

The Louis Garfinkle Memorial Fund California Institute of Technology

December 21, 2007

Dear Family and Friends,

It seems like just a short time ago that I wrote to you establishing the Louis A. Garfinkle Memorial Laboratory Fund to remember my Uncle Lou who battled so hard for so many years against Parkinson's disease. Many of you responded with generous donations to make this dream a reality. The funds that we have raised together go to support something that Lou always encouraged and loved to hear about – the research in Dr. Ellen Rothenberg's laboratory at Caltech to which I have dedicated the last 25 years of my life.

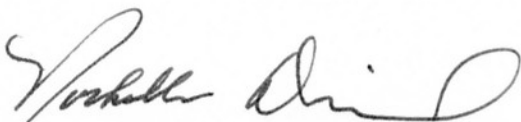
You may have read articles in the news media recently about transforming skin cells into stem cells. This is very exciting news, but all the experts interviewed for those articles clearly point out that the research is far from over and in fact just at the beginning. Why? Because we still don't understand how to control the stem cells from becoming cancer cells, no matter whether the cells were derived from adult skin or from embryos. The fact remains that researchers still do not understand how these stem cells actually work biologically to reach their ultimate mature fate of a neuron, blood cell, or liver cell. This is the puzzle that our lab has been dedicated to solving for many years. Without the foundation of this knowledge, physicians attempting to use stem cells as therapy for disease are performing rudderless voyages into the unknown.

Ellen Rothenberg and I are happy to report to you what we have done since the beginning of 2007 with the funds that you so generously have donated. Please take the time to read the enclosed Caltech fiscal report detailing what we have purchased and what those purchases are being used for. We hope that you will feel as much a part of this research as we do. It isn't very often that donors know exactly what each dollar has purchased. We feel that you should know that your donation has been and will continue to be used only to purchase the vital equipment and reagents that will help us gain important knowledge that might someday make stem cells and their progeny major players in the battle against disease. We are constructing a website for the Louis Garfinkle Memorial Laboratory Fund so that you can see the members of our lab and the new instruments that we have purchased. You can point your internet browser to:

<http://www.louisgarfinklememorial.org>

It is our fervent hope that you will continue to support this vital research and that you will become a true stakeholder in the process and progress of this important endeavor. All of us in the Rothenberg Laboratory thank you from the bottom of our hearts for making this fund a reality. It is truly making a difference every day in our ability to accomplish our mission.

Best wishes to you and yours for this holiday season and New Year.



Rochelle (Shelley) Diamond
Member of the Professional Staff



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December 12, 2007

Dear Friends,

We are deeply grateful and humbled by the trust you have placed in my research group, to honor Louis Garfinkle's life. In his memory, you have given us vital funding that renews and enhances our efforts to understand how stem cells can be channeled accurately into specific roles in the body. I must confess another debt of gratitude: much of the strength of my lab over the years has grown from the extraordinary talent and selfless dedication that Shelley Diamond has invested for a quarter of a century. She has often called Louis Garfinkle her own inspiration. Now the individual, personal decisions you have made to contribute to the Louis A. Garfinkle Memorial Laboratory Fund are like a miracle for us.

Your support for our lab's mission has already made an enormous difference in the work of all the group members, from advanced postdoctoral scholars to enthusiastic young students just beginning their training. We truly hope that you will be able to share the excitement of progress that we are making with your help. It would be a great honor to welcome you to our lab and thank you in person. Most of all, in giving us the privilege to honor Louis Garfinkle's memory through our work, we are inspired by your own vision and generosity. It is with awe, as well as gratitude that we accept this precious charge. I cannot find words to thank you enough.

With kindest wishes for a joyous holiday season,

Ellen V. Rothenberg
Albert Billings Ruddock Professor of Biology

