

UM Institute for Genome Sciences Announces New Associate Directors Baltimore, Maryland May 14, 2010

Claire M. Fraser-Liggett, PhD, director of the Institute for Genome Sciences (IGS) at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, is pleased to announce the appointments of two distinguished scientists and faculty members to new positions at IGS. Dr. Jacques Ravel, Associate Professor in Microbiology and Immunology, has been appointed to Associate Director, Genomics at IGS. Dr. Owen White, Professor, Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, has been appointed Associate Director, Bioinformatics.

“The IGS research portfolio has increased significantly in the past two years, and our faculty are engaged in a number of new collaborations with investigators on the UMB campus and in laboratories around the world. With the introduction of new DNA sequencing technologies and the challenges of dealing with massive amounts of data, we need to continually be thinking about how to best manage our research programs, platforms, and personnel,” said Dr. Fraser-Liggett. “Drs. Ravel and White have been contributing significantly to these discussions, and their appointments to Associate Directors will formally recognize their leadership roles within the organization.”

Both Associate Directors will actively participate in strategic planning with regard to the growth and future research directions of IGS. Their new team effort will lead to many new opportunities for expansion of multi-investigator, genomic-enabled research collaborations across the UMB campus. They will also have leadership roles in mentoring other IGS faculty and continuing to assist with development of comprehensive graduate and medical curricula in genomics and bioinformatics. The Institute for Genome Sciences was launched in 2007 and is an internationally recognized center for interdisciplinary genomics and bioinformatics research. Some of the scientists at IGS also hold faculty appointments at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Drs. Ravel and White will continue with their faculty positions, along with their new management positions at IGS.

Dr. Ravel first began working with Dr. Fraser-Liggett over 10 years ago, when she was Director of The Institute for Genome Research (TIGR), a research institution that was in Rockville. He started his microbiology degrees at the University of Nancy 1 in France and completed his doctorate in Microbial Ecology from the University of Maryland College Park. He is a lead investigator with the Human Microbiome Project (HMP), an NIH-funded roadmap initiative and has expertise in microbial forensics. In FY 10, his annual grant awards are over \$4.8 Million in funding at IGS. As Associate Director, Genomics, Dr. Ravel will oversee the research work in Metagenomics and Genomics laboratories at IGS.

Dr. White first began working with Dr. Fraser-Liggett over 16 years ago at TIGR. He completed his doctorate in Molecular Biology from New Mexico State University. NIH has selected Dr. White as lead scientist for the Human Microbiome Project’s central data repository or the Data Analysis and Coordination Center (known as HMP DACC). Dr. White and the IGS Bioinformatics department are involved in large-scale annotation, ontology development and data sharing. In FY10, his annual grant

awards are over \$4.1 Million in funding at IGS. As Associate Director, Bioinformatics, Dr. White will oversee the annotation work for researchers from the UMB community and from global collaborators.

About IGS

The Institute for Genome Sciences (IGS) at the University of Maryland School of Medicine is an international research center dedicated to advancing the use of genomics to improve healthcare. Led by Dr. Claire Fraser-Liggett, a preeminent genome scientist and microbiologist, IGS is located in a 10-acre BioPark on the University of Baltimore's campus in downtown Baltimore. IGS scientists integrate genomics, bioinformatics and metagenomics into biomedical research. For more information, see www.igs.umaryland.edu.