Nancy C. Walworth, PhD, has been named chair of the Department of Pharmacology, as of December 1. Dr. Walworth is an esteemed investigator who served first as acting chair and then interim chair of the department since 2012. She holds a bachelor's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a doctorate in cell biology from Yale University. Dr. Walworth conducted post-doctoral research as a Damon Runyon-Walter Winchell Cancer Research Fund Fellow at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, and at the Netherlands Cancer Institute in Amsterdam. She joined Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in 1994 as an assistant professor, was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 2001, and to professor of pharmacology in 2005. Dr. Walworth is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), elected in 2008, and served as AAAS Council Delegate from the Section on Biological Sciences in 2010 and 2013.

As chair, Dr. Walworth's goal is to foster faculty endeavors that further extramural funding of projects and improve morale throughout the department; promote faculty strengths that can contribute in meaningful ways to the academic mission of the medical school; and fortify collaborative relationships with colleagues and staff that have been established throughout the medical school and university. In addition, she will continue the recruitment and mentoring of talented junior faculty, and oversee the department's continued dedication to the education of students at all learning levels through an interdisciplinary curriculum that includes pharmacology, physiology, biochemistry, microbiology, and immunology.

Dr. Walworth was the first to report the identification of the protein kinase Chk1 (pronounced "check one") in 1993 (Walworth et al, *Nature*, 1993) and described its DNA damage-induced phosphorylation in 1996 (Walworth and Bernards, *Science*, 1996). Projects in her laboratory at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School were supported continuously by NIH funding from 1995 until 2013, and have revealed mechanistic insight regarding the role of Chk1 in delaying cell cycle progression in the presence of DNA damaging agents including radiation and drugs used in cancer chemotherapy. Because inhibition of Chk1 by mutation (in yeast) or with small molecule inhibitors (in mammalian cells) sensitizes cells to killing by DNA damaging agents, clinical studies are ongoing to assess whether Chk1 inhibitors in combination with known DNA damaging agents would be effective in cancer therapy. In the last 15 years the focus of her lab broadened to consider additional cellular mechanisms that control genome stability, focusing on a fission yeast homologue of a protein that binds the tumor suppressor Rb, which acts through a histone variant to impact chromosome segregation.

In addition to her investigations, Dr. Walworth has mentored more than a dozen students who have received graduate degrees and more than two dozen undergraduate students, many of whom have gone on to graduate or medical school, and served on more than 70 PhD thesis advisory committees. She has served as director of major courses in the medical school curriculum and at the graduate level. In 2011, she became co-director of the Graduate Programs in Molecular Biosciences, an umbrella program that recruits, admits and provides a comprehensive curriculum to first-year graduate students for five PhD degree-granting programs in the biomedical sciences. Along with co-director Richard Padgett, PhD, she has led Molecular Biosciences through a renovation of its curriculum, and revamped its admissions and recruitment procedures.

Dr. Walworth served on the founding board of reviewing editors for *Science Signaling* and on the editorial board for the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, on multiple NIH study sections, and

currently chairs an NIH review panel for pre- and post-doctoral fellowship applications. She has been recognized for contributions to the field of cell cycle checkpoint control through invited presentations at university, national and international meetings.

At the university level, Dr. Walworth chaired from 2009 to 2014, the Campus Committee on Research Integrity for the Piscataway/New Brunswick campus. In addition, she has served on search committees and LCME self-study groups, and on several standing committees of the medical school including Academic Standing, Curriculum, and Nominations and Elections, and currently serves on the Advisory Committee on Appointments and Promotions.

Congratulations, Dr. Walworth on your appointment!