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Dear PennScience Readers:

This year, February 12th marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, whose theory of evolution has completely reshaped scientific and social thought. For this issue, PennScience has interviewed Janet Monge, curator of the Penn Museum's new exhibit on evolution (if you haven't seen it yet, make some time to go). We also have interviews with Theodore Schurr, who researches genetic diversity in humans, and with Brent Helliker, who studies responses of plants to their environment.

As always, we have an exciting collection of student research as well. Zhu Wang presents a study on the role of two proteins in acute myeloid leukemia. Jens von der Linden performed a mathematical analysis that may help design the next generation of fusion reactors, like the ITER project underway in France. Esther Kim's paper explores the effects of nicotine on pancreatic cancer cells, a highly relevant effect for those using cigarette substitutes to quit smoking.

For those interested in doing their own projects, we have provided a list of programs that will allow you to stay in Philadelphia this summer to do research.

Sincerely,

Boris Zinshteyn and Benjamin Gaines

Co-Editors-in-Chief