



(articles taken from "Today at Berkeley Lab", an electronic newsletter delivered daily to LBNL employees)

## Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

### CUCSA Update

December 2004- February 2005

December 22



While soaring oil prices in the 1970s prompted major advances in the nation's energy efficiency, this year's surge in fuel costs has not sparked a new wave of conservation. Experts say they expected petroleum demand growth to slow in 2004. Instead, worldwide oil demand grew more than 3 percent. Some now say that conservation is unlikely to play a bigger role in the United States, unless predictions that the era of cheap oil is over come true. **Mark Levine**, director of Berkeley Lab's Environmental Energy Technologies Division said he was "disappointed" though not entirely surprised by the inelasticity of oil demand over such a short period of time.

### Energy Prices Not Spurring Conservation



Levine

January 6

### Director Chu's First 'Brown Bag' Monday



Chu

Berkeley Lab Director **Steve Chu's** first "brown bag" lunch with employees since he arrived in August is scheduled for next Monday, Jan. 10, from noon to 1 p.m. in Perseverance Hall. Employees are invited to bring their lunches and questions to the table and converse with the Director about Lab matters. The informal get-togethers were initiated by Chu's predecessor, Chuck Shank, two years ago to give staff the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with Lab leadership.

January 7

## Lab Water Expert Gadgil Featured on NPR Show



Gadgil

Berkeley Lab's resident expert on water resources in third-world countries, Environmental Energy Technology's Ashok Gadgil, was a featured guest on the call-in talk show, "The Connection," on National Public Radio. The one-hour program, emanating from NPR's Boston affiliate, aired Wednesday morning. During the show, he commented on the world's need for clean, fresh drinking water, whether it be in the aftermath of a catastrophe like the Asian tsunami or in the everyday lives of impoverished citizens throughout the world.

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January 21

## Supervisor Training Sponsored by HR

Human Resources has announced the launch of seven new supervisor training courses. The first class, "Labor and Employee Relations at Berkeley Lab," will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 26. The second class, "Hiring Policies and Processes," is on Friday, Jan 28. Future class topics include "What is Workplace Harassment?," "Preventing Workplace Violence," "Compensation for Managers," "Hiring Policies and Processes," "Interviewing Skills," and "Screening Resumes and Conducting Reference Checks." The classes are free.

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January 25



## New Insights in Role Of Genetics in Fitness

*By Glenda Chui*



Williams

Some people stay fit and live to a ripe old age, despite never bothering to exercise. Why? A recent report may provide an answer. Researchers ran rats on a treadmill, then bred the best runners, and did the same with the worst runners, until they had superjocks and superwimps. The average rodent jock could run 42 minutes without stopping; the average wimp, just 14 minutes. The least fit rats gained more weight as they aged and increased the chances of heart disease and diabetes. **Paul Williams**, a health researcher at Berkeley Lab who has been studying similar issues in humans, said the new study offers insights into the role of genetics in fitness.

January 26

**The New York Times**

## Weapon In Battle Against Malaria



Keasling

Yesterday's *New York Times* featured an article on the development of a super anti-malaria drug that is being led by **Jay Keasling**, who heads the Synthetic Biology Department for Berkeley Lab's Physical Biosciences Division. The *Times* article cited the \$43 million grant recently pledged by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for the development of Keasling's technique for inexpensively making the drug artemisinin. Currently, artemisinin is extracted from the sweet wormwood plant at a hefty price. Through genetic engineering, Keasling hopes to turn *E. coli* bacteria into artemisinin factories, dramatically reducing the cost of the anti-malaria drug.

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February 9

## UC Proposal for Lab Contract Sent to DOE



Barletta

It was hand-carried to Chicago, and the University of California's proposal to continue management of Berkeley Lab arrived at Department of Energy offices yesterday, one day short of the deadline. The comprehensive document, prepared by UC and the Lab over the past few months, will be the basis for a senior management meeting with the Source Evaluation Board later this month. A decision on awarding a new contract is expected sometime in April. Acquisition manager **Bill Barletta** yesterday thanked the preparation team members for their "extraordinary efforts" in assembling the proposal.

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February 14

## Black History Month Lecture is Today



Harris

San Francisco District Attorney [Kamala Harris](#) — the first woman ever elected to this position and daughter of Berkeley Lab scientist **Shyamala Harris** — visits the Lab today to deliver a speech commemorating Black History Month. The talk begins at noon in the Building 50 Auditorium. Black History Month got its start as "Negro History Week," which was established by schoolteacher [Carter Woodson](#) in 1926 to educate children about the important things African Americans had accomplished.

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February 16



Gray

## Berkeley Lab, UCSF Unite Against Cancer

Berkeley Lab and the University of California, San Francisco entered into an informal affiliation Feb. 11 designed to integrate the two institutions' cancer research programs. **Joe Gray**, director of Berkeley Lab's Life Sciences Division and leader of the Breast Oncology program at UCSF's Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Frank McCormick, director of UCSF's Comprehensive Cancer Center, will lead the collaboration. The partnership will promote a multidisciplinary inquiry into the fundamental causes of cancer, and help parlay this knowledge into effective therapies.

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February 18



## Lab Among Others Trying To Solve Arsenic Problem

By Mark Clayton



In Nepal's agricultural flatlands, women line up at village wells with earthen or metal pots. The water they pump out is sweet and apparently clean. Tragically, it's also often laced with arsenic. In a scene repeated in more than a dozen countries, tens of millions of people are drinking from arsenic-tainted wells. Some have called it the largest mass poisoning in history. Now, researchers — from Harvard, Columbia, the Centers for Disease Control, the World Bank, and Berkeley Lab — are racing to fix this mistake.

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February 18

## ACS Director Jacobs To Speak Next Week



Jacobs

Madeleine Jacobs, Executive Director and CEO of the American Chemical Society, will visit Berkeley Lab next Friday and will speak on "Ten Ways to Make a Difference." The one-hour talk begins at 11 a.m. in the Building 50 Auditorium. Jacobs, the first woman to hold the top ACS position, heads the world's largest scientific society. A science journalist as well as a chemist, Jacobs has spoken worldwide on topics ranging from gender equity in science to the challenges facing chemists in a global environment. Her subject in the Lab address is personal and professional growth. Go [here](#) to learn more about Jacobs.

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