Dr. Geoffrey Land Receives Celebration of Life Award

Dr. Geoffrey Land was the recipient of the Celebration of Life Award at the Methodist J.C. Walter Jr. Transplant Center’s annual Celebration of Life event in Crain Garden on April 12th. Dr. A. Osama Gaber, medical director of transplantation for the Center, presented Dr. Land with the award in recognition of his leadership in the transplant program and for being a vital member of the transplant team.

“Geoff is essential to the success of our ever-growing Center,” said Dr. Gaber. “He and his staff in the Histocompatibility and Transplant Immunology Laboratory impart a fundamental service that allows us to provide excellent care to our patients. Transplant surgery wouldn’t be possible without them.”

Dr. Land is the medical director of Histocompatibility and Transplant Immunology (HLA) in the Department of Pathology and Genomic Medicine. The HLA Laboratory provides tissue typing, cross-matching, and antibody identification testing services for transplant patients in The Methodist Hospital System and at institutions served by The Methodist Hospital System Reference Laboratory.

For more information on Dr. Land, visit methodisthealth.com/Land. For more information on the Methodist J.C. Walter Jr. Transplant Center, visit methodisthealth.com/transplantcenter.

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CAP ‘12 THE Pathologists’ Meeting:
The annual meeting of the College of American Pathologists will be held from September 9-12, 2012 at the Manchester Grand Hyatt in San Diego, California. Dr. Philip Cagle will moderate a Scientific Plenary Session and Drs. Geoffrey Land and Randall Olsen will present a short course. In addition, 14 Department trainees will present posters or abstracts. Registration is still open at cap.org/annual_meeting/2012.
Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer deaths worldwide, but recent advances in diagnosis and treatment will likely improve these traditionally grim statistics. Genomic data and radiological studies continue to contribute novel information on disease histology and pathogenesis, allowing for the development and validation of new, targeted molecular therapies and the establishment of clearer correlations between specific types of lung cancer and responses to specific therapies.

“Genomic sequencing provides us with molecular biomarkers, usually oncogene mutations, that can have significant predictive value,” said Dr. Philip Cagle, medical director of pulmonary pathology for the Department. “Identifying these markers in patient samples allows pathologists to advise treating physicians on the selection of therapies that are more ‘personalized’ to specific targets in the patients’ lung cancer.”

Two predictive biomarkers for non-small-cell lung cancer (epidermal growth factor receptor [EGFR] and anaplastic lymphoma kinase [ALK]) have been clinically validated, and tests for them are now available at Methodist. Approximately 12 other biomarkers are in various stages of investigation.

Dr. Cagle will moderate a scientific plenary session on molecular testing of lung cancer at the annual meeting of the College of American Pathologists on September 9th in San Diego. The new testing guidelines for predictive biomarkers in lung cancer are expected to be unveiled at that meeting. These guidelines are established through a special committee of the College of American Pathologists, the Association for Molecular Pathology, and the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer.

For more information on molecular testing of lung cancer at Methodist, please contact Dr. Randall Olsen in the Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory at rjolson@tmhs.org. For more information on Dr. Philip Cagle, visit methodisthealth.com/Cagle.

From left, Drs. Ethan Natelson, Abdus Saleem, James Musser, and James Davis at a retirement reception on June 22nd.

Drs. Abdus Saleem and Donald Weilbaecher Retire After Decades of Service

Dr. Abdus Saleem, co-director of the Coagulation Laboratory and associate medical director of hematopathology for the Department, and Dr. Donald Weilbaecher, medical director of autopsy pathology for the Department, have retired after a combined 67 years of dedicated service to The Methodist Hospital System.

“Abdus is the embodiment of collegiality, and it has been an honor to work with him,” said Dr. James Musser, chair of the Department. “He is a tremendous physician and has been an important mentor in our training programs. He will be missed, but we wish him well in this next chapter of his life.”

Dr. Saleem joined the medical staff at Methodist in July of 1976 when he was recruited from the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine in Hershey. He has trained numerous local hematopathologists over the years, including Drs. Jacqueline O’Hare, Munir Shahjahan, Choladda Curry, Randall Olsen, Thu Ngo, and Christine Finch.

The Department has established the Dr. Abdus Saleem Award. The award will be given annually to a member of the Department who most epitomizes Dr. Saleem’s outstanding professionalism and commitment to diversity.

Dr. Weilbaecher joined the medical staff at Methodist in 1981.

“During this time, he has served as Director, Autopsy Service, and has generously shared his expertise with residents, medical students, and other trainees,” said Dr. Musser. Dr. Weilbaecher also has been the Department’s leader in cardiovascular pathology for much of his career.
Department Ranks Among Best in World for Abstract Presentations

The Methodist Department of Pathology and Genomic Medicine is in the top 20 of all institutions worldwide for first-authored scientific abstracts accepted for presentation at the annual meeting of the United States & Canadian Academy of Pathology (USCAP). The Department also ranked in the top 5% of all medical institutions.

“Our faculty and trainees are very active academically,” said Dr. Alberto Ayala, deputy chief of pathology for the Department. “We expect to rank even higher next year.”

Hundred Attend Houston Lung Symposium

More than 250 physicians and scientists attended the Houston Lung Symposium on April 28th and 29th in The Methodist Hospital Research Institute auditorium. The event was a collaboration between the Houston Society of Clinical Pathologists and the Methodist Department of Pathology and Genomic Medicine. The two-day symposium featured renowned speakers from around the world.

New Diagnostic Test Offerings:

Lung Cancer and Glial Tumor Mutation Panels

The Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory of The Methodist Hospital System has developed new gene mutation panels for lung and brain cancer. Somatic mutation profiling determines whether patients with non-small cell lung cancer or glial brain tumors could benefit from a targeted therapy. Non-small cell lung cancer accounts for approximately 85-90% of lung cancers, and includes squamous cell carcinoma, adenocarcinoma, and large cell carcinoma. Glial tumors are the most common form of central nervous system neoplasm, and include astrocytomas, ependymomas, oligodendrogliomas, and glioblastoma multiforme.

The new lung cancer panel tests for mutations in the genes encoding epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) and V-Ki-ras2 Kirsten rat sarcoma viral oncogene homolog (KRAS). The new glial tumor panel genotypes the isocitrate dehydrogenase 1 (IDH1) and IDH2 genes. IDH1 and IDH2 gene mutations have also recently been associated with acute myeloid leukemia, myelodysplastic syndrome, and prostate cancer.

These assays are performed on the Sequenom MassARRAY analyzer that determines DNA sequences using PCR and MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry. EGFR, IDH1 and IDH2 testing was previously performed at a reference laboratory, and KRAS testing was previously performed using pyrosequencing. Validation studies for both panels were supported, in part, through departmental microgrants. The new molecular diagnostic panels will be introduced in-house in August.

For more information on these panels or other tests offered by the Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory, please contact Dr. Randall Olsen at 713-441-6802 or Ms. Heather Hendrickson at 713-441-0504.
In Focus: The HLA Team

The Histocompatibility and Transplant Immunology Laboratory provides tissue typing, cross-matching, and antibody identification testing services for solid organ and bone marrow transplant patients in The Methodist Hospital System and at institutions served by The Methodist Hospital System Reference Laboratory.

The HLA laboratory also performs microsatellite analysis for engraftment monitoring, assays for immune cell function monitoring, and human leukocyte antigen (HLA) typing for disease associations and pharmacogenomics.

Geoffrey A. Land, Ph.D., D(ABB)
Medical Director, Histocompatibility and Transplant Immunology
Dr. Land received his Ph.D. in microbiology from the Tulane University Medical Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. He then completed an NIH-sponsored research fellowship in microbiology at the Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina.

Dr. Land has been in the fields of histocompatibility and immunogenetics for over 30 years, and has been actively involved in quality assurance and the standardization of histocompatibility laboratory procedures and practices. He remains an active laboratory inspector for the College of American Pathologists and the American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (ASHI). He is the immediate past-president of ASHI and is the president-elect of the Texas Transplantation Society.

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

Kevin Burns, M.D.
Co-Medical Director, Histocompatibility and Transplant Immunology
Dr. Burns received his M.D. degree in 2006 from The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. He completed his clinical pathology residency in 2009, his transfusion medicine/blood banking fellowship in 2010, and his HLA fellowship in June of this year, all here at Methodist. Dr. Burns joined the Department as faculty in July of this year and became co-director of the Histocompatibility and Transplant Immunology Laboratory.

Dr. Burns is board certified in both clinical pathology and blood banking/transfusion medicine.

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

Smaroula Dilioglou, Ph.D., D(ABHI)
Associate Medical Director, Histocompatibility and Transplant Immunology
Dr. Dilioglou received her Ph.D. in immunology from the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi. She then completed her postdoctoral training at the St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. In addition to providing clinical services, Dr. Dilioglou is especially involved in HLA education of residents and fellows.

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

For more information on the Histocompatibility and Transplant Immunology Laboratory at Methodist, please contact Dr. Geoffrey Land at gland@tmhs.org.

Dr. Burns in the laboratory with HLA Medical Technologist Andreea Acevedo.

Dr. Dilioglou mentoring trainee Dr. Susan Haley in the Flow Cytometry Laboratory.
**Medical Director:** Seema Mullick, M.D.

Dr. Mullick received her medical degree from the Christian Medical College in Ludhiana, India. She completed a pathology residency program and a cytopathology fellowship at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, followed by a surgical pathology fellowship at The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

**Faculty:**

- **Bisong Haupt, M.D.**
  
  Dr. Haupt received her M.D. degree from the Southeast University School of Medicine in Nanjing, China. She is a graduate of the pathology training programs at Methodist, and a general surgical pathologist.

- **Ognjen Kosarac, M.D.**
  
  Dr. Kosarac received his medical degree from the University of Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Like Dr. Haupt, he is also a graduate of the pathology training programs at Methodist. He has subspecialty certification in cytopathology.

**Director:** Donna Hermis, M.H.A.

Ms. Hermis received her Master of Healthcare Administration from Texas Woman’s University. In addition to being the director of the laboratory at Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, she is also the hospital safety officer.

**Manager:** Rosalie Thornblom

Ms. Thornblom received her Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. She has been with the Sugar Land laboratory since 2004, and became the manager in 2007.

**Staff:**

The laboratory currently employs 42 staff members that include shift coordinators, technologists, histologists, processors, and technicians. These employees demonstrate their ICARE values every day to ensure that the laboratory is efficient and that the patients and medical staff at Methodist Sugar Land Hospital are well served by their efforts.

“We have an incredible group here in the Sugar Land laboratory. We all really love what we do, and we love Fort Bend County; it’s a great place to work and serve our patients.”

Seema Mullick, M.D.

“Dr. Mullick is a remarkable medical director. I have enjoyed working with her and the rest of the faculty and staff here.”

Bisong Haupt, M.D.

“I was pleased to be able to remain at Methodist after my training; it is an impressive hospital system, and I enjoy working at both the main hospital in the Texas Medical Center and at Sugar Land.”

Ognjen Kosarac, M.D.

“This is a busy laboratory, especially with the recent growth at the hospital and the expansion of the Breast Center. We all work together to make accuracy and safety our main priorities, and we do it well.”

Donna Hermis, M.H.A.

“Getting tests completed right and quickly is very important. It takes a good team to do that, and that’s what we have here.”

Jennifer Selvidge, MLT Specialist

“Our laboratory continues to evolve and expand. Like the hospital and the community it serves, it just keeps getting better.”

Rosalie Thornblom

Pictures from top: Dr. Mullick at the microscope; Dr. Haupt at the chemistry analyzer; Dr. Kosarac in the Histology Laboratory; Ms. Hermis in her office; and Ms. Thornblom (right) with MLT Specialist Jennifer Selvidge.
Department Faculty Receive Teaching Award

Two faculty members in the Department received teaching awards from the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Department. Dr. Jae Ro, medical director of surgical pathology, and Dr. Arthur Zieske, co-director of hematopathology, received the GME Faculty Teaching Award on July 2nd, from Dr. Judy Paukert, the GME Designated Institutional Official for The Methodist Hospital.

“The success of our many programs relies heavily on the contributions of great teachers and mentors like Dr. Ro and Dr. Zieske,” said Dr. Paukert. “We truly appreciate their efforts with our trainees.”

The awards are given annually for exemplary teaching and are voted on by the residents in their respective programs.

For more information on Department training programs, visit methodisthealth.com/pathologytraining.

New Trainees Start on July 1st

The Department welcomed 4 new residents and 12 new fellows on July 2nd 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 hospital’s GME office. Dr. Powell and the education manager and coordinators greeted the incoming trainees and apprised them of the various support services in the Department, including the training program coordinators, a poster printing service, and the Office of Academic Development.

“Our department is large and busy; we service a multi-site hospital system as well as our reference laboratory clients. We want to make sure our new trainees transition into their programs quickly and relatively seamlessly,” said Dr. Powell. “We are preparing the next generation of practicing pathologists and investigative pathologists, and we want to ensure they have an outstanding training experience.”

The Department currently has 40 existing trainees, with 21 of them having completed their residency or fellowship program and graduated as of June 30th. With the 16 new trainees, the Department will have a total of 38 residents and fellows for the academic year 2012-13. The Department of Pathology and Genomic Medicine has a residency program, a resident research program, and 11 fellowship programs – the most training programs of any department at Methodist.

**PGY1 Residents**
- Miguelina De la Garza, M.D.
  Escuela de Medicina Ignacio A. Santos, Monterrey, Mexico
- Maren Y. Fuller, M.D.
  The University of Texas Medical School, Houston
- Jordan A. Roberts, M.D.
  Louisiana State University School of Medicine, New Orleans
- Eric Salazar, M.D., Ph.D.
  Weill Cornell Medical College, New York

**Incoming Fellows**
- Blood Bank/Transfusion Medicine
  Miho Teruya, M.D.
  Internal Medicine
  Baylor College of Medicine
- Cytopathology
  Lindsay Waters, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  The Methodist Hospital
- Hematopathology
  Adeel Muhammad Raza, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  St. John Hospital and Medical Center, Detroit
- Molecular Genetic Pathology
  Elizabeth McQuitty, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  The Methodist Hospital
- Neuropathology
  Jo Elle Peterson, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  The Methodist Hospital
- Surgical Pathology
  Laura Kidd, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  The University of Texas Medical School, Houston
- Crystal Trujillo, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  The University of Texas Medical School, Houston
- Sadhna Dhingra, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  The University of Texas Medical School, Houston
- Cecilia Clement, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  The University of Texas Medical School, Houston
- Andrea Haws, M.D.
  AP/CP Residency
  Baylor College of Medicine

For more information on Department training programs, visit methodisthealth.com/pathologytraining.
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 29th as part of the TACLS Annual Meeting in Fort Worth, Texas. A Methodist team has won the competition 12 times in the past 24 years.

“Winning the TACLS Bowl is testament to the strength of our program,” said Tatia Feltman, program director for the Methodist MLS Program. “We are always proud of our students, and especially so for taking first prize at a state-wide competition such as this.”

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 (NAACLS). Upon successful completion of the program, students will qualify for the examination and certification by the Board of Certification of the American Society of Clinical Pathology (ASCP). Many of the 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.

Summer Students Start on June 4th

Twelve summer students recently began their three-month program in the laboratories of some of the Department’s faculty.

“We have several impressive research programs in our Department,” said Dr. Patricia Chevez-Barrios, founder and director of the Research Institute Summer Student Program and director of the Ocular Pathology Research Laboratory. “Our faculty are particularly committed to developing the next generation of physician scientists, and the Summer Student Program is a great opportunity to do that.”

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 student retreat.

Center for Molecular and Translational Human Infectious Diseases Research Laboratory of Dr. Edward Graviss
Valerie Brooker – Texas Tech

Ocular Pathology Laboratory
Director, Dr. Patricia Chevez-Barrios
Maria Ethel Aguirre-Flores – Tecnológico de Monterrey
Aravindh Ganapathy – Texas A&M University

Cancer Pathology Laboratory
Director, Dr. Yoidi Zu
Eduardo Camacho-Martinez – Tecnológico de Monterrey
Lucia Wang – Washington University, St. Louis

For more information on the Research Institute Summer Student Program, visit methodisthealth.com/SummerStudentProgram.
Dr. Byron Moore, a surgical pathology fellow, is the recipient of the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Resident Leadership Award for the 2011-2012 academic year. Dr. Moore received the award specifically for his exemplary leadership and service to GRE. This is a special award bestowed annually upon residents, as determined by the GME Designated Institutional Official, who have shown great leadership and commitment with their participation in extracurricular responsibilities in GME.

Dr. Moore received his medical degree from The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas and completed all of his postdoctoral training at Methodist, which included an AP/CP residency and fellowships in blood banking/transfusion medicine and surgical pathology.

Trainee Spotlight:

Byron Moore, M.D.
Surgical Pathology Fellow

Dr. Moore (right) receiving his award from Dr. Judy Paukert, GME Designated Institutional Official for The Methodist Hospital.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS


Bae YS, Ro JY, Shim HS, Hong SW, Yoon SO. Pulmonary sclerosing haemangioma with metastatic spread to stomach. Histopathology. 2012 Jun;60(7):1162-4.


Devos JM, Gaber AO, Knight RJ, Land GA, Suki WN, Gaber LW, Patel SJ. Donor-specific HLA-DQ antibodies may contribute to poor graft outcome after renal transplantation. Kidney Int. 2012 May 23. [Epub ahead of print]


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RECENT PUBLICATIONS continued


