



TENNESSEE INSTITUTE OF
REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

TennIRM Newsletter: October 2021

MIRM Transitions to TennIRM

In June, colleagues from UT Knoxville College of Veterinary Medicine and UT Knoxville College of Medicine approached the leadership of the Memphis Institute of Regenerative Medicine (MIRM) with their interest in joining MIRM. We welcomed our colleagues from the other end of the state that necessitated that we rebrand ourselves to become the statewide Tennessee Institute of Regenerative Medicine - TennIRM. Please visit our new website <https://tennirm.org>. You will find a lot of important information about our institute that now has four academic participants, UTHSC with its four campuses, UT Knoxville CVM, University of Memphis and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. We are in the process of integrating new members from Oak Ridge National Laboratory. As MIRM transitioned into TennIRM, changes in its leadership were introduced. Dr. Gabor Tigyi (UTHSC COM) was appointed Executive Director, James Carson (UTHSC CHP) became Deputy Executive Director, and Dr. James Kang assumed the role of Chief Scientist. Please check out the organization chart of TennIRM at <https://tennirm.org/about-us> where you will find the minutes of the External Industry Board meetings and other information of our plans and activities.

TennIRM External Industry Advisory Board

Our industry partners represented on the External Industry Advisory Board include FEDEX, MEDTRONIC, Stryker Medical, Revotek USA, The Economic Development Growth Engine (EDGE) for Memphis and Shelby County, the Department of Commerce, the Clinical Trials Network of Tennessee, Southwest Community College, and the UT Foundation.

TennIRM Academic Advisory Committee

TennIRM formed the Academic Advisory Committee (AAC). The AAC consists of researchers engaged in areas of stem cell and regenerative/rehabilitation science research. The AAC has ambitious plans to grow this rapidly developing field at our member institutions. For example, we will be launching a Regenerative and Rehabilitation Sciences seminar series, a Regenerative Science Symposium in early 2022, and grant consulting and research mentoring to TennIRM members.

Strengthening Research in Stem cell, Regenerative and Rehabilitation Sciences

To further bolster research grant funding success in stem cell, regenerative and rehabilitation sciences, TennIRM will offer a stipend for external grant review. These initiatives will facilitate the most competitive grant applications from our members. To

qualify, the prospective applicant must contact TennIRM via the website email ten weeks before the due date of the application. Preference will be given to applications that have been previously reviewed, and a summary statement is available. This program is in addition to the services provided to UTHSC faculty by Hanover Research grant consultants contracted by the Office of Research.

Department of Commerce Employment Development Agency (EDA) Funding Opportunity

The Office of Research and TennIRM is responding to a new funding opportunity by the Department of Commerce Employment Development Agency (EDA). The program is called the “Good Jobs Challenge” that provides up to \$25 million to train a workforce and create jobs that are truly good jobs with compensation above the low end of the income scale. Memphis and Tennessee at large are on the low end of the national ranking in “good-paying jobs.” For this reason, we have received encouragement from EDA to apply in January 2022. Our application proposes new certificate training programs in five areas: 1) data analytics, 2) animal husbandry, 3) clinical trial coordinators, 4) regenerative and rehabilitation science, and 5) sterile pharmaceutical manufacturing and compounding. As part of the application, we propose developing new certificate programs in stem cell research, regenerative and rehabilitation science. This unique training will be assisted with state-of-the-art core equipment that is included in the proposed budget. The EDA grant provides salary support for the training period, and the second phase is hands-on laboratory training in the workplace of future employers.

Growing Regenerative and Rehabilitation Science at UTHSC

Regenerative and rehabilitation science is now an aspirational area of excellence in the final draft of the Operational Strategic Plan for Research Part Two (OSPR-2) for the period between 2021-2026. Once enacted, OSPR-2 will provide a path for establishing an academic unit for new researchers in this field of investigation and an avenue to train graduate students and postdocs aspiring to work in regenerative and rehabilitation science. In OSPR-2, there is an explicit request for including regenerative and rehabilitation science in the highly successful CORNET program offered by the Office of Research.

The International Regenerative Medicine Foundation

TennIRM joined the International Regenerative Medicine Foundation (RMF, <https://www.regmedfoundation.org/>) in June, and many of our members participated in the 2021 Annual World Stem Cell Summit conference. TennIRM was invited to give a 60-minute presentation in the Hot Topics Session of the conference. RMF is a well-organized global network with powerful lobbying activity and strong industry backing. RMF offers training and technical resources to its members that are available to TennIRM members.

We are excited about the new horizon for regenerative and rehabilitation science at UTHSC and invite everyone interested in joining TennIRM (send an email via the “Contact Us” link on <https://tennirm.org>) or just take part in the activities we organize in the future.