



Allan J. Tobin

GRFP Recipient: 1963

Undergraduate Institution:
S.B. 1963, Massachusetts Institute
of Technology

Graduate Institution:
Ph.D. 1969, Harvard University

Graduate Field of Study:
Biophysics, Neuroscience

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Current Position:
Senior Scientific Advisor, CHDI
Foundation; Eleanor Leslie Chair
in Neuroscience, Emeritus,
University of California,
Los Angeles

RESEARCH INTERESTS //

The molecular and cellular mechanisms of brain diseases and spinal cord injury have been at the heart of Allan J. Tobin's research. Tobin's work, with the CHDI Foundation focuses on finding treatments that will stop or slow Huntington's disease. In addition to publishing over a hundred scientific papers, he is the co-author of "Asking About Life," a prize-winning university biology textbook whose three editions sold more than 150,000 copies.

BROADER IMPACT OF MY WORK ON SOCIETY //

Consistent with my interdisciplinary graduate work in biophysics, supported by NSF, I have tried, throughout my career, to catalyze the interactions scientists, clinicians, and engineers from different subspecialties. As Chair of UCLA's Interdisciplinary Program in Neuroscience, I brought molecular and cell biology to a program traditionally based in physiology and anatomy; as Director of the UCLA Brain Research Institute. As Director of the Brain Research Institute, I encouraged the application of basic neuroscience to neurological and neuropsychiatric disease. As founder and CoChair of the NSF-supported UCLA Neuroengineering Training Program (an IGERT site), I helped build collaborations between engineering and neuroscience researchers. As Scientific Director of the Hereditary Disease Foundation, I assembled the interdisciplinary team of geneticists and cell biologists that found the gene whose alteration causes Huntington's disease. With the High Q Foundation and the CHDI Foundation, I have helped build a team that guides and supports worldwide efforts to find therapies for Huntington's disease.

A FOND MEMORY OF MY EXPERIENCE AS A FELLOW //

NSF support of my graduate studies was particularly important, since it allowed me more freedom to explore different aspects of biophysics and biology. It took me quite a while to arrive at neuroscience, long after my Ph.D. My favorite and most far-reaching project ever was my involvement in the NSF IGERT program, as co-Chair of UCLA's Neuroengineering Training Program.

AWARDS/ HONORS //

Excellence Award in Life Science (for Tobin & Dusheck, Asking About Life, Third Edition) Textbook and Academic Authors Association ; Hall of Fame, Manchester (N.H.) Central High School; David Gillespie Memorial Lecture-ship, Medical College of Pennsylvania and Hahnemann University; Eleanor Leslie Chair in Neuroscience, UCLA.

POSITION PROFILE //

1971-1975 Assistant professor of biology, Harvard University

1975-2003: Professor of physiological science and professor of neurology, University of California, Los Angeles; Founder and Director, UCLA NeuroEngineering Training Program; Chair, Interdisciplinary Program in Neuroscience, Director, UCLA Brain Research Institute;

1979 -2002 Scientific director, Hereditary Disease Foundation

1996 Eleanor Leslie Chair in Neuroscience

2004- Managing Director, High Q Foundation, Senior Scientific Advisor, CHDI Foundation

