CHAIRMAN’S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues:

Best wishes for the upcoming Holidays and for the New Year 2005. Even though academic and clinical work never entirely stops, this is a time of the year we all use to center ourselves and plan ahead. The Department of Pathology is doing very well. The academic productivity continues to rise, as evidenced by publications, grant submissions, presentations in local and national meetings, etc. Clinical services are expanding and new faculty have been added to meet the challenge. Teaching is very active, both in the prior months and for what is coming ahead in the spring. All our affiliated hospitals report good status of finances and organization.

I am taking this opportunity to thank you all for your inspired effort in the past calendar year, which is the main factor for which the Department is doing so well. In the upcoming year, my hope is that we will continue the fruitful intellectual partnership between faculty and Department and Division leadership. My pledge to you is to continue to be an advocate for the Department and for your academic and career interests.

With best regards,

George K. Michalopoulos, M.D., Ph.D.
Maud Menten Professor and Chairman

RESEARCH GRANTS AND CONTRACTS UPDATE

NIH PHS 398 forms have been revised as of 9/04, with new instructions. All form pages, except the Resources page, have been altered. The previous versions (4/98, 5/01) can no longer be used. A few highlights of these changes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Form Page 2 (Abstract) is now two pages, and incorporates an “Other Significant Contributors” section in addition to Key Personnel, as well as a section on “Human Embryonic Stem Cells” research;

- All Investigators’ eRA Commons User Names are required on Form Pages 1 (Face), 2 (Abstract), and all Biographical Sketches. It is highly recommended that all researchers as soon as possible complete the process of obtaining access to the eRA Federal Commons. Instructions for obtaining this access are included in this publication.

- Only Arial or Helvetica typeface fonts at 11 point or larger may be used. A Symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters, although the font size requirement (15 characters per inch, 6 lines per inch) still applies. Non-compliant proposals are being returned without review.

- Project titles may now be 81 characters/spaces.
• The old PHS 398 Rev.5/01 forms and instructions may be used until May 9, 2005. After May 9, 2004 the new 9/04 formats and instructions become mandatory.

• PHS 398 instructions for the 5/01 and 9/04 formats may be found at: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html

We are revising our normal Excel budget pages and Word documents to conform to these new page formats, and will distribute these as soon as completed.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OBTAINING AN eRA User Name:

Registering for the NIH Commons, which will enable PIs to review status (place in review process, priority scores, etc.) of submitted projects, is initiated by the Office of Research. In order to be registered on the NIH Commons, the following procedure must occur:

• First, researchers must access http://www.pitt.edu/~offres/forms/ornihform.html and complete the University of Pittsburgh P.I. Request Form to Register on NIH Commons.

• Upon receipt of this completed form, the University of Pittsburgh Office of Research will register you at NIH Commons (usually within a day or two following receipt of your request).

• NIH subsequently begins a "Search" process, which normally takes between 2-3 days but which may take as long as 5 days or more.

• Once you have been verified/confirmed, NIH will send an email directly to you requesting information and/or confirmation.

• Once you return this NIH request, the registration process will proceed and a Login (User Name) and Password emailed to the PI for use on the NIH Commons.

• IF YOU DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS NIH QUERY/CONFIRMATION, nothing further will occur regarding the Registration process and you will not receive a Login and Password. Please be advised that this registration process may take as long as two weeks to complete, but is usually less.

Vida George
Grants Administrator

NEWLY ACQUIRED GRANTS
University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI) Pilot Project Developmental Grant: “Mechanisms of genomic instability in gastrointestinal stromal tumors (GISTs): Role of mTOR and possible therapeutic implications” $25,000, direct costs

PI Dana M. Grzybicki, M.D., Ph.D.
Collaborators: Stephen S. Raab, M.D. and Michael J. Becich, M.D., Ph.D. Agency: CDC
Funding Period: 9/04-8/07
Aims/Goals: Determine and evaluate effectiveness of 6 pathology laboratory performance measures that involve all phases of specimen examination (cytology diagnostic errors, surgical pathology diagnostic errors, surgical pathology specimen TAT, troponin 1 TAT, point of care glucose reporting accuracy and clinical-pathological discrepancy rates assessed through autopsy performance.
Meeting Announcements

Patient Safety meeting August 22 and 23
and
10th Annual Advancing Practice, Instruction, and Innovation through Informatics
APIII 2005
August 24 thru August 26, 2005
Lake Tahoe, California
Section of Laboratory Medicine

The faculty in Laboratory Medicine continues to grow in response to the needs and challenges facing the Department. Recent additions to the faculty this year include Dr. Mark Yazer who joined the Transfusion Medicine service from Edmonton; his academic interests involve genetic polymorphisms in blood group antigens. Sara Monaghan came into Hematopathology from Chicago; her academic interests relate to flow cytometric analyses. Our current Transfusion Medicine fellow Lirong Qu also has stayed on as a Visiting Assistant Professor in Transfusion Medicine; she is studying EBV and its impact on transfusion practice. In December, Dr. Zoltan Oltvai came aboard the Molecular Diagnostics service from his faculty position at Northwestern; he is a pioneer in the exploration of metabolic networks in organisms. Lastly, while not a new face, Dr. Marie DeFrances moved over into Molecular Diagnostics; she will be continuing her studies in signaling in hepatocellular carcinoma.

In addition, the Section of Laboratory Medicine is actively recruiting for other positions. We have already interviewed a number of strong candidates to replace Dr. KN Rao upon his retirement last June. This person is expected to develop a clinical pharmacogenomics program to work within the Toxicology/TDM testing arena of Clinical Chemistry. Another person is being sought to replace Dr. Bong Kim in Hematopathology, as Bong is leaving for a position in South Carolina this winter. We will be interviewing a number of promising candidates this winter. The last position under active recruitment is being pursued jointly with Pediatrics to find a director for the biochemical genetics subsection of Clinical Chemistry. With the growth in pediatrics genetics, this area is set to explode in volume and complexity.

The research support base of the Section has remained strong with new grants flowing in to a number of faculty to replace expiring ones. The additions of Drs Oltvai and DeFrances deepen the support base and, along with new directions by Drs. Yazer and Qu, broaden the research areas. The recruitment of Dr. Oltvai and the new pharmacogenomics position, coupled with burgeoning interest from existing faculty, the Section has made a commitment to systems biology both in terms of research and to be turn this opportunity into clinical utility.

The biggest challenge on the academic side is the growth and strength of our clinical practices. The Section is looking at ways to provide more assistance to developing the academic programs of those primarily engaged in research. A major concern of the strategic planning process this spring will be in promoting such academic engagement within the realities of these centers of excellence. The individual successes of the clinical practices were highlighted in the last newsletter in the summer and in the individual Division reports, and won’t be reiterated in the interests of time and space.

Teaching remains strong on both the clinical and graduate education sides. Section faculty provide key course sections to second year medical students, but the main clinical education service is geared towards residents and fellows. Based on our entire faculty, the department just recruited and again, a very strong class yet. And Laboratory Medicine is ready to graduate a straight LM resident this coming June. Ken Tamama will be staying on to pursue his research interests.

The Section will be highlighted this June by hosting the 40th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Clinical Laboratory Physicians and Scientists (ACLPS) here in Pittsburgh. We expect a strong showing from our residents in the Young Investigator Awards Program. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase your expertise and demonstrate the breadth and depth of training here. The Section will be providing for all trainees (and faculty) to attend this meeting June 9-11. Drs. William Pasculle and Jorge Sepulveda have ably assisted the planning, with individual sessions being selected and chaired by Drs. Steve Swerdlow/Fiona Craig and James Harrison.

Lastly, I would be remiss without congratulating Dr. Cary Wu on his promotion to full Professor.
The deadline date for the next Pathology Newsletter is March 30. Please email items to szalkuskict@upmc.edu. Thanks!

Department Retreat
The Department of Pathology held its annual Research Day at Seven Springs in June, 2004 and awarded the following for their contributions at the Retreat:

Graduate Student Category:
Clayton Yates – 1st place
Priya Ramaswami – 2nd place
Sheila Schreiner and Rachelle Prantil 3rd place

Basic Science Research Category:
Xianghong Zhong – 1st place
Irina Tourkova – 2nd place
Wen-Xing Ding and Jianhui Zhu – 3rd place

Clinical Research Category:
Lawrence Johnson – 1st place
Diana Ionescu – 2nd place
Ken Clark and Adrian Gologan – 3rd place

First place winners received $500, second place $300 and third place $100.

Next year’s retreat will be held at Seven Springs on June 24-26, 2005. More information will be sent closer to the date, however, please hold the date on your calendars.

Robert Bowser, Ph.D.
Director

RESIDENCY PROGRAM UPDATE

We are in the midst of recruiting for the 2005-2006 academic year. So far, we have received over 350 applications through ERAS and have interviewed over 30 candidates. Three more interview days are scheduled in January 2005. Altogether, we expect to interview 45 candidates for the 5-6 open positions. Many of this year’s applicants are of high caliber; in fact, most of our interviewees have also interviewed at the other top programs in the country. The entire Department should be congratulated for the rising stature of our training program. A sincere thank you to all faculty, residents, and staff who have helped with this year’s recruitment process.

We are also preparing for the RRC site visit scheduled for late March 2005. The visit is part of ACGME’s periodic reaccreditation of our residency training program. Faculty and staff may be contacted for assistance in completing the required ACGME forms. Our thanks in advance for cooperating with such requests from our office.

Greg Naus, M.D.
Residency Program Director

Faculty and Staff Highlights

Fiona Craig, M.D.
Dr. Fiona Craig and Dr. Albert Donnenberg organized, directed and hosted the 17th Annual Clinical Flow Cytometry Course, September 5-10, 2004.

Rebecca Crowley, M.D.
Presented at MEDINFO 2004 Panel - Information Technology in Health Professions Education: Issues at the Frontier Moderator - Charles P. Friedman, Organizer, September 7-11, 2004

Presented at NCI Center for Bioinformatics, Informatics Seminar Series. Data Integration Support Plan for Cancer Research, June 4, 2004


Lenora "Peachies" Freshley is our new Purchasing Coordinator, replacing Shari Bottoms who left us in September to take a Project Coordinator position at Hampton University in Virginia Beach. Peachies comes to us with 11 years purchasing experience, the past 6 years as a buyer in the University of Pittsburgh's Central Purchasing Department. Please say "hello" to Peachies next time you visit us in S-417 BST.

Jennifer Hunt, M.D.

Interviewed on KDKA-2 evening news regarding thyroid cancer, November 2, 2004.

Mingfeng Li, Ph.D.


Youhua Liu, Ph.D.

Invited to give a seminar at the Rogosin Kidney Center, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Weil Medical College of Cornell University, New York, NY. October 6, 2004.

Dr. Liu was appointed as a member of the Editorial Board of Journal of the American Society of Nephrology, effective on July 1, 2004.

Mingfeng Li, Ph.D.


Youhua Liu, Ph.D.

Invited to give a seminar at the Rogosin Kidney Center, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Weil Medical College of Cornell University, New York, NY. October 6, 2004.

Dr. Yingjian Li has won the “Best Poster Award” in the International Society of Nephrology 2004 Conference, which was held in Hong Kong, June 29 - July 1, 2004. The presentation was titled “Hepatocyte growth factor is a downstream effector that mediates the anti-fibrotic action of peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor-gamma agonists”, co-authored by Bradley C. Spataro, and Youhua Liu.

George K. Michalopoulos, M.D., Ph.D.


Gave a seminar at the University of North Carolina entitled “Cellular and Molecular Pathways to Liver Regeneration and Tissue Assembly,” October 6, 2004.

Fredrico Monzon, M.D.

Presented: Towards Clinical Applications of Microarray Analysis: Effects of Different Target Preparation Methods on Microarray Based Gene Expression Profiling, Association for Molecular Pathology, 10th Annual Meeting & Exhibits November 10-13, 2004 Los Angeles, CA
Gregory Naus, M.D.
Excellence in Education Awards presented by first and second year medical students at the 12th Annual Curriculum Colloquium picked Dr. Naus as Course Director awardee.

Erin Ochoa, M.D.

Ochoa ER, Zhu L. Presented “Targeting kip1p27 to Improve Hepatocyte” Transplantation. May 3, 2004, Department of Pathology, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Pittsburgh, PA.

Ochoa ER. Presented “Targeting kip1p27 to Improve Hepatocyte” Transplantation. April 13, 2005, Department of Pathology, University of California Los Angeles, CA.

Robert Peel, M.D.
Presented three days at the ASCP Educational Course “Surgical Pathology of the Head and Neck, November 10, 11, 12 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Sponsored by The American Society for Clinical Pathology

Jorge Sepulveda, M.D.


Steven H. Swerdlow, M.D.
Presented a talk on Castleman Disease at the recent American Society of Hematology Meeting in San Diego on December 4 and 5, 2004.

Cary Wu, Ph.D.
Invited speaker, Signaling By Adhesion Receptors Gordon Research Conference, June 20-25, 2004, Bristol, RI. Title: Protein complexes that link focal adhesions to the actin cytoskeleton: a tale of two LIMs

SEMINAR SERIES
(Weekly’s at noon unless otherwise stated.)

January 12, 2005 (1104 UPMC Conference Center)
“Apoptotic Versus Oncotic Signaling Mechanisms During Acetaminophen – Induced Liver Injury”
Hartmut Jaeschke, Ph.D.
Professor of Pharmacology
Associate Director
Liver Research Institute
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ

January 19, 2005 (S-100 Biomedical Science Tower
4:00 pm.)
1st Annual Julio Martinez Lecture
“Dr. Julio Martinez and his love/hate relationship with the pathogenic and opportunistic amebas”
Govinda S. Visvesvara, Ph.D.
Research Microbiologist
Division of Parasitic Diseases
National Center for Infectious Diseases
Centers for Disease Control
Atlanta, GA

January 26, 2005 (1104 UPMC Conference Center)
“Generating Liver Progenitor Cells in the Embryo”
Kenneth Zaret, Ph.D.
Senior Member and Program Leader
Cell and Developmental Biology Program
Fox Chase Cancer Center
Philadelphia, PA

February 2, 2005 (Lecture Room 5 Scaife Hall)
Annual Maud L. Menten Lecture
“Understanding the Tumor Microenvironment”
Zena Werb, Ph.D.
Professor and Vice-Chair
Department of Anatomy
University of California
San Francisco, CA

February 16, 2005 (1105A/B UPMC Conference Center)
Title: TBA
Peter Burger, M.D.
Professor of Pathology
Department of Pathology
Johns Hopkins Medical Institute
Baltimore, MD

March 16, 2005 (1105B/C UPMC Conference Center)
“Historical Perspective of Lymphoma Immunohistology”
Roger A. Warnke, M.D.
Professor of Pathology
Ronald F. Dorfman Professor of Hematopathology
Stanford University
Stanford, CA

March 23, 2005 (1105B/C UPMC Conference Center)
“Molecular Pathways and Therapeutic Targets in Liver Cancer”
Snorri S. Thorgeirsson, M.D., Ph.D.
Chief, Laboratory of Experimental Carcinogenesis
Center for Cancer Research
National Cancer Institute
National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, MD

March 30, 2005 (1105B/C UPMC Conference Ctr.)
"Signaling to the cell cycle"
Richard K. Assoian, Ph.D.
Professor of Pharmacology
Department of Pharmacology
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA

PUBLICATIONS
Duensing A, Heinrich MC, Fletcher CDM, Fletcher JA.


PUBLICATIONS
Duensing A, Heinrich MC, Fletcher CDM, Fletcher JA.


Chong Feng, Caisheng Ye, Xiaoning Liu, Hong Ma and Mengfeng Li. β4 integrin is involved in statin-induced endothelial cell death. Biochem Biophys Res Commun. 323(3): 858-64, 2004.


Huyng ML, Raab SS, Suba EJ. Association between war and cervical cancer among Vietnamese women Int J Cancer 2004 110:775-777


Raab SS. Factors affecting the adoption of new cytology technologies. Diagn Cytopathol 2004;30:105-106


Chen, H, Huang, XN, Stewart, AF, Sepulveda, JL. “Gene expression changes associated with fibronectin-induced cardiac myocyte hypertrophy.” Physiological Genomics, 18, 273-83, 2004


