CONTINUED FROM SCIENCE EDUCATION
(SMART YOUNG MINDS)

She plowed through textbooks to prepare for her work with group leader Loren Looger, a mathematician and chemist by training who has devoted himself to building better tools to study the brain. Trengrove's project focused on improving imaging of glutamate, the brain's primary excitatory neurotransmitter and a chemical that is useful for tracing neural activity.

The four undergrads stayed in a four-bedroom townhouse on campus, just a short walk from the laboratory building. The proximity helped them integrate into the larger community—including pick-up games of soccer and ultimate Frisbee after work. Trengrove was impressed by the sense of community. At lunchtime, for instance, there were empty tables in the cafeteria, but if people were sitting at any given table, every chair was taken. The place was often abuzz with new hypotheses, setbacks, and results. "Everybody was talking about what they were doing," she says. "I just tried to listen and understand."

Based on the success of this fledgling effort, HHMI has formalized the Janelia Undergraduate Scholars program for 2008 and will be accepting online applications from students.

Simpson says that providing a positive research experience for young people at the college level is a good way to inspire future scientists. After all, Simpson's summer research while enrolled at Princeton University is what sold *her* on science. She believes the summer undergraduate training program at Janelia will help to "convert smart young minds to neuroscience." ■ –LINDSEY PUJANAUSKI

FOR MORE INFORMATION on applying for the 2008 Undergraduate Scholars program, visit www.hhmi.org/janelia/undergrad.

HHMI Expands Support of New Physician-Scientists

INSTITUTE INCREASES NUMBER, SIZE, AND DURATION OF PHYSICIAN-SCIENTIST EARLY CAREER AWARD PROGRAM.

ONLY A SMALL FRACTION OF THE PHYSICIANS who graduate from U.S. medical schools each year pursue a career in academic research. The reasons vary, but graduates often cite two in particular: insufficient time for research and lack of financial support.

To minimize those hurdles for a small cadre of physicians, HHMI has named 20 new recipients of its Physician-Scientist Early Career Award. Now entering its second year, the awards program is part of the Institute's commitment to help promising physician-scientists launch their careers in academic research.

"It's not easy to go back and do science once you've started down the clinical path, so it's really important to get a good solid footing early in your career," says William Galey, program director for HHMI's graduate education and medical research training programs.

When the awards were created last year, 13 grantees received $150,000 over a three-year period. This year, the 20 awardees will receive $375,000 over five years.

Each year, HHMI invites alumni of the HHMI–National Institutes of Health Research Scholars Program and the HHMI Research Training Fellowships for Medical Students who are starting up their labs with full-time, tenure-track positions to apply. The funding must be used for direct research expenses, and the awardees' institutions must allow them to spend at least 70 percent of their time conducting research. ■

"It's not easy to go back and do science once you've started down the clinical path, so it's really important to get a good solid footing early in your career."

WILLIAM GALEY

Tom Kochel