



Thursday, October 16, 2003

OU to host Craig Venter for Varner Vitality Seminar

Oakland University will host Craig Venter, president of the Center for the Advancement of Genomics, as part of the Varner Vitality Seminar Series on Wednesday, Oct. 22, at 3 p.m. in the Oakland Center Banquet Room.

In his discussion, "Our Genomic Future," Venter will detail the lessons gleaned from sequencing the human genome as well as a multitude of other species' genomes. He will talk about the impact genomic information will have on the future of biology and medicine; our evolutionary history recorded in the human genome sequence; the complex relationship between genes, environment, disease and behavior; and the small number of genetic differences between people and how this should profoundly change our view of race.

Venter is the former president and founder of Celera Genomics and has played a leading role in sequencing and analyzing the human genome. His accomplishments in decoding the genetic sequences of other organisms, particularly the fruit fly and mouse, have provided important scientific insights, including a new understanding of the genetic relationship between species as well as human evolution. He has published more than 200 research articles and is among the most frequently cited scientists in biology and medicine.

He earned his Ph.D. in physiology and pharmacology from the University of California at San Diego and became a researcher at the National Institutes of Health. While serving first as a section chief and then as a lab chief in the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, he developed expressed sequence tags or ESTs, a revolutionary new strategy for gene discovery. In 1992, he and his wife, Claire Fraser, founded the Institute of Genomic Research, where he served as president and chief scientific officer until 1998.

Venter and his team decoded the genome of the bacterium *haemophilus influenzae*, making it the first free-living organism to have its full DNA deciphered. To date, Venter and his team have sequenced more than 30 genomes.

This free lecture is open to the public. For more information, call (248) 370-2190.

SUMMARY

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