Welcome to the Spring 2019 Houston Methodist Hospital Department of Pathology and Genomic Medicine Newsletter: The Laboratory Report. If you have contributions or feedback for upcoming newsletters, please email us.

In this issue:
1. Faculty Accomplishments
2. Laboratory News
3. Trainee News
4. New Faculty
5. Faculty Appointments & Promotions
6. Conferences and Events
7. Faculty Publications

Faculty Accomplishments

Dr. Ro Receives the Koss Medal Lifetime Achievement Award

Jae Y. Ro, MD, PhD, was honored as the 2018 recipient of the Koss Medal Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Society of Urological Pathology (ISUP) at USCAP 2019. This prestigious award is given for lifetime achievements in and contributions to the field of urologic pathology and is the highest honor bestowed by ISUP. Dr. Ro is the second HMH pathologist to receive this award, joining Dr. Alberto Ayala, Elected Deputy Chair of our department, the 2010 recipient. Dr. Ro expressed his surprise and gratitude for ISUP’s recognition of his dedication to training top quality pathologists and his passion for genitourinary (GU) pathology and education. He and Dr. Ayala have inspired a new GU-Medical Kidney Fellowship at HMH that was recently granted ACGME accreditation; it will be directed by Dr. Steven Shen, and co-directed by Drs. Luan Truong and Mukul Divatia. The program will welcome its first fellow this summer.

Congratulations on this well-deserved honor, Dr. Ro!

Dr. Jae Ro receiving the 2018 Koss Medal Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2019 USCAP meeting.

Dr. Alberto Ayala (left) and Dr. Jae Ro (right) displaying their Koss Medal Lifetime Achievement Awards from 2010 and 2018.

Dr. Mody Receives the first Dr. Grover Award at MACyCON 2019

Dina R. Mody, MD, was honored as the international guest
speaker for the Second Conference on Cytology, MACyCON 2019, held by the Association of Cytologists of Maharashtra (ACM) in Mumbai, India this February. The title of her keynote address, which was the first of the newly established Dr. Shobha Grover Orations, was “Quality Improvements and Risk Reduction Activities in Cytopathology.” Dr. Grover is an influential cytopathologist who was the chief of her department of pathology in India for many years. “I am honored and humbled to be the first recipient of a medal named and blessed by a trailblazer in pathology in my country of birth,” Dr. Mody said.

Congratulations, Dr. Mody!

Dr. Powell Selected for Physician Development Program through Rice University’s Business School

Suzanne Z. Powell, MD, has been selected from a competitive pool of applicants to represent our department in the Houston Methodist Physician Leadership Development Program through Rice University’s Jones Graduate School of Business. Dr. Powell is one of 29 physicians from HMH’s Specialty Physician Group enrolled in the semester-long course. This condensed MBA-style leadership course teaches leadership effectiveness, business strategy, and business development tools. As part of the course, Dr. Powell is participating in a group of 40 physicians and administrators working to standardize patient consent forms across the HMH system. Dr. Powell is excited to share what she has learned in this course with faculty and trainees in our department.

Dr. Singh Delivers Invited Lecture in India

Rajeev Singh, MD, MBA, was an invited speaker at the First Symposium Cum Workshop in Biobanking organized by the National Liver and Disease Biobank at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences Hospital in New Delhi, India on February 22. Dr. Singh spoke on “Current Quality Trends in Biobanking.” The symposium cum workshop was attended by 50 participants who learned about ethics and informed consent, as well as basics, challenges, and trends in biobanking. The workshop included lectures for the first half of the day and a hands-on workshop on biobanking, histological techniques, and tissue preparation. The workshop’s organizers look forward to presenting additional successful workshops in the future.

Photo: Dr. Rajeev Singh delivering his seminar on biobanking.

Dr. Mody Lectures at the American University of Beirut

Dina R. Mody, MD, lectured at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in April. Dr. Mody is one of the course faculty at AUB and enjoyed giving several Anatomic Pathology course lectures during the week. Speakers included those from the US and local faculty. US speakers included those from Houston Methodist Houston (Dr. Mody), MD Anderson Cancer Center, and Cleveland Clinic. Course participants came from Lebanon and other surrounding countries.

Photo: Faculty, department members, pathology residents, and participants at the AUB AP course. Dr. Dina Mody (middle row, second from the right) was joined by Dr. Nour Sneige (bottom row, third from the left), who retired from our department in January, and the chair of the AUB Pathology department, Dr. Ghazi Al-Zaatari (middle row, third from the right).
JASC Obtains Inclusion in Medline under Dr. Mody’s Leadership

Our own Dina R. Mody, MD, is the editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the American Society of Cytopathology* (JASC), the official journal of the American Society of Cytopathology (ASC) and one of the top journals in the field of cytopathology. JASC is a bimonthly journal which has been publishing original research since 2014. With the leadership, relentless drive, and advocacy of Dr. Mody, JASC was recently accepted by the National Library of Medicine (NLM) for inclusion in Medline. This is a major accomplishment, as it is extraordinarily difficult for new journals to be recognized by the NLM. All JASC articles will receive PMIDs retroactively.

Congratulations on this accomplishment, Dr. Mody and editorial team!

Visit JASC Online

Laboratory News

Lab Week Celebrations Honor Pathology Laboratory Professionals

We celebrated Medical Laboratory Professionals Week on April 22-27. The week is an annual celebration of the laboratory professionals and pathologists who play a vital role in providing top quality patient care. Lab Week honors the more than 300,000 medical laboratory professionals around the country who perform and interpret more than 13 billion laboratory tests in the US every year. During Lab Week, we especially recognized our onsite team of over 400 laboratory professionals who work hard every day to provide the best care for our patients at HMH. The week included a lab coat decorating contest and luncheon for the honorees.

Thank you, laboratory professionals, for your continued dedicated service!

Laboratory professionals (*left to right*) Brenda Hernandez, Pat Cernoch, Beth Trahan, and BJ Scott enjoying the luncheon.

Winners of the Lab Coat Decorating contest (*left to right*): Cattareya Farrar, MaiAnh Nguyen, Kristy Nguyen, Julie Pham, Konnie
Mr. Eric Luna Joins Our Department as Laboratory Manager for Anatomic Pathology

We welcome Eric Luna, MBA, SCT(ASCP), as the new laboratory manager for Anatomic Pathology. Mr. Luna comes from an academic background, starting at UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, and then working at Scott & White Hospital as a cytotechnologist. He had a distinguished career at LabCorp where he established the first center of excellence, which then became a model for other cytopathology divisions. Most recently, he served as Vice President, Senior Director of Remote Labs and National Cytology Operations at Bio-Reference Laboratories Inc.-OPKO Health. Mr. Luna looks forward to “improving the workflow and quality for both Histology and Cytology to maintain efficiency and scale growth within the department in order to meet the needs of HMH and the community hospitals.”

New and Ongoing Safety Initiatives in the Pathology Laboratories

Laboratory managers and technical staff in the Core, Microbiology, Molecular Diagnostic, Histology, and Blood Donor Center Laboratories have recently spearheaded initiatives to increase quality and safety. Heather Hendrickson leads a laboratory safety committee that meets monthly. One initiative is a safety corner displaying a bulletin board with interactive games to foster safety awareness. After the Core Lab created their safety corner, other labs developed their own boards. Ms. Hendrickson’s and Pat Cernoch’s teams have also solidified their safety goals and assigned new safety representatives covering each shift. Paul Christensen, MD, has incorporated bioinformatic analyses into daily quality management reports. The reports encourage team member ownership and brainstorming.

We greatly appreciate everyone’s dedication to quality and safety!

Photo: Members of the Core Laboratory in front of their safety board: (left to right) David Barefield, Nadara Bishop-Reed, and Al Jimenez.
Trainee News

Department Welcomes New Residents and Chiefs

Our department will welcome six new residents following an exciting Match Day 2019: Drs. Dyron Allen from UTMB, Karen Thomas from Texas Tech in El Paso, Renee Eng from Rutgers University School of Medicine, John Rogers from UT Houston, Guy Williams from Howard University, and Fernando Zazueta from the University of Autónoma de Guadalajara. We also welcome Dr. David Joseph (a graduate of UTMB) from UT-Southwestern who is transferring into our program as a PGY2. We congratulate our newly elected Chief Fellow, Dr. Andreia Barbieri, and our Chief Residents, Drs. Paloma Monroig-Bosque and Ahmed Shehabeldin. We look forward to your leadership this year!

Ms. Sofia Medrano Joins the Department as Fellowship Coordinator

We welcome Sofia Medrano as our new fellowship coordinator. Ms. Medrano previously worked at UT-Houston as a residency coordinator for the Emergency Medicine Department, and before that as a residency coordinator at UTMB for the Family Medicine Department. We are thrilled to have Ms. Medrano join our department, and look forward to her leadership for our subspecialty training programs.

The Dynasty Is Back: Methodist Laboratory Science Program Students Win Statewide Bowl Competition

Our team of six HMH Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Program students competed against ten other teams and won first place overall at the Texas Association for Clinical Laboratory Science (TACLS) Student Bowl competition in Corpus Christi on April 10-12. Our team has won first or second place ten times in the past 11 years. Christopher Leveque, MD, and Tatia Feltman, M.Ed., MT(ASCP)SM, are the medical and program directors, respectively. Dr. Leveque is “very proud of the class. This win highlights our successful program built on strong faculty mentors and bright, motivated students. HMH's and the department’s commitment to training these technologists is truly leading medicine by creating exceptional labs.”

Congratulations to our MLS students and all who support them!
HMH MSL students after their win at the 2019 Bowl Competition: (left to right) Kristy Nguyen, Phuong Truong, Julie Pham, MaiAnh Nguyen, Konnie Le, and Cattareya Farrar.

HMH MLS students showing the final competition bracket with our team as the champions!

New Faculty

Our department welcomed Andrea Diaz De Vivar, MD, as a staff pathologist at our Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital (HMBH) on March 20. Dr. Diaz De Vivar trained with our department from 2010-2011 as a surgical pathology fellow, and previously worked as a staff pathologist at Texas Children's Hospital, an anatomic pathologist at St. Luke's Medical Center, and an associate for Brown and Associates Medical Laboratories. Dr. Diaz De Vivar has given lectures and didactic series at Houston healthcare institutions and has been published in more than a dozen scientific journals about her work in gynecologic and oncologic pathology.

On May 1, our department welcomed Rebecca (Bekra) F. Yorke, MD, as a staff pathologist at HMH. Dr. Yorke has most recently worked as a Clinical Assistant Professor at Baylor College of Medicine and as a pathologist with Richard J. Hausner and Associates at the Cypress Fairbanks Medical Center. Dr. Yorke has received numerous honors and awards, published several papers, given many presentations, and taught several courses. She has also recently served as the President of the Texas Society of Pathologists (TSP).

Faculty Appointments & Promotions
Zejuan Li, MD, PhD, received a faculty appointment to Associate Professor of Pathology and Genomic Medicine at the Institute for Academic Medicine (IAM) and Associate Clinical Member at the Houston Methodist Research Institute (HMRI). Dr. Li joined our department in July 2018 as the Associate Director of the Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory. Dr. Li looks forward to “providing high-quality services to HMH patients, not only through routine clinical services, but also by bringing additional state-of-the-art testing to the Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory to guide patient management with personalized therapy and improved treatment efficacy.” In addition, Dr. Li has set up her funded research laboratory in the HMRI.

Muthiah Kumaraswami, PhD, was promoted to Associate Professor of Pathology and Genomic Medicine on the Investigation Track at the Institute for Academic Medicine (IAM) and Associate Member on the Unmodified Track at the Houston Methodist Research Institute (HMRI). Dr. Kumaraswami joined our department in 2011, and has continued to be a productive member of the HMRI, publishing many papers, receiving NIH funding, and mentoring several students and postdoctoral fellows. His research focuses on understanding the molecular details of signaling pathways involved in bacterial disease pathogenesis and identifying undefined molecular targets that may be exploited for new therapeutics.

Andriana E. Rosato, PhD, was appointed to Associate Professor of Research in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at the Institute for Academic Medicine (IAM) and Associate Professor of Research in Microbiology and Immunology at the Houston Methodist Research.

Stephen B. Beres, PhD, was promoted to Research Professor of Pathology and Genomic Medicine at the Institute for Academic Medicine (IAM) and Full Research Member at the Houston Methodist Research Institute (HMRI). Dr. Beres has been a prolific member of the HMRI since
Institute (HMRI). Dr. Rosato joined the Center for Molecular and Translational Human Infectious Diseases Research at HMRI in 2010, where she has continued to be a prolific member. Dr. Rosato directs a successful laboratory that conducts translational research aimed at identifying the molecular mechanisms underlying antibiotic resistance during the dynamic process of host/multidrug-resistant pathogen infection.

2006, authoring 44 manuscripts detailing his research on the genomics of microbial pathogens, especially *Streptococcus pyogenes*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. Dr. Beres also serves as the Director of Microbial Informatics for the Center for Molecular and Translational Human Infectious Disease Research.

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**Conferences and Events**

**Dr. Mody and Dr. Schwartz Host Successful Cytopathology Symposium**

The Second Annual Cytopathology and Small Biopsy Updates and Review was held at the Houston Methodist Research Institute (HMRI) on March 1-3. Dina R. Mody, MD, and Mary R. Schwartz, MD, served as the program co-directors. Thirteen speakers from our department (Drs. Chévez-Barrios, Coffey, Crumley, Haley, Mody, Schwartz, and Thrall) and other institutions presented. There were approximately 185 attendees from 45 institutions. Attendees listened to many informative talks and also had opportunities for hands-on technology demos and slide reviews, including:
- ROSE Demo Using Telecytology and Cytopreparatory Techniques; instructors Dr. Blythe Gorman, Ms. Debora Smith, and the cytotechnology faculty.
- Independent Glass Slide Review; instructors Drs. Rose Anton, Nicola Dundas, April Ewton, and Heidi Holtorf.
- Slide Review and Unknown Cases; instructors Drs. Mojgan Amrikachi, Mukul Divatia, Yimin Ge, Ekene Okoye, and Steve Zhou.

Congratulations to all who made this event a success!

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**USCAP Annual Meeting**

The 108th United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology (USCAP) meeting was held March 16-21. Faculty and trainees from our department attended and presented lectures and posters:
- Faculty speakers: Drs. Chévez-Barrios, Suzanne Powell, Jae Ro, Steven Shen, and Luan Truong
- Faculty poster presentations: Drs. Alberto Ayala, Roberto Barrios, Yimin Ge, Suyang Hao, Dina Mody, Ekene Okoye, Jae Ro, Mary Schwartz, Steven Shen, Jessica Thomas, Michael Thrall, Luan Truong, and Steve Zhou
- Trainee speakers: Dr. Eli Morey (PGY4) presented at the Evening Specialty Conference
Trainee poster presentations: Drs. Ghadah Al Sanna, Fadi Alakeel, Betty Chung, Paloma Monroig-Bosque, Aseeb Rehman, and Siavash Samimi

Congratulations to all!

Upcoming Conferences

- Click to visit ACLPS
  The 54th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Clinical Laboratory Physicians and Scientists (ACLPS) will take place at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City on May 30-June 1.

- Click to visit ASCP
  The 2019 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) will take place in Phoenix, AZ on September 11-13.

- Click to visit CAP19
  The Annual Meeting of the College of American Pathologists (CAP19) will take place at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center in Orlando, FL on September 21-25.

- Click to visit ASC
  The 67th Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Society of Cytopathology (ASC) will take place at the Grand American Hotel in Salt Lake City, UT on November 14-17.

Schedule for 2019 Grand Rounds

- June 4
  Alex Lazar, MD, PhD
  MD Anderson Cancer Center
  Dermatopathology

- October 1
  Dong Chen, MD, PhD
  Mayo Clinic
  Hematopathology

- November 5
  Lester D. R. Thompson, MD
  Woodland Hills Medical Center
  Head and Neck

- December 3
  Tina Ipe, MD
  Houston Methodist Hospital
  Transfusion Medicine

Office of Academic Development News

The Office of Academic Development within the pathology department is available to assist department members with editing manuscripts, grants, posters, and presentations. Please contact Sasha Pejerrey at spejerrey@houstonmethodist.org or 713-441-5889. There is no charge for these editing services.

If you need help reducing percent overlap within a document for a specific journal requirement, please let us know! We have access to iThenticate and expertise in reducing overlap to whatever percent a particular journal may require.

Faculty Publications
The Musser lab has recently published two scientific papers that gained significant media attention. Congratulations to all who contributed!

1. Co-first authors **Luchang Zhu, PhD**, and **Randall J. Olsen, MD, PhD**, and colleagues published an article reporting the genes in Group A streptococcus (GAS) essential for causing necrotizing fasciitis ("flesh-eating disease"). They discovered more than 100 GAS genes that are required for infection in deep soft tissue. **Read here.**

2. Co-first authors **Priyanka Kachroo, PhD**, and **Jesus Eraso, PhD**, and colleagues recently published results of a large-scale genomic study integrating transcriptome and virulence data by using machine learning to identify novel important Streptococcus pyogenes virulence factors. Their integrated analysis of population genomics, transcriptomics and virulence provides novel insights into Streptococcus pyogenes pathogenesis. **Nature Genetics. 2019, vol. 51, no. 3, pp. 548-559. [Epub ahead of print]**

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integrated strategy, which is similar to big data approaches used to identify potential targets in cancer genomic research, identified and confirmed a single-nucleotide insertion-deletion that significantly affected virulence. Read here.

