

Multi-faceted Problems Require Multi-faceted Solutions

By Arvin M. Gouw, Ph.D.

Like nearly all scientists in the field of cancer research, I know that making discoveries that are ground-breaking – discoveries that will lead to the development of new drugs for various cancer types – takes time and requires specialized research that doesn't always translate into catchy headlines. Throughout my training and career, like many scientists, I have delved deeper and deeper into the abyss of my particular field (cancer metabolism), becoming ever more specific in my research investigations.

As a scientist, one of my biggest challenges has been to answer the questions "What's your research about? Have you discovered a drug to cure cancer yet?" from family, friends, and others outside of my field. Instead of trying to explain in plain words the significance of Myc's cooperation with SREBP1 in the regulation of the lipogenesis pathway in Burkitt's lymphoma, I realize that my audience basically wants to know "What contribu-

tion has your research given to the cure of cancer?"

Upon further reflection on this question, I realize that science is only the means to an end. We in the medical field strive to battle specific diseases. However, we often forget that the problem doesn't stop with the disease. Diseases are caused by both environmental and biological factors. As much as we try to battle these diseases biologically, there are a multitude of harmful environmental conditions that scientists cannot deal with. Scientists are constantly giving recommendations for healthy living to reduce the risk for diseases such as cancer, but unfortunately healthy living is often times not possible given the pervasive, systemic social issues that surround various communities. In the same vein, the legal and civil authorities battling social problems often do not connect these problems to the state of health of the victims of injustice.

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The goal of *Cancer InCytes* magazine is precisely to bridge this gap in awareness between the biological and the social aspects of our common problem. Just as the challenges that we face are multi-faceted, our means to combat them have to be multi-faceted as well. This does not mean that scientists must start studying sociology and law, and vice versa. This is merely an encouragement for you to use whatever expertise you have to partake in the solution by working hand-in-hand with others not in your field.

Sincerely,



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Senior Editor of
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