

The Fourth International Aspergillus Meeting (alias Asperfest4) took place March 18-20, 2007 at Asilomar Conference Center in Oak Grove California. There were 121 participants representing 16 countries.

Summary of community discussion: Most discussion focused on efforts to improve genome annotation and to make improved annotation and other genome information easy to access. It was pointed out that these needs will only increase as more microarray and knock-out projects come on line. Scott Baker mentioned the need to link CADRE information with other genome information. Steve Harris mentioned the possibility of applying semantic web technologies and that a pilot program with this technology is underway at University of Nebraska. It was clear that the top priority for our community is an Aspergillus genome database that allows high quality annotation and full integration of genome, microarray, knockout, pathogenicity and other functional data.

During the meeting Michelle Momany (AGRPC Chair), Gavin Sherlock (Stanford University, P.I. of CGD), Jennifer Wortman, Natalie Fedorova and Bill Nierman (all heavily involved in Aspergillus comparative genomics work at TIGR) met to brainstorm ways to meet these community needs. They came up with the idea of creating AspGD, an Aspergillus Genome Database modeled on SGD (<http://www.yeastgenome.org/>) and CGD (<http://www.candidagenome.org/>). The plan was for Gavin Sherlock to submit an RO1 with Jennifer Wortman as co-PI to fund AspGD. The initial database would be anchored by *A. fumigatus* and *A. nidulans* genomes and would be constructed in a way to allow easy addition of other Aspergilli. The plan for AspGD was presented to the community in the final session of the meeting and a vote was taken. The vote was unanimous to support Gavin and Jennifer's proposal to NIAID for creation of AspGD. Michelle took on the task of collecting support letters from the community.

It was also announced that the funding for PFGRC (NIAID-sponsored supplier of microarray slides for *A. nidulans* and *A. fumigatus*) has been renewed. This was greeted with enthusiasm since many Aspergillus researchers are taking advantage of these resources or plan to do so.

Poster prize: The DSM poster prize went to Nora Khaldi (Trinity College, Dublin) for her poster entitled: "Horizontal gene transfer as the source of extra genes in *Aspergillus oryzae*." Poster judges were Noel van Perj, Scott Baker and Kevin McCluskey.

Elections: Terms ended for AGRPC members Michael Hynes (University of Melbourne) and Paul Dyer (University of Nottingham). New AGRPC members elected (2007-2009) were Joan Bennett (Rutgers University), Jennifer Wortmann (TIGR) and Gustavo Goldman (Universidade de San Paulo). After the meeting the 2007 AGRPC met and elected Michelle Momany Chair and Gerhard Braus Program Chair for Asperfest 5.