

Robin Stanley joins NIEHS Signal Transduction Laboratory

By Robin Arnette

The NIEHS Laboratory of Signal Transduction welcomed a new researcher to the fold in July. Robin Stanley, Ph.D., joined the institute as a National Institutes of Health Earl Stadtman Tenure-Track [Investigator](http://www.irdp.nih.gov/careers/faculty-level-scientific-careers/stadtman-tenure-track-investigators) (<http://www.irdp.nih.gov/careers/faculty-level-scientific-careers/stadtman-tenure-track-investigators>) and head of the Nucleolar Integrity Group. She will examine the regulation and molecular mechanisms that govern the development of ribosomes, the primary sites of protein synthesis in cells.

Prior to her appointment at NIEHS, Stanley was a postdoctoral fellow at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, where she studied autophagy, a cellular process that literally means self-eating. A cell activates autophagy in response to nutrient starvation. Stanley said she wanted to switch her research focus to how ribosomes form, because it is one of the most taxing processes in the cell, using up to 80 percent of a cell's energy. In addition, the signaling pathways involved in ribosome biogenesis take their cues from the environment, so doing her research at NIEHS was a perfect fit.

"I really wanted to come to NIEHS when I started looking for permanent positions," Stanley said. "Not only would I get to collaborate with some of the top scientists in environmental health research, but I'd also have an opportunity to enjoy the wonderful recreational and cultural activities that take place in the Raleigh-Durham area."

Having the best of both worlds

When Stanley graduated from high school in Lumberton, North Carolina, in 1999, she was a math and chemistry geek. She entered The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC) with a double major in math and chemistry. Stanley discovered a perfect combination of her two favorite subjects during a research rotation in a UNCC crystallography lab.

After completing a Bachelor of Arts in math and a Bachelor of Science in chemistry, she attended Yale University as a doctoral student, where she began doing her first crystallographic studies of the ribosome.

NIEHS Scientific Director Darryl Zeldin, M.D., said the institute was looking to expand its interest into the environmental influences of protein production, and was pleased that Stanley accepted the position. He said her expertise will help NIEHS answer basic questions about how environmental exposures impact human disease at the cellular level.

Running key to work-life balance

Stanley is married to a biochemist and is the mother of a 1-year-old. When asked how she balances being a wife, mother, and scientist, she said having a supportive spouse and participating in a fun activity have been crucial to her success. For her, running provides the outlet she needs. She especially looks forward to long distance runs. Stanley has completed seven marathons, three of them being the famed Boston Marathon.



Stanley said her older brother was a runner, so she started running in high school to keep up with him. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)

The Environmental Factor is produced monthly by the [National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences \(NIEHS\)](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/)

(<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>)

, Office of Communications and Public Liaison. The content is not copyrighted, and it can be reprinted without permission. If you use parts of Environmental Factor in your publication, we ask that you provide us with a copy for our records. We welcome your [comments and suggestions](#).

(bruskec@niehs.nih.gov)

This page URL: NIEHS website: <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>

Email the Web Manager at webmanager@niehs.nih.gov