



3333 California Street  
Suite 103, Box 0462  
San Francisco, CA  
94143-0462  
tel: 415/476-2557  
fax: 415/476-3541

Alice Trinkl, News Director  
Source: Bill Gordon (415) 476-2557  
E-mail: [bgordon@pubaff.ucsf.edu](mailto:bgordon@pubaff.ucsf.edu)  
Web: [www.ucsf.edu](http://www.ucsf.edu)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **LEADING SCIENCE ADMINISTRATOR NAMED DIRECTOR OF NEW INSTITUTE**

Marvin Cassman, PhD, a nationally-known innovator and leader in basic science administration, has been appointed director of the new Institute for Quantitative Biomedical Research (QB3), a multi-campus effort headquartered at the University of California, San Francisco.

Cassman currently is director of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) of the National Institutes of Health. NIGMS supports basic biomedical research that is not targeted to specific diseases, but that increases understanding of life processes and lays a foundation for advances in disease diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

As director of the QB3 Institute, Cassman will oversee innovative programs designed to integrate physical, mathematical, and engineering sciences to create powerful new techniques for attacking biological problems. This integration of sciences could open the way for discovery of treatments and cures for some of our most intractable diseases, such as brain disorders, cancer, and diabetes.

The QB3 Institute, one of three California Institutes for Science and Innovation recently created by Gov. Gray Davis, is a partnership of three University of California campuses – UCSF, UC Berkeley, and UC Santa Cruz. It will be headquartered in a portion of Genentech Hall, the first building at the new UCSF Mission Bay campus now under construction, and in an adjoining building now being planned. Additional facilities will be located at the Berkeley and Santa Cruz campuses.

“Marvin Cassman is an outstanding individual and scientific program manager. His background and skills are ideally suited for managing the highly innovative and complex mission of the QB3 Institute,” said UCSF Chancellor J. Michael Bishop, MD.

Cassman’s appointment was announced today by UCSF Executive Vice Chancellor Regis Kelly, PhD. His appointment is subject to UC Board of Regents’ approval. He will come to UCSF in mid-May 2002.

“The QB3 Institute represents an unprecedented collaboration among the three campuses, breaking the traditional boundaries of scientific disciplines. Marvin Cassman brings the skills and experience needed to identify trends and organize a wide range of scientists and ideas,” said Kelly.

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Organized around three research and education modules -- Bioengineering and Biotechnology, Bioinformatics, and Structural and Chemical Biology -- the Institute will focus on developing techniques for storing and analyzing vast quantities of biological information and using imaging and mathematical modeling to view molecules, cells, and single organ systems as part of functional networks. These technologies will allow scientists to understand interactions and predict outcomes and to reconstruct parts of living systems in the laboratory to improve human health.

A portion of the Institute's 54 laboratories at UCSF also will be housed in 90,000 square feet of Genentech Hall at UCSF Mission Bay, about a mile south of San Francisco's Financial District. Genentech Hall is scheduled to open in early 2003. The Institute also will occupy an adjoining building containing 92,000 usable square feet that the campus expects to construct by 2004.

UCSF Mission Bay, a 43-acre teaching and research campus, is expected to attract one of the nation's most important concentrations of biotechnology and life sciences companies to a private research and development zone surrounding the site.

At UC Berkeley, a new 150,000 square foot building nearing construction will house 41 principal investigators from physics, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, engineering and structural biology. At UC Santa Cruz, the Institute's Bioinformatics and Analysis of Complex Biological Systems module will be housed in 11,250 square feet of a new Physical Sciences Building, now under construction, and in another campus building.

"The promise of the work of QB3 is the promise of healthier, longer lives. We are delighted to have someone of the stature of Marvin Cassman directing the Institute," said Robert M. Berdahl, PhD, UC Berkeley Chancellor.

David Haussler, PhD, who will direct QB3 efforts at the UC Santa Cruz campus, described Cassman as an outstanding choice to lead the Institute.

"Dr. Cassman has been at the forefront in developing programs and focus in the exciting area of computational biology, and he has championed research that looks at how cells work as a system, how genes interact, and how it all fits together. He has shown great leadership and vision in his work at NIH. I am very excited to be working with him," said Haussler, professor of computer science and director of the Center for Biomolecular Science and Engineering at UCSC.

As NIGMS director, Cassman oversees the administration of basic research and research training grants in the areas of cell biology, biophysics, genetics, developmental biology, pharmacology, physiology, biological chemistry, bioinformatics, and computational biology. He also oversees programs designed to increase the number and capabilities of minority biomedical scientists.

In fiscal year 2002, the NIGMS budget is \$1.73 billion. The vast majority of this money goes to fund grants to scientists at universities, medical schools, hospitals, and research institutions throughout the country. At any given time, NIGMS supports more than 4,000 research grants--about 12 percent of all NIH grants.

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A native of Chicago, Cassman received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Chicago and a doctoral degree in biochemistry from Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University in New York. Following a postdoctoral fellowship at UC Berkeley, Cassman joined the UC Santa Barbara faculty as assistant professor.

In 1975, he joined the National Institutes of Health as a health scientist administrator and has been there since that time, advancing through a series of positions. He became acting director of NIGMS in 1993 and was named director in 1996.

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