

alumni



¡Bienvenido to DKFZ members, international guests, and friends! Alumni Chairman Manfred Schwab introduced to the attractive program of the Alumni New Year Reception that offered colourful examples of Latin American music and dances and provided insight into the culture of the Hispanic countries.

Exquisite Encounter with Latin America

This year, the DKFZ Alumni Association favored the Latin American countries and their culture as the motto for the New Year Reception. This was a good choice, as eventually became clear by the tremendous response to the colorful and vivid afternoon. Folk music and dances alternated with reports on the typical lifestyle and cultural specialties, which included more than one surprise for the many national and inter-national guests.

2+3

Potent Platform Promotes Career Boost

With the aim of actively tracing back DKFZ Alumni and staying in touch with current DKFZ members, a DKFZ Career Network group on a social media platform was created. Learn more about the treasure box “LinkedIn” and find out how an active membership can open up new avenues for your career. No matter if you are seeking the latest news on former colleagues or if you wish to advertise your own profile – this platform gives easy access to the required information.

7

Ambitious Approach Fosters Work Life Balance

Compatibility of career and family is one of the central concerns of the DKFZ as an employer. To this end, an Equal Opportunity Representative was appointed to open up for new options facilitating the balance of work and private life. Further, in order to increase the awareness for the issues of female executives and to raise the numbers of female scientists in leading positions the DKFZ Executive Women’s Initiative has been established.

12 + 13

editorial

Dear Alumni, Colleagues, and Friends,

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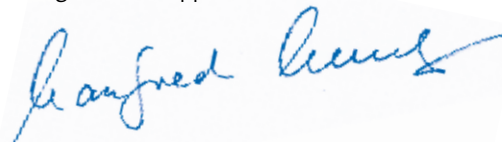
Front cover, back cover, p. 2, p.3, p.4, bottom: DKFZ/ Yan de Andres; p.2: wikimedia commons, p. 4, top, middle: DKFZ/Josef Wiegand; p. 5 private; p.6. pixabay.com; p.7: Barbara Janssens/Dagmar Anders; p. 8: DKFZ/Markus Feuerer, Dieter Schröter; p.9, top: Hotel am Badersee, bottom: private; p. 10, top: Philipp Rothe, middle: DKFZ, bottom: Yassin Harim, Alumni des Heidelberger Life-Science Lab e.V.; p. 11, left: private, middle: Heidelberg University Medical Center, right: DKFZ; p.12: Fotolia; p.13: DKFZ/Jutta Jung; p.14: private; p. 15: wikimedia commons; p. 16, top and middle: Christel Schwab, bottom: Hadeel Khallouf; p. 17, top: Peter Schmelzle/ wikimedia commons, bottom: Christel Schwab, p. 18: DKFZ

Scientific excellence and competitiveness are hallmarks on which the internationally outstanding reputation of the DKFZ is based. As an employer of almost 3,000 staff members, the Center is aware of its responsibility to provide stimulating organizational structures for career development. This aim is strongly supported by the DKFZ Alumni Association, too. With the aim of actively tracing back DKFZ Alumni and staying in contact with current members of the Center, a DKFZ career network group based on the social media platform LinkedIn was set up by Barbara Janssens, PhD Career Manager at the DKFZ and also Board Member of the Alumni Association, together with Marion Gürth, Project Coordinator Career Service (p. 7). Lately, the network has grown and to date gives easy access to information for more than 1,000 members. In order to foster personal contacts during career development, Lindsay Murrells (PhD Program Manager and Alumni Board Member) has initiated get-togethers ("Stammtische") in different cities such as San Francisco, Boston, London, Berlin and others. In this activity she receives support by Barbara Janssens and Marion Gürth (p. 5). New members of the DKFZ who are at an early stage of their career and who seek to establish personal contacts gratefully welcome site visits to regional pharmaceutical companies that introduce to career options in industry (p. 15). Another good chance to get connected are visits to cultural sites as described on page 17. These activities are organized by Gerhard van Kaick, DKFZ Alumni Advisor, whose remarkable and exceptional career is portrayed by Wolfgang Schlegel on page 4. Compatibility of career and family is one of the central concerns of the DKFZ as an employer. Karin Greulich-Bode, "DKFZ Equal Opportunity Commissioner", elaborates on recent developments of "gender issues" where the concept of "supporting women alone" has shifted to "gender blindness", implying that it should not matter anymore if a man or a woman is taking over family issues (p. 12). An ambitious program to promote women in DKFZ lead positions is discussed by Susanne Weg-Remers, Head of the DKFZ Cancer Information

Service (KID; p.13). To increase the share of females in leading positions, the DKFZ Executive Women's Initiative has been established and receives generous support by the DKFZ Management. A number of interesting topics also featured in this issue reflect the lively involvement of the DKFZ Alumni Association in a range of attractive events. Please see, for instance, the presentation by Andres Florez and Lindsay Murrells about the exciting "2015 New Year Reception" under the motto "A Taste of Latin America" (p. 2+3); learn more about Herrmann von Helmholtz as a philosopher from the essay by Barbara Janssens and Liesbet De Kock – bearing in mind that the DKFZ is a member of the Helmholtz Association. Further, Stefanie Seltmann reports on the successful Alumni Reception during the AACR meeting in Philadelphia (p.6); and in an interview Alumnus Daniel Stolte states a revealing point of view on the Alumni Association (p. 14).

An important event of the Alumni Association is scheduled for June 9-11, 2016: the "7th General Alumni Meeting". The scientific part will address "Clinical Epigenetics" and an attractive faculty of international experts has firmly agreed to present latest developments on this "hot topic" (p. 15). Please, keep in mind that access to the meeting is not restricted to DKFZ Alumni, but granted to all DKFZ members, to the Heidelberg University scientific community and to interested guests without a fee. So, save the date!

All that is left is to thank all friends, supporters and sponsors of the DKFZ Alumni Association. In particular I thank my fellow Board Members Lindsay Murrells, Barbara Janssens, Elfriede Mang, Wolfgang Schlegel, and Axel Wiest as well as the Advisors to the Board Gerhard van Kaick and Konrad Buschbeck for continued activity and encouragement, Dagmar Anders for talented artistry layout, professional design and creative editing of the Newsletter, and last not least the Management Board of the DKFZ Josef Puchta and Otmar Wiestler for continued generous support.



alumni lecture

Hermann von Helmholtz as a Philosopher

by Barbara Janssens and Liesbet De Kock

How much do we know about Hermann von Helmholtz? What can we tell about him beyond the fact that an association of large-scale research centers is named after him, and that he was a nineteenth century scientist and philosopher? To delve deeper into these matters, the Alumni Association DKFZ hosted a lecture by Dr. Liesbet De Kock, Centre for Logic and Philosophy of Science, Free University of Brussels, Belgium, in the end of March. More than 80 guests joined the lecture, and young students as well as experienced professors engaged in a lively discussion.

In the nineteenth century, scientist Hermann von Helmholtz (1821-1894) founded the Physikalisch-Technische Reichsanstalt, the predecessor of the Helmholtz Association. Helmholtz is said to have been one of the last universal geniuses, famous for his numerous contributions to the fields of physics, optics and thermodynamics. Much less is known, however, about Helmholtz as a philosopher. As an empirical scientist, Helmholtz was certainly inspired by empiricist philosophers such as John Stuart Mill. But Helmholtz was also an heir of the idealist tradition that dominated the intellectual landscape in Germany for a large part of the eighteenth and nineteenth century – a tradition instigated by Immanuel Kant, and further developed by Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Friedrich von Schelling. Especially in the context of his extensive inquiries into the nature of human perception, Helmholtz became increasingly fascinated with questions of truth and objectivity, or at a more primitive level: the question of how we first arrive at the idea of an external world. For Helmholtz, the relevancy of this question was not restricted to the theory of perception, but pertained to the foundation of empirical science itself, that is, after all, based primarily on sensitive experience.

Interestingly, it was the question of perception of the “outer world” that inspired psychologist and philosopher Dr. Liesbet De Kock to move from her work with psychotic patients to the philosophy of perception: Indeed it seems that in psychosis, people’s perception of the outer world is changed as such that the division between “inner” and “outer” perception is not clear any more.

How does Helmholtz fit into the term “idealism”, for which it is hard to find a common denominator? It is fairly safe to claim that all idealists, in one way or another, took the subject, or the problem of subjectivity in philosophy and science as a point of departure. Kant’s theory of knowledge started out from the basic



idea that the subject, not the object, is at the center of all knowledge, and that this should therefore be our focus in trying to gain an understanding of what knowledge is, and what makes science possible. Another possible difficulty in trying to gain a clear understanding of Helmholtz’s idealism, is his notorious anti-metaphysical attitude. Helmholtz was not a big fan of speculation, and he therefore firmly rejected the systems of

Hegel and Schelling, for example. The same does not hold for his relation to Kant and Fichte however, whom he considered to be in complete accordance with the physiology of his time (Helmholtz, 1855).

In line with Fichte’s philosophy, Helmholtz conceived of the external world

first and foremost as a negative entity: a force that opposes the power of will, or literally: a “Gegen-stand”. Hence, in the end, the principle of freedom lies at the foundation of Helmholtz’s philosophy of science in general, and his theory of perception in particular. This is quite surprising for a man that has been described by many as a representative of strict determinism...

Taking a fresh look at the philosophical dimension of Helmholtz’s work not only enables one to understand why he considered himself a precursor to certain contemporary approaches towards the genesis of perceptual experience and external consciousness. His work also invites us to reflect on the nature of objectivity. More particularly, as Helmholtz claimed, this epistemic category necessarily prompts us to investigate the physical and physiological structure of the sensory apparatus, but also, and more importantly, the structure of our understanding, as it governs our interpretation of purely

bodily sensations. To say it with Helmholtz (1891): “Just as a physicist has to examine the telescope and galvanometer with which he is working; has to get a clear conception of what he can attain with them, and how they may deceive him; so, too, it seemed to me necessary to investigate likewise the capabilities of our power of thought.”

reception

A Taste of Latin America by Andres Florez and Lindsay Murrells

After the success of last year's Chinese New Year Reception, the DKFZ Alumni Association wanted to make another continent the motto of the event. After an initial brainstorm the decision was made in favor of Latin America. A good choice as eventually became clear by the tremendous response to the colorful and vivid afternoon.

Actually, it was a coincidence when it came to Prof. Manfred Schwab's attention that Andres Florez, a Colombian PhD student at the DKFZ, had created a video for the competition "Dance your PhD" in the Journal "Science". His video explains his thesis about neuroblastoma and MYCN, a useful biomarker for cancer medicine, and how to fight it using systems biology approaches. Prof. Schwab was enthusiastic about this creative way of showing science with Latin American dancing and asked Andres to bring the "Latino" spirit into the Association's yearly celebration. Perfect support was offered by Sarah Zimmerman who is in charge of organizing important DKFZ events, e.g. the 2014 Nobel Laureate symposium. She was especially motivated for this project not only due to her affinity for the Latino culture, but also for flu-



ent Spanish in combination with amazing salsa skills. Together with Andres she set up an attractive choice of dances and music interspersed with entertaining talks and presentations. Dr. Lindsay Murrells and her team beautifully decorated the Communication Center with colorful flags of the different Latin American countries. With the help of Dagmar Anders from the Public Relations Office an appealing flyer and poster were created to promote the event adequately.



In fact, the program attracted many DKFZ members and associated friends. Right from the beginning, the sounds of Salsa music in the foyer fueled the easy going party mood. Cumbia, a typical folkloric dance from Colombia, lived up the introduction of the event. After the great performance of the Alma Latina dancing group, Manfred Schwab welcomed the national and international guests and promoted the different activities of the year. Later, he introduced to the story of the song "Girl of Ipanema", a famous song originated in Brazil. The memorable Bossa Nova tunes were presented by the band Bue-



na Onda. Their musical performances combined percussion, Spanish guitar and violin and perfectly matched the mixture of African and Spanish rhythms typical in Latin America. A highlight of the afternoon was an entertaining presentation given by the Paula Marin, a DKFZ PhD student, together with Andres Florez. Paula explained how to survive in Latin America and how to cope with cultural manners that fairly differ from the German ones. Yet, there is some danger when going to Latin America, as indicated by Paula: Actually, you might want to stay, no matter whether public transportation never comes on time or despite parties on the streets. Even if you have to figure out complicated devices in order to deal with ant infestations, typical of tropical countries, you may not want to leave...



The beautiful performance of Chan Chan, a famous Cuban song, was followed by a very creative presentation by two Master Students (now PhD students) from Heidelberg University: Veronika Ceballos and David Bejarano gave an actual “taste” of what it is like being in Latin America. They took the audience on a virtual journey over a year of the different celebrations



David Bejarano

portunity to show that science can be presented without the need of slides. His video performance proved that research still can be understood and at the same time entertain the audience. The grand finale was once again performed by Buena Onda, this time with live singing by David Bejarano and No-hora Galán, two Master students who beautifully interpreted the famous song



Veronika Ceballos

Guest speaker Dr. Hai-Kun Liu, head of the DKFZ Junior Research Group Normal and Neoplastic CNS Stem Cells, provided the scientific part of the program with an enlightening and inspiring presentation. He talked about his path of becoming a scientist and a group leader and advised everybody to live up their dreams without neglecting the people who come across the way: In fact, it's



Buena Onda

in Latin America. A combination of music, videos and pictures perfectly described the cultural roots of Latinos. Starting with the carnivals in Barranquilla Colombia and ending with the Posadas in Mexico, it seems that despite all difficulties that might appear in the news, Latin America is a beautiful part of the world that is really worth visiting.



Hai-Kun Liu

“Cancion con todos” from the great artist Mercedes Sosa. The song expresses the nature of Latinos who eagerly give away their warm feelings to people and who fight for a better future. After the official end, a Latin American buffet, exquisitely prepared by the casino team of Martin Hauschild, awaited the guests. Janosch Weber, the chef in charge, combined culinary recipes from



them who enrich the career, not the places! Hai-Kun Liu is clearly an example of someone who became productive and successful and at the same time managed to keep up a nurturing environment in science. Last but not least, Andres Florez presented his contribution to the “Dance your PhD” competition. He described how his passion for dancing became an ideal op-



Andres Florez

different countries with a special selection of Chilean wine. Additionally, typical cocktails such as Mojitos and Margaritas were offered by the postdocs Heiko Weyd, Karen Nieto and Ana de Oliveira. As expected, dancing to the rhythmic sounds of Latin American music was not the exception. No doubt – the taste of Latin America has been met with great enthusiasm. Only one question remains: Which country will rise to the challenge to organize the 2016 Alumni Reception?

special honor

Exceptional Commitment to Radiooncology and Science

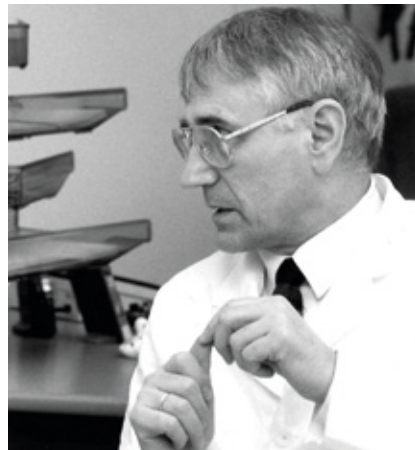
by Wolfgang Schlegel

Only recently, on the 21st of April, Gerhard van Kaick celebrated his 80th birthday. This occasion provides a welcome opportunity to acknowledge the radiologist's dedication to science and his many achievements throughout his career, which was closely linked with the evolution of the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ).



As head of the Division Oncological Diagnostics and Therapy Prof. Gerhard van Kaick was a promotor of the modern tomographic imaging modalities: He introduced ultrasound into oncological diagnostics as early as 1972, computerized tomography (CT) in 1976 and magnet resonance imaging (MRI) in 1983. Since 1972, he was the coordinator of the German Thorotrast study where he significantly contributed to the clarification of late radiation effects after the incorporation of radioactive substances.

Gerhard van Kaick served as a consultant in numerous authorities, e. g. in the Tumor Center Heidelberg/Mannheim, the German Research Founda-



tion (DFG), in advisory councils of the German Ministry of Research and Education (BMBF). As a physician, scientist and academic teacher, he was not only interested in pursuing scientific goals; his passion was to serve patients, to foster young physicians and scientists and to distribute his broad knowledge in medical imaging to his colleagues, the medical practitioners: More than 60 professional training courses in oncological ultrasound diagnostics were held by him and he became the figurehead for oncological ultrasound in Germany.

After retirement from his position as division head in 2002, Gerhard van Kaick continued to be closely connected to the DKFZ, first as the Head of the Cancer Information Service (Krebsinformationsdienst), later as a board member and now as honorary member of the Alumni Association and Advisor to the Board.

His remarkable commitment to the Association currently includes the organization of 25 day out for international DKFZ scientists. Destinations of the excursions were not only cultural places like the domes of Cologne and Speyer, the Maulbronn Monastery and the Heidelberg Castle, but also lab visits to Life-Science companies like Roche, Boehringer and Merck.

Another important achievement was the foundation of the Alumni Club Heidelberg. Twice a year, Gerhard van Kaick hosts scientific oncological evening lectures followed by get-togethers for 60 to 80 participants. Last but not least, he initiates regular welcome meetings for new scientists at the DKFZ, events,



which tremendously helped young associates to become familiar with the Center and Heidelberg.

The Alumni Association is indebted to Gerhard van Kaick and estimates him as an extraordinary active, cooperative and cordial board member. We wish him a belated happy birthday and all the best!

get-together

Alumni Connections upon Thames by Marion Gürth



An evening out in London for Timo Kehl (second left) and Marion Gürth (in the back, right): A traditional British Pub seemed to be the right place to meet some former DKFZ members: Silvia von Karstedt, Lucie Abeler-Dörner, Malte Paulsen, and Jennifer Neumann (clockwise).

After representing the DKFZ as part of the Helmholtz Association at the Naturejobs Career Expo 2014 in London, Timo Kehl and me seized the chance to carry on the DKFZ Alumni Association's "Stammtisch" initiative and chose a traditional British pub for the meeting with DKFZ Alumni. We spent a very

nice and interesting evening with four former DKFZ members. Three of them used to work in the Division of Tumor Immunology (Head: Peter Krammer): Between 2003 and 2012, Lucie Abeler-Dörner (now Scientific Project Manager, King's College), Silvia von Karstedt (now PostDoc, University College), and

Jennifer Neumann (now Field Application Specialist, Illumina) were Master and PhD students respectively. Malte Paulsen who is now manager of the FACS facility at St. Mary's Campus at the Imperial College, conducted his PhD thesis in 2011 in the group of Christof Niehrs in the Division of Cell and Tumor Biology.

All participants were curious about the different career paths the Alumni had been going after their time at the DKFZ and also showed great interest in news about their former research institute. Finally everybody agreed to repeat the get-together by no later than next year!

If you are interested in joining or hosting a "get-together", please contact me (m.guerth@dkfz.de). Also, feel free to invite DKFZ Alumni to join the DKFZ Career Network Group on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/groups/DKFZ-Career-Network-4831669

New Members

Dr. Mohammed Abba, Mannheim // **Azer Acikgöz**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Stefan Alt**, Schriesheim // **Hilde Angermeier**, Heidelberg // **Dr. Andrea Bauer**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Aline Bayerle**, Heidelberg // **Dr. Pilar Bayo**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Verena Becker**, Boston, USA // **Dr. Christian Breunig**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Boris Brühmann**, Heidelberg // **Prudence Carr**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Laura Cato**, Boston, USA // **Jia Cheng**, Heidelberg // **Dr. Claudio Diema**, Cordoba, Argentina // **Prof. Michael Eisenhut**, Heidelberg // **Dr. Octavio Espinosa**, Heidelberg // **Dr. Heinz Gundlach**, Heidenheim // **Dr. Regine Hagmann**, Heidelberg // **Dr. Katharina Hammer**, Plankstadt // **Sigrid Heil**, Hockenheim // **Dr. Christina Hölscher**, Schriesheim // **Dr. Olga Ivchenko**, München // **Dr. Apar Jain**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Kathrin Jansen**, Oxford, UK // **Dr. Johanna Kaufmann**, Cambridge, USA // **Dr. Jens Keienburg**, Dossenheim // **Melanie Keil**, Mannheim // **Dr. Milen Kirilov**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Bojana Kriznik**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Jieping Lei**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Hyun-ju Lim**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Sven Lindner**, Essen // **Amira Metwaly**, Munich // **Iman Meziane**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Lis Müller**, Nussloch // **Clifford Nwaeburu**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Jose Manuel Ordonez-Mena**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Selcen Öztürk**, Heidelberg // **Tim Rath**, NCT/DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Kristin Rattay**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Suda Ravindran**, Hamburg // **Dr. Bladimiro Rincon Orozco**, Santander, Columbia // **Prof. Angela Risch**, Salzburg, Austria // **Dr. Tobias Schafmeier**, Munich // **Dr. Kolja Schleich**, Berlin // **Lea Schröder**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Maximiliane Schuldner**, Bonn // **Susanne Schunk**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Gabriele Schwebel**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Kirti Shukla**, Hannover // **Anatoliy Shumilov**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Mahak Singhal**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Chenlin Song**, Heidelberg // **Dr. Johanna Sonntag**, Hannover // **Daniel Stolte**, Tucson, USA // **Dr. Axel Szabowski**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Dr. Keyvan Tadjalli Mehr**, Heidelberg // **Anna Tobias**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Barbara Vodicska**, DKFZ, Heidelberg // **Siao-Han Wong**, Heidelberg // **Dr. Manuela Zucknick**, Oslo, Norway

aacr reception

Philly Reunites Former Colleagues and Prospective Alumni

by Stefanie Seltmann

In April, the Alumni Association of the German Cancer Research Center hosted its tenth reception at the AACR Annual Meeting. This year, it was held in Philadelphia. The guests witnessed a lively talk by DKFZ Chairman Otmar D. Wiestler on recent activities, especially the highlights of the DKFZ's anniversary year. Additionally, the forthcoming developments in biopharmaceutical industry were addressed by Merck Serono representative Axel Wiest.

Manfred Schwab, the Association's chairman for the past two years, welcomed approximately 100 guests consisting of alumni, friends and "prospective" alumni of the DKFZ. "After all, that is what everybody attending this event is," Schwab said. He greeted "the former Heidelberg residents who are now working in positions around the world" and was particularly pleased about the attendance of the oldest alumna, Professor Rosalie Elespuru who, together with her husband, had pursued research at the DKFZ 40 years ago in 1975. Now 97 years of age, the toxicologist still regularly works at her laboratory at the FDA in Baltimore. "Sadly, almost all of my colleagues have already died from cancer," the resolute scientist said.

In his subsequent welcome address, Chairman and Scientific Director of the DKFZ Management Board Professor Otmar D. Wiestler first reflected on the

prior anniversary year of the Center, which was celebrated under the theme "50 Years of Research For A Life Without Cancer." He thanked the many visitors and honorary guests who had visited the Center in 2014 and had delivered congratulatory messages and gifts to the DKFZ. Even Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel visited the DKFZ in April of last year and was impressed by the excellent scientific achievements of this "jewel in Germany's research landscape." "The Nobel Prize for Stefan Hell was also a particularly wonderful birthday present," Wiestler said. Stefan Hell, a Director at the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry in Göttingen, has also been leading a division at the DKFZ for 10 years. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for developing high-resolution fluorescence microscopy in 2014. "At the DKFZ, we will stay committed to achieving 'a life without cancer,'" Wiestler said.

He continued that important steps were made last year toward this ambitious aim. The German government and the states of Baden-Württemberg and Saxony have agreed to apportion substantial funding toward the expansion, in both size and scope, of the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg,

and for the establishment of the NCT partner site in Dresden. "This will enable us to achieve our main goal of bringing individualized therapy to each patient." Next, Dr. Axel Wiest, Chief Operating Officer Research and Development at Merck Serono in Darmstadt and Member of the Alumni Board, outlined "Trends and challenges in the biopharmaceutical industry". He noted that current challenges include rising costs in healthcare, increased safety standards, globalization, new technologies in science such as targeted therapy, and an aging population. Dr. Wiest sees that the pharmaceutical industry's solution to these challenges lies in innovations that are aimed no longer at developing one drug for everybody for maximum profit, but rather at creating individualized treatment options of maximum value. Furthermore, Wiest is convinced that small start-up companies that are taken over by the major players are reliable providers of innovation. Following the official portion of the event, guests were invited to enjoy an appealing spread of food and drinks and engage in further conversation at the buffet.



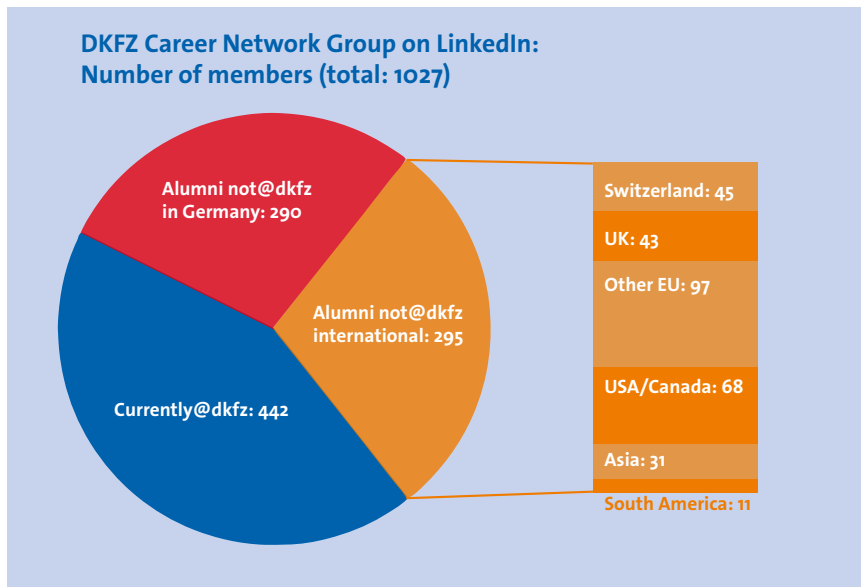
networking

A Treasure Box for More than Thousand and One Alumni

by Barbara Janssens and Marion Gürth*

With the aim of actively tracing back DKFZ Alumni and staying in touch with current DKFZ members, a DKFZ Career Network group on the professional social media platform LinkedIn was created two years ago. The group consists of two subgroups: the “currently@DKFZ” group or the “DKFZ Alumni” group – no matter which one you choose, you automatically become a member of the mother group.

The most important advantage of group membership is that one can send messages to other group members without being 1st degree (direct) contacts. Even just browsing career profiles of former DKFZ members may be very inspirational for planning the own future. Also well

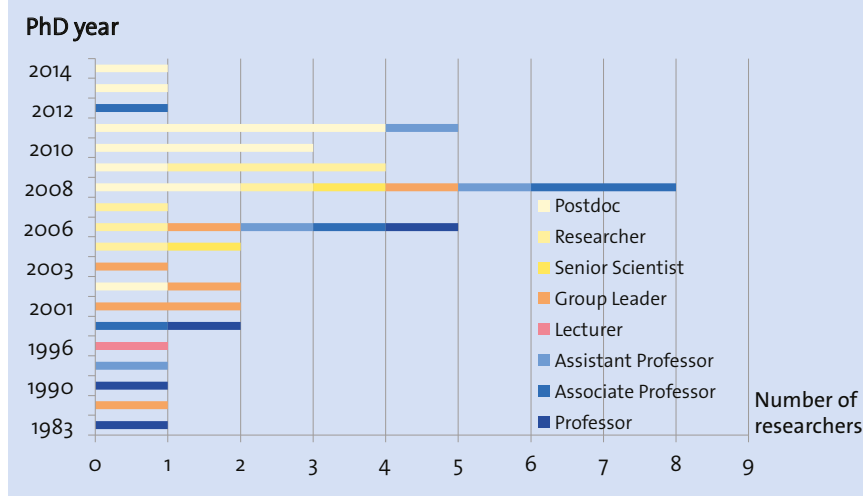


esteemed is the access of group members to links on vacancies and job ads including the opportunity to post own ads for free! Have a look at current jobs and upload any vacancies you may have by clicking on “start a new discussion” in the respective area in the category “jobs”. The DKFZ Career Network group has proven to be a treasure box for the

recruitment of speakers for the regular DKFZ Career Days. For example, at the Career Day on Publishing 9 out of 15 speakers were Alumni, while 12 out of 20 were hosted on the R & D Career Day. Despite the short runtime, the DKFZ Career Network group has already reached the milestone of 1,000 members in February 2015: of these, 43% are still currently working at the DKFZ, and the majority are Alumni properly speaking – i. e. not working at the DKFZ anymore. Half of these DKFZ Alumni

have left Germany, and meanwhile hold responsible positions. An exceptionally active subgroup consists of Masters students from the DKFZ Major in Cancer Biology and other Masters programs – many of them continue their career as graduate students, a fact that explains why a relatively high proportion of Alumni are still working in academia. The growing Career Network group also consists of 43 people who worked as postdocs at the DKFZ and now feature various positions in academia. Also outside academia there is a long list of career opportunities as indicated on the personal profiles. Indeed, behind all these web profiles one will find people deeply committed to the networking idea. Many scientists are happy to stay in touch with former DKFZ colleagues. They readily provide information about their recent work experience, how they got into their new position and what is particular about their careers. Just check it out on www.linkedin.com/groups/DKFZ-Career-Network-4831669. Hopefully, the Network group will grow with at least a few hundred members every year – so don’t hesitate to invite your friends and colleagues from the DKFZ to join the network, too!

Former DKFZ Postdocs in Academia (n=43)



In the LinkedIn Network Group 43 members did a postdoc at DKFZ and now occupy various functions in academia. In this figure the number of researchers (x axis) is plotted against the year they did their PhD (y axis), resulting in a typical age pyramid. Most professors did their PhD in 2006 or before, but one is still very young (PhD 2012).

* with special thanks to our student assistant Jana Fehr for extensive data analysis and crunching.

farewell symposium

A Cordial “Good-bye” to a Pioneering Duo in Immunology

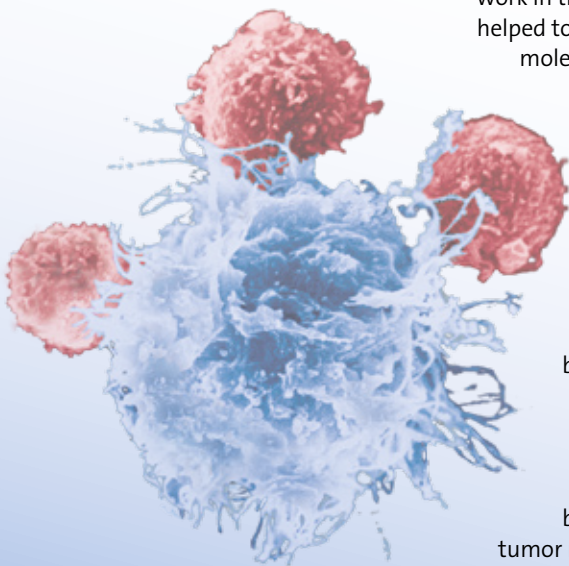
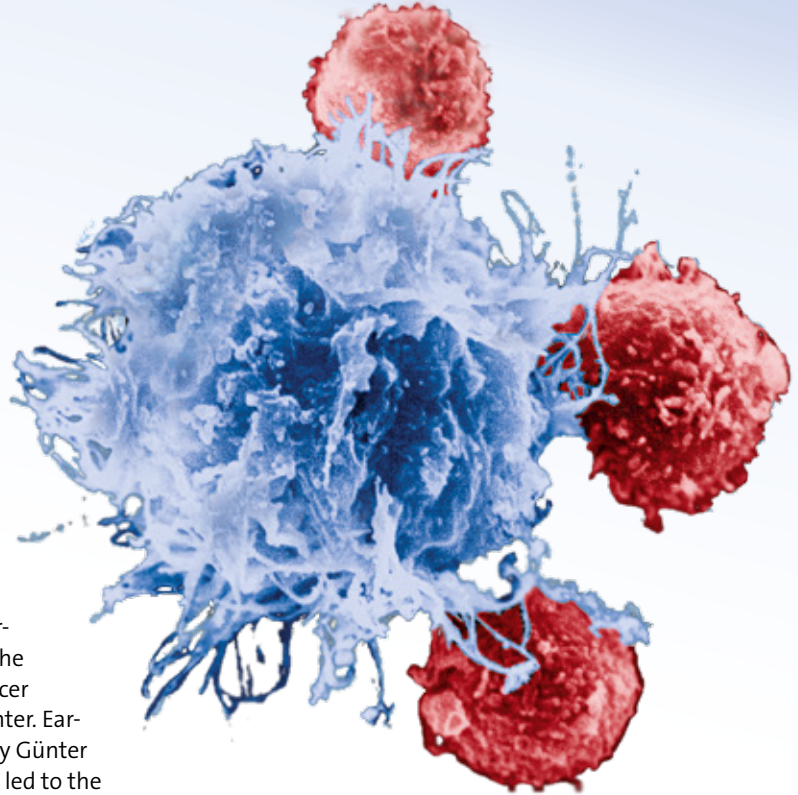
by Adelheid Cerwenka

On the occasion of their retirement, Prof. Günter Hämmerling and Prof. Bernd Arnold were honored for their remarkable scientific accomplishments with an International Farewell Symposium. For the conference entitled “The Immune System in Health and Disease” many distinguished and leading scientists from all over the world including the US and Japan gathered on December 8th, 2014 at the DKFZ. Quite a few of them were either former members of the Hämmerling and Arnold laboratories or close colleagues.

The program started with an overview about research activities at the DKFZ by the Chairman and Scientific Director of the DKFZ Management Board Prof. Otmar D. Wiestler followed by exciting talks on frontline research in Immune Regulation, Tumor Immunity and Infection and Autoimmunity. In the evening a delightful reception and dinner were organized at the Prinz Carl Palace in the old town of Heidelberg. Special highlight of the evening were contributions from opera singers of the Mannheim University of Music and Performing Arts.

More than 30 years ago Günter Hämmerling and Bernd Arnold joined the German Cancer Research Center. Earlier studies by Günter Hämmerling led to the discovery that the so-called “immune response” genes encode a set of proteins, which today are known as MHC class II molecules. Their subsequent seminal work in the field of antigen presentation helped to identify the role of accessory molecules invariant chain, DM, Tap and Tapasin in the MHC class-I and -II pathways. Using sophisticated transgenic mouse models, the two scientists showed that tolerance cannot only be induced in the thymus but also in peripheral tissues. They defined basic tolerance mechanisms that are highly relevant for the often-observed failure of tumor cell recognition by T cells. The knowledge gained by their further studies on the tumor microenvironment and mechanisms of T cell infiltration into tumors is undoubtedly paving novel avenues for the design of innovative approaches for the induction of potent anti-tumor

immunity. Following his official retirement, Günter Hämmerling is still active at the DKFZ as an Emeritus and exploits his findings on tumor immunity in collaboration with several DKFZ groups. A very special “Thank You” goes to Günter Hämmerling and Bernd Arnold for their important contributions to the Research Program “Tumor Immunology” of the DKFZ and for all their very valuable advice both scientifically and personally. For the future endeavors of the two remarkable scientists as well as their friends and families good luck and all the best!



cancer school

Winter Wonderland in Grainau near Garmisch

by Peter Angel and Thomas Höfer

The 7th German Israeli Cancer Research School in Mid-February awaited its participants with exciting lectures and a great number of posters. Additionally, the marvelous setting in Grainau at the snow-covered foothills of the alps provided ample opportunities for memorable social activities.

With “Systems Medicine” the scientific coordinators Profs. Eithan Galun (Israel), Roland Eils and Thomas Höfer (DKFZ) had chosen a seminal topic for this year’s School. Fourteen speakers from Israel and Germany addressed the school attended by a total of 27 PhD students and postdocs (13 participants from Israel and 14 from Germany). The lectures focussed on different levels of regulation in the human body from a mechanistic perspective and the effects on people’s health. A key issue was the role of epigenetic and transcriptional mechanisms for the development and progression of cancer and other diseases, also taking into account the influence of the environment on the predisposition for various diseases. Another aspect addressed the impact of cellular heterogeneity and cell-to-cell communication in cell fate decisions, focusing on cancer progression and its interplay with the tumor microenvironment and the immune system. The scientific presentations were followed by lively discussions with many



questions from the attending students and postdocs. With the diverse scientific background of the participants, it was easy to gain new insights and broaden the horizon. During the poster session, three female participants, Dr. Erika Kuchen, Michal Mark and Alina Simerzin, were awarded for their excellent posters with 300 Euro each. The participants’ feedback showed clearly that the expectations of the school were fully met. The high scientific level and great brainstorming with other members of the scientific

community had been well-esteemed. Moreover, the social activities, such as horse sledging and a dinner in a mountain lodge with folk music and Bavarian dishes were very well received by the attendees. Many of them explicitly expressed their gratefulness to the scientific coordinators and to Peter Angel (see picture below, far right), who organized the Cancer Research School with assistance of Elfriede Mang and Corinna Sprengart on the German side and Dr. Hagit Schwimmer and Prof. Varda Rotter from Israel.



The participants of the Cancer Research School expressed their sincere appreciation of the excellent opportunity for scientific exchange and socializing in a most comfortable environment.

Awards people



Prof. Hellmut Augustin (right) and **Prof. Roland Eils** (left) were honored with the 100,000 Euro HMLS Investigator Award for 2014 for their commitment in promoting “the activities of the university and of non-university institutions in an exemplary manner”, as stated in the award ceremony of the Heidelberg Molecular Life Sciences initiative.

Augustin is head of DKFZ Division Vascular Oncology and Metastasis. He also heads a department at the University of Heidelberg’s Medical Faculty Mannheim and is a co-director of the DKFZ-ZMBH Alliance. Eils heads the DKFZ Division Theoretical Bioinformatics and the University Department Bioinformatics and Functional Genomics. He is the BioQuant Managing Director at Heidelberg University and co-director of the Heidelberg Center for Personalized Oncology (DKFZ-HIPO).



Deliver their congratulations to Nanina Föhr: (from left) Marius Schwabenland, Chairman of the Life-Science Lab Alumni, Prof. Manfred Schwab, Chairman of the DKFZ Alumni, and project coordinator Jochen Reder.

Both, the Alumni Association DKFZ Heidelberg and the Alumni of the Heidelberg Life-Science Lab share significant similarities: deeply rooted at DKFZ, the support of gifted young researchers is an integral part of both their missions. This includes an award for High School graduate students, which in 2015 is dedicated to **Nanina Föhr**. It enables

her to take part in the Dr. Bessie F. Lawrence International Summer Science Institute (ISSI) at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel. There, she will have the opportunity to work in a renowned research group. The participation fees including tuition of approximately 5,100 US Dollar will be borne by the two Alumni Associations as well as the German Association of the Friends of the Weizmann Institute.

The Robert Koch Foundation is jointly awarding this year’s 100,000 Euro Robert Koch Award to **Prof. Ralf Bartenschlager**, Heidelberg, and Prof. Charles M. Rice, New York, USA. The two molecular biologists are honored for their groundbreaking work on hepatitis C virus, laying the foundation for drug discovery efforts to combat prevalent human liver disease. Bartenschlager is Executive Director of the Department of Molecular Virology at the University of Heidelberg, and heads the Research Program Infection and Cancer at the DKFZ.

The Roland Ernst Foundation for Medical Research awards a 5,000 Euro prize for interdisciplinary radiological research to **Dr. Tilmann Bostel** and **PD Dr. Florian Sterzing**, Clinical Cooperation Unit Radiation Oncology, and **Dr. Asja Pfaffenberger**, Division Medical Physics in Radiation Therapy. The award acknowledges their cross-disciplinary project on MR-guided radiotherapy planning. The team developed a positioning system that allows the transfer of patients directly from an MRI device to a linear accelerator. This guarantees that the patient’s position remains exactly identical throughout imaging and irradiation.

The Felix Burda Foundation annually awards scientists for innovative and outstanding projects and efforts to the prevention of colon cancer. This year, the Award in the category Medicine and Research is dedicated to **Prof. Magnus von Knebel Doeberitz** and **PD Dr. Matthias Kloor**, both DKFZ and Heidelberg University Medical Center, as well as Prof. Elke Jäger, Hospital Northwest in Frankfurt. The investigators identified immunologic targets for new prevention strategies. Based on these results they developed a promising vac-

cine consisting of synthetic peptides mimicking frame-shift induced neopeptides that occur in colon carcinoma with microsatellite instability. An initial trial showed that such a vaccine is able to trigger a strong immune response.

The Johann Georg Zimmermann Medal is among the most distinguished awards for service in cancer research in Germany. **Prof. Peter Lichter**, head of the Division of Molecular Genetics, received the award for 2014/2015 in recognition of his life’s work. His outstanding achievements in genome research include the development of fluorescence in-situ hybridization techniques (FISH) and the array CGH (comparative genomic hybridization) technique, with which DNA amplifications and deletions can be determined at high resolution.



Dr. Lina Jansen

The science prize “Regional Health Research” of 5,000 Euro endowed by the Central Research Institute of Ambulatory Health Care was awarded to **Dr. Lina Jansen**, Division Clinical Epidemiology and Aging Research. She investigated data from ten population-related cancer registries from the years 1997 to 2006. The study showed that cancer patients from the socioeconomically weakest fifth of administrative districts died sooner after their diagnosis than cancer patients from other regions.

Dr. Mária Martisíková, Division of Medical Physics in Radiation Oncology, won the Klaus-Georg and Sigrid Hengstberger Prize of the Heidelberg University 2013. The prize money of 12,500 Euro was delivered for the organization of a symposium at the Heidelberg University’s International Science Forum (IWF) discussing new developments in the field of radiation detection technology with special regard to the improvement of precision in ion beam radiotherapy.

people

The European Research Council (ERC) awards “Starting Grants” of 1,5 million Euro for a period of five years to support excellent young investigators starting an independent science career.

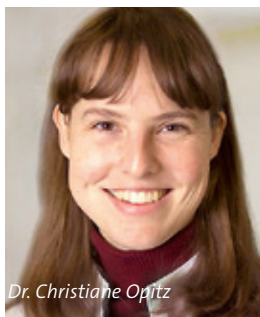
PD Dr. Lena Maier-Hein is one of three DKFZ researchers who have received the prestigious grant for a multidisciplinary project: The computer scientist plans to combine computer-navigated minimally invasive surgery with novel, gentle imaging technology based on sound and light. The additional imaging information will help physicians to differentiate between malignant and healthy tissue and to improve the application of endoscopic instruments into a target region without injuring nearby organs.



Dr. Markus Feuerer

Dr. Markus Feuerer and **Dr. Hai-Kun Liu** also succeeded with their application for the prestigious grant. **Feuerer**, head of the Helmholtz University Junior Research Group Immune Tolerance, is studying how regulatory T cells (“Tregs”) prevent an immune response against tumors. He wants to establish new methods and agents to keep these Tregs in check so that the immune system can effectively fight cancer cells. In addition, he will investigate how groups of Tregs specialize in different organs and support their functions in the absence of classical immune responses in these organs.

Hai-Kun Liu is investigating why brain tumors are composed of a variety of cells. The goal of his project is to find out how brain cancer stem cells, cancer precursor cells and differentiated cells all contribute to tumor growth and how treatments like chemotherapy or radiation influence the composition of tumors. Liu wants to elucidate the molecular factors responsible for the tumor heterogeneity and to derive new strategies for therapy.



Dr. Christiane Opitz

Dr. Christiane Opitz has won the Prize of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences endowed with 10,000 Euro. The head of the DKFZ Junior Group Brain Cancer Metabolism, and resident physician at the Neurology Center of the Heidelberg University Medical Center, studies tryptophan catabolism in both normal and cancer cells, particularly in gliomas. The award acknowledges the identification of a new metabolic pathway of tryptophan in cancer cells. The product of this pathway not only inhibits the immune system but also stimulates the growth of cancer cells.



Dr. Hendrik Witt

The Foundation Tübingen Friends of Children with Cancer awarded the Erna Brunner Prize to **Dr. Hendrik Witt** from the Division of Pediatric Neurooncology. The distinction of 5,000 Euro honors his research into new approaches for the therapy of children and young people with particularly aggressive brain tumors.

Prof. Stefan Pfister, DKFZ and Heidelberg University, received the sponsorship award from the Walther and Christine Richtzenhain Foundation 2014. The pediatrician investigates the genetic characteristics of malignant brain tumors in children, which exhibit an enormous biological heterogeneity and therefore require customized treatments. Some of the genetic alterations that Pfister has identified so far are already in clinical application as biomark-

ers for disease progression and treatment response. The physician scientist shares the prize endowed with 10,000 Euro with Prof. Roman Thomas, University of Cologne.

Together with the Dr. Holger Müller Foundation the Care-for-Rare Foundation annually honors scientists for outstanding contributions to the field of rare diseases. Recently, the Dr. Holger Müller Prize of 5,000 Euro was awarded to **Theresa Schumacher** and **Lukas Bunse**. They want to find new approaches to improve the immune system's fight against rare brain tumors. Therefore, the two young researchers of the Clinical Cooperation Unit of Neuroimmunology and Brain Tumor Immunology developed a mutation-specific vaccine that inhibits the growth of brain tumor cells in mice. Their results are now being implemented in clinical studies on the safety and efficacy in patient vaccination.

For the second time in a row, **a student team from the DKFZ** and Heidelberg University has won the Grand Prize in the international iGEM competition in Boston. The team supervised by **Prof. Roland Eils**, DKFZ, and Dr. Barbara Di Ventura, University of Heidelberg, was ranked highest among 245 teams,



leaving competitors from renowned universities such as Harvard, Yale and Stanford in their wake. With the project “Ring of Fire”, the team of Heidelberg students solved a common problem in the use of biologicals: Many proteins applied in research, medicine and biotechnology are not very stable. Particularly the ends of a protein are very fragile. The students got around this with a trick: They used a so-called “linkers” to cause proteins to form rings, which protects their fragile ends and makes them significantly more stable.

career opportunities

A Professional Approach to Gender Blindness and Family Issues

by Karin Greulich-Bode

Compatibility of career and family is one of the central concerns of the DKFZ as an employer. To make this possible, the position of an Equal Opportunity Representative was established in 1999. Since then, there has been a constant search for new options and avenues to facilitate the balance of work and family life. A major task has been and still lies in the career support of women and their efforts to get hold of key positions.

When I was elected as the DKFZ's new "Equal Opportunity Commissioner" in 2009, not only the term of the position was replaced but also the whole strategic concept was readjusted. The former description "women's representative" was abandoned and thereby the focus was shifted from "supporting women only" towards gender balance. This implied that several actions in the commissioner's scope of work were

of family and work – especially in research – had been quite challenging in former days, the DKFZ has consequently established countermeasures, for example by continuously raising the number of daycare places for children, the extension of the flexibility in working places and by the offer of re-entry positions – just to name a few. The certificate "audit Beruf und Familie", which the DKFZ holds since 2005, combines many more tasks, which all together have led to a sustainable family-friendly and family-supporting culture at the DKFZ. The Equal Opportunity Commissioner here acts as the project manager of the audit and consultant for any aspect in this regard. Yet, being responsible for family issues is only one part of the work of

Additionally, the DKFZ implemented Junior Group positions for highly talented women.

Despite these and other women-supporting actions, raising the number of women in high-ranked positions still remains a difficult task. Therefore, the DKFZ is currently organizing a conference entitled "Quote,

Quark(s) und Qualität" at the DKFZ together with the Arbeitskreis Frauen in Forschungszentren (akfifz, i. e. the working team of women in research centers). The event scheduled for November, 26th and 27th, 2015

is expected to provide innova-

tive impulses from national and international option makers on how we can raise women's quota in research and at the same time identify pitfalls. A list of speakers consisting of outstanding people in the field has been set up, representing research institutions like the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas, and the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot, Israel, but also organizations like the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and Roland Berger Strategy Consultants. It will be a special pleasure to welcome Curt Rice from Norway at the conference (see www.curt-rice.com – Science in Balance) who is internationally well-known for his outstanding research, knowledge and experience in this field. Everybody who is interested is cordially invited to join and register under www.dkfz.de/de/akfifz; translation services will be provided. A registration fee of 50 Euros is required. And don't forget: Equal opportunities are a matter for all of us and can therefore only be achieved by common efforts!



henceforward looked upon as being "gender blind". It should – for example – not matter anymore whether a man or a woman is taking over family issues, also taking into account that the "picture of a family" nowadays is much more broadened compared to the past. Since the compatibility

an Equal Opportunity Commissioner. The other major task still lies in specific support for women. To achieve as much as possible, the DKFZ developed a unique mentoring program together with the Medical Faculty of Heidelberg University, which aims at promoting women for high ranked positions.

Ambitious DKFZ Policy to Promote Women in Lead Positions

by Susanne Weg-Remers

Although a high percentage of women are represented at early career stages such as PhD or postdoctoral positions, only a few manage to successfully establish themselves in leadership positions in life sciences. To increase the awareness for the issues of female executives and to raise the numbers of female scientists in leading positions at the German Cancer Research Center, the DKFZ Executive Women's Initiative has been established.

Founded in July 2011 by 30 women in scientific and administrative lead positions, the group has set the stage for closer cooperations and the pursuit of common goals. Particularly, it supports young female scientists during their career path by various means, including individual mentoring and coaching. In addition, the Executive Women's Initiative aims at strengthening the participation of women in stakeholder

processes at the DKFZ. Networking among the group provides a major benefit to all active members. A number of successful activities have been pursued by the Executive Women's Initiative during its first term when it was headed by Prof. Cornelia Ulrich as chair of a steering committee of five members. Jointly with the DKFZ Management Board a policy to increase the representation of female speakers in lecture series and conferences has been established. Together with the German Cancer Aid, the Mildred Scheel Lectureship has been implemented. This lecture series honors internationally renowned women in the field of cancer research and gives young female scientists the opportunity to directly interact with outstanding role models. Several events were organized to address topics of interest, among them in April 2012 a panel discussion on "How to succeed

as a woman in science – questions you have and never dared to ask", which attracted more than 200 young female – and also male – scientists. In a round table meeting in April 2013, the Executive Women discussed their goals and plans with Prof. Otmar D. Wiestler, Chairman of the DKFZ Management Board.

In October 2014, Prof. Ursula Klingmüller was appointed chairperson of the Executive Women. Together with the steering committee she has promoted a strategic approach to pursue the different aims of the Executive Women's Initiative, which has led to the foundation of several working groups.

By the way, alumni executive women of DKFZ are welcome to join the group as guests. Interested women may get in touch with the steering committee via executive.women@dkfz-heidelberg.de.



With the aim of encouraging especially young female scientists to take up a career in cancer research, Cornelia Ulrich (fourth from left) initiated a lectureship series named in commemoration of the German Cancer Aid (Deutsche Krebshilfe) founder, Dr. Mildred Scheel. The kick-off event in May 2012 featured Prof. Lisa Coussens of the University of Oregon, U.S.A. (fifth from left). She gave an insight into the connections between immune system, inflammations and cancer. Among the guests at the opening celebration was Theresia Bauer, Minister of Science of the State of Baden-Württemberg (sixth from left).

alumni affairs

Membership in a Nutshell by Dagmar Anders

It was only recently that Daniel Stolte became a member of the Alumni Association though he had already been involved in a couple of Alumni events before. Indeed, he can claim some history of close connection with the German Cancer Research, since he left it in 2005 for a position as a science writer in Tucson, Arizona. At the communications office at the University of Arizona, Stolte coordinates with University researchers, external funding agencies and partnering institutions and organizations in developing engaging stories on the University's research.

The Alumni Board invited him to state his point of view on the Association's activities and to suggest new ideas for further development.

Daniel, how did you first become involved with the DKFZ?

As a fresh graduate with degrees in biology and journalism, I had the pleasure of working with the public relations team producing content for the Cancer Center's popular science magazine, "einblick". The freely available magazine is an invaluable source of information for the public, providing insight into highly sophisticated cancer research otherwise not accessible.

What have you been doing over the years since you first came into contact with the DKFZ?

During a year as an exchange student in Flagstaff, Arizona, I fell in love with the American Southwest. In 2005, when the University of Arizona in Tucson offered me a position as a science writer at their newly founded BIO5 Institute, it was difficult to leave the wonderful work environment at the DKFZ, but in light of the regulations of the German employment law, I knew that my time there would be limited anyway. I was incredibly excited about moving to Arizona. As a science writer responsible for the whole university, I get to report on research as diverse as astronomy and space exploration, evolutionary biology and ecology, physics, environmental and agricultural sciences.

What made you become a member of the Alumni Association?

The Alumni Association has a special place in my heart because I had the honor – thanks to Prof. Peter Bannasch and Dr. Julia Rautenstrauch – of developing the original format for the DKFZ Alumni Newsletter. It makes me very happy to see how the publication has developed.

Thus, when I was invited to join the association, I felt very honored because I am not a "typical" DKFZ alumnus pursuing cancer research. I also appreciated very much the invitations to the alumni meetings and the offer to talk about my experience as a science communicator on both sides of the Atlantic.



During the Rodeo Week in Tucson the Stetson is a MUST – obviously even at the Communications office of Daniel Stolte.

What can Alumni members do who want to get more involved into the Association's activities?

Geography probably presents the biggest obstacle. I therefore think that finding new ways to connect members and enhancing existing ones are crucial going forward. The DKFZ Alumni group on LinkedIn is a great step in that direction.

Are there additional benefits the Alumni Association should provide to its members?

Already the Association is doing a tremendous job to keep the community of DKFZ alumni connected, including get-togethers in the U.S. I can't think of much else that could be provided,

other than to consider offering travel stipends for those members – like me – whose current workplaces don't provide financial support for participation in DKFZ Alumni meetings.

2014 was the year of the 50th anniversary of the DKFZ and at the same time the 10 years jubilee of the Alumni Association. How do you rate the achievements of the past and what do you suggest for the future?

The level of dedication and effort invested, especially by the Alumni Board, the DKFZ leadership and support staff, is staggering. In light of the fact that my time at the DKFZ was relatively short, I have been overwhelmed by

the hospitality and genuine friendship during my visits to the DKFZ in recent years.

As for the future, I look forward to getting involved in the activities of a newly formed group of former DKFZ communication professionals. We hope to participate in future Alumni Meetings and contribute to maintaining the high level of science communication in Germany.

Daniel, thank you very much for your time!

symposium

**SAVE
THE DATE:
June 9 - 11,
2016**

7th General Alumni Meeting 2016

MENTORING & CLINICAL EPIGENETICS

DKFZ, Communication Center

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Thursday, June 9, 2016

MENTORING

Start of the Symposium with Presentation of BioMed X-Model

Invited Speakers:

[Adelheid Cerwenka](#), DKFZ Heidelberg

[Susanne Weg-Remers](#), DKFZ Heidelberg

[Hai-Kun Liu](#), DKFZ Heidelberg

Friday, June 10, 2016

CLINICAL EPIGENETICS

[Olaf Witt](#), DKFZ Heidelberg

[Stefan Pfister](#), DKFZ Heidelberg

[Toshikazu Ushijima](#), National Cancer Center Research Institute, Tokyo

[Jean-Pierre Issa](#), Temple University, Philadelphia

[Manel Esteller](#), Bellvitge Biomedical Research Institute, Barcelona

Friday, June 10, 2016

RECEPTION

Alumni Award for International DKFZ Scientists (5,000 Euro)
and three Poster Awards, 1,000 Euro each

Saturday, June 11, 2016

SOCIAL ACTIVITY

Excursion to Darmstadt's Art Nouveau District Mathildenhöhe



Art Nouveau District at Mathildenhöhe

sight visit

Career Options in Industry and a on German History

by Hadeel Khallouf



PhD students, postdocs and other Alumni members coming from around the globe met on Wednesday, October 29, 2014, for a bus trip to Darmstadt, first heading for the pharmaceutical manufacturer Merck. An impressive historical tour at the world heritage site Lorsch perfectly complemented the pleasant day out.

Upon arriving at the headquarters of Merck, we have been divided into two groups: the first one visited the toxicology department, while the second was introduced to the tablet production facility where participants got an overview about the different machines, technologies and development of those departments. Afterwards, the program was continued with interactive presentations by Merck representatives. Dr. Axel Wiest (Strategy & Business Operations Merck Serono) talked about the history and structure of Merck and expressed his wish of strengthening the interaction between DKFZ and Merck in the research and development area. Another talk highlighted career options at Merck as a product manager and illustrated major responsibilities providing information about pharmacology, safety and clinical applications of Merck products. Dr. Michael Wolf, Head of the Immuno Oncology department at Merck Serono, introduced our group to the fascinating therapeutic area of emerging immunotherapies and cancer stem cells. Over lunch, the participants of the excursion

had the chance to further exchange with Merck speakers about career options and related topics; furthermore, Sabine Eiers, the Manager of Visitor Relations, offered an interesting insider view and provided tips on how to get a job at Merck. She emphasized the importance of clearly describing any work experience relevant to the advertised job and recommended to be modest while applying. In industry, one needs to be more flexible in career options, which implies that one might have to start in a job that is not necessarily the dream job, but rather a starting point to get first experience in industry. Very often it is possible to rotate and change jobs within the same company. Sabine Eiers also emphasized the importance of a well-prepared CV and cover letter.



Lorsch Abbey

In particular, the candidate's picture is worth a good investment, she said. While many jobs in the area of communication, management and human resources require an excellent level of German language, there are also jobs where English is in great demand, the Merck manager pointed out. Finally, she reported about job offers for applicants who only have basic knowledge of German and English.

After leaving the Merck headquarters, our day trip took us to Lorsch where we had an informative historical guided tour through the Imperial Abbey, one of the most renowned monasteries of the Carolingian Empire. In 1991, the remains of the abbey were listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Later, participants visited the outdoor Laboratory Lauresham to get an idea about life in the Carolingian time. The Carolingian court of Lauresham was remodeled on the basis of archeological findings in order to conduct research into farming, animal

husbandry and crafts in the course of everyday life.

All in all, the day was a great opportunity for our group to get a closer look into the pharmaceutical industry. Especially for international DKFZ scientists, it was impressive to visit the Imperial Abbey of Lorsch and the outdoor Laboratory

Lauresham and get to know about that interesting era of German history – a fact the DKFZ Alumni Association is quite aware of and therefore continues to organize such lovely day trips.



Outdoor Laboratory Lauresham

excursion

A Showcase of Heidelberg's Best

by Prudence Carr

A visit to the Castle is a "must do" for every visitor to Heidelberg. On Thursday November 6th, 2014, more than 20 "newcomers" to the DKFZ along with some of the members of the Alumni Association were invited for a welcome tour to showcase some of the city's best attractions.

The highlight on the agenda was of course the town's landmark, the "Heidelberg Schloss". After a ride on the funicular we were warmly welcomed and ready to step back in time to learn about the rich and eventful history of the Heidelberg Castle. Its construction began in the early 14th century, but it wasn't until the start of the following century that the prince electors established their residence in Heidelberg, where they remained for over four hundred years. The residence was extensively built and extended during this time with each building representing a different architectural style as our tour guide reported. Construction to the Castle was halted in the 17th century with the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. Later, in the late 18th century, not one, but two devastating lightning strikes caused heavy damage. Unfortunately, this time the Castle could not be saved and the citizens of Heidelberg started to use the ruin as a source of building materials for their own houses.

Additionally, we heard tales about some of the palace's famous residents and were even given a lesson on how to bow and curtsy. Apparently, we all still need a little more practice! A tour to the Heidelberg Castle wouldn't have been complete without taking a look at the world's largest wine barrel. It stands seven meters high, is eight and a half meters wide and holds 220,000 liters of wine. Next item on our tour agenda was a visit to the German Pharmacy Museum. The museum spans more than 2000 years of pharmacy history and contains a wide array of raw medicines from the 17th to 19th centuries. We learnt about some of the miracle potions such as unicorn, mummy and fox skull and were introduced to the ori-



The fortification walls of the Heidelberg Castle report of a rich and eventful history.

gins of today's well known red 'A' sign, which is displayed at every Apotheke in Germany.

After an enlightening afternoon, we had all worked up an appetite and enjoyed a delicious German meal at the Red Ox Inn whilst discussing the day's adventures with new colleagues and friends. This was a great way to meet other newcomers of the DKFZ as well as some of the members of the Alumni Association. One could hardly imagine a better welcome event than this to the wonderful city of Heidelberg.



Imprint

Alumni

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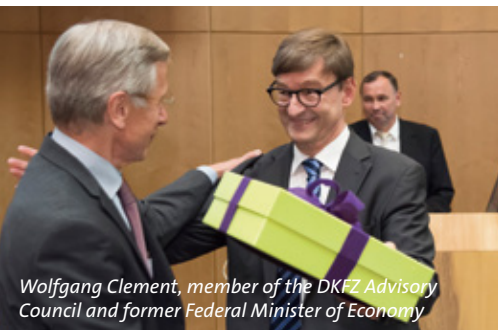
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NCT-Director Christof von Kalle and his wife



*Dr. Alfred Mertens, Advisor to the DKFZ Research Group
Cancer Drug Development, and Wolfgang Hiddemann,
Spokesperson of the DKTK Partner Site Munich*

Time to Say Good-bye

by Manfred Schwab

On the occasion of the Farewell Ceremony for Prof. Otmar D. Wiestler many friends, colleagues, and cooperation partners took the opportunity to show him their appreciation and express their best wishes for his future. Otmar Wiestler has been Chairman and Scientific Director of the DKFZ Management Board since 2004. As of September 1, 2015, he will take the position as new president of the Helmholtz Association. He follows Prof. Jürgen Mlynek who took up the position in 2005 and leaves in accordance with the statutes after two terms of office. Already in October 2014, the senate of the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centers had unanimously elected Prof. Otmar D. Wiestler as the new president of the Association. The Alumni Association DKFZ is very grateful to Prof. Wiestler for his generous and sustained support. According to the statutes, the Chairman of the DKFZ Management Board is

a member *ex officio* of the Alumni Board. Otmar D. Wiestler belonged to the Board since the foundation of the Association in 2004. He was obviously well aware of the Association's importance for the implementation of a corporate identity among current and former DKFZ members. Prof. Wiestler particularly encouraged efforts of the Alumni Board to support new international scientists at the DKFZ and also recognized the major significance of the Alumni Reception at AACR meetings for the promotion of the DKFZ reputation throughout the world. The same applies for the General Alumni Meeting organized every two years. The Board of the Alumni Association wishes Otmar D. Wiestler all the best, in particular continued good health to master the challenges ahead, personal happiness, and much fortune while interacting with representatives of different institutions from within but also outside life sciences.

ON THE LEAVE FOR BERLIN: DKFZ Chairman Prof. Otmar D. Wiestler is overwhelmed by the cordial wishes for his future position as Helmholtz President.