

2/99

### **Chronology of Key Events in the Formation of UW Medical Genetics Department**

1) March 5, 1956

Dean John Z. Bowers recommends to the Executive Committee of the Medical School that Newton Morton be hired as assistant professor of Anatomy and Human Genetics.

2) June 4, 1956

A \$25,000 grant to the University of Wisconsin from the Rockefeller Foundation to support a program in human genetics is announced at an Executive Committee meeting of the Medical School.

3) February 1, 1957

From the Brink correspondence, Van Potter writes to E. B. Fred stating that Joshua Lederberg might leave Wisconsin unless a medical genetics department is created.

4) February 4, 1957

At an Executive Committee meeting of the Medical School, Dean Bowers discusses the possibility of expanding the Medical Genetics Program. He notes the Rockefeller Foundation had been approached for support. A committee consisting of members of the Medical School is appointed to look into the matter. Bowers notes that Joshua Lederberg "had expressed an interest in such a program."

5) February 20, 1957

The Medical School committee recommends that: a) the program of Medical Genetics should be expanded; b) Joshua Lederberg should be offered a joint appointment in Ag Genetics and Medical Genetics; and c) adequate space and facilities should be provided.

6) March 7, 1957

The Genetics Department recommends approval of the appointment of Joshua Lederberg jointly in the Medical School and the Department of Genetics.

7) March 18, 1957

From Brink correspondence, Brinks writes E. B. Fred concerning a transmittal of forms for the appointment of Lederberg to ag genetics and medical genetics.

8) March 22, 1957

Medical Genetics is referred to as a *program*. By May 29, 1957 it has become a *department*.

9) May 4, 1957

"Statement to Genetics Department, Ad Hoc Committee on Plans." In this document, Lederberg presents a three page sixteen point discussion concerning the need for medical genetics.

10) May 29, 1957

A committee consisting of Newton Morton, Jim Crow and Lester Casida reports on the possibility of forming a *division* of genetics. A division is formed and Crow is elected executive secretary pro tem.

11) May 30, 1957

A meeting of the Department of Genetics is convened "during the session of the Division of Genetics." The purpose of the meeting is to consider the possible appointments of A. D. Hershey, Kimball Atwood, and Aaron Novick.

Regarding Hershey: Lederberg moves that authority to negotiate with the Department of Biochemistry regarding a joint appointment for Hershey be given to Alexander Brink.

Regarding Atwood: It is moved and seconded that Atwood be accepted, if possible, as a member of the Genetics Department and the Medical Genetics Department.

Regarding Novick: A vote is taken expressing interest in bringing Novick to the UW

campus. No further action is taken concerning Novick.

12) June 3, 1957

The Executive Committee of the Medical School votes unanimously *against* a Division of Genetics.

13) June 18, 1957

Biochemistry likes the idea of Hershey coming to campus but says its funding is tied up elsewhere. Lederberg becomes active in pursuing alternative funding routes.

14) July 1, 1957

The Medical School Executive Committee reports that, after a discussion with Jim Crow and Joshua Lederberg, the document in question is "not to be construed as a desire on their part to establish a division of genetics." Rather it is a desire to express on paper "only certain internal relationships and that no formal arrangement was intended." Also at this meeting, consideration of the appointment of Kimball Atwood is deferred until the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

15) July 25, 1957

Irwin spoke with Conrad Elvehjem, Ira Baldwin, and E. B. Fred regarding Hershey. All were sympathetic though Baldwin thought it might be more desirable to hire a younger man.

16) October 22, 1957

At a meeting of the Department of Genetics, Irwin reviews negotiations concerning the appointment of Hershey prior to his visit to campus. It was moved to recommend to the administration the appointment of Hershey in genetics and biochemistry.

17) November 12, 1957

Hershey writes that taking a job at Wisconsin would be a difficult decision and he needs until the first of the year to make it.

18) July 19, 1958

At a meeting of the Division of Genetics, Lederberg announces that he has accepted a position at Stanford to become effective in February, April or July of 1959 "depending on further developments and the departmental needs ."

19) August 8, 1958

At a meeting of the Division of Genetics hope is expressed to find a strong replacement for Lederberg.

20) August 11, 1958

At a meeting of the Division of Genetics it is moved and passed that Irwin and Crow contact the following people as possible replacements for Lederberg: Benzer, Cavalli, Roman, and Nanney.

21) October 7, 1958

At a meeting of the Division of Genetics Irwin and Crow are to broach the question of hiring S. E. Luria.

Chronology prepared by Barry Teicher,

**End Chronology**