The center actively supports and engages in translational and clinical research with ongoing clinical trials investigating genetic and epigenetic mechanisms in disorders of autism, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and other complex disorders. The center also collaborates with the autism and intellectual and developmental disabilities communities to develop interventions, promote awareness and improve the quality of life for individuals and their families. The Rose F. Kennedy Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center (RFK IDDRC) hosted its annual Rare Disease Day celebration on Monday, February 29, 2016—a rare “leap” day, which was chosen by EURORDIS, an alliance of rare-disease organizations in Europe, as an opportunity to draw attention to issues that are genetically different.

In observance, Sophie Molholm, Ph.D., the new associate director of the RFK IDDRC, introduced the program and provided a brief recap of the history of the IDDRC at Einstein. She also underscored the importance of basic science research in translational medicine. Following her introductory remarks was a screening of the short-documentary film On Beauty by Emmy-nominated filmmaker Joanna Rudnick. The film was shown to a packed and enthusiastic audience in the Ethel and Samuel J. Cherkasky Auditorium. Following the film, there were interviews with parents whose children receive RFK IDDRC services. More information about the RFK IDDRC can be found at www.einstein.yu.edu/idrc.

EVENTS
On May 24, 2016, the IcahnAustim National Conference, offered in conjunction with Montefiore and Albert Einstein College of Medicine, provided the opportunity to meet and network with leading professionals in the medical, academic, research, biopharma and healthcare industries. The all-day conference took place at Montefiore’s Chaskasy Auditorium. See more at www.icaahnautism.com.

On May 22, 2016, Einstein and Montefiore hosted the annual 22q at the Zoo event. See more at www.einstein.yu.edu/r/2016. For more about 22q at Montefiore, please go to www.cham. org/programs-centers/22q11-2-deletion-syndrome.

IN THE MEDIA, 2015–16
John Greally, M.B., B.Ch., Ph.D., the RFK IDDRC NGEN director, was interviewed by Nature regarding his criticism of a New York Times article (May 10, 2016) on epigenetics. See more at www.einstein.yu.edu/greally2015.html.

On November 4, 2015, as part of its New York City outreach program, StoryCorps, which has collected and archived more than 50,000 interviews with 100,000 participants, visited the Bronx for a day of interviews with parents whose children receive RFK IDDRC CERC services. See more at www.einstein.yu.edu/story2016.

The Telegraph (UK) (October 15, 2015) quotes Scott W. Emmons, Ph.D., the Siegfried Ullmann Chair in Molecular Genetics, about his Nature study, which found that male nematode worms have neurons that allow them to prioritize mating. See more at www.einstein.yu.edu/emmons2016-telegraph.

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To view details of upcoming RFK IDDRC-sponsored or -sponsored events, please visit www.einstein.yu.edu/research/centers/iddrs/events-workshops.

To support the work of the RFK IDDRC, contact: Albert Einstein College of Medicine John W. Carter Pearl Resnick II 1300 Morris Park Avenue Harold and Muriel Block Bldg., Rm. 726 Bronx, New York 10461 Phone: 718.430.2411 institutionaldevelopment@einstein.yu.edu www.einstein.yu.edu/donors

On Beauty: Celebrating International Rare Disease Day 2016

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she explained, that best summarizes her life and personal struggles.

Following the screening, performance and presentations, Ms. Rudnick and Mr. Guidotti answered questions before joining the audience of students, faculty and guests on Main Street in the Leo Forchheimer Medical Science Building for a meet-the-speakers reception, where members of the audience interacted with the presenters while enjoying an exhibit of Mr. Guidotti’s photographs. See more at www.einstein.yu.edu/features/around-campus/440/rare-disease-day.

FOURTH ANNUAL ISABELLE RAPIN CONFERENCE ON COMMUNICATION DISORDERS: 22Q11.2DS (DIGEORGE SYNDROME/VCF5)

The RFK IDRC hosted its fourth annual Isabelle Rapin Conference on December 3, 2015. Each year, the conference highlights research on a specific neurodevelopmental disorder, and this year the chosen focus was 22q11.2 deletion syndrome—also known as DiGeorge syndrome or velocardiofacial syndrome. The conference was organized by the assistant director of the IDRC Neurogenomics Core (NGEN), Bernice E. Morrow, Ph.D., whose lab studies key genetic pathways involved in the development of 22q11.2 deletion syndrome. Guest speakers included Wendy R. Kates, Ph.D., of the State University of New York Upstate Medical University; Donna M. McDonald-McGinn, M.S., L.C.G.C., of the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia; Ann Swillen, Ph.D., of the University of Leuven, in Belgium; and Carie E. Bearden, Ph.D., from the University of California-Los Angeles Center for the Assessment and Prevention of Prodromal States. Einstein faculty member Noboru Hirai, Ph.D., a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, gave a compelling talk on psychiatric variation and gene identification in DiGeorge syndrome, “22q11.2 Copy Number Variation: Identifying Individual Genes for Autism and Schizophrenia in Mouse Models.” See more at www.einstein.yu.edu/r/rrapin2015 and www.einstein.yu.edu/centers/idrc/seminars-workshops/.

Speakers and presenters at Rare Disease Day included (from left): Joanna Rudnick, documentary filmmaker; Rick Guidotti, Alona Galej, Robert W. Marion, M.D., IDRC Internal Advisory Committee member; Sophie Molholm, Ph.D., IDRC associate director; and Howard M. Steinman, Ph.D., assistant dean for biomedical science education.

RARE DISEASE DAY 2016 (continued from page 1)