



and UCSB Gaining Ground with Research Reagents

Millipore Corporation, a leader in life science technologies, tools, and services for bioscience research and biopharmaceutical manufacturing, has been working with UCSB scientists for less than two years. While the company has collaborative relationships with other universities, its budding involvement with UCSB is already unusual for the broad spectrum of projects in which Millipore is engaged.

“It began in 2007 when Millipore provided a three-year, \$50,000 grant to UCSB stem-cell investigator Dennis Clegg for his ongoing research,” says Dr. Rubén Flores-Saaib, manager of scientific collaboration business development for Millipore.



Dennis Clegg
Professor MCDB

Clegg’s focus is in neural development and disease; retinal development and degeneration; and differentiation of ocular cells from embryonic and adult stem cells.

Flores wanted an opportunity to expand his relationship with campus researchers and so he contacted Leslie Edwards, director of Corporate Business Development. Edwards orchestrated a day of one-on-one meetings with a number of researchers. Based on that visit, Millipore through Flores-Saaib has fostered new relationships with molecular, cellular and developmental biologists Erkki Ruoslahti, Leslie Wilson and Thomas Weimbs.

“Millipore’s collaboration has been instrumental in the rapid growth of UC Santa Barbara’s Center for Stem Cell Biology and Engineering. The company has an abiding interest in basic science and a significant history of research collaboration in exciting areas. Collaboration with Millipore and UC Santa Barbara continue to grow.”

Ruoslahti, an expert in cancer and tumor research, is co-developing novel reagents and a number of antibodies with Millipore. Wilson’s expertise is in the mechanism and regulation of cell function and is a consultant for Millipore scientists on new products. During the course of his research, Weimbs developed an antibody that plays a role in cell polarization. The antibody could prove to be an important tool for researching kidney and prostate diseases. Millipore is now working with UCSB’s Office of Technology & Industry Alliances to make the antibody more broadly accessible to the research community.

Millipore is an S&P 500 company with 6,000 employees in 47 countries worldwide. Flores-Saaib works closely with Millipore’s marketing and development staff on Millipore’s strategic direction for new products and technologies. Then he looks to UCSB to identify investigators who are working in those strategic areas.



Ruben Flores-Saaib

“The idea is to follow up on these grants and see if there is any possibility to work with the investigator

to enable other worldwide scientists' access to reagents developed at UCSB labs," Flores-Saaib says. "I'm the person who facilitates the interactions between our internal R&D and marketing and UCSB investigators."

For UCSB scientists, collaborations such as these provide a path for their research to ultimately help society.

"The reason these relationships are important to Millipore is oftentimes our best innovative technologies and tools originate with the customers we serve," Flores-Saaib says. "We want to enable investigators a path to allow their worldwide peers access to validated and consistent-performing research tools and in exchange support them with royalties derived from sales of such tools and other research support."

And, as Flores-Saaib explains: "It's not only about research materials and technology. It's also about the possibility of finding some talent that could possibly work at Millipore in the future."

That's good for UCSB graduates, too.

To learn more about how your company can work with UC Santa Barbara, contact Leslie Edwards (805-893-3394/edwards@engineering.ucsb.edu) or Chris Russo (805-893-5544/crusso@engineering.ucsb.edu) in the Corporate Affiliates Program office.