

**GENETICS SOCIETY OF CANADA
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Friday June 18, 2010, 12:30 p.m.- 2:00 p.m.

Michael DeGroote Center for Learning and Discovery (MDCL) Room 1110
McMaster University, Hamilton

1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Paul Lasko went over the main points of the proposed merger with the Canadian Society of Biochemistry, Molecular & Cellular Biology (CSBMCB). The GSC has been facing major challenges over the past several years including a rapidly declining membership, and yearly deficits which continue to erode our financial position. A merger with CSBMCB offers the opportunity to maintain GSC awards, while merging with a society with considerably more resources, and a strong role in science advocacy. Paul put forth a motion to accept the merger between the GSC and CSBMCB, with Brian Golding seconding. Discussion then followed. Paul pointed out that two members of the GSC would be joining the CSBMCB executive for a term of three years, and would be active in ensuring the new merged society continues to reflect GSC interests. Rama Singh said it was sad to lose the GSC as a separate entity, and that the new society should be made aware that it is easier to sell genetics, as opposed to molecular biology, as part of lobbying efforts. Shiva Singh raised the possibility of CIHR funding future GSC meetings. Paul pointed out that he has been appointed the new Director of the CIHR Institute of Genetics (IG), and that it would be more appropriate for the new merged group to approach IG for funding. Concerns were raised that this seems like the 'death' of the GSC. Paul said that this would indeed be the end of the GSC as a separate entity, but that some independent management of GSC money and awards will continue. There would be enough money for us to continue as an independent society for a while longer, but funds would just dwindle down to nothing. Virginia Walker said she was concerned about the narrow focus of CSBMCB meetings and wondered if a GSC poster section could be maintained. Paul replied that our influence on this type of decision will depend on the enthusiasm of the two GSC members on the CSBMCB executive. The issue of communication between CSBMCB and its membership was raised; Andrew Simmonds pointed out that they send out an e-mail twice a year, as well as a yearly hard copy Bulletin. Julie Brill raised the point that the Genetics Society of America (GSA) is popular because of its sponsorship of multiple meetings, and that perhaps CSBMCB could be more like this. Paul indicated that this was tried with the GSC; Julie replied that the CSBMCB has more resources. Shiva asked how the relationship with Genome would be affected. Brian stated that there will be no relationship. Genome will continue as a separated entity, just as it does now. Shiva wondered whether by joining the CSBMCB, we will simply find ourselves in the same financial situation as the GSC down the road. Paul replied that we have a better chance of survival in a larger rather than smaller organization. Virginia stated that the GSC has become a place to encourage our students, and said she'd like to send a strong message to the new merged society that this is what we believe in. Andrew replied that CSBMCB is a strongly student-oriented group, and offers them free membership. Paul pointed out that one of the problems with GSC meetings has been low student participation. Even if the main topic is not always of interest to GSC members, CSBMCB meetings always have a high student turnout and this is a great opportunity for them to network. Shiva asked

where the CSBMCB gets its funding from. Andrew replied it was from a dynamic, bigger membership. Paul added they have more sponsorship.
Final vote: 13 in favour, 2 opposed, 5 abstentions. Motion passed.

2. TREASURER'S REPORT

Julie Brill went over the highlights of her report, which was distributed at the meeting. We have about \$61,000 in the bank which is about 10% less than last year. We have only 87 paid members so far this year, which continues the trend of declining membership. Because of increased conference expenses and decreased revenue due to the economy, we spent almost \$7,000 more last year than we took in.

3. MEETING REPORT

Jianping Xu said that there had been 99 registrants for the McMaster meeting, which included 5 award talks, 3 symposia (18 invited talks), 3 contributed talk sessions (29 talks), and 27 contributed posters. The split was about 40% Ecology, 60% Molecular/Cell Biology. The meeting will be self-sustaining with no net cost to the GSC. He noted that Rama Singh had been the co-organizer.

4. AWARDS

Bernie Duncker listed the 2010 GSC award winners: Lara Skwarek, University of Toronto – Margaret Thompson Award for Outstanding Ph.D. Thesis; Ryan Gregory, University of Guelph – Robert H. Haynes Young Scientist Award; Rama Singh, McMaster University – William F. Grant and Peter B. Moens Award of Excellence.

5. CHANGE OF OFFICERS

A motion was proposed by Paul that Andrew Simmonds and Arthur Hilliker be the GSC representatives on the CSBMCB Executive, with Virginia Walker as an alternate, which was seconded by Ellen Larsen. Some discussion followed. Andrew stated that he is willing to take a strong mandate from the GSC membership, but needs us to tell him what we want this to be. One suggestion put forward was to request a 2012 meeting with a genetics theme. Andrew said he would do so. Andrew thanked Paul for his years of service as GSC President. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Andrew put forth a motion for adjournment, which was seconded by Paul, and approved unanimously.