

THE *Current*

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[Andrea Estrada](#)

UCSB Affiliates Lecture to Highlight Research in Stem Cell Therapy for Treatment of Macular Degeneration

Stem cells have generated considerable hope and excitement because of their potential in the treatment of disease and injury. At UC Santa Barbara's Center for Stem Cell Biology and Engineering, efforts to are under way to understand the fundamental molecular and cellular biology of stem cells, as is research aimed at developing novel biotechnologies for stem cell growth and delivery.

In a lecture on Monday, March 15, Dennis O. Clegg, co-director of the UCSB Center for Stem Cell Biology and Engineering, and Lincoln V. Johnson, director of the Center for the Study of Macular Degeneration, will speak on "The California Project to Cure Blindness: Stem Cell Therapies for Macular Degeneration." Their talk is part of the UCSB Affiliates' Science Lite series.

The lecture will begin at 7:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 21 E. Constance Ave. in Santa Barbara. Check-in and reception are at 7 p.m. Admission is \$8 for UCSB Affiliates and Chancellor Council members, and \$10 for all others. Advance reservations are recommended and can be made by calling the Office of Community Relations at (805) 893-4388.

The California Project to Cure Blindness seeks to derive ocular cells from stem cells for the treatment of degenerative eye diseases. These cells can rescue visual

function in a rat model of blindness, and progress is being made toward clinical trials in humans.

Clegg, a professor in the Department of Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology, is also a member of the UCSB Neuroscience Research Institute. He earned his doctorate in biochemistry at UC Berkeley, where he used emerging methods in recombinant DNA to study the sensory transduction systems of bacteria. As the Jane Coffin Childs Postdoctoral Scholar at UC San Francisco, he studied neural development and regeneration. He has continued that area of research since joining the UCSB faculty.

Johnson, who is also associate director of the Neuroscience Research Institute, received his undergraduate training in biology at UC Riverside, and pursued doctoral studies in the Department of Cell and Neurobiology at UC San Francisco's School of Medicine. Subsequently, he has performed postdoctoral research at Harvard Medical School's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. He served on the faculty of the cell and neurobiology department at the University of Southern California School of Medicine prior to joining the Neuroscience Research Institute at UCSB.

More information about the Science Lite series is available at www.ia.ucsb.edu/comrel/events.shtml.

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