CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

DAVID D. GINTY

The Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences

Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by

William Van Benschoten

at

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Baltimore, Maryland

on

2-4 September 2003

From the Original Collection of the University of California, Los Angeles

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This Interview Agreement is made and entered into this 22 day of 2003, by and between THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, a California corporation, on behalf of the Oral History Program at the UCLA campus, hereinafter called "University," and DAVID D. GINTY, having an address at Department of Neuroscience, PCTB, Room 100D, Johns Hopkins University, 725 North Wolfe Street, Baltimore, MD 21205-2185, hereinafter called "Interviewee."

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University and Interviewee have executed this Agreement on the date first written above.

INTERVIEWEE

X _____
(Signature)

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(Typed Name)

Department of Neuroscience
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Baltimore, Maryland 21205-2185

Date Sept. 2, 2003

THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

_____
(Signature)

Janice L. Reiff
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Date 9/22/03

Pew Scholars in the Biomedical Sciences

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David D. Ginty

David D. Ginty, Ph.D.

2-6-08

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DAVID D. GINTY

1962 Born in Danbury, Connecticut on 8 May

Education

1984 Bachelor of Science (Biology), Mount Saint Mary's College
1989 Ph.D. (Physiology), East Carolina University School of Medicine

Professional Experience

Mount Saint Mary's College
1982-1984 Laboratory Teaching Assistant, Department of Chemistry

East Carolina University School of Medicine
1984-1989 Graduate Teaching Fellow, Department of Physiology

Harvard Medical School
1989-1991 Postdoctoral Fellow in the laboratory of John A. Wagner, Ph.D., Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Department of Biological Chemistry and Molecular Pharmacology
1991-1994 Postdoctoral Fellow in the laboratory of Michael E. Greenberg, Ph.D., Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
1995-1999 Assistant Professor, Department of Neuroscience
1999-present Associate Professor, Department of Neuroscience
2000-present Assistant Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute

Honors

1984 Beta Beta Beta Biological Honor Society
1987 American Gastroenterological Association Student Research Fellowship
1989 NIH Individual NRSA Postdoctoral Fellowship
1992 American Cancer Society Postdoctoral Research Fellowship
1992 American Heart Association, MA Affiliate, Postdoctoral Fellowship
1995 Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship
1995 Klingenstein Foundation Award in Neuroscience

1996	American Cancer Society Junior Faculty Research Award
1996	Basil O'Conner Scholars Award, March of Dimes
1996-2000	Pew Scholars Award
2000	Howard Hughes Medical Institute

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ABSTRACT

David D. Ginty was born in Danbury, Connecticut, but grew up in Fairfield, Connecticut; he has an older brother and a younger sister, and all three are adopted. Ginty's father worked in insurance, eventually becoming the head of the malpractice division for the state of Connecticut. His mother began as an elementary school teacher but eventually founded her own nursery school, which flourished. Their extended families were large and close, for which David still feels extremely fortunate. He loved school, especially mathematics and science, and he did well until high school. Then he took advantage of his parents' "laissez-faire" attitude toward their sons and hived off with his brother instead of going to school. He did, however, play football and jai alai in high school. His parents were devout Roman Catholics, and religion was an important part of Ginty's childhood.

Religion was also an important factor in his mother's urging Ginty to attend Mount St. Mary's; she wanted him to become more disciplined and more religious. There he majored in biology, which was the strongest of the science departments. Because it was a small college it offered very little lab experience, but Ginty was able to work for Dr. Thomas, who worked on the synthesis of porphyrin rings; because Dr. Thomas loved his work, he inspired Ginty. Dr. Gauthier offered a course in physiology that Ginty also found exciting. Furthermore, Ginty met his future wife at Mount St. Mary's.

In spring of his senior year of college, Ginty realized that he needed to decide what he would do next. He was offered a job at National Institutes of Health, but a friend's mother urged him to obtain a Ph.D. He applied to graduate schools very late but was accepted at East Carolina University. There he found a small program, with close relations between faculty and students; also, this program was new and required students to have a broad foundation in the sciences, so Ginty took many other courses. He had five rotations, all of which he loved, but he went to work in Edward Seidel's lab to study nerve growth factor signaling.

Ginty's interest in the nervous system led him to a postdoc at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, where he worked in John Wagner's lab on growth factor signal transduction in the neuron. When Wagner moved to Cornell University he wanted Ginty to go with him, but Ginty decided to stay at Dana-Farber, and he went to Michael Greenberg's lab, studying phosphoantibodies. After three years there he accepted an assistant professorship at Johns Hopkins University, where he is now an associate professor. He continues to work on nerve growth factor and retrograde signaling; to teach; to publish; to write grant proposals; and to balance his work with his family life.

UCLA INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER:

Andrea R. Maestrejuan, Interviewer, UCLA Oral History Program; B.S., Biological Sciences, University of California, Irvine, 1986; M.A., History, University of California, Riverside, 1991; C.Phil., History, University of California, Los Angeles, 2000.

TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEW:

Place: Ginty's office at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Dates of sessions: September 2, 2003; September 3, 2003; September 4, 2003.

Total number of recorded hours: 5.0.

Persons present during interview: Ginty and Maestrejuan.

CONDUCT OF INTERVIEW:

This interview is one in a series with Pew Scholars in the Biomedical Sciences conducted by the UCLA Oral History Program in conjunction with the Pew Charitable Trusts's Pew Scholars in the Biomedical Sciences Oral History and Archives Project. The project has been designed to document the backgrounds, education, and research of biomedical scientists awarded four-year Pew scholarships since 1988.

To provide an overall framework for project interviews, the director of the UCLA Oral History Program and three UCLA faculty project consultants developed a topic outline. In preparing for this interview, Maestrejuan held a telephone preinterview conversation with Ginty to obtain written background information (curriculum vitae, copies of published articles, etc.) and agree on an interviewing schedule. She also reviewed documentation in Ginty's file at the Pew Scholars Program office in San Francisco, including Ginty's proposal application, letters of recommendation, and reviews by Pew Scholars Program national advisory committee members.

ORIGINAL EDITING:

Carol Squires edited the interview. She checked the verbatim transcript of the interview against the original tape recordings, edited for punctuation, paragraphing, and spelling, and verified proper names. Words and phrases inserted by the editor have been bracketed.

Ginty did not review the transcript. Consequently, some proper names and other information remain unverified.

Carol Squires prepared the table of contents and compiled the guide to proper names.

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