Greetings from your Co-Chairs!

It has been a busy and productive year.

This is the last update from Rebecca Lundquist, who will be stepping down as the clinical co-chair at the end of the summer. We welcome Ann Salerno, recently elected as the new clinical co-chair.

As discussed at our two most recent meetings, we are in the process of modifying our governance and bylaws as part of the UMMS-wide changes to the Governance Document. The biggest change for WFC involves limiting the number of voting members, although meetings will remain open to all as in the past. The current procedures and membership will still apply through the end of the calendar year.

At the 13th annual WFC Awards Luncheon on May 20, six outstanding faculty members received awards: Outstanding Community Service – Mariann Manno, MD; Sarah Stone Excellence in Education – Trudy Manchester, MD and Elizabeth Murphy, MD; Early Career Achievement in Science and Health – Kristina Deligiannidis, MD; Women in Science and Health Achievement – Patricia Franklin, MD, MBA, MPH; Excellence in Clinical Services – Kathryn Edmiston, MD; and Outstanding Mentor – Julia Andrieni, MD. In addition to the award winners, Dr. Luanne Thorndyke and Dean Michael Collins opened the program, Dr. Jean King spoke on mentoring, Dr. Judith Ockene highlighted recent achievements of UMMS women faculty, and Dr. Deborah Plummer gave closing remarks.

The WFC Women’s Health event, held on Friday, June 14, was a success as well. This year’s program had a new format, with a panel of UMass faculty covering the topic of Bench to Bedside on Skin Care. Dr. April Deng (Anatomic Pathology) spoke on Melanoma in Women; Dr. Laura Lambert (General Surgery) spoke on Clinical Management of Melanoma; Dr. Corrie Painter (Molecular Medicine) spoke on Melanoma: Insights from the Lab; and Dr. Mary Maloney (Dermatology) moderated and gave closing remarks. The session generated lots of questions from the audience, and we hope it provides ideas for new research and collaborations!

Thanks to WFC members for a great year, and a wonderful summer to all! See you in September.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Lundquist and Sybil Crawford, Co-Chairs
Women's Health Month Event Report

The program entitled "Bench to Bedside on Skin Care" took place June 14th as an event for Women's Health Month. Dr. April Deng introduced various types of skin cancers, and emphasized that aggressive types of cancer can be avoidable mostly by preventing UV exposure to the skin. Dr. Laura Lambert then introduced a current clinical procedure for diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer, and reminded us of the ABCDE's of melanoma. Asymmetrical Shape, irregular Borders, more than one Color, Diameter larger than pencil eraser and Enlarging are signs of malignant melanoma. Dr. Corrie Painter spoke about a new (and only) chemotherapy for melanoma called biochemotherapy or immunochemotherapy. CDC recommends easy options for protection from UV radiation—Seek shade, wear protective clothing, a hat, and sunglasses. Also, use sunscreen and avoid indoor tanning. Dr. Mary Maloney emphasized indoor tanning is extremely harmful especially for younger generations; people who begin tanning younger than age 35 have a 75% higher risk for developing melanoma.

Speakers (from left to right). Drs. April Deng, Laura Lambert, Corrie Painter and Mary Maloney.

American Medical Women’s Association
UMass Student Chapter

The UMass AMWA chapter is focusing on promoting mentoring relationships between female physicians and students. They are planning a mentoring reception for October, which will include the WFC and Worcester District Medical Society’s Women’s Caucus. The chapter is also launching a program called Dinner with Doctors. Twice a semester, students will be invited into the homes of female physicians for food and conversation. Additionally, they are establishing regional connections between their chapter and others and are recruiting UMass women to be active with the chapter on campus. Interested? Contact Safiyah at <Safiyah.Hosein@umassmed.edu> or Molly <Molly.Cook@umassmed.edu>

New chapter Co-Presidents will be Molly Cook and Safiyah Hosein. Molly graduated from Holy Cross with a major in Psychology and a concentration in Women’s and Gender Studies. She completed a postbaccalaureate program at Bryn Mawr, before doing research at Children’s Hospital. She has explored female genital cutting and sexual assault, and is interested in working with women who have experienced violence. Safiyah graduated from Brown University with a degree in Human Biology with a focus on the Health and Sexuality of Women in the US. She then worked as a women’s health counselor and has an interest in the role of sex education in preventative healthcare.
We would like to shine our spotlight on recently tenured Dr. Cantor with her group in this newsletter. Sharon Cantor, Ph.D is Associate Professor and Director of the Cancer Biology Graduate Program. Dr. Cantor received a Ph.D. from Tufts University and completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute before joining UMass. She talks about her interests below:

“Our laboratory focuses on the reasons that mutations in the hereditary breast cancer genes predispose to cancer. We searched for genes interacting with BRCA1 and identified a novel DNA helicase, BACH1 (also known as FANCJ or BRIP1). We determined that BACH1 was also mutated in hereditary breast cancer. Our in vitro studies revealed that the ability of BACH1 to unwind DNA was compromised by patient mutations, and that these mutations disrupted DNA repair in cells, confirming that DNA unwinding activity was critical for BACH1 tumor suppression. This work established that DNA repair defects contribute to hereditary breast cancer and that tumor suppression requires more than single gene products, but rather pathways of interacting proteins.

We found that the BRCA-pathway extends beyond the suppression of breast cancer. Similar to BRCA2, BACH1 was mutated (and was not expressed) in the rare cancer-prone disease Fanconi anemia. Reintroducing wild-type BACH1 restored DNA-repair and the ability of these cells to function like normal cells. Collectively, these data revealed that loss of DNA repair functions link breast cancer and cancers associated with Fanconi anemia.

More recently our research has shed light into chemotherapy-resistance mechanisms. We discovered that cells expressing a BACH1 mutant were resistant to chemotherapy agents, such as cisplatin. DNA damage was tolerated because cells circumvented normal repair processes through mutagenic bypass pathways. We believe that this phenomenon may explain the emergence of resistance in BRCA-associated tumors. Addressing the problem of chemotherapy-resistance is a future direction for our laboratory.

Lab members from left to right Shawna Guillmette, Emory Payne, Sharon Cantor, Min Peng and Amy Branagan.

Recipe: Blueberry Dumplings

- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup vegetable shortening
- 6-8 tablespoons milk
- Mix together the flour, sugar, salt and baking powder. Cut in the shortening with a pastry cutter or two knives until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Gently mix in milk until it becomes a very soft dough

Stewed Blueberries
- 2 cups blueberries
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup sugar
- Heavy cream
- Bring the blueberries, water and sugar to a boil in a wide pan.
- Divide the dough into about five dumplings and drop on top of the blueberries. Lower heat to a simmer and cover the pan tightly. Steam for 12 minutes. Serve warm, drizzled with cold heavy cream.

(Picture and recipe from http://www.npr.org/2013/06/27/195633254/blueberry-dumplings-the-star-of-lasting-summer-memories)
Congratulations!

Promotions:
Carolyn Keiper, MD, Pediatrics, Assistant Professor
Kathleen Mazor, EdD, Geriatrics, Professor
Maria Duenas Decamp, PhD, PMM, Assistant Professor
Naomi Botkin, MD, Medicine, Associate Professor
Tanya Lucas, MD, Anesthesiology, Associate Professor
Jane Owens Saczynski, PhD, Medicine, Associate Professor
Deborah Molrine, MD, MPH, Pediatrics, Professor

Tenure:
Sharon Cantor, PhD, Cancer Bio, Associate Professor
Haley Melikian, PhD, Psychiatry, Associate Professor
Jie Song, PhD, Orthopedics, Associate Professor

Faculty Scholars Award:
Kimberly Fisher, MD, Medicine, Assistant Professor

Junior Faculty Development Program Graduates:
Shashi Bala, PhD, Medicine, Instructor
Felicia Chu, MD, Neurology, Assistant Professor
Nina Deng, EdD, QHS, Assistant Professor
Nivedita Gour, MD, Medicine, Assistant Professor
Shirin Haddady, MD, MPH, Medicine, Assistant Professor
Amy Harrington, MD, Psychiatry, Assistant Professor
Catherine James, MD, Pediatrics, Assistant Professor
Michelle Mendoza, MD, Emergency, Assistant Professor
Reshma Parikh, MD, OB/GYN, Assistant Professor
Banu Sundar, MD, Neurology, Clinical Asst Professor
Rosalie Torres Stone, PhD, Psychiatry, Assistant Professor
Rebecca Zanconato, MD, Anesthesiology, Assistant Professor

Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) Institute at Wellesley College
Lisa Beittel, MBA

Women’s Faculty Committee Awards:
Outstanding Community Service Award
Mariani Manno, MD, Pediatrics, Professor

Sarah Stone Excellence in Education Award
Trudy Manchester, MD, Medicine, Clinical Associate Professor
Elizabeth Murphy, MD, Medicine, Clinical Associate Professor

Early Career Achievement in Science and Health Award
Kristina Deligiannidis, MD, Psychiatry, Assistant Professor

Women in Science and Health Achievement Award
Patricia Franklin, MD, MBA, MPH, Orthopedics & Physical Rehabilitation, Professor

Excellence in Clinical Services Award
Kathryn Edmiston, MD, Medicine, Associate Professor

Outstanding Mentor Award
Julia Andrieni, MD, Medicine, Associate Professor

TIME named Katherine Luzuriaga, MD, to The 2013 TIME 100

As a part of a team of researchers that reported the first case of a so-called “functional cure” in an HIV-infected infant. By giving the infant, who contracted HIV from its mother, anti-HIV drugs within hours of birth, the team managed to battle back the virus so the child, now 21/2 years old, no longer needs medications and shows no signs of HIV. The finding hopefully make the way to eliminating HIV infection in children and adults.
Women's Health News

By Shirin Haddady

It’s Only Natural

Surgeon General Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA announced the launch of It’s Only Natural; a new public education campaign that aims to raise awareness among African American women of the importance of and benefits associated with breastfeeding and provide helpful tips. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 80% of all women in the United States—regardless of status, race or income—start out breastfeeding. Among African American women, the breast-feeding rate is almost 55%.


HPV Vaccine Works

The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention has announced that “HPV vaccine lowering infection rates among girls”. It seems that the extent of protection from sexually transmitted virus is higher than expected, which might be due to herd immunity. The rate of new infection with strains of HPV targeted by the vaccine have dropped by 58 percent among females aged 14 to 19 since the first vaccine approved in 2006. The new findings “are striking results, and I think they should be a wake-up call that we should increase vaccination rates, because we can protect the next generation of adolescents and young girls against cancer,” CDC director Dr. Tom Frieden said in a press conference held Wednesday. Link: http://health.usnews.com/health-news/news/articles/2013/06/19/hpv-vaccine-lowering-infection-rates-among-girls-cdc. (Image from http://healthvigil.blogspot.com)

Pent-Up Stress Could Harm Health of Middle-Aged Women

Many middle-aged women develop aches and pains and other physical symptoms as a result of chronic stress, according to a decades-long study. Researchers in Sweden examined long-term data collected from about 1,500 women and found that about 20 percent of middle-aged women experienced constant or frequent stress during the previous five years. The highest rates of stress occurred among women aged 40 to 60 and those who were single or smokers (or both). Among those who reported long-term stress, 40 percent said they suffered aches and pains in their muscles and joints, 28 percent experienced headaches or migraines and 28 percent reported gastrointestinal problems, according to the researchers at the Sahlgrenska Academy of the University of Gothenburg. The study appeared recently in the International Journal of Internal Medicine. Link: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_137622.html

Newsletter Team and Contributors:
Bonnie Bray (Diversity & Equal Opportunity), Molly Cook (Medical Student), Sybil Crawford (Medicine), Sarah Curtora (Medicine), Shirin Haddady (Endocrinology), Safiyah Hosein (Medical Student), Gennie Ludovico (Office of Faculty Affairs), Rebecca Lundquist (Psychiatry), Janaki Moni (Radiation Oncology), Susan Tremallo (Faculty Administration), Yumi Uetake (Cell and Developmental Biology)

Comments: Yumi.Uetake@umassmed.edu

Website: http://www.umassmed.edu/Content.aspx?id=54436&linkidentifier=id&itemid=54436
Newsletter Archives: http://www.umassmed.edu/Content.aspx?id=62180&linkidentifier=id&itemid=62180