

## Support for the Recommended Molecular Biology Building Site

My name is Kimberly Kline. I am an Associate Professor. I teach undergraduate courses in nutrition and conduct research and train graduate students in the interdisciplinary area of molecular biology including nutritional sciences, immunology and cancer biology. I appreciate this opportunity to speak in favor of the recommended site selected for the Molecular Biology Building.

I concur with the comments made by my two colleagues, Dr. Artzt and Dr. Brown, and would like to point out that the site selection for the new molecular biology building has involved a long, careful, thoughtful process, involving input from many groups inside and outside the University community. The consensus developed during this process is that the preferred site being considered today is the best site.

(i) This site provides for a low-rise horizontal building that will maximize collaborative interactions. Low-rise, horizontal buildings facilitate interactions critical to the success of molecular biology programs and such structures have a proven record of success at other institutions.

(ii) This site provides an attachment to the Experimental Science Building that will link these two buildings, maximizing the teaching and research activities conducted in these two structures, and

(iii) This site is in close proximity to buildings housing other biological scientists as well as biomedical engineers, pharmacists, and biochemists who will benefit from the modern facilities and state-of-the-art equipment the molecular biology initiative will provide.

Obviously, selection of a centrally located site on the University of Texas campus in the 1990's necessitates some type of compromise. The compromise involved is the swimming area in Anna Hiss Gymnasium which will have to be removed to make room for the new molecular biology building. The remaining three-fourths of the Anna Hiss Gymnasium will remain intact and alternate accommodations have been arranged elsewhere on campus to accommodate the exercise needs of the physically impaired.

A high-rise vertical building squeezed between the Experimental Science Building and the Anna Hiss Gymnasium Building is not suitable for many reasons. A high-rise building would not enhance collaborative interactions, windows against windows would diminish work space quality in the three buildings, the dense array of buildings would be aesthetically unpleasant, and the flow of pedestrian traffic would be greatly hampered. All groups that studied the potential building sites rendered this site the least acceptable.

It was clear during the site selection process that there was some concern that a woman oriented structure was being destroyed. Therefore it is critical that you know how the molecular biology initiative will benefit women. The academic programs in biological sciences are among the fastest growing degree programs on campus. Approximately 50% of the undergraduate students in biological sciences are women, and 48% of the graduate students in biological sciences are females. In fact, the highest percentage of women faculty in the College of Natural Sciences are in the biological sciences, representing 27%. The discipline of molecular biology has and will continue to provide important opportunities for undergraduate and graduate women who will make contributions to basic research in academia and industry, including the rapidly emerging biotechnology industry, as well as the medical and health related professions, and the agricultural industry.

In conclusion, The University and the State of Texas will be served best by a decision to build the molecular biology building on the preferred site.

Thank you.