



The Restriction Digest

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Habitat for Humanity

By Edel Hyland

Saturday November 13th 7:30am I got out of bed – yes, I actually opened my eyes before 10am this Saturday. Although I was sluggish getting ready I had acquired an unfamiliar Saturday morning surge of inner energy and I was looking forward to the day ahead. Unlike my typical Saturday where my endeavors at the bench may or may not prove worthwhile, today I was volunteering for “*Habitat for Humanity*” and I was more optimistic that I may actually get a positive result by the end of the day!

I arrived at the headquarters of the organization on North Fulton avenue by 8:30am and was greeted by the GSA representative and organizer of the day, Rebekah Zinn, who had kindly supplied tasty doughnuts and bagels for breakfast. Also present were the other volunteers and I recognized some fellow BCMB-ers Matt Caples and Carey Connely. The rest of the group I subsequently learnt included Gyanu Lamichhane, Radhika Reddy, Naveen Michaud-Agrawal, Jason Wen, Wilsaan Joiner, Shih-Jung Pan, and Sherri-Gae Scott, all students from the medical campus. After brief introductions and apprehensions about what the upcoming hours would entail, a *Habitat* employee led us to the tool shed and we were



Continued on page 2

Fun with Numbers

One of the responsibilities of the School of Medicine Alumni Office is keeping track of the whereabouts of our graduates. We do this so that we can provide our constituents with the best possible resources for staying in touch with us as well as with each other. Check out these numbers:

- 687:** Number of Ph.D. and M.A. candidates currently enrolled at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
- 1,373:** Number of Ph.D. and M.A. graduates of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
- 49:** Number of states, including Puerto Rico, in which Hopkins Ph.D. and M.A. graduates reside
- 22:** Number of countries in which Hopkins Ph.D. and M.A. graduates reside
- 550:** Number of Ph.D. and M.A. graduates who settled in Maryland after graduation
- 67:** Percent of the 1,373 Ph.D. and M.A. graduates who live in the state of MD, NY, CA, MA or PA

Another reason for keeping track of our constituents is so that we can invite them back for the Johns Hopkins Medical and Surgical Association Biennial Meeting and School of Medicine Reunion Weekend. The weekend consists of departmental programs, award and portrait presentations, an art exhibit of medical illustrations and a continuous stream of breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

We’re currently gearing up for this event which will be held June 2-5, 2005, so save the date! You will be receiving more details in the coming months about Biennial Weekend as well as information on how to register for **FREE**. Make sure to take advantage of this wonderful educational and social opportunity.

For more information on the Biennial, visit www.hopkinscme.net, e-mail us at JHMalumni@jhmi.edu or call us at 410-516-0776.

Upcoming GSA Event
Ice Skating at Patterson Park Rink
Friday, January 14, 9:15-11:15pm
Admission and skates are free for all SOM
Grad Students and guests.



loaded up with gardening equipment - it seemed we were going to be landscape architects for the day! The landscape in question was the back yard of a nearby house in which one half needed to be flattened to a depth of 5 inches below its current level in preparation for the construction of a terrace, and the remainder converted into a southwardly facing slope – no problem! We all got down to business and began digging, shoveling, wheel-barrowing, and raking and although most of us had worn multiple layers of clothing to fight against the chilly November weather, within 30 minutes of arriving at the house we had discarded our outer layers and were down to only one or two! The energy and efficiency of the group was remarkable and by 11am it was clear that we were going to have completed our task in time for lunch, much to the surprise of the *Habitat* coordinators.



After lunch the question arose “what will we get them to do next”? The goal of “*Habitat for Humanity*” is to aid in the rehabilitation of the neighborhoods in west Baltimore by providing free labor to rebuild its vacant houses, therefore it came as a bit of a disappointment when we were directed to clean up the litter in a disused lot. Nonetheless we faced the task at hand and in the end, as only true graduate students know how, we found pleasure and satisfaction in tedious work! However, it

was definitely advantageous being part of such a collaborative and friendly group of people. Although we can only assume that, with time, our efforts would prove futile, perhaps we succeeded in creating awareness among the people of the area as to the neighborhood’s short-comings – indeed one local woman was very grateful for the improvements we made and amazed to hear that we weren’t getting any course credit for our work!



Fortunately before the day was over the organization realized that there were other worthy projects that could also benefit from the efficacy of the Johns Hopkins team. Consequently we were all loaded onto the back of a pick up truck and brought on a perilous ride through the streets of west Baltimore to our final destination of the day. We arrived at a house in the final stages of completion with workmen everywhere, laying brick on the outside, drilling dry wall into the interior and generally appearing extremely busy. To my astonishment I learnt that this house was scheduled to be presented to the deserving family the following Wednesday i.e. in 4 days time, so there definitely was a feeling of urgency about the place. We were instructed to weave ourselves through the activities inside the house, collect the left over dry wall and deposit it in the dumpster out front.



Continued from page 2

Even though our responsibilities were pretty nominal it was exciting, for me at least, to be part of a project like this and to contribute in some way to the construction of a house. Two members of our group, Naveen Michaud-Agrawal and Radhika Reddy were fortunate to gain insight into the initial stages of construction. While the majority of us were collecting trash, they were given the opportunity to assemble the wooden frame of another house. I joined them briefly, just as a spectator however, and an on-site *Habitat* employee took me through the house and kindly spent time explaining the different stages in construction. So I know now that if my scientific pursuits fail, I have the knowledge to enter the construction field!



Ultimately 3pm arrived and we were dismissed for the day. Before leaving however we were directed towards a stretch of Stricker street, where all the houses have been restored by the *Habitat* crew. It was definitely a fitting way to end the day as we got to see the final result of all this effort, and it was indeed very impressive. This street seemed like an oasis in the midst of the west Baltimorean surroundings. Here each house is painted a different color and have been adorned with many hanging baskets and window boxes all filled with



flowers. Therefore it appears to me that not only do "*Habitat for Humanity*" provide housing for underprivileged people, it also instills in them a sense of pride about their locality and a desire to maintain the improvements.



As we rode home in the pick-up truck we all compared the state of our work gloves to decipher the hardest worker among us – and it was a tough call between Naveen Michaud-Agrawal and Jason Wen! However, I think we all benefited equally from the experience and it is something I would definitely consider repeating. With the satisfaction I gained from my Saturday afternoon work it made me wonder whether I should reconsider my current career path – although with the back aches I endured for the subsequent three days after all my digging, I was happy to return to the bench and resume the strenuous task of transferring minute quantities of liquid between tubes!



For those who would like to get further information about the efforts of "*Habitat for Humanity*" their website is www.sandtownhabitat.org.

Association for India's Development

(Johns Hopkins University chapter)

By Sathya Ravichandran

An onlooker saw thousands of starfish washed ashore by the tide. Standing nearby was a man who was patiently throwing each one back into the sea to save their lives. The onlooker laughed and said, "There are so many starfish to save! What difference can you possibly make?" The man picked up another starfish and threw it back into the sea and said, "It certainly made a difference to *that* one."

This probably captures the spirit behind the work that we do as volunteers of the Association for India's Development (AID). Started in 1991 by a group of students at the University of Maryland, College Park, AID now has 40 chapters in the US, six in India and one each in Germany, Australia and UK. The Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore) chapter of AID was started in February 2002 by students at Hopkins, who wanted to contribute their resources (time, money, ideas and skills) towards community service projects in India and shared the vision behind AID's work: the vision of encouraging local and sustainable solutions to the interconnected problems of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and dwindling natural resources via community participation.

How we function

AID is a purely voluntary effort in the US. Saturday meetings or "Community Service Hours" are the occasion for discussing projects and planning events. These meetings are open to everyone.

Project review

AID has supported almost 300 projects in 18 states of India usually by working with non-government organizations (NGOs), AID fellows or through chapters in India. AID has disbursed over \$800,000 to projects in India over the last two years. Projects are visited by a volunteer prior to approval by one of the AID chapters. During the project, every possible form of non-monetary support is explored. AID volunteers have shipped old computers, prepared material for science projects, and have provided crucial information to projects in India. AID-JHU alone has raised about \$38,000 since we first started, and has supported seven projects in various parts of India.

Awareness and outreach

We publish and send out **monthly newsletters** to all our 7500 donors, which contain highlights of recently approved projects and upcoming events. AID also has an electronic newsletter that is sent out 2-3 times a week. It contains important development-related news from our projects,

allied people's movements and from India in general that often goes unreported in the mainstream media. In addition, we also organize talks and discussions with prominent Indian social activists working at the grassroots level such as Medha Patkar, Dr. M.P. Parameswaran, Dr. Sudarshan and Leo Saldanha.

Community Events

Community events such as concerts, cultural programs and food festivals are organized by every AID chapter. While individual donations still remain the primary source of funds for AID, proceeds from these events go towards projects in AID. In addition, AID volunteers attend community events and perform skits to raise awareness about AID's activities.

Recent AID activity

A sold-out crowd of over 700 music-lovers witnessed an enthralling musical evening with the world renowned Sarod Maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan on October 3rd, 2004, at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Ustad Amjad Ali Khan was accompanied by his sons, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash, on the sarod and Tanmoy Bose on the tabla. The concert, billed "Shanti – Together in Peace", was a benefit concert for the Johns Hopkins University chapter of the Association for India's Development (AID-JHU), while commemorating the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi by celebrating the ideals of peace and non-violence that he lived by. At the concert, the State of Maryland Governor's Office honored Ustad Amjad Ali Khan with the Governor's Citation Award for his outstanding contribution to music and service to the community. Numerous activist and cultural student groups on campus came together to put this evening together. AID is grateful to the Hopkins administration, including GSA, for their support.

Giving to AID

Volunteering with AID can be a lot of fun as well as a great learning experience. We welcome you to attend our meetings and participate: we believe that all of us have answers to the problems that face India, and every one of us must participate to address them. Many volunteers pledge their support by contributing a (small) monthly donation to AID and/or their time according to their convenience and schedules. More information can be found at www.aidindia.org/jhu or you may write to aidjhuinfo@yahoo.com

Chinese Student and Scholar Association at Johns Hopkins

By Lin Zhang

The Chinese Student and Scholar Association at Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (JHMI-CSSA) was established in 1990. The goals of our organization are to provide a culture-characteristic social network to the students and scholars at JHMI, to promote communications between the Chinese community and other school-wide student groups at JHMI and to help the students and scholars accommodate to and develop their career in a multi-cultural environment.

Membership is open to all students and scholars at JHMI. Currently we have more than 600 members and among them, about 250 are graduate students in the School of Medicine. We own an email list (cssa-1@jhsp.edu) for our members to exchange useful information and discuss specific issues. To join, simply send an email to JHMICSSAlistmanager@yahoo.com. Our website is currently under development and will be launched soon (www.jhmicssa.org).

Each year, JHMI-CSSA holds two big celebration parties, one for the Moon Festival and National Day in early September, and another for the traditional Chinese New Year (the Spring Festival) in February. In addition, there are a lot of other activities along the year, such as picnics, seminars, and movie shows, etc.

In 2004, sponsored by GSA and other organizations, JHMI-CSSA joined hands with 13 other universities and schools to co-sponsor a celebration of the 55th Chinese National Day and Moon Festival On September 12th at Homewood Campus. Nearly a thousand of audience enjoyed a three-hour on stage show including traditional Chinese performance as well as Latin and Indian dances. We made the show English-speaker-friendly by including English translations in all of the spoken and visual introductions. A dance party and a movie show followed the event.

Earlier in October 2004, we invited some senior students at JHMI to give a seminar to our new Chinese students and scholars. The topics covered a wide range of useful information and experience for new comers. On October 16th, we hosted a picnic for all members at Centennial Park; roughly 80 members joined the event. In addition to tasting delicious food, we enjoyed playing volleyball, fishing, and hiking in the park. Lots of new members made friends through this event.

We are planning more events in the next a few months. We will present another seminar to our Chinese community, which is focused on knowledge of visa issues. We will invite advisers from the international office. A series of celebrations will take place during the Chinese Spring Festival.

Everyone is welcomed to join our activities. We pre-post all of our events on our email list. Please join the list and hope to see all of you in our next activity!



Healthcare Business & Industry Organization – H2BIO – is here! H2BIO is an interactive resource for business education and information in the fields of healthcare and the healthcare industry. Founded in January 2004, H2BIO was built on the promise of creating an innovative and sustainable resource – an organization designed to address the educational and career interests of its members.

On July 12th, 2004, H2BIO presented its kickoff seminar with one of the world's top management and strategy consulting firms, Booz Allen Hamilton. Members of the Booz Allen Health Services Team discussed current consulting projects, including ongoing work in their health services, pharmaceuticals, bioinformatics and medical products & supplies sectors. Among the panel speakers were Johns Hopkins alumni Nik Buesher, Chandan Sastry and Davis Bu, Jamie Hui of the NIH dashboard and National Children's Study.

Most recently, the H2BIO team sponsored a seminar on Investment Banking with Hopkins Med alum Marc Grasso, MD. Dr. Grasso was a Vice President in the Healthcare Group of Credit Suisse First Boston. Marc worked for Credit Suisse First Boston from 1999 until 2004 and at BT Alex. Brown from 1998 to 1999 where he engaged in a full range of investment banking activities for U.S. and European biotechnology, pharmaceutical and other healthcare companies.

H2BIO has numerous other seminars lined up for the academic year and is currently developing a 3-tier service platform, addressing continuous and structured educational seminars, interactive career profiles and recruiting, and social activities/networking events.

Founder and president, Andrew Nava, said:

"I firmly believe that the students should have greater say in what direction their career goes in and that each and every student should have their institution's 100% support for their choices."

"H2BIO was created by students who craved diversity in their educational experience – created by students who believed that we are innately empowered to mold our own intellectual development for the purpose of supplementing our basic academic experience and forging new and innovative career paths."

"The H2BIO Executive Board desires nothing less than to reflect the interests of its members as they pertain to business and healthcare."

H2BIO is an official organization within the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. For more information, contact Deepali Tukaye at dtukaye@jhmi.edu or Monica Chopra at mchopra@jhsp.edu.

Travel Essay

By Tom Sussan

I recently attended the “Colon Cancer in Murine Models and Humans” conference in Bar Harbor, ME. This meeting has been supported by the Jackson Laboratory as a biannual conference for several years. This was my first time attending this meeting; however, I have been to a Jackson Laboratory sponsored conference in Bar Harbor before. Bar Harbor is a beautiful place, so I jumped at the opportunity to go to this conference.

The meeting was relatively small, consisting of approximately 150 scientists, all of whom had interests in colon cancer research. There were a total of about 75 posters presented and 70 talks spread out over the three and a half day long conference. Because of the size and concentrated focus of this meeting, there was limited variety from one presentation to the next. The colon cancer community is tightly linked, so I felt that my lack of a strong cancer research background made me an outsider.

The poster that I presented at this conference came from my research in Roger Reeves’ lab, in which I have shown that mouse models of Down syndrome are protected, to a large degree, from intestinal tumors induced by a mutation in the *Apc* gene. Down syndrome is caused by trisomy of chromosome 21, and our mouse models of Down syndrome are trisomic for regions of DNA that are orthologous to chromosome 21. I have some nice data showing that only a subset of the genes orthologous to chromosome 21 are required to protect against tumorigenesis. I went to this meeting with the specific goal of getting feedback and helpful insights that would allow me to progress my work toward an understanding of the underlying etiology associated with the interesting observation that Down syndrome provides some protection from tumorigenesis.

I did not come home from the meeting with any new ideas. Because my research is outside the main focus of the conference, my poster received very little attention. Those people who were interested in my poster all wanted to know the same thing that I did: which gene is causing the protection? After they realized that I did not have a gene, they quickly lost interest. While I did not get any useful ideas for my research project, there were plenty of opportunities to network with other scientists at all levels of their careers. There were many fellow graduate students there, plus post docs, PIs, company representatives, clinicians, and I even got to talk to a scientist who had been knighted- Sir Walter Bodmer.

There is plenty to do in Bar Harbor, such as hiking, swimming, whale watching, shopping, etc; however, the conference did not allow much time to explore the island. The meeting began on a Thursday night and ended on a Sunday morning, so I took advantage of the half days before and after the conference to see and do many of the tourist attractions. This, by itself, made the trip worthwhile. My overall impression of the science presented at the conference was that it was interesting, but the focus was too specific, causing my research to go largely unnoticed. The small size of the conference made networking much easier. Most participants stayed in the same hotel, ate breakfast and lunch together, and presented their posters and talks in a single room. Since networking is an important part of any conference, the size of this meeting was ideal.

Travel Essay

By Elizabeth Reichl

This past July, I went to a summer ASCB conference on cytokinesis. Cytokinesis is the process by which a mother cell divides to form two daughter cells. This was the first ASCB conference devoted entirely to cytokinesis. Cytokinesis has been an active area of research since the first microscopes were built and microscopic cells could be seen to divide. Remarkably, despite this long history, the fundamental mechanisms by which cells divide are still not well-understood.

The keynote speaker of the conference was Ray Rappaport. Dr. Rappaport has been a pioneer in the cytokinesis field since his first article was published in the *Journal of Experimental Zoology* in 1961. As noted by Thomas Pollard, Rappaport’s studies established the fundamental rules for how the mitotic apparatus determines the position of the cleavage furrow (1). Remarkably, these insights were based on experiments that lacked many of the tools that are prerequisites for modern assays such as molecular biology, biochemistry, or even antibodies. Rappaport’s main tools were an inverted microscope, a microforge, a centrifuge, micromanipulators, and his handmade observation chambers. This simple approach even extends today as Dr. Rappaport’s keynote speech was a “chalk-talk,” given without the use of computer, much less powerpoint. One of the most striking aspects of the speech the demonstration of how simple hypotheses addressed by simple experiments can yield tremendous insight into how cells carryout intricate tasks.

The cytokinesis field (albeit from an insiders point-of-view) is one of the most varied, encompassing cell signaling, cell mechanics, and cell development. Indeed, a cell undergoing cytokinesis utilizes essentially all its machinery from membrane trafficking to nuclear transport (2,3). The meeting was especially valuable as it provided a “big-picture” view of the many different disciplines that are integral components of the cytokinesis field. Some of the major areas of study discussed at the meeting are microtubules, actin, and associated proteins. A call was made to standardize the protein nomenclature between species, which is a problem every graduate student faces. Another recurrent theme throughout the meeting was the need for more quantitative approaches in cytokinesis research. One of the reasons why cytokinesis is not better understood is because there is no available reconstitution system in order to analyze the role of each protein in the process.

The summer ASCB meeting at the University of Vermont was not all seminars and poster sessions for me. It also provided a time to meet the important figures in the field socially and to bond with the members of my lab. Lab members are somewhere at the intersection of coworkers, friends, and family. After braving the university’s air-conditioning-free dormitories and enjoying the shopping and local brewery, we had formed stronger ties with one another. We came back from the meeting full of new ideas and questions as well as a greater respect for one another.

References

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SAP CORNER

The Importance of Diversity

Deborah Hillard, Psy.D.

By definition, the word *diversity* implies being different from the norm and having distinct characteristics that are unlike others in a group. In the new millennium, we are living in a society comprised of individuals from many different ethnic, cultural and socioeconomic groups. Our academic environment should reflect the times by being inclusive and respecting the differences that exist as a result of our diverse backgrounds.

Depending on the type of setting in which one studies, diversity can either flourish or falter. In an environment where diversity is valued, individual differences are perceived as strengths and are necessary for the healthy functioning of the institution. In an institution where diversity is not valued, differences might only promote conflict. And, in an environment where everyone is of the same ilk and thinks alike, individuals new to this setting would need to conform or adapt in order to fit in, thereby denying the very elements that define their diversity. In this latter type of environment, the opportunity to develop and create new approaches and solutions to working together cohesively is lost.

Interacting with others in a diverse environment requires a great deal of self awareness. We must be mindful of our own prejudices and the stereotypes we have developed about cultures different from our own. We must be thoughtful in terms of how we react when relating to people from different cultures and about the type of impact our attitude

may have on our ability to work together effectively. While it is not easy to confront our own prejudices, it is crucial if we are truly to become an inclusive work environment.

There are many ways your academic department can address the issue of diversity. JHU School of Medicine has many resources to assist in ensuring a diverse academic environment. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Programs (410 516-8075) works to create a University-wide climate where all individuals can feel comfortable and succeed. The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is also on hand to provide confidential services to members of the university community who want to discuss personal issues related to diversity.

When an organization places a high value on diversity and supports and nurtures it, students and employees tend to feel that they are valued members of an organization, thereby enabling them to work to their full potential. Letting go of our own preconceived notions about others is not an easy task for any of us, but being aware of our prejudices is the first step. In time, with patience, understanding and acceptance, we will learn how to take larger steps. For more information about this topic, please feel free to contact the Student Assistance Program (SAP) at (410) 955-1220 or visit our website at www.jhu.edu/sap. Also, be sure to keep an eye out for the upcoming Spring Panel Symposium, focusing on issues of diversity.

Are you the type to save a life?

Type for Life, the 6th annual marrow registration drive, will take place March 7-11, 2005. This event, organized by students of the Johns Hopkins Schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health, provides FREE convenient registration with the National Marrow Donor Program. Registration, which takes about 20 minutes, involves completing a short health questionnaire and a simple finger stick to obtain a drop of blood. The blood sample, which is drawn by professional Hopkins phlebotomists, is then used for a blood test called a "tissue type." Your participation in the marrow registration drive will provide all patients nationwide with a better chance of finding a bone marrow or stem cell donor.

Registering with Type for Life is only the first step towards becoming a donor. After the March drive, your tissue type is entered anonymously into a national database that is searched daily by thousands of patients needing a marrow transplant. If your type matches a patient's type, you can consider donating to save a life! At no time is there any cost to you, and new donation procedures are safer and more convenient than ever. The donation of your healthy marrow can cure many diseases including leukemia, breast cancer and other tumors, and many fatal blood diseases. All are encouraged to participate, and there is a special need for non-Caucasian individuals to register. Join us in the fight to save lives through marrow donation. Mark your calendar to register with Type for Life at the most convenient time and place listed below.

Are you the type to save a life? Come find out:

March 7	Johns Hopkins Hospital, Broadway Corridor, 8am-5pm
March 8	School of Nursing, Carpenter Room, 8am-5pm
March 9	School of Public Health, Anna Baetjer Room, 8am-5pm
March 10	School of Medicine, PCTB 113, 8am-5pm
March 11	Johns Hopkins Hospital, Broadway Corridor, 8am-5pm

Questions are welcomed at jenny@jhmi.edu, 410-502-7716 or visit www.typeforlife.org. Those typed previously may update contact information at 410-955-6347. Registration requires your driver's license and the address and phone number of two alternate contacts not living with you.

Help Type for Life provide FREE registration for all volunteers with your tax-deductible donation. Checks payable to JHU with "Type for Life" in the memo may be mailed to:

Type for Life
tax exempt # 31006126
c/o Ryan Foxworthy
615 N. Wolfe St., Suite E1002
Baltimore, MD 21287

FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL HERPES TESTING OFFERED

AT THE STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER AS PART OF NIH FUNDED STUDY

Call Dr. Hayley Mark 410-614-5298 to learn
more about the study
and make an appointment

Herpes Simplex Virus Type 2 (HSV-2) is the virus that usually causes genital herpes. Approximately one out of five adults in the United States has antibodies to HSV-2. However, only about 1/4 of people who are infected know they have the infection. We usually think of genital herpes as causing noticeable sores on the genitals but actually, most people never have any severe symptoms and do not recognize that they are infected. How do you find out if you or your partner have unrecognized herpes? HSV blood tests (serological tests) detect antibodies.

Dr. Hayley Mark, Assistant Professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing is conducting a research study to determine how students react to getting tested for herpes. Do they like the testing? Does it make them anxious? Does it impact their behavior? Johns Hopkins students age 18 to 35 are eligible for the study. Call today for an appointment. All subjects receive financial compensation.

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[http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/gsa/
news.html](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/gsa/news.html)

Next Deadline: February 15, 2005