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## Women’s Care Center Addresses Needs of Circumcised Women and Girls

With a rapidly growing immigrant population, Philadelphia ranks seventh among major U.S. cities with the highest prevalence — up to 16,500 — of women and girls who have undergone female genital cutting.

The practice includes the partial or total removal of external genitals, for cultural or other nonmedical reasons, and it can lead to long-term social and health effects, especially related to childbirth. Female genital cutting affects over 200 million women and girls worldwide, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the World Health Organization.

Now, as part of a coalition of organizations, the Drexel Women’s Care Center will play a key role in addressing the specific health needs of this population in Philadelphia over the next three years.

The Philadelphia International Women’s Project is a partnership between Drexel, Nationalities Service Center and the African Family Health Organization. The project is part of a \$6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that was awarded to eight sites across the country.

“The thought from HHS was that there is a large population of women coming to the United States from countries where female genital cutting is a cultural norm, and there are very obvious gaps in services for women who have experienced it,” says Sandra M. Wolf, MD, executive director of the Women’s Care Center and an associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology in the College of Medicine. “Immigrant communities are so vital to Philadelphia’s economic growth. Recognizing the needs of these women is important to any sector, and health care in particular.”

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The Class of 2020 completes its first rite of passage



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Breast surgeon offers holistic approach and innovative procedures



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Discovery 2016’s activities and awards all in a new venue



Under Sandra Wolf, MD, the Women’s Care Center addresses the specific health needs of women and girls from immigrant communities in a culturally sensitive manner.

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# pulse

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# A Brilliant Discovery

Discovery Day, our annual day of research, is the modern version of research days long held by our legacy institutions, Medical College of Pennsylvania and Hahnemann Medical College. In the late 1990s, three MD/PhD students at the merged MCPHU School of Medicine wanted to resurrect the concept, and Discovery Day was born. The first edition drew 35 abstracts and was held in the basement of MCP Hospital's Ann Preston Hall. Later the event found its home at the Queen Lane Campus; ever since, the number of people, presentations and activities has grown.



Daniel V. Schidlow, MD

This year, for the first time in its history Discovery Day moved off campus, to a grand space: the Pennsylvania Convention Center. This was very exciting. The venue gave the whole proceedings a sense of relevance or gravitas that we could not have achieved having the event "at home." There was a great sense of enthusiasm — you could feel the vibrancy.

What was very impressive — beyond the quantity of poster abstracts — was that we had research that ranged from urban health community-based studies to education issues to molecular biology and very refined science,

all presented by trainees — students, residents, post-docs. It was an enormous array of subjects and represented great involvement by our faculty. I thought: This is who we really are, a community of questioning, a community of learning.

One thing that was particularly gratifying for me was that alumni came to act as judges of the poster presentations — it served to link our alumni with our current students. Also the L.M. "Bill" Stephenson Lecture was given by a fascinating speaker — a neurosurgeon who straddles the worlds of basic science and clinical medicine, with a background in engineering, too.

All in all, Discovery 2016 set a new standard for showcasing our research education efforts and their success.

Here I would like to make a plug for faculty to sponsor medical student research projects. The students' interest in participating in research continues to grow, and we want to continue to increase the number of research opportunities available to them. If you have a research project — ongoing or a new idea — in which you are willing to mentor a student, please respond to the annual email call.

We continue to be excited by the kinds of students that are coming into our College in all programs. I've gotten to speak with quite a few of them at lunch or in the corridors, and I am always impressed with how thoughtful and insightful our students are and how motivated they seem.

Daniel V. Schidlow, MD  
Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg Dean  
Senior Vice President of Medical Affairs

## Perspective from a Progressive Past

Most of us know the statistics: Nationally, about 47 percent of medical students are women, and 35 percent of physicians currently practicing are women. With a little more time, numbers of women and men in the profession will nearly be equal. The number of women doctors in the United States hovered around 6 percent from the end of the 19th century until the 1970s, so these recent statistics represent relatively significant growth over the last 40 years. This rapid increase was due largely to the second wave of the women's movement, prompting Title IX in the Higher Education Act Amendments (1972) and the Public Service Act (1975), banning discrimination on the basis of gender.

But when did women get started on this path? How did they join the ranks of the profession? Why does it matter?

The College of Medicine at Drexel is the successor institution to the world's first and longest-lasting medical school for women. The Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania opened in 1850 and is estimated to have produced as many as a third of all American women physicians until 1968.

Women medical students and physicians of the 19th century were regularly described as "unwomanly" and were criticized by some for stepping outside their "sphere." Others felt that women and medicine were a natural fit because caring for sick family members at home was an acceptable role for women. Becoming professional caregivers would simply be an extension of those duties.

Some argued that there was no reason women could not be physicians if given the same educational and professional opportunities. In an influential essay, Mary Putnam Jacobi (WMC 1864) used science to refute the notion that the nature of women's bodies imposed limits on their learning and professional life, exposing that idea as a poor justification to keep women out of paid work.

There was also a demand for women physicians: Some women patients were eager to be seen by women doctors, in part due to a perceived sympathetic understanding, but also due to a desire to feel less vulnerable during examination, as well as Victorian-era modesty. This particularly opened doors for women in gynecology and obstetrics.

The role of Woman's Med as a significant producer of women doctors placed it squarely among those organiza-

tions that sought equality for women. Founded in the Age of Reform by Philadelphia's progressive-minded Quakers and some free-thinking businessmen, the school was established at a time when women who were interested in science and health care, and who wanted or needed to earn their own living, had little opportunity for acceptance to a traditional medical school.

Equality at Woman's Med went beyond gender to include race and ethnicity. Rebecca Cole, who graduated in 1867, was the first of 11 African-American women to graduate from the school before the turn of the 20th century. At least one of those students, Eliza Grier, is known to have started life as a slave. Though fewer in number, Native American women also enrolled. Alumna Susan LaFlesche Picotte was the first Native American woman to earn an MD.

Woman's Med also opened its doors to women from all over the world. By 1904, women from Japan, India, Syria, Jamaica, Brazil, England, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Russia, China, Burma, Australia and the Congo Free State were counted among its alumnae.

As a single-sex school, Woman's Med may not have seemed very interested in diversity, but providing medical education for women made the college a major contributor to diversifying the profession. The inclusion of women of all backgrounds and ethnicities reflected the school's ethos of equality and community. Today we know that diversity of experience and perspective in the student body helps prepare students to better serve a diverse population as physicians.

— Joanne Murray, Director, *The Legacy Center: Archives & Special Collections*



These images of Susan LaFlesche Picotte, WMC 1889 (left) and Eliza Grier, WMC 1897, are preserved in The Legacy Center: Archives & Special Collections. Visit the award-winning website produced by the center: [Doctor or Doctress? Explore American History Through the Stories of Women Physicians \(doctorordoctress.org\)](http://DoctororDoctress?).

## Women's Care Center

• *continued from the cover*

The objectives of the Philadelphia International Women's Project include:

- Building community partnerships to increase community engagement around female genital cutting and reduce stigma
- Utilizing a peer-to-peer model to engage affected communities in outreach and education, while facilitating connections to appropriate supportive services
- Providing essential clinical services to affected women in a culturally sensitive health care home
- Increasing medical provider competency through a comprehensive provider education initiative that focuses on teaching effective and culturally sensitive female genital cutting care strategies

Over her years in practice, Wolf has cared for hundreds of patients who have experienced female genital cutting. "But it was only to a small extent until I began to do more work with attorneys representing women seeking asylum on that basis," she says. Soon after, she integrated care specifically for this population of women and girls into services provided at the Women's Care Center.

Wolf has seen a wide range of patients with diverse feelings about female genital cutting and its consequences.

Some women believe female circumcision is a cultural practice that should continue, and rather than feeling mutilated, they see the cutting as a minor issue in their lives, Wolf says.

Other female patients immigrated to the United States shortly after being circumcised, without ever having discussed the procedure with anyone. Once they learn they look different from their peers here, as teenagers or young adults, it is often a traumatic revelation, Wolf says.

"I think the most important thing a provider can do in that situation is to let a woman know she will be able to live a normal life. She'll be able to have intimacy and a family, and we will help her to talk to her partner," she says.

During the three-year project, the Women's Care Center, Nationalities Service Center and the African Family Health Organization will work to educate both health care providers and community members about female genital cutting, as well as to increase clinical services for women who have been affected by female genital cutting and to work toward prevention strategies.

"We would like the Women's Care Center to be a meaningful place in the community, where we can address any unmet needs in health care related to female genital cutting for women and their partners," Wolf says. "And we want to ensure that all health care settings are prepared for this population, that providers understand the ethical and legal aspects surrounding the issue as well."

## Center Moves Into State-of-the-Art Space

The providers and professional staff of the Women's Care Center proudly welcomed patients into a brand new suite this past fall. For the previous year, while the clinic continued in its usual quarters, Drexel Facilities gutted and fully built out a sparkling customized space for the center on a different floor in the same building. The sunny waiting room includes a play area for small children. In the back, the examination rooms have phones for access to interpretation services, and artwork reflecting diversity. Several of the rooms have extra privacy curtains to help patients feel warmer and less exposed. The Women's Care Center is located at 1427 Vine Street, 5th floor; telephone: 215.762.7824.



**Ob/Gyn Chair Owen Montgomery, MD, and Dean Daniel V. Schidlow, MD, assisted at the ribbon-cutting.**

## Sex and Gender Research Forum

**Wednesday, March 8, 2017**

The Institute for Women's Health and Leadership at the College of Medicine invites the Drexel community to a University-wide Sex and Gender Research Forum on Wednesday, March 8, 2017, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Gerri C. LeBow Hall, University City Campus. Registration and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

This interactive program will highlight Drexel's multidisciplinary research focused on sex and gender in a local, national and global context.

Registration (free) will be available in January 2017 and will include a light lunch.

Additional Drexel sponsors include the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Education, Office of International Programs, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Department of Psychology and CoM Office of Research. Co-sponsor: The Helen I. Moorehead-Laurencin, MD, Family Foundation.

Contact: Alexa Bonacquisti, PhD, program coordinator, [anb35@drexel.edu](mailto:anb35@drexel.edu).

# White Coat Ceremony

The Class of 2020 received their first white coats at the traditional ceremony on August 5.



Second-year students Alana Dutton and Giscard Adeclat lead the procession.



May I help you? Jacob Ferguson, David Fitzgerald, Quinten Fletcher, Sean Flynn and Christopher Fong



Eleni Hannaberry, Ryan Brannon, MD (back), Isabella Hanulik, Ashley Harvard and Jonathan Hauptfeld



William D. Surkis, MD, MCPHU '02, welcomes the students.



Keynote speaker Neilanjan Nandi, MD, Medicine



Roshni Singh and her father, alumnus Binoy K. Singh, MD, MCPHU '93; Residency MCP '96; Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship HUH '00



Richard H. Maley Jr., MD, HU '88, and his son, Owen



Lauren Skerritt and her future mother-in-law, Theresa Eichenwald, MD, MCP '88.



Front row seats (l-r): Orchideh Abar, Alexandra Abbott, Joseph Abdul-Malak, Jonathan Acosta, Temitayo Adegoke, Jason Adleberg, Rita Akumuo and Mehnaz Ali Khan

## New Tool for Offbeat Hearts

When the heart quivers, you could be suffering from an ailment more serious than lovesickness. But a new tool could help to mend the organ.

Atrial fibrillation, or AFib, is one of the most prevalent heart rhythm disorders and the leading cause of stroke among those who are 65 and older. During AFib, the upper chambers of the heart beat fast and irregularly so they are out of synch with the ventricles, which doubles the risk of heart-related death.

Ablation is often an option to treat an irregular heartbeat. Cardiologists insert a catheter through a vein in a patient's leg and guide it into the heart to spot where the dangerous arrhythmia originates. Once the arrhythmia is located, the doctors burn (or ablate) the tissue inside the heart, where the irregular beats are triggered.

Though the technique can be lifesaving, it is complex and time consuming, according to Heath Saltzman, MD, an assistant professor of medicine in the Division of Cardiology.

"If you do not have good tissue contact, the lesion or burn may not be sufficient. If you push too hard, there is risk of heart damage," Saltzman says.

In September, Saltzman became the first cardiologist in Philadelphia to use a new type of catheter intended to improve patient outcomes. The device, developed by Biosense Webster, Inc., has an irrigated, porous tip. This allows cardiologists to use less fluid during the procedure and to more accurately determine contact with the troublesome areas of the heart.

In clinical trials, the new catheter has been shown to reduce overall procedure time, limit radiation exposure to patients and improve efficacy, according to Biosense Webster.

Saltzman says he is proud that Drexel Cardiology is the first health practice in the region to offer the procedure and is hopeful that it will put patients' hearts back in synch.



## AOA Call for Nominations

*Attention, alumni and faculty members of Drexel University College of Medicine:*

The Delta Zeta Chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha is requesting nominations of candidates for AOA election. Following are the categories of candidates who will be considered.

**Alumni:** After 10 years or more following graduation, alumni who have distinguished themselves in their professional careers and are judged on the basis of achievement to be qualified, may be elected to membership. No more than five alumni members per year may be elected.

**Faculty:** The chapter may elect to membership each year up to five College of Medicine faculty members who have distinguished themselves in their professional careers and are judged on the basis of achievement to be qualified. Such faculty members must hold an earned doctoral degree.

**Residents and fellows:** The chapter may elect to membership up to six graduate trainees after their first

year of training, based on continued achievement and promise.

Nominations must be submitted online at [surveymonkey.com/r/SSM9PNX/](http://surveymonkey.com/r/SSM9PNX/). Include a brief description of the nominee's achievements, and email a copy of the nominee's CV to Janice Edwards at [janice.edwards2@drexelmed.edu](mailto:janice.edwards2@drexelmed.edu). Self-nominations are not accepted. *Deadline: January 15, 2017*

Late or incomplete nominations, including those lacking CV, will not be considered.

Following the deadline, a caucus of AOA members, including student inductees, will review all nominations and present a slate of nominees to the committee for election.

**Membership update:** Please help us update our AOA Delta Zeta Chapter membership list. If you are an AOA member and would like to join the Delta Zeta Chapter of AOA or if you are a current member and your email or mailing address has changed, please contact Janice Edwards ([janice.edwards2@drexelmed.edu](mailto:janice.edwards2@drexelmed.edu)). For more information about the Delta Zeta Chapter, upcoming elections or events, contact AOA Councilor Kathleen Ryan, MD, at [kathleen.ryan@drexelmed.edu](mailto:kathleen.ryan@drexelmed.edu).



## New Breast Surgeon Takes Holistic Approach to Breast Cancer

Amanda M. Woodworth, MD, has joined the College of Medicine as director of the Breast Health & Wellness Center. Woodworth is also a faculty member in the Department of Surgery.

A leader in the patient-centered holistic approach to breast cancer management, Woodworth specializes in innovative breast surgery procedures, such as nipple-sparing mastectomy and reduction pattern lumpectomy.

Nipple-sparing mastectomy is a newer procedure that involves removal of the breast tissue while leaving the nipple-areolar complex in place. It has been shown to be as effective as more invasive surgeries in preventing breast cancer in high-risk women who elect prophylactic mastectomies, according to an April 2016 study. Nipple-sparing mastectomy can be used in the treatment of breast cancer as well if the nipple is not involved in the cancer.

Reduction pattern lumpectomy is an oncoplastic technique in which the cancer is removed using the same type of incision that is used for a breast reduction. Incisions are

made along the inframammary fold so the incision and scar are hidden.

Woodworth's holistic approach includes diet and exercise. She encourages patients to eat healthfully and avoid processed food. She talks to them about vitamin D supplementation since low vitamin D levels increase the risk of breast cancer. Exercise is also important. "Studies show that exercising for at least three hours a week can reduce your risk for breast cancer by almost 20 percent," she notes. "That's huge!"

Woodworth is fellowship trained in surgical breast oncology and is a board-certified surgeon. She received her medical degree from Albany Medical College and completed her residency in general surgery at Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia. During her fellowship, at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California, she was trained in oncoplastic surgery, which combines the principles of cancer surgery with the techniques of plastic surgery for optimal oncologic and cosmetic results.



## University Ranks in Top 8 Percent

Drexel was ranked in the top 8 percent of all U.S. colleges and universities in a new ranking developed by *The Wall Street Journal and Times Higher Education*. Drexel placed 81st overall out of 1,061 national research universities and liberal arts colleges.

The new *WSJ/THE* ranking is significant because its methodology emphasizes outputs (like students' postgraduate employment) more than inputs (like average SAT scores or acceptance rates). The ranking also differs from the *U.S. News & World Report "Best Colleges"* lists by including students' experience with their professors gathered through a national survey of over 100,000 current college students, as well as students' views on the degree to which collaboration and critical thinking were stressed in their studies.



**Jane Clifford, PhD, with colleagues (l-r) Drs. Eishi Noguchi, Ramesh Raghupathi, Mauricio Reginato, Michael Bouchard, Patrick Loll and Bill (Lawrence) Bergman**

## Kudos to Dr. Clifford

Nearly a hundred faculty and students attended a reception to honor Jane Clifford, PhD, for her service as director of the MD/PhD program at the College of Medicine. Clifford, who is chair of the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and associate dean for medical student research, requested to step down as program director effective September 1. She had held that position for 12 years, overseeing a period of sustained growth and increased competitiveness of matriculated students.

## ELAM: Flourishing and Set for the Future

Nancy D. Spector, MD, has been appointed executive director of the *Hedwig van Ameringen* Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® program for women, succeeding Diane Magrane, MD, who was named director emerita. Spector, an alumna of ELAM® herself, class of 2010, is the associate dean for faculty development at the College of Medicine, where she holds the rank of professor in the Department of Pediatrics.

Spector brings considerable leadership experience to her new positions. She is a nationally recognized educator in the fields of faculty and professional development, curriculum development, and mentoring. She served for many years as director of the Pediatric Residency program and associate chair of education and faculty development at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children. Her honors include the Association of Pediatric Program Directors' Robert S. Holm, MD, Leadership Award; the Academic Pediatric Associa-

tion's Miller-Sarkin Mentoring Award; and the Drexel College of Medicine Elias Abrutyn Mentoring Award. She serves on the Education and Training Committee of the American Board of Pediatrics.

Mary Anne Delaney, MD, was named associate director of the ELAM program. Delaney is the associate dean for faculty affairs at the College of Medicine and is a professor and chair of the Department of Psychiatry. A 2008 ELAM alumna, or "ELUM," Delaney has been a member of the program faculty since 2007 and has been very involved with the ELAM finance curriculum. As associate director she will focus on operations.

The ELAM program, which offers an intensive one-year fellowship of leadership training, was established in 1995. Under Magrane (ELUM 2003) since 2009, the program has flourished, continuing to attract top female faculty from schools of medicine, dentistry and public health; expanding its class size; and drawing from countries beyond North America. Unique among professional development programs, the ELAM curriculum integrates learning and institutional leadership work across the fellowship. More than 1,000 ELAM alumnae hold leadership positions in institutions around the world.

**A pride of ELUMs (l-r): Olimpia Meucci, MD, PhD, chair, Pharmacology & Physiology; Jane McGowan, MD, professor of pediatrics, and director of the NICU and chair of the Research Committee at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children; Mary Anne Delaney, MD; Nancy Spector, MD; Ellie Kelepouris, MD, interim chair, Department of Medicine; Elisabeth Van Bockstaele, PhD, dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies; Mary Moran, MD, chair, Department of Pediatrics, associate dean for the Pediatric Clinical Campus, and pediatrician-in-chief at St. Christopher's; Jane Clifford, PhD, chair, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and associate dean for medical student research.**



## Calling All Physicians! Students Seek Clinic Volunteers

Medical students involved in the Health Outreach Project are looking for physicians to volunteer in the project's clinics. These clinics are student-run and designed to support the underserved populations in and around Philadelphia. They also serve to provide students with a safe environment to practice interviewing and case presentation skills. There are three clinics that rely on physician support in order to operate:

- Eliza Shirley, Wednesdays, 6:30–8:30 p.m., serves women and children.
- SalVal, Tuesdays, 7–10 p.m., serves mostly veterans.
- Streetside, Fridays, 12–4:30 p.m., serves the impoverished in the Kensington neighborhood

of Philly and also functions as a needle exchange.

The clinic schedules for each month are sent out to the physician volunteers, who can sign up for dates that fit their schedule — as often or as little as they wish.



At clinic, students conduct the patient interview and present the case to the physician. The physician then takes over the care of the patient and provides feedback to students on their interviewing and case-presenting proficiency.

The students are seeking physicians with a passion for teaching and service. If being a part of this dedicated team interests you, please contact our physician recruitment chair, Janson Jacob, at [jansonjacob04@gmail.com](mailto:jansonjacob04@gmail.com).

## Crozer-Chester Medical Center Becomes Drexel Med's Sixth Regional Medical Campus

Crozer-Chester Medical Center in Delaware County will serve as a regional medical campus for Drexel University College of Medicine beginning July 2017. The designation is an expansion of Crozer's long-standing academic affiliation with the College.

Under the new regional medical campus designation, Drexel medical students will have the option to select Crozer as their primary clinical campus, which means they can complete all of their required clinical rotations at the medical center during their third year of medical school. Crozer will provide the full complement of training in core clinical areas.

The College of Medicine currently has five regional medical campuses and 17 academic campuses. Up to 24 students per medical class will complete all of their clinical rotations at Crozer.

Crozer is a 300-bed tertiary-care teaching hospital located in Upland, Pa. The hospital is part of Crozer-Keystone Health System, the largest employer and health care provider in Delaware County. Crozer features the county's only trauma and burn centers, a regional cancer center, a regional kidney transplant center,

a Level III intensive care nursery, and advanced outpatient, surgical and acute care services. It admits more than 19,000 patients, treats approximately 53,000 emergency department patients and delivers about 1,700 babies per year.

The hospital has been a clinical campus of the College of Medicine for more than 30 years. It hosts more than 100 medical students on site each day in the Departments of Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Psychiatry, Family Medicine and Neurology, with full-time educators in each department.

Stephen T. Higgins, MD, director of medical education at Crozer, will serve as associate dean for the regional medical campus.



## Top Research Scientists Showcased at IMMID Symposium

The 2016 International Symposium on Molecular Medicine & Infectious Disease highlighted the work of some of the world's top research scientists September 13–15 on the Center City Campus. This was the fourth year for the symposium, which is spearheaded by Brian Wigdahl, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Microbiology & Immunology and director of the College of Medicine's Institute for Molecular Medicine & Infectious Disease.

Presentations showcased ongoing investigations in the areas of cancer biology; HIV-associated disease and neuroAIDS; and bacterial pathogenesis and diseases caused by eukaryotic pathogens. Each of the three full days focused on one of those areas, with a broad range of relevant sessions. The College awarded five prizes for scientific excellence to scientists who are eminent in their fields. Special lectures were given by the prize recipients:

**Drexel Prize in Cancer Biology:** Alan Ashworth, PhD, FRS, president, UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center; "Synthetic Lethal Approaches to Cancer Therapy."

**Drexel Prize in Translational Medicine:** Jonathan

Karn, PhD, Reinberger Professor of Molecular Biology; chair, Molecular Biology & Microbiology; and director, CFAR, Case Western Reserve University; "The Molecular Basis for a Future HIV Cure: The Ins and Outs of HIV Latency."

**Drexel Prize in Immunology:** Satya Dandekar, PhD, professor and chair, Medical Microbiology & Immunology, University of California, Davis; "HIV Infection and Mucosal Immunity: Siege and Defense."

**Drexel's Hilary Koprowski**

**Prize in Neurovirology:** Harris A. Gelbard, MD, PhD, director, Center for Neural Development and Disease; professor, Neurology, Pediatrics, Microbiology & Immunol-

ogy, and Neuroscience, University of Rochester; "Selectively Non-selective Inhibition of Innate Immunity: Treatment for End Organ Diseases of Infectious and Non-infectious Etiologies."

**Drexel Prize in Infectious Disease:** Rita Colwell, PhD, Distinguished University Professor, University of Maryland, College Park, and Johns Hopkins School of Public Health; founder and chair, CosmosID; "Next Generation Sequencing, Climate, and Cholera."



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Institute for

Molecular Medicine  
& Infectious Disease

College of Medicine

## A Fruitful Service Project

Around 35 first- and second-year medical students spent a glorious fall afternoon at Linvilla Orchards in Media, Pa., picking apples for donation to Philabundance, an organization whose mission is to drive hunger from Philadelphia and surrounding communities.

The trip was planned by the Learning Society service reps (each entering medical student is assigned to one of four Learning Societies): Andrew Qian from Physick House; Alex Blumer, Rocky Statue; Darshan Parikh, Liberty Bell; and Sheryl Mathew, Athenaeum. Says Qian, "When we met earlier in the year, we decided we wanted to plan more large-scale, schoolwide service events in hopes of generating larger turnouts and a more community-building vibe." This was the first event of the year.



The outcome? Together the students picked some 240 pounds of apples of different varieties, filling a total of 12 boxes for Philabundance. "Each box was worth \$30," Qian says, "so we were pretty pleased with the end result in terms of the donation amount." And it was a nice break from school out in the sun.

## Marion Spencer Fay Award Presented

The Institute for Women's Health and Leadership presented the Marion Spencer Fay Award to Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, incoming president and chief executive officer of the Dana Farber Cancer Institute and former dean of Weill Cornell Medical College, on September 26.

The award is given to a woman who has made an exceptionally significant contribution to health care as a practitioner, educator,

administrator or research scientist. It includes a \$10,000 honorarium to support her ongoing work.

Glimcher has made pioneering discoveries in immunology and osteobiology, with important implications for understanding autoimmune diseases, infectious diseases, osteoporosis and cancer. In addition, she has had a remarkable impact on medical education, policy and health care. She was the

first woman to serve as the dean of a medical school in the state of New York.

Marion Spencer Fay, PhD, was dean and president of Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania from 1946 to 1963. The National Board for Women in Medicine established the award in her name to recognize her pioneering leadership, and later turned over administration of the award to the institute.

## Sim Center Wins Education Award

The Independence Blue Cross Medical Simulation Center at Drexel University College of Medicine was named "Outstanding Education Partner" by the District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund. The award was presented to Kathleen Ryan, MD, associate dean, Medical Education-Simulation, at the Training Fund's graduation at the Kimmel Center.

The Simulation Center regularly hosts students from the STE(A)M\* Scholars program at Roxborough High School, which was developed by the District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund with a grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Each group of scholars (9th graders, 10th graders, and so on) comes separately to the Queen Lane Sim Center three times a year. There they participate in patient-centered simulations and interact with the high-fidelity manikins and standardized patients.

The Training Fund was created in 1974 by collective



bargaining agreements between 11 Philadelphia hospitals and District 1199C of the National Union of Hospital & Health Care Employees; it now involves 50 area health-care and human services employers. Its mission is to provide access to career pathways in health care and human services through context-based education and training, annually serving more than 5,000 union members and low-income residents.

\*Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics

# Drexel Psychiatrist Collaborating In Landmark Genomic Study

Schizophrenia is an idiopathic mental disorder with substantial morbidity, mortality and personal-societal costs. Understanding its genomic basis is one of the most significant pursuits in psychiatry today. A decade ago, there was perhaps one solid genomic finding for schizophrenia, but there are now 130+ loci that meet consensus criteria for significance and replication. Considerably larger group studies will be completed in the next year. These are projected to increase the numbers of loci into the high hundreds. This ever-increasing number of genomic loci, while encouraging, reflects a fundamental issue that plagues the field — the schizophrenia literature is based on large samples with considerable heterogeneity. Such high-throughput genomic sequencing of large cohorts is the standard approach to contemporary psychiatric genomics.

But Rita A. Shaughnessy, MD, PhD, associate professor of psychiatry, is collaborating with a team of investigators who have launched a study — supported by several grants from the National Institute of Mental Health — that takes a different approach. While subjects in the large cohort studies clearly have psychotic disorders, an alternative and time-honored strategy in genetics is to study the most severely ill subjects — in this case, individuals with longstanding, severe psychotic symptoms that are highly treatment-resistant.

The state psychiatric hospitals operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services afford a unique opportunity to study this singular population of the “sickest of the sick” psychotic individuals. These individuals have been actively treated, are largely adherent to prescribed medications, and reside in a protected environment with adequate sustenance and minimal access to substances of abuse; yet many have remained severely psychotic for decades. This new project, “The Genomics of Treatment-Resistant Psychotic Symptoms,” performs genomic assays on this unique population, on a case-by-case basis, to identify genomic changes that could lead to more effective therapeutics or to the discovery of important rare genetic mutations.

The core idea driving the project is that, infrequently or rarely, the initial presentation of schizophrenia is actually an undiagnosed genetic disorder. Therefore, the researchers wish to screen these atypical and severely affected individuals for rare variations that can cause a clinical presentation initially “confusable” with schizophrenia. The investigators hypothesize that a subset of subjects with highly treatment-resistant psychotic symptoms have rare genetic mutations of strong effect, such as a Mendelian disease. Effective treatments are available for some Mendelian diseases.

For the study, biospecimens are being processed and biobanked by the NIMH Human Genetics Initiative at the Rutgers University Cell and DNA Repository. To ensure the validity of the genomic data, the DNA assays are performed at the Stanley Center for Psychiatric Research at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard. Any actionable genomic information will be certified in a separate CLIA-certified\* laboratory.

“This ‘genome-first’ approach has led to dramatically improved outcomes in general medicine,” Shaughnessy says,

“but the abundance of recent genetic findings in general medicine contrasts with the striking absence of discoveries that have been translated into the psychiatric clinic.”

The study’s co-principal investigators are Richard C. Josiassen, PhD, research professor of psychiatry at Drexel, who is also chief scientific officer of Translational Neuroscience, and Patrick Sullivan, MD, distinguished professor of genetics and professor of psychiatry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and distinguished professor of clinical neuroscience at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm.



Shaughnessy will play a leadership role in the committee that decides how to disclose information to the patient. She will be working with the chief medical officer for the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as well as a diverse group of professionals from UNC, including a behavioral neurologist, a bioethicist and a genetics counselor. “If something interesting shows up and is verified, and the subject has indicated that he or she would like to be advised if something is found, then we will come up with a plan for the individual,” Shaughnessy explains.

A subject may consent to a blood draw but want no further involvement. If a patient is too sick to consent, a person with power-of-attorney may give consent and ask to be informed of any finding, which — if something treatable is revealed — could lead to the patient’s improvement.

By the end of September, the team had examined the DNA of three subjects — a kind of trial run for the larger study population. Of those three, one had a major genetic deletion, a finding that a CLIA-certified lab was re-evaluating.

“I am very excited to be working with the team in this unique effort,” Shaughnessy says. “It has the potential to be phenomenally important, not only in the lives of individual subjects who may benefit but also in reducing the impact of serious mental illness on a significant fraction of the population we attempt to serve.”

\* CLIA (Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments) regulations establish quality standards for laboratory testing.

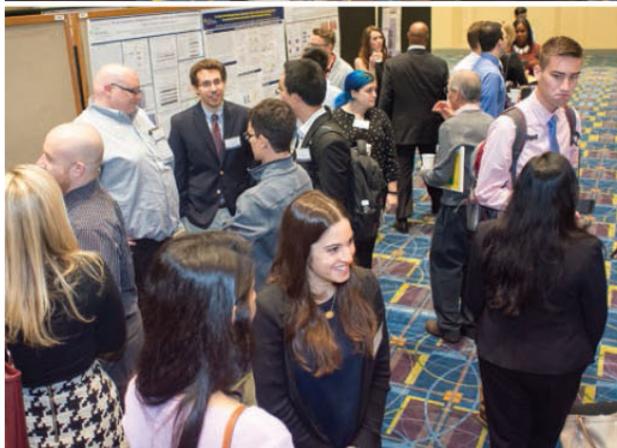
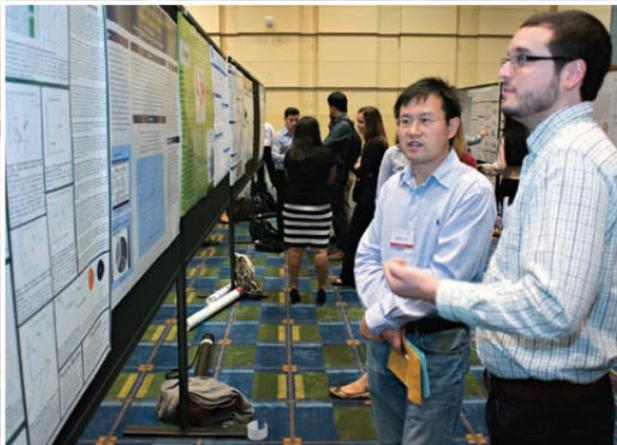
# Discovery 2016

With topics ranging from malaria and HIV/AIDS to spinal cord injury and neuroengineering, more than 400 participants presented their original research at Discovery 2016 on October 20.

The research projects represent work from medical students, students in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies, clinical residents and fellows, and postdoctoral trainees, as well as students who participated in the 2016 Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships. Discovery Day 2016 was held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center for the first time since the event began.

A corps of about 170 judges, including distinguished alumni, Drexel faculty and colleagues from neighboring institutions, generously volunteered their time and expertise to evaluate the posters for awards.

Acclaimed neurosurgeon and biomedical engineer Charles Liu, MD, PhD, who directs the Neurorestoration Center at the University of Southern California, gave a provocative keynote address, with something of interest for everyone. His center aims to turn new technologies into effective therapies to restore neurological function, using an interdisciplinary approach involving neurosurgery, neurology, and biomedical engineering.





Erol Veznedaroglu, MD, director, Drexel Neurosciences Institute; John K. Lee, an MD/PhD student who introduced the keynote; Drexel University President John Fry; Daniel V. Schidlow, MD, dean of the College of Medicine; keynote speaker Charles Liu, MD, PhD; Elisabeth Van Bockstaele, PhD, dean of the Graduate School; Valerie Weber, MD, vice dean for educational affairs; and Kenny Simansky, PhD, vice dean for research

## Awards

Winner (Mentor)

### Barry Waterhouse Outstanding Platform Presentation

- 1 Brielle Ferguson (Wen-Jun Gao, PhD)
- 2 Patrick Williams (Todd Strohlic, PhD, VMD)

### Outstanding Senior Graduate Student Poster

- 1 Kaitlin Farrell (John Houle, PhD)
- 2 Brett Cornell (Kazuhiro Toyooka, PhD)
- 3 Lindsay Festa (Olimpia Meucci, MD, PhD)

### Outstanding Junior Graduate Student Poster

- 1 Ankita Patil (Peter Baas, PhD)
- 2 Alexander Allen (Brian Wigdahl, PhD)
- 3 Genie Han (Wen-Jun Gao, PhD)

### Outstanding Medical Student Poster

- 1 Nicholas Bertha (Michele Marcolongo, PhD)
- 2 William Valentino (Megan Detloff, PhD)
- 3 Alexander Valiga (Ashani Weeraratna, PhD, Wistar Institute)

### Outstanding Postdoctoral Fellow Poster

- 1 Devasena Ponnalagu (Harpreet Singh, PhD)
- 2 Virginie Tardif (Elias El Haddad, PhD)

### Outstanding Clinical Resident/Fellow Case Study Poster

- 1 Suresh Mukkamala (Mahesh Krishnamurthy, MD), Easton Hospital
- 2 Mariola Vazquez (Maneesh Jain, MD)

### Outstanding Clinical Resident/Fellow Research Poster

- 1 Matthew Meleka (Patrick Osei-Owusu, PhD)
- 2 Mark Collin (Brent Becker, MD), WellSpan York Hospital

### Outstanding Undergraduate Student Poster

- 1 Ayush Parikh, Drexel University (Seena Ajit, PhD)
- 2 Sydney Wilson, Drexel University (Eishi Noguchi, PhD)
- 3 Jordyn Karliner, Ursinus College (Michael Lane, PhD)



The Graduate Citation Young Investigator Award was presented to Nicholas V. DiPatrizio, PhD '08, by Timothy Manzone, MD, MCP '89, president of the Alumni Association. DiPatrizio, who earned his doctorate in neuroscience, has done pioneering research into the integrative neurobiology and physiology that control food reward, sensory processing and energy balance.



Michael Bouchard, PhD, director of the Division of Biomedical Science Programs, presented the award for outstanding poster by a senior graduate student to Kaitlin Farrell, an MD/PhD candidate in the neuroscience program, for "Chronic Inflammation and Depression After Spinal Cord Injury."



Ole Mortensen, PhD, associate professor, pharmacology and physiology; Brielle Ferguson, winner for her platform presentation; Barry Waterhouse, PhD, namesake of the award; and Donna Frithsen, vice president for development. Mortensen chaired the platform presentation selection committee.



Dr. Amori Dr. Simon

**Renee E. Amori, MD**, assistant professor of medicine, and **Barbara Simon, MD**, associate professor of medicine, both in the Division of Endocrinology, published "A Primer on

Diabetes Mellitus: Foundations for the Incoming First-Year Resident" in MedEdPORTAL Publications in September 2016. MedEdPORTAL Publications promotes educational scholarship and collaboration by facilitating the open exchange of peer-reviewed health education teaching and assessment resources. MedEdPORTAL is a program of the Association of American Medical Colleges.



**James E. Barrett, PhD**, professor, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology, and director of the Clinical & Translational Research Institute, has been elected editor-in-chief of the *Handbook of Experimental Pharmacology*. The series, currently approaching its 70th year,

publishes critical and comprehensive volumes of the most significant areas of pharmacological research, written by leading international authorities. Barrett will be the first editor-in-chief from a country other than Germany. This past summer, Barrett taught a course on pharmacology and drug discovery at China Pharmaceutical University in Nanjing.



**Jessica R. Barson, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, gave an invited talk, "Neuropeptide Circuits Regulating Alcohol and Palatable Food Intake," as part of the symposium "Sober Thoughts on Alcohol Ingestion" at the 2016 conference of the

Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior, held July 12–16 in Porto, Portugal.



**Tatiana Bezdudnaya, PhD**, an instructor in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, is this year's recipient of the Edward Jekkal Muscular Dystrophy Research Fellowship, for her proposal "Muscle Stimulation to Promote Motor Recovery Following Cervical Spinal Cord

Injury." The fellowship is designed to strengthen the training of senior postdoctoral students and facilitate the career development of young faculty members interested in research related to neuromuscular diseases and motor neuron atrophies. The fellowship will provide funding for two years in the amount of \$55,000 per year.



**Luther W. Brady, MD**, a faculty member in the Department of Radiation Oncology, has been awarded an honorary doctorate by Complutense University of Madrid, the largest university in Spain. This is his seventh honorary degree. The ceremony, held on June 20 in the Faculty of Medicine, was attended by several family members.



**Michael R. Clancy, MBA, CFP, CLU**, director of financial planning, Division of Medical Education, was a guest presenter and panelist at the Student Debt Symposium hosted by the George Washington University School of Medicine & Health Sciences on October 14 in Washington,

D.C. The goal of the symposium was to raise awareness of the national scope and significant impact of medical and health profession student indebtedness, and to share best practices and strategies for mitigating the burden of student indebtedness.

**Justin Cohen**, a PhD candidate in the Molecular and Cell Biology and Genetics program, has been awarded by NIH a Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award Individual Predoctoral Fellowship to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research (F31) for his project entitled "HIV-associated Astrocyte Senescence as a Contributor to NeuroAIDS." He is doing thesis work in the laboratory of Claudio Torres, PhD, research associate professor in the Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine.

**Armine Darbinyan, MD**, a cytopathology fellow, is first author of "BK Virus Encephalopathy and Sclerosing Vasculopathy in a Patient with Hypohidrotic Ectodermal Dysplasia and Immunodeficiency" in *Acta Neuropathologica Communications*, July 13, 2016 (PMID 27411570). She is also an author of "Multiple Meningiomas in a Patient with Cowden Syndrome," in *Journal of Neurological Surgery Reports*, July 2016 (PMID 27563534).



**Dennis DePace, PhD**, associate professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, has been invited by the National Board of Medical Examiners to join the USMLE Gross Anatomy and Embryology Test Material Development Committee, beginning November 2016.



Dr. Detloff

**Megan Ryan Detloff, PhD**, instructor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, gave a presentation, "Modulation of Spinal Cord Injury-Induced Neuropathic Pain by Exercise," at the 2016 American Spinal Injury Association meeting held April 13–16 in Philadelphia. She also

participated in the pre-course “Progress in Translational Research: Moving the Bench to the Bedside and Back,” as did department members **Itzhak Fischer, PhD**, professor and chair, **John Houlé, PhD**, professor, and **Marion Murray, PhD**, professor.



**Joshua P. Earl, MS**, research instructor, Department of Microbiology & Immunology, gave a talk, “Writing Functions in R,” for the R Club (a regular meeting of R language users) at Monell Chemical Senses Center on May 27.



**Garth D. Ehrlich, PhD**, professor in the Departments of Microbiology & Immunology and Otolaryngology–Head & Neck Surgery, served on the NIH National Institute of General Medical Sciences Special Emphasis Panel ZGM1 TWD-A(KR) for review of K99 applications, July 8.

He also gave two talks in Research Triangle Park, N.C.: “Development of a High Fidelity Pipeline for Microbiome Analyses,” on July 5 at AgBiome, and “Comparative Genomics and Microbiome Studies Reveal the Diversity of Bacterial Populations and Provide Insight into Chronic Infections,” on July 6 at Metabolon. In August, Ehrlich gave a talk, “Pacbio-based Species-Level Microbiome Analyses,” at the Advances in Microbiome Diagnostics Symposium as part of Cambridge Healthtech Institute’s Eighth Annual Next Generation Dx Summit in Washington, D.C.



**Howard J. Eisen, MD**, the Thomas J. Vischer Professor of Medicine and chief of the Division of Cardiology, was elected this year in the first group of fellows of the Heart Failure Society of America. He was also in the first group of fellows of the American Society of Transplantation,

elected in 2015. He gave an invited talk on “Biomarkers and Heart Transplantation” at the Spanish Transplant Society in Santander, Spain, in May 2016. He is a member of the Symposium Planning Committee for the 2017 International Society of Heart and Lung Transplantation meeting.



**Dr. Fischer**

**Itzhak Fischer, PhD**, professor and chair, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, received the Louis and Bessie Stein Family Fellowship for Exchanges with Israeli Universities, together with Dr. Merav Shamir from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, for a study entitled “Using

Spontaneous Disc Herniation in Dogs as Model of Spinal Cord Injury in Large Animals and for Translation Research.” Fischer, with former lab members **Xiaobing Yuan, PhD**, and **Christopher Haas, MD, PhD ’16**, published a review article, “Guiding the Migration of Grafted Cells to Promote Axon Regeneration,” in *Neural Regeneration Research*, August 2016 (PMID 27651760).

# Calendar

## December

*Safe Toys and Gifts Month*

- 1 **DUCOM Classical Recital**  
Showcasing the musical talents of students and faculty  
Settlement Music School Germantown Branch,  
6128 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
- 2 **Medical Education Faculty Development Day (CME)**  
21st annual faculty retreat, Queen Lane,  
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.  
Details and registration:  
[webcampus.drexelmed.edu/retreat](http://webcampus.drexelmed.edu/retreat)

## January

*Cervical Health Awareness Month*

- 16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

## February

*American Heart Month*

- 11 **Pediatric AIDS Benefit**



## March

*Colon Cancer Awareness Month*

- 8 **Sex and Gender Research Forum**  
Website: [drexel.edu/medicine/SGRF](http://drexel.edu/medicine/SGRF)
- 17 **Match Day!**

## April

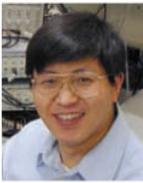
*National Donate Life Month*

## May

*Mental Health Month*

- 18 **Classes of 1967 Dinner**  
The Union League
- 19 **Commencement**  
The Kimmel Center, 9 a.m. (robing, 8 a.m.)
- 19-20 **Alumni Weekend**  
Calling all classes ending in 2 or 7,  
and the Grand Classes (1966 and earlier)
- 26 **Memorial Day**

**Alumni: For additional information about alumni events, please call 215.762.2371, email [medical\\_alumni@drexel.edu](mailto:medical_alumni@drexel.edu), or visit [drexel.edu/medicine/alumni/events](http://drexel.edu/medicine/alumni/events).**



**Wen-Jun Gao, PhD**, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, received an R21 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health titled "Role of Dopamine in Prefrontal Control of Aggression."

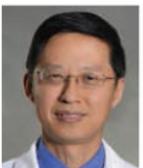


**Simon Giszter, PhD**, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, and a colleague at USC were awarded a four-year NIH multi-PI U01 grant, "Multi-scale Models of Neural Population Control in Spinal Cord," in the amount of \$1,757,582 (the Drexel portion of the

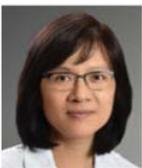
award is \$889,696). Giszter also received a two-year grant in the amount of \$299,996 from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation for "Optogenetics With Robot Rehab Enhances Plasticity and Outcome in Spinal Cord Injured Rats."

Giszter attended the 2016 Society for the Neural Control of Movement meeting, held April 24–29 in Jamaica, and presented the work of his graduate student Kendall Schmidt, "Enriched Cortical Motor Synergies Through Subthreshold Optogenetic Stimulation in Spinal Complete Adult Rats." Schmidt is a doctoral candidate in the Biomedical Engineering program. Together with two other Biomedical Engineering graduate students, Ubong I. Udoekwere (first author) and Chintan S. Oza, Giszter published "Teaching Adult Rats Spinalized as Neonates to Walk Using Trunk Robotic Rehabilitation: Elements of Success, Failure, and Dependence" in *Journal of Neuroscience*, August 2016 (PMID 27511008).

**Shreya Gowda** and **Danielle Hofheinz**, both second-year students in the Master of Laboratory Animal Science program, each won a J.J. Noonan scholarship for \$1,000 from the Delaware Valley branch of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science. The award is based on merit, achievement and need.



Dr. Hou



Dr. Zhou

**Chelsey Gracia, DO**, third-year pathology resident, presented a poster, "Post-Polycythemic Myelofibrosis with Acquired 5q and 7q Deletions: A Case Study," at the College of American

Pathologists meeting held September 25–28 in Las Vegas. The other authors were **Nadia Nashed, DO**, PGY-4; **J. Steve Hou, MD**, professor; and **Jing Zhou, MD, PhD**, assistant professor, all in the Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine.



**John Houle, PhD**, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, gave an invited platform presentation, "Exercise After Spinal Cord Injury: More Than Just a Strategy for Rehabilitation," at the 34th Annual National Neurotrauma Symposium, held June 26–29 in Lexington, Ky.



Dr. Jost



Dr. Baird



Dr. Gaurnier-Hausser

**Drs. Karen Hurley, Monika Jost** and **Douglas Baird** of the Pre-medical and Pre-health Division of the Graduate School for Biomedical Science and Professional Studies gave two presentations at the biannual meeting of the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions in Minneapolis in June: "Designing pre-health post-baccalaureate programs for the contemporary health sciences education landscape," and "From M.S. to M.D.: How diverse post-baccalaureate programming fosters success in medical school and beyond." Co-authors included **Drs. Christina Cestone** (Office of Educational Affairs), and

**Anita Gaurnier-Hausser, Loretta Walker** and **Blanche Young** (Pre-medical & Pre-health Division).

Baird, Hurley and Jost also presented an exhibit on graduate programs at Drexel at the conference.



Dr. Walker



Dr. Young



Dr. Jin

**Ying Jin, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, published a review article, "The 'Other' Concussion: Spinal Cord Concussion," in *Atlas of Science*, February 29, 2016. The other authors were **Christopher Haas, MD, PhD '16**; **Julien Bouyer**, research assistant; and **Itzhak Fischer, PhD**, professor and chair, all Neurobiology & Anatomy.



Society of America.

**Suresh G. Joshi, MD, MS, PhD**, associate professor, Department of Microbiology & Immunology, and adjunct professor in the A.J. Drexel Plasma Institute and the School of Biomedical Engineering, Science & Health Systems, has been elected as a fellow of the Infectious Diseases



**Hans Kersten, MD**, a professor of pediatrics, was one of four finalists in the *Philadelphia* magazine 2016 Health Hero competition. The magazine received more than 600 nominations. Kersten was nominated for his efforts to make Philadelphia "hunger-free." He was instrumental in developing the Hunger-Free Health Care model at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, where he is a pediatrician. In 2011, 22 percent of Philadelphia children were food insecure, according to data from Feeding America. Research shows that children who lack access to nutritious meals are more likely to suffer from disease, have cognitive development issues and experience behavioral problems. Through the Hunger-Free model, health care professionals screen for food insecurity throughout the hospital, provide

resources to families and organize food drives. Kersten has also led programs at the hospital to improve fresh food access, including FreshRX, in which providers write prescriptions for boxes of food.



**Michael A. Lane, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, presented a talk, "Breathing After Cervical Spinal Cord Injury," at the American Spinal Injury Association meeting held April 13–16 in Philadelphia.



**Lanfranco Leo**, a PhD student, **Wenqian Yu, MD**, research instructor, and **Peter Baas, PhD**, professor, all in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, published "Using siRNA to

Study Microtubule-Related Proteins in Cultured Neurons," in *Methods in Cell Biology*, Volume 131, 2016 (PMID 26794513).

**Li Li, MD, PhD**, and **Lynn T. Mackovick, DO**, both third-year residents; **Ying Lu, MD**, PGY-4; and **Jing Zhou MD, PhD**, assistant professor, all in the Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, presented "A Case Report: Collision Tumor of Colon High-Grade Adenocarcinoma and Low-Grade Neuroendocrine Tumor (NET)" at the American Society for Clinical Pathology annual meeting, held September 14–16 in Las Vegas.



**Yan-Chun (Lisa) Li, PhD**, instructor; Sha-sha Yang, a visiting student; and **Wen-Jun Gao, PhD**, professor, all in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, published "Disruption of Akt Signaling Decreases Dopamine Sensitivity in Modulation of Inhibitory Synaptic Transmission in Rat Prefrontal Cortex" in *Neuropharmacology*, June 2016.



**Vitaliy Marchenko, PhD**, research assistant professor, **Tatiana Bezdudnaya, PhD**, instructor, and **Ilya Rybak, PhD**, professor, all in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, had a paper

accepted for publication in *eNeuro*: "Perturbations of Respiratory Rhythm and Pattern by Disrupting Synaptic Inhibition Within Pre-Bötzinger and Böttinger Complexes," May 2016.



**Joshua Chang Mell, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Microbiology & Immunology, gave a talk, "Which which() is which?" on May 6 for the R Club (a regular meeting of R language users) at Monell Chemical Senses Center. He also gave a talk to Drexel's Department of

Biodiversity, Earth and Environmental Science, "DNA Feeding Frenzy: The Causes and Consequences of Natural

Competence," on May 11.

**Mark Messih, MD**, now a second-year resident in psychiatry, last year authored "Mental Health in LGBT Refugees: A Review of Common Concerns and Patient Presentation to Inform Resident Practice," which was selected for publication in the July 2016 issue of *The American Journal of Psychiatry Residents' Journal*. He was also invited to be a guest editor of the issue.

**Eugene Mironets**, a third-year PhD student in the Neuroscience program, received a Dean's Fellowship for Excellence in Collaborative or Themed Research. Mironets is doing research in the lab of Veronica Tom, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy.



**Mary K. Mulcahey, MD**, assistant professor and associate program director, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, was one of four surgeons selected for the 2016 Arthroscopy Association of North America Advanced Arthroscopy Traveling Fellowship.



**Ana E. Núñez, MD**, professor of medicine, and associate dean for diversity, equity and inclusion, has been appointed editor-in-chief of *Health Equity*, a new peer-reviewed, open-access journal that will serve as a resource for information for health care providers, researchers, policymakers and others about health disparities and health equity. Content will range from translational research to prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of disease and illness toward the goal of optimal outcomes and ultimately health equity for all. The publication is supported by a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to ensure that it is accessible as widely as possible.



**Peter Pizzuttillo, MD**, professor of orthopedic surgery and pediatrics, has been appointed surgeon-in-chief at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, effective July 2016. He has served as director of the Pediatric Orthopedic Surgery Unit at St. Christopher's since 1995 and vice chairman of the hospital's Department of Surgery for the past six years.



Dr. Poggio

Dr. Stein

**Juan Lucas Poggio, MD, MS**, associate professor of surgery, has been appointed chief of the Division of Colorectal Surgery, effective July 2016. He is the senior lead author of "Nursing

Home Status Is an Independent Risk Factor for Adverse 30-Day Postoperative Outcomes After Common, Non-emergent Inpatient Procedures," published in the *American Journal of Surgery*, August 2016 (PMID 27287834). Poggio made a podium presentation of the study at the American College of Surgeons prior to publication. The

other authors are **David Stein, MD**, chair of surgery, and **Mario D. Caldararo, MD '16**.

**Anand N. Rao** and **Aditi Falnikar**, PhD students in the laboratory of Peter Baas, PhD, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, are co-first authors of "Sliding of Centrosome-unattached Microtubules Defines Key Features of Neuronal Phenotype," published in the *Journal of Cell Biology*, May 2, 2016 (PMID 27138250). The article was chosen for an "In Focus" news article in the journal, titled "Neurons Let It Slide," by Ben Short.



**Mauricio J. Reginato, PhD**, professor in the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, has been appointed to serve as co-leader of the Breast Cancer Program at the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Thomas Jefferson University. Drexel University is a consortium partner of the National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center.

**Naomi Rosenberg, MD**, a current student in the MS in Forensic Science program, published an op-ed piece, "How to Tell a Mother Her Child Is Dead," in *The New York Times Sunday Review* section on September 3. She is an emergency room physician at Temple University Hospital.



**Kathleen Ryan, MD**, associate professor of medicine, associate dean for medical education-simulation, and the councilor for the Delta Zeta Chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society has been elected to the national board of directors of AOA as a councilor director.



**Allan B. Schwartz, MD**, professor of medicine in the Division of Nephrology & Hypertension at Drexel's College of Medicine, wrote an article for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* about the role that health played in the first televised U.S. presidential debate, between John F. Kennedy and

Richard Nixon on September 26, 1960.



**Christian Sell, PhD**, associate professor, Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, became the president-elect for the American Aging Association in June. He will be in charge of organizing the 2018 annual meeting of the association and plans to hold it in Philadelphia. The

meeting attracts more than 200 researchers in the field of aging. Sell was also named to the program planning committee for the 2018 International Symposium on Neurobiology and Neuroendocrinology of Aging, a biannual conference held in Bregenz, Austria. The symposium is a joint effort of researchers from the United States and the European Union.



**Dr. Shaughnessy**

**Rita A. Shaughnessy, MD, PhD**, associate professor of psychiatry, and **Richard C. Josiassen, PhD**, research professor of psychiatry, are among the authors of "Framework for the Return of Results to Psychiatric Genomics Sequencing Research Participants: What Should Be Offered?" which was presented at the 2016 World Congress on Psychiatric Genetics, held October 30 to November 3 in Israel. (See article, page 11.)



**Suganthi Soundararajan, MBBS**, clinical associate professor in the Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, is the new president of the Pathology Society of Philadelphia.



**Colin Tkatch**, second-year medical student, was selected to receive an American Heart Association Student Scholarship in Cardiovascular Disease for the project "Physiologically Inspired Generation of Complex Blood Flow and Computational Fluid Dynamic (CFD)

Simulations." The work that he will conduct under the mentorship of J. Yasha Kresh, PhD, professor of cardiothoracic surgery and medicine, is a continuation of this year's DUCoM Summer Medical Student Research Fellowship. The project will bridge physical in vitro model(s) of cardiac torsional/helical deformations and spiral-flow generation with computational in silico models (prediction/validation) using Drexel's high-performance computing (Proteus) cluster.



**Dr. Tom**



**Dr. Osei-Owusu**

**Veronica Tom, PhD**, associate professor in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, **Patrick Osei-Owusu, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology,

and John Bethea, PhD, professor in the College of Arts & Sciences Department of Biology, received a grant from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation for their project "Inhibiting TNF to Diminish Autonomic Dysreflexia After Spinal Cord Injury."



**Drs. Tomi-Olugbodi and Lentini**

**Adeola Tomi-Olugbodi, MD**, fourth-year pathology resident, and **Ashley Lentini, MD, PGY-2**, presented a poster, "Acute Promyelocytic Leukemia: An Unusual Presentation," at the American Society for

Clinical Pathology annual meeting, held September 14-16 in Las Vegas. Other authors were Mary Kay Vaske, MD (former hematology-oncology fellow); **Indumathy Varadarajan, MD**, a third-year hematology-oncology fellow; and **J. Steve Hou, MD**, professor of pathology.

Tomi-Olugbodi also presented a poster she co-authored, "Sperm Morphology Assessment: Variability and Reproduc-

ibility with Reference to Classification Scheme,” at the College of American Pathologists meeting, held September 25–28 in Las Vegas.



**Thomas Trojjan, MD**, professor in the Department of Family, Community & Preventive Medicine and director of the Sports Medicine Fellowship program, presented a webinar, “Viscosupplementation Injections for Knee Osteoarthritis,” on August 17 as part of the Lunch & Learn Webinar Series of the Osteoarthritis Action Alliance.



Dr. Côté

**Di Wu, PhD**, postdoctoral fellow, **Megan Detloff, PhD**, research assistant professor, **Marie-Pascale Côté, PhD**, assistant professor, and **Veronica Tom, PhD**, associate professor, all in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, published “Expressing Constitutively Active Rheb

in Adult Dorsal Root Ganglion Neurons Enhances the Integration of Sensory Axons That Regenerate Across a Chondroitinase-Treated Dorsal Root” in the journal *Frontiers in Molecular Neuroscience*, July 5, 2016 (PMID 27458339).

**Guanjun Xia, MD**, a second-year Drexel/Hahnemann pathology resident, is the second author of “Human Serum Albumin and HER2-Binding Affibody Fusion Proteins for Targeted Delivery of Fatty Acid-Modified Molecules and Therapy,” published in *Molecular Pharmaceutics*, August 21, 2016 (PMID 27546214).

**Bo Xing, MD, PhD**, postdoctoral associate; **Yan-Chun Li, PhD**, instructor; and **Wen-Jun Gao, PhD**, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, published an invited review paper, “Norepinephrine Versus Dopamine and Their Interaction in Modulating Synaptic Function in the Prefrontal Cortex,” in *Brain Research* (special topic: Noradrenergic System), June 15, 2016 (published online January 11, 2016).



**Michael Weingarten, MD, MBA**, professor of surgery and chief of vascular surgery at the College and director of the Comprehensive Wound Healing Program, is a co-investigator on an NIH R01 grant for “Enhanced Ultrasound Treatment of Chronic Wounds with

Monitoring of Healing and Quality of Life Outcomes.” The principal investigator is Peter Lewin, PhD, professor, School of Biomedical Engineering, Science and Health Systems. Weingarten was listed as a top physician in vascular surgery in “Healing Hands” in the August issue of *Philadelphia Life/Suburban Life* magazine.



**Brian Wigdahl, PhD**, professor and chair of the Department of Microbiology & Immunology and director of the Institute for Molecular Medicine & Infectious Disease at the College of Medicine, and of the institute’s Center for Molecular Virology

& Translational Neuroscience, has received the 2016 Wybran Award from the Society for Neuroimmune Pharmacology. The highest honor bestowed by the society, the Wybran Award recognizes “the very best scientific contributions that have resulted in the preservation and expansion of the field of Neuroimmune Pharmacology.”

**Lana Zholudeva**, a PhD candidate in neuroscience in the laboratory of Michael Lane, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, was awarded a Biomedical Sciences PhD Fellowship by the Biomedical Sciences Graduate Student Association for her research project “Endothelial Cells Alter the Inflammatory Phenotype of Immune Cells.”

## Radiology Residents Place Third in Philips Wearables & Chronic Care Challenge

An innovative smartphone interface for cancer patients earned kudos for Suruchi Dewoolkar, DO, and alumnus Ajay Kohli, MD '15, both trainees in the Drexel/Hahnemann Radiology Residency program. Dewoolkar, Kohli and their team were third-prize winners at the Philips Wearables & Chronic Care Challenge held recently at Harvard Medical School.

The competition began with an open call for submissions at the end of July and continued as an online challenge for two months, during which the judges and the community-at-large could offer feedback, and submissions could be refined. Then the finalists — determined by a combination of online voting and votes from the judges — were invited to Boston to pitch their ideas in front of a live audience.

Under the direction of Douglas W. Parrillo, MD, Radiology chair, the Drexel/Hahnemann group developed CancerCarePartner — a smartphone interface that emphasizes patient education while keeping track of the different treatment options that a patient will undergo. For their third-place finish, they received \$2,500.

**Drs. Kohli (left) and Dewoolkar**



## '50s

**Herbert H. Keyser, MD, HU '58**, is the author of *An Unquiet Life: Odyssey of a Whistleblower* (Cogent Publishing, May 2016). Described as a medical thriller, this is his sixth book but first novel. It is available on Amazon.

## '70s

**Elaine M. Bunick, MD, MCP '73; Internal Medicine Residency, HU '76; Endocrinology Fellowship, HU '78**, an endocrinologist in Oak Ridge, Tenn., and leader of four medical missions to Ghana, received the William T. Sergeant Award of the Rotary Club of Oak Ridge.

**Georgia "Gigi" Dash, RN, CIC; MS Community and Preventive Medicine, MCP '74**, director of infection prevention for Cape Cod Healthcare, received the 2016 Carole DeMille Achievement Award from the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology.

**Gary Michelson, MD, HU '75; Orthopaedics Residency, HU '79**, joined the Giving Pledge, the philanthropic initiative that encourages billionaires to give the majority of their wealth to philanthropic causes.

**Steven Bergmann, MD; PhD Physiology, HU '78**, joined Princeton HealthCare System as chairman of the Department of Medicine.

**Patricia Lee Friedsam, MD, MCP '78**, joined Allegheny Health Network as a physician at Washington Internal Medicine in Washington, Pa.

**Mark Chag, MD, MCP '79**, senior partner at Harbour Women's Health and one of the founders of the Portsmouth Prenatal Clinic, recently decided to retire from the obstetrical part of his practice. He will continue to provide gynecological services at Harbour Women's Health in Portsmouth, N.H.

**Randy W. Hawkins, MD, HU '79**, a surgeon and assistant professor at Drew University, has been reappointed to the California Medical Board.

**Raymond R. Townsend, MD, HU '79**, director of the Hypertension Program at Penn, received the Physician of the Year Award from the American Heart Association.

## '80s

**Andrew F. Inglis Jr., MD, MCP '81**, a physician at Seattle Children's Hospital, was named one of *Seattle* magazine's 2016 Top Doctors for pediatric otolaryngology.

**Steven Sandler, MD, HU '81**, professor of psychiatry at Albany Medical College, is the author of the book *Tea with Freud: An Imaginary Conversation About How Psychotherapy Really Works* (Dog Ear Publishing, March 2016).

**Robert E. O'Connor, MD, MCP '82; MPH**, professor and physician-in-chief at UVA's Department of Emergency Medicine, is a current board member and candidate for president of the American College of Emergency Medicine.

**William F. Muhr Jr., MD, DABR, HU '83**, CEO of South Jersey Radiology Associates, was listed in the "Who's Who in Health Care" section of *South Jersey Biz* magazine.

**Linda Good, MD, MCP '85**, a family physician who helped start the Mt. Airy Family Practice in Philadelphia in 1989, left the practice in early July to explore other interests.

**Stephen A. Chidylo MD, HU '87; DDS**, has recently expanded his practice. He has a new office in the Medical Arts Building at Southern Ocean Medical Center in Manahawkin, N.J., where he is on staff with the Department of Surgery, Division of Plastic Surgery, as well as being on staff at AtlantiCare Medical Center, Atlantic City Hospital.

**Helen Goldberg, MD, MCP '88**, has relocated to "the beautiful Western Slope" in Colorado to pursue her integrative oncology practice. She joined Grand Mesa Oncology in Delta, Colo., "amidst organic orchards, vineyards and breweries."

**Charles D. Peters Jr., MD, MCP '88**, joined Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center's Pearsall Heart Hospital in Wilkes-Barre, where he will provide noninvasive cardiology services.

**David Talenti, MD, HU '88**, joined Northeastern Gastroenterology Associates at their Honesdale, Pa., office.

**Donna M. DeSantis, MD, HU '89**, joined MDVIP, a national physician network, in Chandler, Ariz., as a family physician.

## '90s

**Joseph G. Chacko, MD, MCP '91**, professor of ophthalmology and neurology in the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Medicine, was invested in the Sally McSpadden Boreham Chair in Ophthalmology on September 26. Chacko has been the director of neuro-ophthalmology at the university's Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute since 2005.

**Lisa Leschek-Gelman, MD, MCP '94**, joined Reading Health System as chief of neurology.

**Charles Bellows III, MD, MCP '95**, joined the general surgery team at Southwest Health System in Cortez, Colo.

**Lesley Ann Hughes, MD, HU '98**, joined WellSpan's Ephrata Cancer Center in Lancaster County, Pa., as a radiation oncologist.

**Sandra Lee, MD, HU '98**, a dermatologist based in Upland, Calif., has become a YouTube star with over 600 million views of her dermatology-related videos.

**Stephanie Barbetta, MD, MCPHU '99**, associate professor of emergency medicine and director of Minor Care clinical operations, has been appointed assistant dean for student affairs at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University.

**Lawrence D. Dodds, PhD Clinical Psychology, HU '99**, an attorney and partner in the firm Wisler Pearlstine, LLP, presented "Divorced Parents and the IDEA [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act]: From Evaluations and IEPs, to Field Trips and School Events" at the Pennsylvania Bar Institute's Snapshots of Special Education Program.



## '00s

**ThucAnh Multerer, MD, MCPHU '00**, a board-certified vitreoretinal specialist, joined TLC Eyecare & Laser Center in Toledo, Ohio.

**Kris Armson, MD '02**, an anesthesiologist based in Williamsport, Pa., was inducted into the All Sports Hall of Fame at Pottsville Area High School.

**Jody Leonardo, MD '02**, joined Allegheny Health Network as director of the adult hydrocephalus program and assistant director of endoscopic neurosurgery for the network, based in Pittsburgh.

**Heidi Solberg-Shankle, MD '06**, joined the emergency medicine department at Kaiser Permanente Moanalua Medical Center in Hawaii.

**Nadeem Hussain, MD '08**, medical director of Kenmore Mercy Hospital's Medical Rehabilitation Unit in Buffalo, N.Y., has been named the hospital's Doctor of Distinction for 2016.

**Drew Rowan, MD; PBC Interdepartmental Medical Science '08; MMS Medical Science '09**, a family medicine physician, joined Brandywine Hospital in Coatesville, Pa.

**Hardik Amin, MD '09**, has co-authored a book, *Vascular Neurology Board Review: An Essential Study Guide* (Springer, September 2016). He is an assistant professor of neurology at Yale University School of Medicine and associate director of the Vascular Neurology Fellowship at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

## '10s

**Meghan Stott Haggerty, MD '10**, completed her residency in radiation oncology at SUNY Upstate Medical University, and is a board-certified radiation oncologist at Northeast Radiation Oncology Center in Scranton, Pa.

**Rani Vasudeva, PhD Neuroscience '11**, has recently accepted a position as assistant professor in the Psychology Department at Temple University. She is teaching courses ranging from research methods to evolutionary and comparative psychology.



**Nicole Michele Lykens, PhD Pharmacology & Physiology '12**, with adjunct faculty member Gordon Lutz, PhD, and former faculty member Melanie Tallent, PhD, co-invented a method of pre-mRNA modulation for use in the treatment of diseases. Drexel University was granted a patent on the invention in June (patent number 9,359,603).

**Stephany Silva, MLAS '12**, received the 2016 ACTS Education and Training Award from the Delaware Valley Branch of the American Association of Laboratory Animal Science. Silva is the training coordinator at the University of Pennsylvania's Division of University Laboratory Animal Resources. She is the immediate past president of the Delaware Valley Branch.



**Jessica Ann Meisner, MD '13**, has accepted a fellowship in infectious diseases at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center. She completed her residency at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

**Xiomara Penn-Becoat, MD '13**, joined Kennedy's Family Health Services as a pediatrician at their Washington Township and Somerdale, N.J., practices.

**Katrina Marie Castille, MD '16**, began her general surgery residency at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Shreveport in July.

**Rachel Navarra, PhD Pharmacology & Physiology '16**, has accepted a faculty position in the Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience at Rowan University College of Medicine as an instructor. Her role involves the development of behavior and electrophysiology research core facilities, new assay validation, and medical pharmacology course lectures.

**Christine Tran, MS Drug Discovery & Development '16**, is a lead researcher of "Strength Through Insight," a mobile health application developed in collaboration with Jefferson's Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center. Built on Apple's ResearchKit platform (available via iTunes), the app allows for the collection of patient-reported outcomes in real time for the purpose of measuring varying characteristics of prostate cancer symptoms to improve health-related quality of life.

• continued on next page

## Residents and Fellows

(alphabetical order)

**Jasjot Kaur Bhullar, MD; Drexel/Hahnemann Nephrology Residency '09**, joined Carolina Nephrology in Greenville, S.C.

**Abhiman Cheeyandira, MD; Drexel/Hahnemann Surgery Residency '14**, joined the bariatric surgery team at Nazareth Hospital in Philadelphia.

**Robert S. Cummings, MD; Orthopaedics Residency, MCPHU '97**, a sports medicine specialist, joined St. Lawrence Health System in Potsdam, N.Y.

**Peter Favini, MD; Emergency Medicine Residency, MCP '86**, was named president of the medical staff and chief of emergency medicine for St. Luke's University Health Network's new Monroe campus in Bartonsville, Pa.

**Mary T. Hofmann, MD; Internal Medicine Residency, MCP '91; Geriatric Medicine Fellowship, MCP '93**, a physician at Abington Adult Medical Associates, has been named a Pinnacle Professional by Continental Who's Who. She is division chief and fellowship director for geriatric medicine at Abington Memorial Hospital.

**Arun Khazanchi, MD; Internal Medicine Residency, MCPHU**, co-founder and president of Florida Digestive Health Specialists, was named a Top Doctor in *Sarasota Magazine*.

**Kinnard Leatham, MD; Surgery Residency, HUH '02**, who specializes in critical surgical care, joined the medical staff of Wilkes-Barre General Hospital.

**Michael S. Nillas, MD; Internal Medicine Residency, MCP '01**, joined Cape Regional Physicians Associates in Cape May Court House, N.J., as a cardiologist.

**Marc Denton Stam, MD; Thoracic Surgery Residency, HU**, joined Sparks Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery in Fort Smith, Ark., where he will work with **David Miller, DO; Thoracic Surgery Residency, MCPHU '98**.

**Nicholas Tyriss, MD; Rheumatology Fellowship '15**, has joined Advocare Arthritis, Osteoporosis & Rheumatology Associates in Mount Laurel, N.J.

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Share your professional accomplishments in Alumni Notes — just email [pulse@drexelmed.edu](mailto:pulse@drexelmed.edu).

If you have **new contact information**, please let us know by calling 215.762.2371 or emailing [medical.alumni@drexel.edu](mailto:medical.alumni@drexel.edu).

## In Memoriam

**Marie Sullivan Blackman, MD, WMC '57**, July 31  
**Donald R. Buxton Jr., MD, HU '67**, July 18  
**Gilbert C. Carroll, MD, HU '75**, June 14  
**Mary M. Cavasina, MD, WMC '52**, October 16  
**John M. Corbett, MD, HU '64**, July 12  
**Janet Cuttner, MD, WMC '57**, August 4  
**Carmela F. De Rivas, MD, WMC '46**, October 6  
**Jean Long Fourcroy, MD, MCP '74**, October 12  
**Paul C. Garell Jr., MD, HU '56**, October 28  
**Carol Jean Glanzberg, MD, WMC '64**, September 1  
**Charles D. Hummer Jr., MD, HU '63**, October 11  
**Salvatore M. Imperiale, MD, HU '59**, August 9  
**Edward A. Jasionowski, MD, HU '46**, August 7  
**Elizabeth Andree Kultchar, MD, WMC '59**, August 1  
**George A. Lauro, MD, HU '58**, April 6  
**Jeannette Marlow, MD, WMC '47**, October 1  
**Paul C. Moock Jr., MD, HU '59**, August 3  
**Clarence G. Novotny, MD, HU '65**, August 7  
**Richard E. Orose, MD, HU '74**, July 9  
**Richard E. Perry, MD, HU '55**, July 7  
**Steven D. Promisloff, MD, HU '69**, September 23  
**Charles W. Schiffert, MD, HU '46**, October 6  
**Clark E. Thompson, MD, HU '58**, October 2  
**Harvey Tritel, MD, HU '69**, September 22  
**Joseph E. Trojak, MD, HU '75**, October 20  
**Oscar R. Weiner, MD, HU '51**, June 29  
**Jewell Jo Ann Wine, MD, WMC '66**, September 20  
**Nanci Yuan, MD, HU '96**, July 1  
**Harry Zall, MD, HU '65**, September 3

**John Dzwonczyk Jr., MD, HU '54**, of Media, Pa., died on September 11. He was 88. Known as an outstanding surgeon, he was on the medical staff at Fitzgerald-Mercy Hospital in Darby. In retirement, he pursued fine woodworking and painting. His wife, Barbara, predeceased him. He is survived by their children, Susan Rosko, John Dzwonczyk, Barbara Gatta, Maria Kurmlavage, Amy Posse and Steven Dzwonczyk; 21 grandchildren, including **Luke Gatta, MD '16**; and 9 great-grandchildren.

**Victor J. Irmiere, MD, HU '55**, a family physician, died on September 5. He practiced in Paterson, N.J., then in Texas as a captain in the Air Force. In 1973 he joined Wayne [N.J.] General Hospital, affiliated with St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center. He was medical director of Passaic Valley Hospice and Llanfair House nursing home. He is survived by his wife, Eleanor Anna Hudak Irmiere; their children, Alice Marcy, Claudia Irmiere, Andrew Irmiere, Dorothy Levorse, Victoria Randazzo and Maria Parry; and 11 grandchildren.

**Elaine (Chong) Wong, MD, WMC '51**, of Chicago, a child psychiatrist in private practice for more than 60 years, died on September 2 at 91. As a volunteer at the Chinese American Service League, she consulted on childhood development issues for over two decades; she was recognized with a State of Illinois Women to Women: Making a Difference Award. She is survived by her husband, Arthur Wong; their children, David Wong and Melissa Wong Aagesen, and three grandchildren.

# Transplant Recipients and Skin Cancer: African Americans at Higher Risk

Although nonwhite individuals in the general population have a significantly lower incidence of skin cancer than their white counterparts, data for nonwhite organ transplant recipients is limited. A new study from Drexel's Department of Dermatology suggests that *all* organ transplant recipients, regardless of race, should receive routine, total-body screenings for skin cancer. The research was published in *JAMA Dermatology*.\*

Further, the study shows risk factors for nonwhite transplant recipients likely differ between races and ethnicities. "This is the first research of its kind to look at a diverse population of nonwhite transplant recipients and how skin cancer affects them," says Christina Lee Chung, MD, associate professor of dermatology in the College of Medicine and director of the Drexel Dermatology Center for Transplant Patients.

"Once physicians began to realize there were a significant number of transplant patients dying from skin cancer, there was a push to prevent it. But much of the field has focused on trying to decrease the morbidity of [transplant patients in] the Caucasian population, which is more susceptible to skin cancer overall," says Chung, the study's principal investigator.

"People tend to believe that dark-skinned patients can't get skin cancer," Chung says, "but they are taking the same immunosuppressant drugs as their white counterparts."

The Drexel Dermatology Center for Transplant Patients provides coordinated, post-transplant dermatological care to every patient who receives a transplant at Hahnemann University Hospital or who is managed by the Drexel transplant program. That means each patient, regardless of race, is screened annually for skin cancer.

The study researchers performed a retrospective medical record review of 259 nonwhite (African-American, Asian or Hispanic) transplant recipients who had visited the center between 2011 and 2016.

## All organ transplant recipients should receive routine screenings for skin cancer.

They found 19 different cancerous lesions among 15 nonwhite patients (six black patients, five Asian patients and four Hispanic patients). Interestingly, the predominant type of skin cancer diagnosed within the group was "in situ" (caught in its earliest form). No black patients were diagnosed with a late-stage skin cancer.

This suggests that screening transplant patients for skin cancer early and often can prevent it from becoming more

aggressive — evidence that the Drexel Dermatology Center for Transplant Patients is a successful model. It is one that Chung hopes can be replicated throughout the country.

The researchers found that the majority of skin cancers in the black transplant patients were in the groin-genital area, and most of those lesions tested positive for high-risk human papillomavirus. For the Asian population, sun exposure appeared to be the most significant risk factor for skin cancer. (Most Asian patients in this study had intense sun exposure where they grew up.) The data on the Hispanic patients were inconclusive.

The potential association between HPV and squamous-cell carcinoma warrants careful examination of the groin, genitalia and perianal area in search of early lesions, the study authors write. The findings also suggest there may be significant differences in risk factors pertaining to the development of skin cancer between white and black organ transplant recipients.

"If you're spending all of your time counseling your black patients about sunscreen, you're probably missing more important aspects of skin cancer prevention," Chung says.

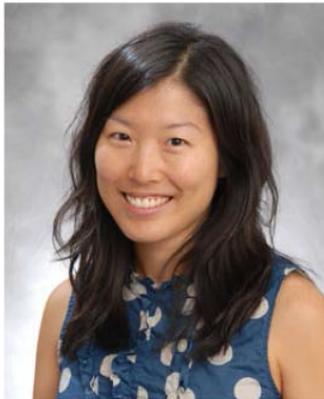
Instead, she adds, consideration should be given to administering the HPV vaccine to all patients prior to transplantation. In addition, African-American patients, especially those with a history of

HPV, should be taught how to identify potential cancerous lesions in the groin area.

"The ultimate takeaway is that although people of color are at decreased risk for skin cancer, they're not *not* at risk. And they have different risk factors," Chung says. "So when you see a person of color who is a transplant patient, you need to approach them differently, depending on their skin type and tone, where they are from and their medical history."

*\* Ellen N. Pritchett, MD, MPH; Alden Doyle, MD, MPH; Christine M. Shaver, MD; Brett Miller, MD; Mark Abdelmalek, MD; Carrie Ann Cusack, MD; Gregory E. Malat, PharmD; Christina Lee Chung, MD. "Nonmelanoma Skin Cancer in Nonwhite Organ Transplant Recipients" in JAMA Dermatology, published online September 21, 2016 (PMID: 27653769). Pritchett, who earned a Drexel MD in 2011 and completed the Drexel/Hahnemann Dermatology Residency program in 2015, is a member of the Department of Dermatology, Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit. Doyle is a former faculty member. Shaver, Miller, Abdelmalek, Cusack and Chung are members of the Drexel Department of Dermatology. Malat is a faculty member in the Department of Surgery.*

**"People tend to believe that dark-skinned patients can't get skin cancer."**



**Christina Lee Chung, MD**



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## A Personal Welcome

This group was among the dozens of medical students, faculty and staff who attended the new-student diversity reception given by Ana Núñez, MD, associate dean for diversity, equity and inclusion, at her home following the White Coat Ceremony.

Front row (l-r): Joy Fatunbi, Jasmine Preston, Tenee Lopez, Monica Diaz, Alexa-Rae Pesce, Laura Columbus, Anne Garcia, Norhan Shamloul, Shantel Maharaj, Temitayo Adegoke, Michael Ramada, Jeffrey Ramirez, Rita Akumuo; middle row: Paulina Ramirez, Giscard Adeclat, Daniel Olea-Mendoza, Gabrielle Pyronneau, Lia Michos, (front) Nardos Makonnen, Leanna Brooks, Deklerk Ngankam (front), Aminot Oshobajo, Chalon Forbes, Christian Gomez; back row: Esieza Braimah, Theophilus Abah, Shawn Adam, Shukri Dualeh, Kwesi Boateng, Michael Bleidistel, Adrian Rainero Garcia, Michael Donneyz.

