

Dr. Omar Bagasra Announces \$1 million Grant to Conduct Cancer research



The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has funded a cooperative grant for the implementation of Minority Institution/Cancer Center Partnerships between Claflin University and the University of South Carolina (USC)/ South Carolina Cancer Center (SCCC) in order to develop a cancer training program to prepare Claflin University students in cancer research.

Dr. Omar Bagasra announced in October 2003 that Claflin University would share the \$1 million grant award with the University of South Carolina. The grant will provide funding for prostate cancer and cervical cancer research.

DR. BAGASRA, AN EMINENT MOLECULAR BIOLOGIST, IMMUNOLOGIST, AND RETRO-VIROLOGIST HAS REMAINED VIGILANT IN PROCURING FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

The lack of significant training opportunities for minority scientists in cancer research and the low level of involvement of minority serving institutions in competitive cancer research have represented two major obstacles to developing a stronger national cancer research effort aimed at understanding the reasons behind the significant disparities of cancer impact on minority populations. The NCI has created an approach that can help Minority Serving Institutions and cancer centers integrate and take maximum advantage of their expertise and experience to work together in areas that are mutually beneficial. Claflin University students will be provided a stipend and transportation to travel to cancer research laboratories at USC/SCCC to conduct the state-of-the-art cancer research.

Dr. Bagasra, an eminent molecular biologist, immunologist, and retro-virologist, was recruited to Claflin in 2001 to establish the South Carolina Biotechnology Center.

Since 2001, Dr. Bagasra has remained vigilant in procuring funding for research and development.