research Building. The work is a gift to KU from David Volkin, Takeru and Aya Higuchi Distinguished Professor of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, far right, and his wife Anna Hagen, education program coordinator in Pharmaceutical Chemistry. Also shown is David’s father, Howard, and children Jonathan and Lisa Volkin, both of whom are students at KU.

## KU “Research Administration 101” Participants Recognized November 19

The annual 10-week RA-101 training program for research administrators wrapped up on November 19. A total of 27 KU staff qualified for a graduation certificate, which becomes part of the employee’s record. Congratulations!

- **Chris Bell**, Biomedical Research SSC
- **Theresa Brown**, Student Affairs Research
- **Elenor Buffington**, Law
- **Lowell Buffington**, Campus Administration and Operations SSC
- **Blake Cauble-Johnson**, Financial Aid and Scholarships
- **Matt Dollar**, KU Research, Post-Award
- **Danielle Dougherty**, KU Research, Post-Award
- **Jane Falls-Rank**, KU Research, Post-Award
- **Aimee Garcia**, Campus Administration and Operations SSC
- **Matt Garrett**, KU Information Technology
- **Jena Gunter**, Institute for Policy & Social Research
- **Jocelyn Isley**, KU Research, HSCL, Research Integrity
- **Jamie Jones**, Life Span Institute
- **Jaime Keeler**, Biodiversity Institute
- **Mandy Kelly**, KU Research, Post-Award
- **Todd Kofford**, KU Information Technology
- **Roxie Lytle**, Center for Research Methods and Data Analysis
- **Roy Lytle**, KU Information Technology
- **Bruce Montrose**, KU Research, Awards Processing
- **Dorothy Nary**, Research and Training Center on Independent Living, Life Span Institute
- **Cindy Nau**, Biobehavioral and Social Research SSC
- **Mary Perkins**, Applied English Center
- **Matt Stevens**, KU Research, Pre-Award
- **Lisa Weeks**, Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation
- **Joyce Williams**, KU Research, Post-Award
- **Lyn Wolz**, KU Libraries
- **Han Yan**, KU Office of Internal Audit

## Upcoming Events

*Additional events and details  
are available at the [KU Calendar](#).*

### DECEMBER 9

**KU Innovation and Collaboration Proof of Concept Fund Project Seminar:** “A New Compound (Murikal) Dramatically Increases Hair Growth: The Development of a New Mouse Model,” **Peter S. N. Rowe, Kidney Institute**  
Noon – 1:30 p.m.  
KU Medical Center, 1018/19 Orr Major Hall

### DECEMBER 11

**Vice Chancellor for Research Candidate Public Presentation**  
4 p.m.  
Lied Center Pavilion

### DECEMBER 16

**Vice Chancellor for Research Candidate Public Presentation**  
11 a.m.  
Lied Center Pavilion

### DECEMBER 17

**Steven F. Warren Research Achievement Award Ceremony**  
3:30 p.m.  
The Forum at Marvin Hall

### DECEMBER 18

**Vice Chancellor for Research Candidate Public Presentation**  
11 a.m.  
Lied Center Pavilion

### FEBRUARY 16, 2015

**Deadline: Strategic Initiative Grants Level I Proposals**

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