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TWIN CITIES

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EXPRESS MAIL

Dr. Ronald Prineas  
c/o: Dr. Stephen Leeder  
Department of Community Medicine  
Westmead Hospital Center  
Westmead, New South Wales 2145  
Australia

Dear Ron:

This is certainly the first and last express mail letter you'll get from me. I expect correspondence from you will drop off rapidly too, as you settle in. However, I did want to get a note to you shortly after arrival.

First, it would be nice if you called John Potter for a social call. He has unofficially responded to my unofficial suggestion that he would be offered a job and indicates that he would be ready to come by October! Isn't that marvelous? You can't imagine the boost this gives to my spirits to think that we may finally be an intact division with more than one mission and vision and image and that we will be moving down the trail of what is the next major area in epidemiology and prevention, that is, cancer. This, combined with our likely continued strength in the epidemiology of health behavior and your heroic efforts in training makes me feel that we have put together a valid and now enduring division.

Let me tell you the other exciting news that is encouraging me. I have finally seen the blueprints for the third floor Mayo space design for health education. It is a palace of 4000 square feet! It could very comfortably house you and me, all student activities and all central administration. Finally, we would be integrated with the school physically. The Dean's office would be on the same floor and many other major divisions nearby. It has the disadvantage of separating administration and teaching from research, but to me the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. In our first meeting with Dean Leyasmeyer on space and support for health education faculty, there was no indication at all that they were going to take any major support away from us or any of the space. Obviously we are taking on the toughest job of six new people.

I have gotten the Dean to set up an internal commission to determine the future of health education and the future of the large undergraduate class in public health that Stuart Thompson, Willie Green, and now Jim Rothenberger teach, to such great delight of the students. There is only lukewarm support from the Dean for this and I would be interested in your idea of whether this is a worthwhile effort and what we should do about evaluating and deciding on it and presenting a strong request to the Dean to back it up with a longer term commitment of Rothenberger support. The idea is that we must have a clear vision by next February of where health education will go for the following years. There is considerable intellectual activity generated in the alcohol group, and you saw evidence of that before you left.

I need now an idea from you how much you want to hear from us or how much you would just as soon forget about.

The reason for my call into you the last day, which you obviously did not have time to return (and I didn't insist) was that Jong Lee appeared on my steps almost in tears. I think it is probably just as well I didn't reach you; it would have given you one more stomach ache or headache or whatever you are liable to get under stress that you didn't need. She presented to me a roughly penciled out design for comparison of parents and grandparents identified through children with and without levels of hypertension. Her main problem seems to be a real sense of urgency in getting ahead with the lab analyses because they are long and time consuming along with her utter inability to conceive of how to identify, approach, mobilize and examine the population. It occurred to her or to me, I'm not sure quite sure which now, that it might be easier to deal with adults identified in our surveys rather than using children as a source of identification of the adults. I will probably be doing a little more thinking about that, but this is an area in which it might be useful to have one phone call from you. She seemed particularly upset about the one month turn around time that she'd expect between submitting plans to you and getting your response. I assured her that express mail was only four days and that there was always the telephone. My problem is that I am very much concerned that she would not be able to put together a draft of a design and protocol for such an undertaking on her own. (She has sent me a rather complete write up, enclosed.) At any rate, if you have any suggestions, I would be happy to hear them. I'm not quite sure on the needed order of her preparation and her oral prelims and beginning of the thesis work. She is apparently very concerned about waiting for her oral prelims and approval of her thesis project until after your return. I assured her I didn't think that that was necessary, but maybe it is. At any rate, I am sure we can work it out using either source of participants and I have asked her to submit promptly an outline of her plan. We will see how clear that is and how much initiative I am going to have to take to arrange the study for her. I will consult with Arlene Hall on who else is on her examining committee. She was very proud to show me pictures taken when she was tapped for Phi Kappa Phi (pictures of her with Ken Keller's arm around her!) She was anxious

to tell me that she was ready to work sixteen hour days to get the project done, but clearly all she is able to think about is working in the laboratory to do the tests. I had not realized how poor her language was and I will be supportive.


I got the big box of materials on the training program. I should think the continuation grant would be fairly routine and I will meet with Arlene Hall on that this week after she meets with Jane.

The latest on the space issue, and I just visited Jim Rothenberger (this is the late afternoon before the 4th of July holiday), is that the new space for health education and now us may be ready January 1, 1987, and the bulldozers will move into the present health education space at that time. If the renovations are complete, we could think of making the general move then. I guess I don't see any sense in putting our students in one place in September and having them move again in January.

What else is good news is the Dean seems responsive to my submitting a package request for school funds to augment the \$40,000 we have in the Potter position slot to the \$55,000 that I have offered him and \$10,000 "setting up" expenses.

Obviously the moving expenses are going to be very expensive. The good think about our Dean is that he is prepared to move vigorously for something that he perceives as being excellent.

Regards,

  
Henry Blackburn, M.D.  
Professor and Director

HB:st

Enclosure: J. Lee document  
Kodama letter

P.S. With Summer Session, we have had a flurry of activity, in fact four candidates for MPH that are all post-doctoral MDs and that would like to get their MPHs with various degrees of non-residence. I pretty well discouraged a woman from Arizona, indicating that there was school policy for a minimum of residence. She was cross about it and indicated that we "should be" providing such education. I don't think I need to respond to her. We had three people at the Mayo Clinic, two neurologists and one family practitioner, all of whom were working with Kurland, and all of whom will be here at least one year. I am moving actively to incorporate their credentials and define what are the minimum requirements for attending courses here. The only basic conflict will be a woman who will not want to repeat the Fundamentals of Epi that she has taken

in summer session. If you have any strong feelings about that, you should let me know. I know David Snowden feels strongly about it and it certainly is a good general policy. But in this case, if her record and training are strong otherwise, I would be inclined to waive it. I think we have logical co-advisors here and if Len Kurland will co-advise down there and handle their projects, it seems to me that they are good people and we wouldn't want to lose them. What do you think?