

February 7, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, our new Strategic Vision calls on us to actively pursue scholarship with consequence, as society looks to USC not just for vital basic research, but also for translational research and professional practice aimed at illuminating and solving real world challenges. With the rise of the life and medical sciences and biotechnology as a major focus for national research, USC has made it a priority to develop, retain and recruit world-class, transformative faculty, whose work advances knowledge across these disciplines, through our Provost Professor, Faculty Hiring in the Sciences and Engineering, and Transformative Hiring in Neuroscience initiatives. These faculty are catalysts for the intellectual and creative energy that infuses our academic community, and they set a path for developing innovative solutions to modern challenges.

I am pleased to announce a major scientific recruitment to the Keck School of Medicine of USC and the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, one that will have a transformative effect on the biological sciences across the university's campuses. Dr. **Andrew P. McMahon** will be a Provost Professor and serve as the inaugural W. M. Keck Professor of Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine. In addition, he will chair the newly created Department of Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine and serve as director of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC. He will also hold an appointment in the Department of Biological Sciences in the USC Dornsife College. He will join the university on July 1, 2012.

Dr. McMahon is currently the Frank B. Baird, Jr. Professor of Science in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University and is on the Executive Committee of the Harvard Stem Cell Institute. He is also a professor in the Department of Stem Cell and Regenerative Biology, Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology and principle faculty member in the Harvard Stem Cell Institute. In 1993, he joined Harvard University as a full professor, and from 2001 to 2004, served as chair of its Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology.

As USC advances its new Strategic Vision, we will continue to make bold investments in recruiting world-class faculty, and Dr. McMahon's appointment marks a significant milestone in these efforts. He is a scientist of the absolute highest caliber, and his appointment will dramatically bolster the medical and biological sciences at USC. In establishing his laboratory at the university, he will also bring a team of highly accomplished researchers from Harvard.

Dr. McMahon and his team study the mechanisms that underlie the assembly, repair and regeneration of critical organ systems. In building knowledge on these subjects, they seek to provide an informed, logic-based platform for translating basic research into practical applications in the area of regenerative medicine. This carries enormous potential for the treatment of human disease, as stem cell science offers a particularly broad reach. It can provide insights into normal and abnormal development in human cells, and it holds the potential for the repair and replacement of human tissues and organs.

Dr. McMahon's basic research has yielded important findings into the biology of mammalian signaling factors that have been translated into clinical medicine with the development of a novel anti-cancer drug, vismodegib, the first FDA –approved hedgehog pathway inhibitor, in a Curis/Genentech partnership.

Before arriving at Harvard, Dr. McMahon led the Department of Cell and Developmental Biology at the Roche Institute for Molecular Biology in Nutley, New Jersey. He previously held the position of staff scientist at the National Institute for Medical Research in London, where he started his independent research program. Dr. McMahon received his bachelor's degree from St. Peter's College, Oxford University and his Ph.D. from University College in London. He subsequently worked for three years as a postdoctoral fellow at the California Institute of Technology, so he is no stranger to Los Angeles.

Dr. McMahon is an elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Royal Society (London), as well as an elected Associate Member of the European Molecular Biology Organization. He has served as an editor of the journals *Development* and *Developmental Biology*, and on the editorial boards of several other scientific journals, including *Genes and Development* and *Current Biology*.

At USC, Dr. McMahon will be charged with recruiting a new generation of the world's top biological scientists to our campuses to work with our current exceptional faculty researchers. We anticipate building a core group of faculty across the university to pursue science that will benefit our entire life sciences research enterprise, as well as contribute to larger efforts to better understand basic human biology. Dr. McMahon will work closely with USC's clinicians to develop new stem cell therapies, and he will teach both our undergraduate and graduate students. During the recruitment process, Dr. McMahon specifically requested the opportunity to teach undergraduates each year—a testament to his belief in the importance of mentoring future scientists.

In leading the Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research, Dr. McMahon will bridge our Health Sciences Campus, the research departments at the Keck hospitals, and a number of schools and academic departments on our University Park Campus, including the Viterbi School of Engineering and our biology and chemistry departments within the Dornsife College. The Broad Center will provide a central core around which these scientists, and those at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, can come together.

Dr. McMahon's appointment represents a key step in our institution's endeavor to build academic excellence in the medical sciences, and to become an international leader in stem cell research. I want to acknowledge the successful recruiting efforts of Dean **Carmen Puliafito** of the USC Keck School of Medicine, Executive Vice Provost **Michael Quick**, and the advisory search committee for the Broad Center director, chaired by Provost Professor **Pat Levitt**.

Dr. McMahon's wife, Jill, is also an accomplished scientist and will continue her research at USC as part of her husband's team. She has extensive experience in gene delivery techniques, and she has authored or co-authored numerous scientific articles. We look forward to their arrival in Los Angeles this summer, and to Dr. McMahon's leadership at USC.

With best regards,



Elizabeth Garrett

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs