

Sasaki, A., C. Janetopoulos, S. Lee, P.G. Charest, K. Takeda, L.W. Sundheimer, R. Meili, P.N. Devreotes and R.A. Firtel (2007). G protein-independent Ras/PI3K/F-actin circuit regulates basic cell motility. *J. Cell Biol.* 178:185-191.

Phosphoinositide 3-kinase (PI3K) and *Dictyostelium* PI3K are activated via G protein-coupled receptors through binding to the G $\beta\gamma$  subunit and Ras. However, the mechanistic role(s) of G $\beta\gamma$  and Ras in PI3K activation remains elusive. Furthermore, the dynamics and function of PI3K activation in the absence of extracellular stimuli have not been fully investigated. We report that *g $\beta$*  null cells display PI3K and Ras activation, as well as the reciprocal localization of PI3K and PTEN, which lead to local accumulation of PI(3,4,5)P<sub>3</sub>. Simultaneous imaging analysis reveals that in the absence of extracellular stimuli, autonomous PI3K and Ras activation occur, concurrently, at the same sites where F-actin projection emerges. The loss of PI3K binding to Ras-guanosine triphosphate abolishes this PI3K activation, whereas prevention of PI3K activity suppresses autonomous Ras activation, suggesting that PI3K and Ras form a positive feedback circuit. This circuit is associated with both random cell migration and cytokinesis and may have initially evolved to control stochastic changes in the cytoskeleton.