DNA Expert to Lecture on Lessons from the Genetic Past

Dr. Eske Willerslev holds a full professorship at the University of Copenhagen as well as the prestigious position of visiting professor at Oxford University. His previous positions include professor of evolutionary biology and professor of ancient DNA at the Niels Bohr Institute at the University of Copenhagen. He has also been a fellow in the department of zoology at Oxford University and a research visitor at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center at the University of Texas.

He has published 29 papers in Science and Nature, and 134 articles in other high-profile, peer-reviewed journals. He has been an invited speaker at 75 international conferences and been awarded 50 large research grants and academic prizes. He received an award in 2012 from the Danish Broadcasting Corporation for his efforts in communicating science to the public.

Dr. Willerslev established the first ancient DNA facility in Denmark, the Eske Willerslev DNA Sequencing Facility. While completing his doctorate, Dr. Willerslev spent time in Greenland to northern Siberia to collect materials from megafauna fossils to glacier ice to ethnographic information.

Coburn Lecture to Connect Bone, Muscle, and CKD

Mary B. Leonard, MD, will present the Jack W. Coburn, MD, Endowed Lecture on Friday, Nov. 13. Dr. Leonard’s topic will be “Frailty, Fractures, and the Bone-Muscle Connection in CKD.”

Dr. Leonard is a professor of pediatrics and medicine at Stanford University School of Medicine. Her multidisciplinary research program is primarily focused on the detrimental effects of glucocorticoid therapy, muscle deficits, vitamin D deficiency, and inflammation on bone development in varied pediatric disorders. Her team uses novel imaging techniques to assess the unique effects of kidney disease on bone and muscle metabolism in children and adults. She has maintained continuous National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding for 17 years and serves as the primary mentor for many junior investigators supported by NIH awards.

She is a member of the Society of Pediatric Research and the American Society of Clinical Investigation. Dr. Leonard recently co-chaired the Kidney Disease: Improving Global Outcomes conference on controversies in chronic kidney disease and mineral and bone disorders. She is currently co-chairing the steering committee of a conference for developing positions on pediatric issues for the International Society of Clinical Densitometry.

She received a research fellowship from the National Kidney Foundation and a young investigator award from the American Society of Transplantation. She also received a faculty mentor award from the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

Before joining Stanford, Dr. Leonard was a professor of epidemiology and professor of pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. At the Children’s Hospital of Pennsylvania, she was the director of clinical and translational research, director of research in the division of nephrology, and director of the pediatric nephrology fellowship program. She received her medical degree from Stanford University and her master’s in clinical epidemiology from the University of Pennsylvania. She completed a residency in pediatrics, a fellowship in pediatric nephrology, and a fellowship in pediatric nutrition at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

ASN gratefully acknowledges Amgen for support of the Jack W. Coburn, MD, Endowed Lectureship.

Winn Lecturer to Discuss Genetics of Glomerular Disease

Andrey S. Shaw, MD, will deliver the Michelle P. Winn, MD, Endowed Lectureship on the genetics of human focal and segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS) on Friday, Nov. 14.

Dr. Shaw is the Emil R. Unanue Professor of Pathology and Immunology and head of the division of immunobiology at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. He is also an investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Dr. Shaw is known for his contributions to our understanding of T cell signal transduction, protein kinases, and the role of podocytes in glomerular diseases. His interest in podocyte biology began with studies of knockout mice that lack a gene called CD2-associated protein, or CD2AP. Because data show that mutations in CD2AP can lead to human glomerular diseases such as FSGS, his team is using human genetics to define the epistatic network of genes involving CD2AP. FSGS is a disease of podocytes, so his team used bioinformatics to identify only those genes expressed in podocytes. They then selected 3000 genes they believed to be the likeliest epistatic candidates. Their goal is to sequence a set of kidney-specific genes in about 1000 FSGS patients and use statistical methods to analyze the pattern of rare variants in patients vs. controls to assemble a list of potential FSGS disease genes. The researchers expect these genes to be epistatic with CD2AP.

Dr. Shaw is the editor of Molecular and Cellular Biology and on the editorial board of BMC Immunology. He received a MERIT Award and a clinical investigator award from the National Institutes of Health and several distinguished service teaching awards from the medical school classes of Washington University.

He earned his bachelors and medical degrees from Columbia University and completed his residency in anatomic pathology and a postdoctoral fellowship at Yale University. He was an instructor at Yale before joining Washington University in 1991. He serves on the immunology program steering committee and the curriculum committee at Washington University Medical School.

ASN gratefully acknowledges Duke University School of Medicine, the school’s Division of Nephrology, and several individuals for support of the Michelle P. Winn, MD, Endowed Lectureship.