Dr. Paul Spellman appointed interim director of computational biology

Dean Sharon Anderson is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Paul Spellman, Ph.D., professor of molecular and medical genetics, OHSU School of Medicine, to the position of interim director of the school’s Computational Biology Program.

This appointment is effective Feb. 15, 2018.

Dr. Spellman takes over the director role from Adam Margolin, Ph.D., professor of biomedical engineering, OHSU School of Medicine, who is departing for a position at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai at the end of March.

Dr. Margolin will be director of the Icahn Institute for Genomics and Multiscale Biology, chair of the Department of Genetics and Genomic Sciences and senior associate dean for precision medicine.

Dr. Spellman brings to the program experience as co-leader of the Quantitative Oncology Program and co-director of the Cancer Early Detection Advanced Research Center, both in the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute.

The Spellman lab focuses on population genetics to help determine cancer risk, new computational methods that analyze genomic data to identify early changes in cancers and new approaches to accurately screen different populations for the disease. He also works to inform the public about the ways that genetics shape cancer risk.

Within the school, Dr. Spellman is a member of the OHSU Center for Spatial Systems Biomedicine and faculty in the school’s Molecular and Medical Genetics Graduate Program and Cancer Biology Graduate Program.

Dean Anderson is convening a work group with Dr. Spellman and other stakeholders to identify next steps for the program, including recruitment of a permanent program director.

Members of the work group are:

- Sharon Anderson, M.D., dean, OHSU School of Medicine
- Peter Barr-Gillespie, Ph.D., interim senior vice president for research, OHSU
- Brian Druker, M.D., director, Knight Cancer Institute
- David Ellison, M.D., director, Oregon Clinical and Translational Research Institute
- Marc Freeman, Ph.D., director, Vollum Institute
- Joe Gray, Ph.D., director, OHSU Center for Spatial Systems Biomedicine
- Mary Heinricher, Ph.D., associate dean for basic research, OHSU School of Medicine
- Carsten Schultz, Ph.D., chair of physiology and pharmacology, OHSU School of Medicine
- Paul Spellman, Ph.D., professor of molecular and medical genetics, OHSU School of Medicine
- Mary Stenzel-Poore, Ph.D., chief of research operations, Knight Cancer Institute
- Daniel Zuckerman, Ph.D., professor of biomedical engineering, OHSU School of Medicine

“I want to thank Dr. Margolin for his leadership in launching computational biology at OHSU and building our capacity to become leaders in precision medicine,” said Dean Anderson. “I’m also grateful to Dr. Spellman for stepping in to provide thoughtful interim leadership. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Spellman to this new role.”