Dear Colleagues:

After a long winter, I am sure we are all welcoming the arrival of Spring. We have accomplished much since the last newsletter which includes an unannounced inspection of the laboratories by CAP. Fortunately, are laboratory supervisors were not shaken by the visit and all went well with a final report recommending minimal changes. I want to thank all that participated in this event, especially Beverly Charlton, who managed the organization of the inspection.

Also of news, we are in the process of creating an endowed chair in honor of Drs. Benito Lombardi and Hisashi Shinozuka to be awarded to Dr. Cary Wu. This is to acknowledge Dr. Wu’s work in the field of extracellular matrix biology.

I would also like to congratulate Dr. Yuri Nikiforov as the recipient of the Van Meter Award which is given to an investigator who has made outstanding contributions to thyroid research.

Our newsletter is full of good news both personal and professional. The Department is moving in a positive direction and as always, feel free to contact me about any concerns you may have or issues you wish to discuss. I look forward to another productive year whereby we will graduate more residents, students and trainees and welcome new ones in July.

Sincerely yours,

George K. Michalopoulos, M.D., Ph.D.
DAFFODIL DAY
We had over $700 in daffodil orders for our area (4th floor BST and 7 Scaife), delivered on March 25 for Daffodil Day. This was very generous since many of the orders were donations delivered to patients in local hospitals, treatment centers, and nursing homes, as well as Bea R. Hope Bears that were sent to children in Children’s Hospital. Thank you to all that gave for Daffodil Day.

Judy Nestico

GRANT RELATED REMINDERS

• TIMELY NOTIFICATION TO PRE-AWARD GRANTS ADMINISTRATORS
It is important that you notify the pre-award office of all proposal submissions and engage your grants administrator in the process as early as possible. Adequate time (4 weeks prior to grant submission date) should be allotted to the pre-award grant administrators to review proposal guidelines, proposal documents and obtain necessary University signatures.

• ALL PROPOSALS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY
Sometimes an awarding agency creates the impression that you can respond directly to the agency and bypass the University. When you bypass the University signature process, you put yourself and the University in a liable position. ALL proposals for research funding must be processed through the Pathology grants office for the proper signatures and ALL proposals MUST have an authorized University signature.

• PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF PUBLICATIONS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT
A reminder concerning the NIH public Access Policy…. As of April 7, 2008, investigators who receive NIH funding must submit their final peer-reviewed manuscripts to PubMed Central no later than 12 months after journal publication. This is the responsibility of the PI. An article in the University Times dated January 24, 2008, “NIH mandates open access to results of research that it funds”, will provide additional information. A memo from Michelle S. Broido, PhD, Associate Vice Chancellor for Basic Biomedical Research was also sent to health sciences faculty on January 15, 2008 listing the steps in the compliance process.

Lastly, a reminder: Grant work is assigned based on last name. For those faculty with a last name beginning A-M please contact Cassie (russelle2@upmc.edu); for those faculty with a last name beginning N-Z please contact Vida (georgev@upmc.edu). Please let me know if you have any questions concerning these issues.

Mary Lou Benedetti
Assistant Administrator
**DIVISION OF MOLECULAR DIAGNOSTICS UPDATE**

The Division was well-represented on the November Program of the 2007 Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP) annual meeting in Los Angeles. Jill Hagenkord MD, MGP Fellow, received one of three prestigious Young Investigator awards for her poster: “Detection and Clustering of Characteristic Chromosomal Aberrations in Renal Epithelial Tumors using High-Resolution SNP Arrays” Jill also was the recipient of the annual light-hearted Speedy Scholar Award for the first accepted abstract after submissions were opened.

Marie Beckner M D, also an MGP Fellow, gave an interesting case presentation at the annual Genetics subdivision workshop “Prior’s Puzzlers.”

In “Coding Conundrums: the AMPire Strikes Back,” Jeffrey Kant M D PhD, MDX Division Director, delivered a Special Topics plenary update on new developments for 2008 on coding and reimbursement for molecular testing and led a spirited discussion around member queries for specific scenarios.

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**MOLECULAR ANATOMIC PATHOLOGY UPDATE**

October 6, 2007—Yuri Nikiforov, M.D., Ph.D., of Pittsburgh, Pa., was honored with the American Thyroid Association’s (ATA) prestigious 2007 Van Meter Award at the ATA’s 78th Annual Meeting in New York City, where he also delivered the lecture, “Radiation-induced Thyroid Cancer: Lessons from the Past and Hopes for the Future.”

Established in 1930, the Van Meter Award honors an investigator who has made outstanding contributions to research on the thyroid gland. The award is the ATA’s oldest and most anticipated because it is kept secret until the recipient presents a major lecture at the ATA Annual Meeting.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

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Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not one bit simpler.

Albert Einstein, (attributed)
US (German-born) physicist (1879 - 1955)
The Cellular and Molecular Pathology (CMP) SURP program has completed making
offers to undergraduates from a variety of Universities across the country. This summer,
our class size will be 10 students and the program will run from May 27 until August 1.
Applicants were selected from 158 students who listed CMP as one of their top three
choices! The total program applicant pool this year was 374 students, up from only 220
last year! In part, this increase reflects the addition of a new SURP “entry” to the group—
the Molecular Biophysics and Structural Biology Program (MBSBP).

For those of you who are not familiar with the CMP SURP program, it is part of a small
consortium within the School of Medicine. In addition to our program and MBSBP, the
other SURP participants are Cell Biology and Molecular Physiology, Immunology,
Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics, Molecular Virology and Microbiology, and
Pharmacology. Students are matched with graduate faculty mentors who agree to assist
them with a specific research project. Whereas some activities are done as a whole (~40
students will participate this year), other activities, such as the Pathology retreat, are
specifically targeted for CMP SURP students. The specifics of the program are as
follows: The cost to the individual investigator is $3,500 with housing and a portion of
travel costs generously provided by Dr. Levine in the SOM. Limited scholarship monies
to offset your costs are occasionally available. If you are interested in mentoring a student
next year, please contact me at 412-648-9690 or wmmars@pitt.edu to learn more.

Wendy M. Mars, Ph.D.
Director
Pathology SURP
CMP held its first meeting of the year on February 28, 2008. It was well attended with lively discussion regarding a variety of topics. Highlights of topics discussed at the meeting are as follows:

1) CMP students who enter through the MSTP program will still be required to take the Tissue Growth and Differentiation course; despite some redundancy it is sufficiently different from material they receive in medical school to merit participation.

2) The requirement will remain for all CMP students, including those in the MSTP program, to attend five semesters of Pathology Research Seminar; it is considered important for ALL students to continually attend a comprehensive journal club that gives them substantive feedback and expands their perspective.

3) A training grant for graduate students doing research on Angiopathies has been submitted to the NHLBI and will be reviewed in October. CATER was not refunded by NIH but will continue to run as a program.

4) Individual faculty mentors and program directors will now be required to sign off on first year rotations to avoid students accepting rotations with mentors who are not in a position to fund them.

Other news of note:

- We welcome James Becker, James Gnarra, Eric LaGasse, Yong Li, Denise O’Keefe, Bill Sunders, Steven Shapiro, Zhou Wang and Sally Wenzel to the CMP faculty! Currently there are 57 faculty members affiliated with CMP as well as 32 students.

- Pathology was award 8.4% of the available basic science ECU credits for the 06/07 fiscal year.

- Dr. Horn has announced the stipend for graduate students will be raised to $25,000.00/year beginning on September 1, 2008.

- The SOM graduate council has approved a PhD program for the Clinical Translation in Science Institute.

- The Pathology Research Seminar an Retreat will be held this year on May 30, 2008 from 3-9 p.m. ECU credits will be offered for the oral presentation portion of the meeting. The poster session will be held at Concordia Club.

If you are interested in having issues brought before the CMP committee, please share them with our CMP administrator, Shari Tipton (tiptonsl@upmc.edu), or me (wmars@pitt.edu). Also, please continue to make me aware of any outstanding faculty members who are not currently members of CMP but who would be eligible and have a possible interest in joining our program.

Thanks so much!

Wendy M. Mars, Ph.D.
Director
CMP Graduate Program
Residency Program Report
A Community Hospital elective is now available at UPMC St Margaret; a process is being developed to evaluate anatomical pathology gross, microscopic and diagnostic competency through Co-Path; our internal GME review is May 22, 2008; on April 1st we welcome Dr. Sonal Kamat as a PGY-3 from University of Pennsylvania.

Recruitment for the Class of 2008.
The residents recruited into the Class of 2008 are listed in this newsletter. We received 524 applications and interviewed 51 candidates on 10 interview days. Eleven applicants were from top tier schools, which rises to 15 if we include school of PhD. We offered one out-of-match position matched 6. The class consists of 1 USA Graduate and 6 IMG’s – 3 with PhD’s from top tier medical schools. We recruited 1 CP Only, 2 AP Only and 4 AP/CP track residents.

A special thank you to the 42 faculty and residents who participated in the interview and ranking process.

Fellowship Program Report
A standard fellowship application form and process are under discussion by the CAP, ASCP and Association of Pathology Chairs; a UPMC-wide fellowship interdisciplinary lecture series is being planned; the annual department alumni reception at the USCAP meeting was again a success; the program office is working on providing support to collect data for the various fellowship GME reviews.

Medical Student Education Report
The Pathology Medical Student Interest Group (PMSIG) continues to be active with a luncheon meeting alternate months. Faculty members and one resident have presented their career paths. Recently the group organized a tour of the VA Hospital laboratories with Dr. Melhem and Dr. Gutkin – a very well received experience. Two mini-elective rotations are now in place – one Occupational Lung Disease (Dr. Sharma and Dr. Oury from pathology) and the other Clinical Pathology (Dr. Rabin, Dr. Virji, Dr. Kant and Dr. Pasculle). Several MD PhD Pitt students are interested in pathology and have taken their required Longitudinal Clinical Rotation with us – Rebecca Leeman in anatomical pathology and clinical pathology rotations – and Chris Crowe in microbiology.

Trevor Macpherson, M.D.
Vice Chair, Department of Pathology
Education
New Residents for 2008-09
Milon Amin, MD
Fei Gao, MD, PhD
Shveta Hooda, MD
Zaibo Li, MD, PhD
Lin Liu, MD, PhD
Oana Radu, MD
Kotaro Sasaki, MD

Clinical Fellows for 2008-09
Henry Armah, MD, PhD; Neuropathology
Mona Bansal, MD; Cytopathology
Steven Catinchi-Jaime, MD; Surgical Pathology
Akosua Domfeh, MD; Cytopathology
Scott Dufresne, MD; Hematopathology
Joaquin Garcia, MD; Head and Neck Pathology
Gabriela Gheorghe, MD; Pediatric Pathology
Sarah Gibson, MD; Hematopathology
Dana Gingell, MD; Gynecologic and Breast Pathology
Joel Gradowski, MD; Hematopathology
Douglas Hartman, MD; Gastrointestinal Pathology
Craig Horbinski, MD, PhD; Neuropathology
Daniel Jones, MD; Transfusion Medicine
Julia Kofler, MD; Neuropathology
Deborah Marks-Jones, MD; Cytopathology
Jeffrey McDavid, MD; Bone and Soft Tissue Pathology
Chady Meroueh, MD; Surgical Pathology
Leo Niemeier, MD; Surgical Pathology
Siobhan O’Connor, MD; Gynecologic and Breast Pathology
Edward Plowey, MD, PhD; Neuropathology
Sameer Talwalkar, MD; Molecular Genetic Pathology
Wen-Hsiang Wen, MD, PhD; Molecular Genetic Pathology
Debra Zynger, MD; Genitourinary Pathology
Charleen T. Chu, M.D., Ph.D.
- Organized and chaired the symposium on "Neuronal Macroautophagy, Autophagic Stress, and Neurological Diseases," for the 2007 Society of Neuroscience meeting, San Diego, CA.
- Chair, Session on Autophagy, Polyubiquitin and Aggregopathies” for the 2008 Gordon conference on Autophagy in Stress, Development and Disease.

Csaba Galambos, M.D.
Society for Pediatric Pathology
- Director, SPP Symposia, 2007-08
- Chairman, Workshop Subcommittee, 2008-09
- Session Chair, Society for Pediatric Pathology Annual Meeting, Denver, CO
Journal referring
- Member, Editorial Board --- Pediatric Developmental Pathology
- Contributing Editor, The Year Book of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

Jeffrey Kant, M.D., Ph.D. is currently a member of several CAP committees, Councils and workgroups has been asked to serve on the recently-established CAP Personalized Medicine Committee. Dr. Kant will also co-Chair the Model Genetic Test Report workgroup for the CDC/RAND Corporation Project on Genetic testing and lecture this spring on Molecular Pathology coding and reimbursement for the American Pathology Foundation Meeting in Phoenix, the Washington G2 Conference on Business and Financial Strategies for Molecular Diagnostics in Cambridge, the joint AACC/AMP Board Review course and a meeting of CMS Carrier Medical Directors in Baltimore. As Program Chair for the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP), Dr. Kant is directing initiatives to expand workshop topics and provide additional practical and fun interactions for attendees.

Eric Lagasse, Ph.D.
DOD Concept award: Ovarian Cancer, Stem Cells and Bioreactors, 04/01/2008-10/31/2009, $75,000 + indirects

Michelle Manni (Dr. Tim Oury’s lab) received a 2007 Young Investigator Award for her oral presentation entitled "The Role of Leukocyte-derived EC-SOD in Pulmonary Inflammation" at the 14th Annual Meeting of the Society for Free Radical Biology and Medicine in Washington D.C., November, 2007.

George K. Michalopoulos, M.D., Ph.D.
*Chair of the Board of Scientific Counselors of the National Institutes on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) of the National Institutes of Health. (2007-2010).
*Member of GCMB Study Section until June, 2008.
Paul Monga, M.D.
- has been invited to become the standing member of Hepatobiliary Pathophysiology (HBPP) study section at the National Institutes of Health Sciences.
- has accepted to be a member of the Transgenic Core Advisory Committee at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Medicine.
- is the guest editor for a special issue of the Journal of Organogenesis. This issue is composed of invited reviews on the canonical and non-canonical Wnt signaling pathways and the role of Wnt signaling in development and organogenesis of the brain, breast, eye, gut, kidney, limbs, liver, lung, pancreas and skin.
- has accepted to be Editor of a book on ‘Molecular Pathology of Liver Diseases’, which will be a volume in the Molecular Pathology Library by Springer.
- is the Program Chair-Elect for the American Society of Investigative Pathology for 2009 and 2010. He has assumed this responsibility and programming for the 2009 meeting is underway. The annual ASIP meeting is part of the FASEB and meets as Experimental Biology (EB) meeting every year. EB 2009 will be held at New Orleans, Louisiana.

Marina Nikiforova, M.D.
- * has been appointed by the College of American Pathologists to serve on the Molecular Oncology Committee starting January 2008.
- *has been elected to serve on the Association for Molecular Pathology Nominating Committee.

Michael Shurin, M.D., Ph.D.
- invited to serve as a member for 4-year term at ACS; Leukemia, Immunology & Blood Cell Development Study Section, January, 2008.

Tong Wu, M.D., Ph.D. has been elected to the AASLD Basic Science Committee, January, 2008.

K.C. Chikwea, Chief Resident and Fellow at UPMC was the recipient of the **2008 Lotte Strauss Prize of the Society for Pediatric Pathology.** The prize recognizes meritorious work by an individual 40 years of age or younger in a subject germane to pediatric pathology, published or accepted for publication in the year immediately preceding the award. The work for which he was honored was done with faculty from UPMC and Children’s Hospital.
Presentations

Charleen Chu, M.D., Ph.D.
• "Mitochondrial signals and autophagy in Parkinsonian neurodegeneration," for the NIH/NIA sponsored symposium on Autophagy and Aging, Ventura, CA.
• "Mitophagy, neurite degeneration and autophagic stress in Parkinson's disease models" plenary session for Neuroscience 2007, November 6, 2007, San Diego, CA.

Csaba Galambos, M.D.
Molecular Mechanisms of Pulmonary Vessel Development and Their Defects in Neonatal Lung Disease”, Symposium on Pediatric Lung Disease Honoring Claire Langston, MD, Texas Children’s Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX, November 15-16, 2007.

Poster
• Castro E, Galambos C: Transient lymphangiogenesis is a component of the inflammatory tissue response to extravasated mucin in mucoceles. Society for Pediatric Pathology Annual Meeting, Denver, CO. March, 2008.
• Castro E, Galambos C: Vascular endothelial growth factor receptor 3 (VEGFR3) and Prox-1 antibodies are superior to D2-40 in identifying malformed lymphatic vessels in cystic hygromas. Society for Pediatric Pathology Annual Meeting, Denver, CO. March, 2008.

George K. Michalopoulos, M.D., Ph.D.
• *gave Grand Rounds at the University Hospital in Zurich entitled “Transcriptomic and Genomic Analysis of Human Hepatocellular Carcinomas, January 17, 2008.
• *gave seminar “Liver Regeneration” at Penn State Hershey, PA, February 20, 2008.
• *gave Dean’s Distinguished Lecture at Georgetown University School of Medicine, March 25.
• *will give keynote address at the Greek Medical Association, Athens, Greece, May 20, 2008.

Paul Monga, M.D.
• Wnt/b-catenin signaling in liver stem cells: Role in Development & Cancer, UPCI Basic Research Seminar Series, Hillman Cancer Center, Pittsburgh 1/2/08.
**PROMOTIONS**

Nick Giannoukakis, Ph.D. promoted to Associate Professor of Pathology.
Dmitry Gutkin, M.D. promoted to Associate Professor of Pathology.
Larry Nichols, M.D. promoted to Associate Professor of Pathology.
Anil Parwani, M.D., Ph.D. promoted to Associate Professor of Pathology.
Hannah Rabinowich, Ph.D. promoted to Professor of Pathology.
Tong Wu, M.D., Ph.D. Conferral of tenure as Associate Professor of Pathology.
Xiao-Ming Yin, M.D., Ph.D. Conferral of tenure as Professor of Pathology.

**FITNESS FOR LIFE**

Just a note to let you know that the Department of Pathology’s Lipid Liquidators team initially showed incentive in the Fitness for Life weight race starting out at number 42. Overall, 26.41% of their goal has been reached. Kudos to Carla Johnson for recording the highest number of weekly steps for the Liquid Liquidators group at 136,835. Transplant Pathology Troupe started out strong at 36 achieving a 13.1% of their goal. We will continue to try…. perhaps when the weather warms up we will add more steps on our pedometers and lose weight. Until then….happy stepping!

Chris Szalkuski and Linda Askren
Fitness for Life Champion Coordinators


Patterson K, Travis WD, Wert S, White F, M.D. Diffuse Lung Disease in Young Children: Application of a Novel Classification Scheme Am J Respir Crit Care Med. 2007; 176:1120-8


Galambos C, Feingold B., Webber S. Characterization of C4d immunostain utilizing paraffin-embedded tissue of non-presensitized pediatric cardiac transplant patients (In press; Pediatr Dev Pathol.).

“Clonal Integration of a Polyomavirus in Human Merkel Cell Carcinoma.”


Dr. Mark Yazer, M.D., Assistant Professor at the Institute of Transfusion Medicine married his fiancé Alison on March 7, 2008. Congratulations!

John Morretti, (administrative office) and his wife Jen welcomed a new daughter, Sara Joy, on March 15 weighing 7 lbs and 9 oz. Big brother Brandon (4 y/o)

John Stoops (Aaron Bell's lab) and his wife Beth Ann welcomed their second son, Anthony David, on January 8 weighing 8 lbs and 13 ozs. Brother Tyler (2 1/2 y/o) is excited to have a baby brother!

Mihaela Avramut, M.D., Ph.D., (Resident) and husband welcomed their first son, Sean Philip, on Oct 27, 2007.

Jean Solarczkie (Purchasing Office) is the proud grandmother of a new baby girl, Grace, born on Easter Sunday, March 23, weighing 7 lbs and 10 oz. Big Brother Nolan is proud and protective already!

Linda Kraly (Research Accounting) welcomed her first granddaughter, Cameron Jordan Kraly, was born to Dan and Amanda on February 24 weighing 6 lbs and 11 ozs. Dan, Linda's son, worked in our Department for several years as a student in the PERF office.

James T. Edinger, M.D., Chief Resident Welcomed a baby girl on January 21, Devin Alexis. She weighed 8 lbs and 7 oz. This is the first baby for the Edinger family. Mom and baby are doing fine.

Daniel Chung, M.D. (UPMC Passavant) Welcomed the arrival of his second child, Chloe Jiyoung Chung. February 14th, Valentine's Day! She came in at 7 lbs. 5 oz.