

Deborah L. Johnson



Current Position: Professor in the Keck School of Medicine of USC in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; also Associate Dean of Graduate Affairs at Keck

Education: Ph.D. in Chemistry (1980) from Georgetown University

Non-scientific Interests: Education

During my post-doctoral studies at Yale University, I became interested in defining the proteins and interactions involved in the formation of functional RNA polymerase III gene transcription complexes. I then moved to the Keck School of Medicine at USC in 1985, where I still am today. As we began to understand the nature of the transcription factor complexes, my laboratory shifted its interest to how these complexes might be regulated and the potential phenotypic consequences resulting from these changes. We have determined the mechanisms by which a number of tumor suppressors and oncogenic signaling pathways regulate the expression or modification of various proteins involved in RNA polymerase III-dependent transcription. Given this information, and the fact that enhanced expression of these genes is a hallmark of neoplasia, we were intrigued with the idea that this event may be crucial for cells to undergo cellular transformation.

Read Dr. Johnson's article entitled: Enhanced RNA Polymerase III-dependent Transcription is Required for Oncogenic Transformation

<http://www.jbc.org/cgi/content/full/283/28/19184>