Dr. James Musser Heads American Society for Investigative Pathology

Dr. James Musser, chair of the Department of Pathology and Genomic Medicine for The Methodist Hospital System, has received the gavel as the incoming and centennial president of the American Society for Investigative Pathology (ASIP), the 100-year-old scientific society dedicated to advancing experimental pathology. He received the gavel at a ceremony at the Society’s annual meeting in Boston on April 22nd.

“This is both a great honor and a tremendous opportunity for service,” said Dr. Musser. “I look forward to continuing the Society’s important work advocating for the practice of investigative pathology, and fostering the professional career development of pathologists.” Dr. Musser assumed his duties as president at the beginning of the academic year on July 1st.

ASIP is a society of biomedical scientists who investigate mechanisms of disease. Investigative pathology is an integrative discipline that links the presentation of disease in the whole organism to its fundamental cellular and molecular mechanisms. The Society, founded in 1913, is celebrating its 100-year anniversary.

For more information about Dr. James Musser, visit methodisthealth.com/Musser. For more information about ASIP, visit asip.org.

Dr. Musser receiving the presidential gavel at the ASIP Annual Meeting on April 22nd.
Dr. Youli Zu Receives TechConnect Innovation Award

Dr. Youli Zu, medical director of Hematopathology for the Department, has received the TechConnect Innovation Award from the TechConnect World Innovation Summit in Washington, D.C. He received the award for a high-throughput, one-step assay to detect tumor cells in whole blood samples; an assay he has been developing with funding from the National Institutes of Health. The award was presented to Dr. Zu at the Summit on May 14, where Dr. Zu showcased the assay to attendees from industry, academia, and the federal government.

“I am very honored to receive this award,” said Dr. Zu, who is also the director of the Cancer Pathology Laboratory at The Methodist Hospital Research Institute. “This test very much represents an innovative approach to cancer diagnostics. It could have an immense impact on patient care.”

The TechConnect Innovation Awards selects the top, early-stage innovations from around the world through an industry review process that evaluates the top 20% of technologies submitted annually into the Summit. Rankings are based on the potential positive impact the submitted technology will have on a specific industry sector. The TechConnect World Innovation Showcase, as part of the Summit, is the world’s largest showcase and accelerator for industry-vetted emerging technologies ready for commercialization, with over 200 emerging technologies, federal laboratories, universities, and federal funding agencies represented.

For more information on Dr. Zu, visit methodisthealth.com/Zu. For more information on the TechConnect World Innovation Summit, visit techconnectworld.com.

Digital Pathology Update

The Department is pleased to report that phase III of the digital pathology validation was completed at the end of May, with all System hospitals validated and online. Select glass slides for all outside surgical pathology consults, including in-transfer patients, are now scanned using the latest in whole-slide imaging technology. The high-resolution digital images are used for consult, teaching, and archival purposes. Digital pathology is now also used for telepathology consults on intraoperative neuropathology specimens at Methodist Sugar Land Hospital.

Whole-slide imaging for primary pathologic diagnosis was approved in the European Union in March, and in Canada in April. A similar approval from the FDA is expected later this year.

For more information on the Digital Pathology Laboratory at Methodist, contact Dr. Michael Thrall at mjthrall@tmhs.org.
New Faculty

Todd N. Eagar, Ph.D.

Dr. Todd Eagar has joined the Department as the associate medical director of HLA. He returns to Methodist from the Department of Pathology and Immunology at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas where he was an assistant professor. Dr. Eagar completed an HLA fellowship at Methodist and a post-doctoral research fellowship in immunology at the University of California at San Francisco. He received his Ph.D. in immunology and molecular pathogenesis from the Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago, Illinois in 2001.

Dr. Eagar’s research interests include identifying immune processes involved in the pathogenesis of multiple sclerosis and transplant rejection, with a focus on finding novel regulatory pathways involved in T cell activation that might be harnessed for therapeutic intervention.

For more information on Dr. Eagar, visit methodisthealth.com/Eagar.

Susan L. Haley, M.D.

Dr. Susan Haley has returned to Methodist after completing a cytopathology fellowship at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. She completed a surgical pathology fellowship at Methodist in 2012. Dr. Haley received her M.D. degree from The University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, and completed pathology residency at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

Dr. Haley’s research focuses on quality assurance and process improvement in cytopathology.

For more information on Dr. Haley, visit methodisthealth.com/Haley.

Bryce P. Portier, M.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Bryce Portier has joined the Department as the medical director of Solid Tumor Molecular Diagnostics. He received his M.D. and Ph.D. degrees at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston in 2008. Dr. Portier then completed pathology residency at the Cleveland Clinic and a fellowship in molecular genetic pathology at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

Dr. Portier’s research centers on the identification and validation of novel molecular biomarkers in breast and gastric carcinomas.

For more information on Dr. Portier, visit methodisthealth.com/Portier.
The Department has set a new record for abstracts accepted for presentation at the annual meeting of the College of American Pathologists, CAP’13. Nineteen abstracts from Department residents and fellows were accepted for presentation at the meeting in Orlando, Florida. This surpassed the previous Department record from 2009 when 15 were accepted.

“These numbers represent a coordinated effort on behalf of the faculty and trainees to develop abstracts of particularly high quality that represent our programs well,” said Dr. Philip Cagle, medical director of Pulmonary Pathology for the Department and the editor-in-chief of Archives of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. “We need to thank Drs. Suzanne Powell, Mary Schwartz, and Youli Zu for leading this effort for the Department. They did a great job.”

The annual meeting of the College of American Pathologists is the only annual meeting designed specifically by and for board-certified pathologists. Over 1,400 pathologists attend each year, including approximately 400 residents and fellows, who present abstracts of their academic work. CAP’13 will be held October 13-16 at the Gaylord Palms Orlando, in Orlando, Florida.

For more information on CAP’13, visit cap.org.

New Diagnostic Test Offerings:

Whole-Genome Sequencing of Microorganisms

The Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory at The Methodist Hospital is now performing whole-genome sequencing of microorganisms as a clinical test. This unique service takes advantage of next-generation sequencing technology, automation, and a custom bioinformatics pipeline.

Compared to lower resolution molecular techniques, such as 16S rDNA sequencing or multi-locus sequence typing (MLST), which analyze a single gene or a few genes, whole-genome sequencing can unambiguously classify organisms and define clonal relationships. Whole-genome sequencing will be used in the clinical laboratory for: 1) species assignment of slow growing, difficult-to-cultivate or difficult-to-identify organisms; 2) molecular typing of strains having important public health implications; 3) real-time investigation of nosocomial infections and possible infectious outbreaks; 4) understanding bacteria strain genotype – patient disease phenotype relationships; and 5) studying the molecular basis of severe, unusual, or interesting infections. The test is run once per week, with additional runs available on demand. It can be performed on bacteria, yeast, or fungi.

For more information, contact Dr. Randall Olsen at rjolsen@tmhs.org or Ms. Heather Hendrickson at hlhendrickson@tmhs.org.
In Focus: The Cytopathology Team

Cytopathology is a branch of pathology that typically uses samples of cells or tissue fragments to study and diagnose disease processes at the cellular level. Samples may be directly smeared on glass slides, or concentrated with centrifugation to increase the number of cells examined. At Methodist, the newer, FDA-approved Thin-Prep and SurePath technologies are used to enhance the cellular yield of samples by lysing blood and removing unwanted debris. The samples are then stained and evaluated using microscopic examination. An inpatient and outpatient fine-needle aspiration biopsy service is also available.

The Department of Pathology and Genomic Medicine has a team of 13 pathologists with subspecialty certification and expertise in cytopathology. This team provides vital clinical services for patients and invaluable support to the entire medical staff throughout The Methodist Hospital System, and at institutions served by Methodist Diagnostic Laboratories.

For more information on the cytopathology service at Methodist, please contact Debora Smith at 713-441-1564.

Dina R. Mody, Ph.D.
Medical Director, Cytopathology

Dr. Mody graduated from the Seth G.S. Medical College at Bombay University in Bombay, India in 1979. She completed her pathology residency at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas. Her special interests are in the areas of cervicovaginal cytology, especially glandular lesions, and skeletal cytopathology, and her research focuses on gynecologic cytology and quality improvement.

Dr. Mody has served as the elected president of the American Society of Cytopathology (ASC), has been a member of the ASC Executive Board, and has received the President’s Award, Excellence in Education Award, and Papanicolaou Award from that society as well. She has also been a recipient of the Lansky Award and Lifetime Achievement Award from the College of American Pathologists.

For more information on Dr. Mody, visit methodisthealth.com/Mody.

Rose C. Anton, M.D.
Associate Medical Director, Cytopathology

Dr. Anton received her M.D. degree in 1994 from the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. She then completed a pathology residency and fellowships in surgical pathology and cytopathology at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas. Her research centers on process improvement and quality improvement in the cytopathology laboratory.

For more information on Dr. Anton, visit methodisthealth.com/Anton.

Dr. Mody (left) with Cytopathology Laboratory Manager Debora Smith.

Dr. Anton (center) mentoring trainees, Dr. Rachel Donohue (left) and Dr. Lindsay Waters (right) in the Cytopathology Laboratory.
Methodist Laboratory Science Students Win Bowl Competition

The team of four students currently enrolled in The Methodist Hospital Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Program won first place at the Texas Association for Clinical Laboratory Science (TACLS) Student Bowl competition on March 28th as part of the TACLS Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas. A Methodist team has won the competition 13 times in the past 25 years.

“We have a great program here at Methodist, and our students demonstrate that every year when they win this state-wide competition,” said Tatia Feltman, program director for the Methodist MLS Program. “These are exceptional students that will enhance any laboratory they serve in after graduation.”

The Methodist MLS Program is a twelve-month professional course of study that is fully accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences. Upon successful completion of the program, students will qualify for examination and certification by the Board of Certification of the American Society of Clinical Pathology. Many graduates of the program go on to work at Methodist in one of our many pathology laboratories. The Methodist MLS Program has been in existence since 1947.

For more information on the Methodist MLS Program, visit methodisthealth.com/mlsprogram.

Lab Star Award Winners

Angela T. Sexton
Autopsy Diener,
Autopsy Laboratory

Ms. Sexton received the award for coming in at 5am on a Saturday morning to prepare the laboratory and assist faculty with an autopsy at the request of a deceased patient’s family. It was important to the family and the physicians that the autopsy be conducted at that time so viable tissues could be removed for an ongoing genetic study that the patient was enrolled in and passionate about.

Catherine H. Mingino, ACA
Outpatient Phlebotomist,
Sugar Land Laboratory

Ms. Mingino received the award for developing an e-learning module for the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) that provides instruction on how to draw blood from patients with special needs and ensure a safe, painless, and pleasant experience for them. Not only is Catherine ensuring this at Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, but she is also sharing her expertise on a national scale through the ASCP certification program.
Trainee Spotlight:

Jordan A. Roberts, M.D.
PGY2 Resident

Dr. Jordan Roberts, PGY2 pathology resident, has received the 2013 CAP Foundation Leadership Development Award from the College of American Pathologists (CAP). He will also be presenting two posters in October at the annual meeting of the College of American Pathologists, CAP’13. He recently published a review article with Dr. Jae Ro on intraductal carcinoma of the prostate, and won 3rd place in the Methodist GME Annual Creative Writing Competition for his essay entitled, “The Fisherman.”

Dr. Roberts received his bachelor’s degree in biological sciences from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge in 2008, and his M.D. degree in 2012 from the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in New Orleans. He began the AP/CP pathology residency program at Methodist in July of 2012.

New Trainees Start on July 1st

The Department welcomed 4 new residents and 10 new fellows on July 1st during a half-day trainee orientation session led by Dr. Suzanne Powell, vice-chair of education for the Department. The session followed a four-day orientation provided by the GME office of the Methodist Institute for Academic Medicine.

“We have a very large department with a substantial patient volume,” said Dr. Powell. “We not only provide services to all of our System hospitals, but to other hospitals and multi-specialty provider groups through Methodist Diagnostic Laboratories. It’s a lot, but we provide the trainees with close mentoring and other support resources so they can get the best possible training experience.”

The Department currently has 36 existing trainees, with 19 of them having completed their residency or fellowship program and graduated as of June 30th. With the 14 new trainees, the Department will have a total of 33 residents and fellows for the 2013-2014 academic year.

**PGY1 Residents**

- David A. Cohen, M.D.
  University of Miami School of Medicine
  Miami, Florida
- Brandon R. Driver, M.D.
  The University of Texas Medical Branch
  Galveston, Texas
- Nicola E. Dundas, M.D.
  The University of Texas Medical School
  Houston, Texas
- Katherine H. Lohmann, M.D.
  Tulane University School of Medicine
  New Orleans, Louisiana

**Incoming Fellows**

**Clinical Chemistry**

- Zheng Cao, Ph.D.
  University of Maryland College Park, Maryland

**Cytopathology**

- Erin N. Consamus, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency, The Methodist Hospital
- Angela M. Wright, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency, The Methodist Hospital

**Selective Hematopathology**

- Lauren C. King, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency, University of Tennessee Health Science Center
  Memphis, Tennessee

**Neuropathology**

- Matthew D. Cykowski, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency, University of Oklahoma
  Tulsa, Oklahoma

**Surgical Pathology**

- Sapna M. Amin, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency Program, University of Kansas Medical Center
  Kansas City, Kansas
- Roberto P. Domingo, M.D.
  Cytopathology Fellowship, Baylor College of Medicine
  Houston, Texas
- Niti Manglik, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency Program, The University of Texas Medical Branch
  Galveston, Texas
- Brian D. Stewart, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency Program, The University of Texas Medical School
  Houston, Texas
- Wendy A. Symons, D.O.
  AP/CP Residency Program, The University of Texas Medical School
  San Antonio, Texas

For more information on Department training programs, visit methodisthealth.com/pathologytraining.
Eleven summer students recently began their 10-week program in the laboratories of some of the Department’s faculty.

“We have numerous research programs in our department,” said Dr. Patricia Chévez-Barrios, founder and director of the Research Institute Summer Student Program, and the director of the Ocular Pathology Research Laboratory. “The Summer Student Program provides invaluable opportunities for aspiring scientists and physician scientists, and our faculty members are ideal mentors to develop their interests.”

First established in 2005, the Summer Student Program matches students with faculty mentors in Research Institute laboratories from June to August (10 weeks) and centers on a single research project. During this time, the students also attend required weekly didactic lectures given by the mentors and invited speakers. Students present their work at the end of the program at a day-long student retreat.

Center for Molecular and Translational Human Infectious Diseases Research Laboratory of Dr. Edward Graviss
Samantha Rodriguez - Texas Tech

Laboratory of Dr. James Musser
Victor Issa - Tecnológico de Monterrey
Susan Lee - Paul L. Foster School of Medicine
Fernanda Fauado - Tecnológico de Monterrey
Katelyn Renke - Grove City College
Kelsey Rice - Southwestern University

Laboratory of Dr. Randall Olsen
Ashley Ngo - Emory University
Anjali Raghuram - Rice University

Laboratory of Dr. Adriana Rosato
Brittany Shah - Case Western Reserve University

Ocular Pathology Research Laboratory
Director, Dr. Patricia Chévez-Barrios
Magda Arredondo - Tecnológico de Monterrey

Cancer Pathology Laboratory
Director, Dr. Youli Zu
Kevin Liu - Columbia University

For more information on the Research Institute Summer Student Program, visit methodisthealth.com/SummerStudentProgram.


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RECENT PUBLICATIONS continued


Knight RJ, Gaber LW, Patel SJ, Devojs JM, Moore LW, Gaber AO. Screening for BK viremia reduces but does not eliminate the risk of BK nephropathy: a single-center retrospective analysis. Transplantation. 2013 Apr 15;95(7):949-54.


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