J. Lawrence Marsh

Current Position: Professor of Developmental and Cell Biology in the Department of Developmental and Cell Biology and the Department of Pathology at University of California, Irvine; Director of the Developmental Biology Center at University of California, Irvine

Education: Ph.D. in Biochemistry (1974) from University of Washington

Non-scientific Interests: Adventure travel, wildlife photography, skiing, hiking, canoeing, and diving

While working to isolate genes involved in Wnt morphogen signaling, we isolated the *dishevelled* gene of *Drosophila*, which contains a curious string of polyQ repeats. Having organized joint meetings of the human and developmental genetics groups, Dr. John Wasmuth, who was working on isolating the human Huntington's disease gene, piqued my interest in the role of polyQs in disease as well as in normal proteins. We decided to model the expanded polyQs that one sees in neurodegenerative diseases such as Huntington's in *Drosophila*. After Dr. Wasmuth's untimely death, Dr. Leslie Thompson and I continued the work in a collaborative venture. The use of human disease models in tractable organisms like *Drosophila* has allowed accelerated progress in understanding the fundamentals of the disease mechanisms and in finding relevant therapeutic strategies. Several of these have made their way to clinical testing in a quite short time, and that is the subject of this review.

Read Dr. Marsh's article entitled: Animal Models of Polyglutamine Diseases and Therapeutic Approaches

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