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People and Positions:

Jeffrey Skolnick To Lead New Center at Georgia Tech

One of the world's leading researchers is joining the faculty at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Jeffrey Skolnick, Ph.D., a renowned systems biologist and previously director of the Buffalo Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics at SUNY-Buffalo, will join the faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) this spring as the Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar in Computational Systems Biology.

"Computational systems biology is a foundation for the next revolution in biomedicine," said Georgia Tech Provost Jean-Lou Chameau. "Dr. Skolnick's work is a perfect fit with the outstanding research already being conducted in nanotechnology and bioengineering here at Georgia Tech. The addition of Dr. Skolnick and his team of researchers will help position Georgia Tech and the state as leaders in this important field."

Dr. Skolnick will bring with him 19 research scientists and technicians and more than \$1.5 million in federal funding, primarily from the National Institutes of Health.

"Georgia Tech and its School of Biology are doing some incredible work in cancer research," said Dr. Skolnick. "The Institute has built a collaborative environment for meaningful interdisciplinary research especially in the areas of science, computing, and engineering. The environment cuts across schools and research centers and offers opportunities to take new ideas, scientific breakthroughs, and business applications ideas from theory to practice."

According to GRA President C. Michael Cassidy, systems biology is the foundation for the next wave of advances in biomedicine.

"Dr. Skolnick is an entrepreneurial scholar whose research is critical to the future health of Georgians and Americans," said C. Michael Cassidy, president of the Georgia Research Alliance. "He has relationships with pharmaceutical and technology companies, holds three patents, has developed and licensed software to biotech companies, and has founded an early stage structural proteomics company. This is the mix of entrepreneurialism and scholarly acumen we seek in our scholars."

Systems biology is the integration of mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology with advanced, high performance computing and engineering and is focused on exploiting the vast information growing out of the sequencing of the human genome. One practical example is that as a systems biologist, Dr. Skolnick brings a different scientific approach to creating new drugs. Utilizing bioinformatics and systems biology, his method allows drug developers to reduce the number of compounds they must screen by a factor of 10. This creates cost savings and can significantly

shorten the time to market for new drugs.

Dr. Skolnick and his team will be housed in the School of Biology, a unit in the College of Sciences. As a part of his hiring, the Georgia Research Alliance will provide support for new technology and lab facilities for Dr. Skolnick and his team.

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