

“Of Mice and Women”: An innovative educational kit to engage the community on why mice models are used in breast cancer research.

Barcellos-Hoff, M. H.,¹ Barlow, J.,² Pierce, K.,³ Balke, K.,⁴ Koblick, K.,⁵ Ornstein, F.,² Marks, C.,⁶ Lee, G.,⁷ Johnson, J.²

¹Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, ²Zero Breast Cancer, ³Bayview Hunters Point Health and Environmental Task Force, San Francisco Department of Health, ⁴UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center, ⁵Marin County Department of Health and Human Services, ⁶Breast SPORE Advocacy Core, ⁷Breast Cancer Fund.

The purpose of this project is to develop an educational tool for breast cancer advocates and community members that will promote an understanding as to why mice models are used in breast cancer etiology research. The secondary goal of the project is to develop an outreach plan for evaluation and use of the video in the community.

In response to positive feedback to Dr. Mary Helen Barcellos-Hoff’s multiple community and town hall presentations given during the past two years, describing why and how different types of mouse models are used to study various aspects of breast cancer biology, Bay Area Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Center (BABCERC) Community Outreach and Translation Core (COTC) has produced a 45 minute video titled, “Of Mice and Women”, a scientific glossary and set of power point slides to accompany the video.

The video describes the limitations, advantages and significant improvements in the technology of modeling human breast cancer in mice. Dr. Barcellos-Hoff explains why there is not a single mouse model that can mimic all features of breast cancer and how the uniqueness or superiority of one mouse model over another largely depends on particular aspect of the scientific question and the study’s design.

The long term goal of this project is to promote community members’ understanding of the research process to be better equipped to dialogue with a variety of audiences, including research scientists, foundations and policy makers. Using a community-based, participatory approach, COTC will use the educational video and accompanying tools to work closely with community partners to foster better interpretation and translation of environmental research findings from Project I. The focus of Project I is two-fold, to define the critical biological steps in normal mammary gland development and to identify what molecular events are responsible for breast tumor formation.

This poster summarizes the video content and outreach education plan which COTC will use to facilitate dialogue between researchers, COTC members and community members.

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