Jan A. Nolta, Ph.D. Bio

Jan A. Nolta, Ph.D., stem cell program director at UC Davis, is one of the nation's leading stem cell researchers.

In addition to conducting groundbreaking research into human stem cells, Nolta is overseeing the expansion of UC Davis' exploration of regenerative medicine, which includes recruiting and hiring additional scientists to complement more than 100 faculty members who are already affiliated with the stem cell program. She is also overseeing the construction of a 100,000 square-foot facility on the UC Davis campus in Sacramento, which will become the focal point for the university's research into stem cells.

Nolta joined UC Davis in 2006 after directing an R01-funded stem-cell research lab and overseeing the work of 14 other scientists at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. She also served as the Scientific Director for the university's Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Facility for cell and gene therapy, where she helped investigators move promising bench research into clinical cellular therapy trials. Her laboratory used human hematopoietic, mesenchymal, and endothelial stem and progenitor populations to examine the recruitment of adult stem cells to areas of tissue damage in immune deficient mice.

Nolta's current research, which continues to incorporate the full range of stem and progenitor cell populations, is focused on developing new and better stem cell therapies for treating liver disease, cardiac infarction, and peripheral vascular disease, among others.

A scientist with more than 20 years' experience with human stem cells, Nolta has served on more than 34 National Institutes of Health review panels and is a full-time member of the Hematopoiesis Study Section at the NIH. She was recently invited to participate in the strategic planning meetings in the area of cellular therapeutics at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. She has served as editor and editorial board member on six scientific journals and belongs to a number of national and international science committees.

Her early research experience focused on biology, cell cycle, transduction, and engraftment of human hematopoietic and mesenchymal stem and progenitor cells in immune deficient mouse xenotransplantation models. She has published more than 75 peer-reviewed manuscripts and has authored 15 book chapters related to stem cells and regenerative medicine research. She recently served as editor of the textbook "Genetic Engineering of Mesenchymal Stem Cells," published in 2006.

Nolta received a Bachelor of Science degree from California State University Sacramento, took master's classes at UC Davis and earned a Ph.D. in molecular microbiology from the University of Southern California. She was a post-doctoral fellow at Children's Hospital of Los Angeles and an assistant professor at the USC School of Medicine before being appointed as an associate professor at Washington University School of Medicine.

Nolta is a native of Northern California. She anticipates that with the existing stem cell expertise at UC Davis, coupled with the new research faculty members and facilities in Sacramento, translational stem-cell science at the university will rise to new levels and will offer great hope for those who suffer from disease and injury.