



Global Virus Network Meeting Strengthens Ties Among Top Virus Researchers

GVN's programs facilitate international collaborations to address growing viral threats

May 19, 2015, Beijing, China--The [Global Virus Network \(GVN\)](#), a coalition of the world's leading medical virology research centers working together to prevent illness and death from viral disease, held its 7th meeting in partnership with Beijing University of Technology, a GVN Center of Excellence, in Beijing, China May 16-19,2015. During a time of mass migration, global climate change and threats of reemerging viruses such as Ebola, the timing and location of the meeting is of significant importance. Experts shared information on varying viral threats, including those causing hemorrhagic fevers, hepatitis, HIV, measles, influenza, dengue and chikungunya, to name a few. GVN members also reviewed strategies at the center of the organization including the creation of specialized task forces and the launch of training programs to address growing viral threats.

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“Professor Yi Zeng and his colleagues hosted an impressive, scientific meeting,” said Dr. Robert Gallo, Co-Founder and Scientific Director of the GVN. “The meeting provided an opportunity for leading experts to share cutting-edge research and stimulate difficult questions in an effort to solve some of the field's top basic science and clinical challenges.”

“It is fitting for Beijing University of Technology to host many of the world's top medical virologists as the University celebrates 55 years of success,” said Professor Yi Zeng, GVN China Center of Excellence Director. “We are pleased to have served as the catalyst for important scientific discussions and the inspiration for new international collaborations.”

GVN Centers of Excellence reviewed the effectiveness of strategies implemented by the network including the creation of international task forces and the use of technology to tackle today's viral challenges.

For example, in 2014, GVN launched the Chikungunya Task Force in response to outbreaks spreading from Africa and Southeast Asia to North and South America. At the conference, GVN Task Force leaders discussed the spread of chikungunya around the world, current treatments and top prospects for vaccine candidates. GVN utilizes information technology such as a globally

accessible webinar series to educate business leaders and media, among others, on viral threats such as chikungunya.

One topic of priority concern in both China and the U.S. is the re-emergence of measles. Dr. Diane Griffin at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health shared updates on how the virus causes disease and how the measles vaccine offers protection against other infectious diseases. The protective value of the vaccine clearly establishes that vaccination policies should be rigorously implemented.

“In addition to the scientific exchanges, the GVN Centers of Excellence recommitted themselves to ensuring that the world is prepared against future pandemics by ensuring the training of tomorrow’s virology leaders,” said Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, President of the GVN. The GVN will host an intensive training course in medical virology in July, and invited Centers to send their best and brightest students to participate in the course, which includes world leaders as lecturers.

“We look forward to welcoming tomorrow's medical virology leaders from around the world to Baltimore in July,” said Dr. Hrynkow.

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