Editorial

With this issue of *Cells Tissues Organs*, we are very pleased to announce the appointment of five new Associate Editors. We believe that each of these appointments represents a strengthening of our commitment to publish quality basic research papers in the emerging interdisciplinary fields of regenerative biology and tumor cell plasticity. Tumor cell plasticity is now emphasized as another new focus of CTO. This rapidly developing field is receiving considerable recent interest not only in basic tumor research, but also as a bridge between stem cell research, developmental biology and general cell biology.

Ravi A. Bellamkonda has been appointed Associate Editor for Neurosciences. Dr. Bellamkonda is a Professor of Biomedical Engineering in the Joint Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech/Emory. He earned his PhD at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, and completed his post-doctoral training at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Prior to moving to Georgia Tech in 2003, he was a tenured Associate Professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, USA. His laboratory is interested in understanding and repairing injuries to the nervous system using therapeutic approaches enabled by technologies derived from Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering. He has developed nano- and micro-scale polymeric systems for spatio-temporally controlled presentation of cues and electrodes that encourage regeneration of, and interfacing to, neural tissue.

Karen K. Hirschi has been appointed Associate Editor for Developmental Biology. She is currently a Professor in the Departments of Pediatrics and of Molecular and Cel-

lular Biology, and the Deputy Director of the Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine (STaR) Center, at Baylor College of Medicine. She is also an adjunct Professor in the Bioengineering Department at Rice University. She earned her PhD degree at the University of Arizona, and received post-doctoral training at Harvard Medical School. While at Harvard, she developed novel in vitro model systems to study the interactions between vascular cells and their progenitors during blood vessel assembly. The work of the Hirschi lab continues to focus on understanding the molecular control of vascular cell differentiation, proliferation and blood vessel formation, as well as identification of cells that participate in these processes in embryonic and adult tissues. Insights gained from such cell and developmental studies are applied to the development and optimization of clinically relevant therapies, including vascular cell and gene therapy, neurovascular regeneration, and vascularization of engineered tissues.

Laura Niklason has been appointed Associate Editor for Stem Cell Biology and Tissue Engineering. She is a Professor of Anesthesia and Biomedical Engineering at Yale University. She received her Bachelor's degrees in Physics and Biophysics from the University of Illinois, a PhD in Biophysics from the University of Chicago, and an MD from the University of Michigan, where she also did her internship. She then went on to the Massachusetts General Hospital for residency in Anesthesia, followed by fellowship training in Critical Care Medicine. During her time in Boston, Dr. Niklason was also a post-doctoral researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with Dr. Robert Langer, where she developed techniques

for the tissue engineering of autologous arteries. Dr. Niklason joined the faculty at Duke University in 1998, where she continued her work in cardiovascular tissue engineering, and founded a biotechnology company designed to bring tissue engineered cardiovascular products to the clinic. Currently, she is engaged in preclinical studies in large animals to validate the method for generating engineered tissues that are available 'off the shelf'. Large animal studies on vascular grafts are centered on immune/inflammatory response minimization to these off-the-shelf tissues and on the long-term function of the grafts in the arterial circulation. In addition, she is developing tissue engineering approaches to generating vascularized cardiac muscle as well as vascularized lung tissue.

Molly Shoichet has been appointed Associate Editor for Neurosciences. She holds the Canada Research Chair in Tissue Engineering and is Professor of Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry, Chemistry, and Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering at the University of Toronto. Dr. Shoichet received her undergraduate degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Chemistry (1987) and her PhD from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in Polymer Science and Engineering (1992). Her research program utilizes a cross-disciplinary approach, where aspects of engineering, chemistry, and biology are applied to the fields of Regenerative Medicine, Tissue Engineering, and Drug Delivery. She is an expert in the study of polymers for regeneration, having designed novel injectable hydrogels for local delivery to the injured spinal cord and brain. Before being recruited to the University of Toronto in 1995, Dr. Shoichet worked at CytoTherapeutics Inc. on encapsulated cell therapy.

Erik (Rik) W. Thompson has been appointed Associate Editor for Tumor Cell Plasticity. He is a Professor at the Department of Surgery, Melbourne University, and is on the faculty of St. Vincent's Institute of Medical Research (SVI), Melbourne, Australia. He received his PhD (1986) from Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia, for studies on extracellular matrix (basement membrane) in postnatal testicular development, then went to the NIH to study cancer cell interactions with basement membrane with George Martin. He joined the breast cancer group of Marc Lippman and Bob Dickson, and transferred with them to the Lombardi Cancer Centre at Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C., USA. He became Assistant Professor there in 1992, and returned to Australia in 1997 to set up the Victorian Breast Cancer Research Consortium Invasion and Metastasis Unit at SVI. His research is focused on cancer invasion and metastasis, in particular epithelial-mesenchymal plasticity and matrix metalloproteinases in breast cancer progression. Prof. Thompson is President-Elect of the Metastasis Research Society, co-founder and treasurer of The Epithelial Mesenchymal Transition International Association (TEMTIA), member of the Research Advisory Committee of the National Breast Cancer Foundation in Australia, and founding president and treasurer of the Australasian Microarray and Associated Technologies Association (AMATA). He recently initiated the EMPathy Breast Cancer Network, a large-scale collaborative initiative to target breast cancer recurrence through epithelial mesenchymal plasticity.

We hope that you will join us in welcoming all of these distinguished scientists.

H.-W. Denker, Essen, Germany

A.W. English, Atlanta, Ga., USA