
Quotient’s C3 Coated Red Blood Cells spotlight the high quality and excellent value our customers have come to expect. Enjoy strong reactivity that lasts to expiration at an affordable price. Contact your local account executive to see what you’ve been missing.
For Treating Hemorrhage, Whole Blood is Best
Researchers are working to adapt and improve blood and blood components for more widespread use.

A Coronavirus-Mediated Change in Plans
Facilities had to switch gears rapidly to begin collecting and transfusing CCP.
In addition to grappling with the reopening of communities, we are experiencing a time of national and international protests against racism and police violence. We at AABB support these protests and yearn to see changes in the communities we serve. We have long sought to provide blood and biotherapeutics to underrepresented populations, and the current situation makes it clear we must rededicate ourselves to increasing minority donor engagement, because patients’ lives depend on it.

For several months, we have also been dealing with the global COVID-19 pandemic and its associated daily challenges. The pandemic continues to affect life throughout the world in a number of ways — beyond anything we could have predicted. As your professional Association, AABB is here to help in any way it can.

The blood and biotherapies community has, of course, been significantly affected. However, it has heartened me to see how our community continues to rise to the challenge and take remarkable steps to ensure optimal care and safety for our employees, donors and patients at all times. We have done this despite unprecedented difficulties. Our community can be proud that our efforts have a vital impact and have helped to ensure that blood is available for patients when it is needed.

COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma

One of the most significant changes the pandemic has brought to our community involves the collection of COVID-19 convalescent plasma (CCP).

Recently approved by FDA as an investigational treatment for patients with COVID-19, CCP is now being collected from donors who have recovered from the infection at blood centers and transfused in hospitals throughout the world.

In this month’s issue of AABB News, a feature article beginning on page 12 highlights steps blood centers have taken to implement CCP collection processes. This is an important intervention in helping patients recover from COVID-19. Our community can feel gratified that this is yet another way in which we are providing optimal care for patients during this critical time.

Monitoring the Blood Supply

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, ensuring the sustainability and adequacy of the blood supply has been a top priority for AABB and our partner organizations. We have been monitoring the situation on a daily basis and alerted the public when the need for blood has changed. This vigilance will continue, particularly now as elective surgeries are resuming. Ensuring a safe and adequate blood supply is of the utmost importance and our community will continue to work together to achieve this.

I would like to end this on a personal note of thanks and ask you please to reach out to me or AABB if there are additional ways for us to help.

Beth Shaz, MD
AABB President
NEW! UltraCW II Automatic Cell Washer

Exceptional performance and consistent, reproducible results for high performance automated cell washing

» Intuitive programming makes creating streamlined workflows a breeze
» Designed to provide consistent, reproducible results with precise saline fills
» Safe and easy to use with time saving performance

Reliable, safe, and effective solutions help you provide the highest standard of patient care.

For more information:
info.helmerinc.com/ultracwII

TrueBlue™
AABB Indicts 2 New Members Into NBF Hall of Fame

By Jerilyn Schweitzer, MA
Managing Editor

AABB and the National Blood Foundation are pleased to announce that two new members will be inducted into the NBF Hall of Fame this year: Eldad A. Hod, MD; and Sean Stowell, MD, PhD. Each year, one to three AABB members who meet rigorous criteria are inducted into the NBF Hall of Fame to honor their lifetime achievements. To be eligible, members must have leveraged an NBF early-career Scientific Research Grant into a successful career in transfusion medicine, biotherapies or patient blood management. Other criteria include having served on a minimum of three AABB committees or workgroups and demonstrating exemplary leadership through commitment, forward thinking and notable contributions to the field.

**Eldad A. Hod**

Eldad Hod, MD, is a tenured associate professor in the Department of Pathology and Cell Biology at Columbia University’s Irving Medical Center in New York. His translational research interests focus on the red blood cell storage lesion, donor iron deficiency and recipient iron overload. Hod is the New York Hub principal investigator for the National Institutes of Health’s Recipient Epidemiology and Donor Evaluation Study IV-Pediatric (REDS-IV-P) program, and he has received several NIH research grants. In addition, Hod has authored more than 80 peer-reviewed articles on transfusion medicine, clinical pathology and hematology.

Hod’s NBF-funded research, which examined the effects of iron deficiency on blood donor health, led to a series of investigations culminating in his current investigation: a randomized, double-blind clinical trial assessing the effects of donor iron deficiency on red blood cell recovery, well-being and neurocognition.

“The NBF award was a critical source of funding at a critical time in my early investigative career,” said Hod. “It allowed me to generate the data needed to jumpstart my extramurally-funded research program.”

Hod added, “The ultimate goal of my research program is to improve both the health of blood donors and the outcomes of transfusion recipients by deepening our understanding of basic red cell biology and iron homeostasis.”

He said that, for the most part, his career trajectory has gone as he expected after his NBF grant. “My goal was to be a physician-scientist with an extramurally-funded research program. The NBF grant was followed by an NIH K08-mentored training award, R01s and, most recently, an NIH contract for the REDS-IV-P program,” he said. “These awards have allowed me to effectively split my time between clinical practice and research in transfusion medicine. I consider myself very fortunate to love what I get to do every day.”

Hod’s foremost piece of advice to those just starting a career in research is to be persistent. “I was not funded on my first or even second NBF submission,” he said. “Each time, I learned from the experience and re-submitted a revised and improved grant application the following year. I think persistence proves to the review committee that you are passionate about your research, and if you adequately address the reviewer comments, it is much more likely you will get funded upon re-submission.”

**Sean Stowell**

Sean Stowell, MD, PhD, is an associate professor in the department of pathology and laboratory medicine at the Emory University School of Medicine, where he also serves as the medical director of the apheresis center at Emory University Hospital. Stowell received his MD and PhD degrees from Emory, where he also graduated summa cum laude. He remained at Emory for clinical training in laboratory and transfusion medicine. In addition to the NBF early-career Scientific Research grant, Stowell received the NBF Award.
for Innovative Research in 2018, the NIH DP5 Early Career Investigator Award and the Burroughs Wellcome Trust Career Award for Medical Scientists. He is currently a principal investigator or project leader on five projects funded by active NIH grants. His research group has published more than 100 papers on topics ranging from host-microbial interactions to key factors that regulate red blood cell alloimmunization. In addition to publishing and lecturing, Stowell has been involved with AABB both locally and nationally, and he sits on the editorial board of Transfusion.

Stowell told AABB News that the NBF early-career grant was the first grant he had written or received. “It came at a critical time in my career, when I was determining whether it was tenable to choose a career as a physician-scientist in transfusion medicine,” he said. As a result, the grant had a significant impact on Stowell’s career. He said that the work directly supported by the NBF grant led him to new insights into donor and recipient factors that influence the likelihood of someone generating alloantibodies following red blood cell transfusion. This work set the foundation for a variety of studies that naturally extended from it, and Stowell continues working to define key factors that influence the development and consequences of red blood cell alloimmunization.

“The NBF grant has had a significant influence on my career trajectory,” Stowell added. “The NBF grant provided the key resources at a critical time that allowed me to pursue transfusion medicine research, and our group has been on this path ever since,” he said.

“This is the most amazing field to do both clinical medicine and research,” he advised early-career professionals, “and if you have any interest, I would readily engage it. It touches on nearly every aspect of medicine and is facilitated by research in diverse areas that come together to make every aspect of transfusion medicine safer and more effective for patients,” he concluded.

Stories From #TeamBlood

I am inspired to continue sharing and bringing awareness to minority communities every chance I get, in part due to the small details we may miss in our daily routines at work or at home. I got to know one of our facilities staff, “Coach,” who is always keeping us in a positive mood every single day, without expecting anything back but for me and everyone else to know that we are blessed just for performing our daily duties the best we can and take a moment to think about your values and dreams in order to continue moving forward together, never alone. I have lived experiences that would otherwise never come to be if I didn’t try the first time and learned to stand up and try again until accomplishing my goal of sharing what I learned during my practice as a physician in blood banking and a community member of a minority group. I want to thank everyone that has touched my life to make me who I am today. Hopefully, this story may encourage others to continue pursuing their dreams and share them with others.

Story submitted by Juan Merayo

AABB and the NBF thank you for all that you and your facility are doing to meet the challenges presented by COVID-19. Our community continues to mobilize with an unwavering commitment to ensure that every patient has access to lifesaving blood products, stem cell grafts and novel treatments.

We want to hear from you! Sharing our experiences throughout the community makes #TeamBlood even stronger. Visit www.aabb.org/teamblood for more information and to share your story.