Hypertension In The News

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Letter from Director

In our last newsletter, we listed a number of clinical research activities in progress. I am pleased to report that we are 80% complete for recruitment on the study on meditation and autonomic function in collaboration with Dr. Kemper and 75% complete for recruitment on the Pepper Center Pilot study on autonomic function and brain magnetic resonance spectroscopy in collaboration with Dr. Groban. Ongoing clinical assessments of the autonomic function in children with nausea in collaboration with Dr. Fortunato continue. Each of these endeavors has led to recent presentations at national or international meetings and/or publications. We are very interested in growing our clinical research program and encourage you to contact us to discuss additional collaborations.

I would like to draw your attention to the highlights of spring activities for the American Heart Association (AHA). Center members participated in national lobby day and Gala activities for the Mid-Atlantic AHA Affiliate. The Center sponsored attendance for junior investigators in the Center, many of whom have current or have had past research funded by the AHA. We encourage you to plan to support the Heart and Stroke Walk scheduled for October 15, 2011 at Tanglewood Park by volunteering to walk or supporting a walk team member.

Finally, we are looking forward to welcoming new trainees this summer. In June, we will have 19 incoming summer research interns participating in the Excellence in Cardiovascular Sciences Summer Research Program for Increased Diversity and additional outreach programs sponsored by the Center in collaboration with the MARC Program at Winston-Salem State University and the HBCU-UP Program at Johnson C. Smith University. In August, we will have 9 new Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP) Scholars arriving for year-long internships in research. I hope you will have a chance to meet and interact with some of these eager young scientists.

Best regards,
Debra

Hypertension Center Members Support the American Heart Association, Mid-Atlantic Affiliate

Center members Drs. Mark Chappell, Debra Diz and David Goff attended the American Heart Association's Lobby Day on Capitol Hill in April 2011 (right photo). They were part of the North Carolina team that met with representatives from the offices of the US senate and house members from North Carolina. Betsy Vetter, NC Director of Government Relations for the American Heart Association, Mid-Atlantic Affiliate, led the group from the North Carolina. Topics presented to the legislators included support for Safe Routes to Schools Programs, maintaining NIH funding for heart disease and stroke research, and sponsorship of FIT Kids Legislation. For more information on these issues, please follow the links below for advocacy.

In May, Dr. David Goff served as medical director of the Winston-Salem Heart Ball and Gala. Through David's leadership and the participation of several medical center components, including the Hypertension and Vascular Research Center, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center served as a Premier Sponsor. The event was a huge success, due to the leadership from not only David, but importantly outstanding corporate leadership through the efforts of Rob Greene and the BB&T team. Attendees from the Center included Bridget Brosnihan, Cheryl Bushnell, Mark Chappell, Debra Diz, John Fortunato, David Goff, Steve Kritchevsky, Sarah Lindsey, Chadwick Miller, Vinay Thohan, and Liliya Yamaleyeva. Stephanie Phipps, Director of Development-Heart Ball American Heart Association, Mid Atlantic Affiliate notified us that a net of $251,000, $100,000 over goal, was raised at this event! Pictured below are Drs. Fortunato, Lindsey, Yamaleyeva, Diz and Brosnihan attendees at the Gala.

Finally, the American Heart and Stroke Walk is an annual national event. This year, Mr. Ed Chadwick, Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, is serving as the local 2011 Campaign Chairman. The event will take place on Saturday, October 15, 2011, at Tanglewood Park. Please stay tuned for more information about support of this activity.

http://www.heart.org/ncadvocacy
http://www.yourethecure.org/
Wear Red: http://www.heart.org/care
Donations:
https://www.research.americanheart.org/

Center Faculty Awarded Recognition for Research Established Investigators in Basic Sciences

Debra I. Diz, PhD and Jay Kaplan, PhD were co-recipients of the 2011 Established Investigator in Basic Science Award in May, 2011. Pictured above are Drs. McConnell, Diz, Applegate and Wagner.

Dr Diz received her PhD in Pharmacology from the University of Tennessee Center for Health Sciences in Memphis and postdoctoral training at the National Institute of Mental Health and the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. She joined the WFUSM faculty in 1992 as a founding member of the Hypertension and Vascular Research Center and currently serves as Director of the Center. Her research has identified the neuroanatomical and transmitter pathways responsible for angiotensin peptide actions in brain areas involved in baroreceptor reflex control of the circulation. Interactions between the renin-angiotensin and the autonomic nervous systems as related to cardiometabolic disease are of particular interest in her current work, as are brain-kidney interactions that may lead to renal injury. Recent implementation of techniques for assessment of spectral and sequence analysis of spontaneous autonomic function, development of magnetic resonance spectroscopy for non-invasive assessment of neurotransmitters, and use of sheep as a model of fetal programming illustrate the wide variety of technical and animal model expertise related to investigating neural control of the circulation. Application of new technologies for spectral analysis and magnetic resonance spectroscopy to human studies is currently being developed through collaborations with clinical research faculty.

She has published over 130 full-length articles and has had sustained funding from the NIH and the American Heart Association (AHA) over the past 25 years. Dr. Diz received an Established Investigator Award from the AHA and serves regularly on AHA committees at the local affiliate and national levels. Finally, she is committed to research training at the undergraduate, graduate, post-doctoral and junior faculty levels, and has had a major commitment to increased diversity in research training for more than 20 years through her direction of several diversity-focused training programs, with continuous NIH support for this work since 1993.

Jay Kaplan, PhD is Professor of Pathology (Comparative Medicine), Translational Science, and Anthropology. He also serves as Head of the Section on Comparative Medicine (Department of Pathology) and Director of the Wake Forest Primate Center. He received his BA in Economics from Swarthmore College. He then earned an MA and PhD in Biological Anthropology from Northwestern

Established Investigators in Basic Sciences continued…

University, where his research involved behavioral observations of free-living rhesus monkeys on Cayo Santiago Island, Puerto Rico. He moved to WFUSM in 1979 to study the effects of behavioral stress on susceptibility and resistance to coronary artery artherosclerosis in a monkey model of human heart disease. His current research with monkeys focuses on the behavioral and genetic factors that influence the quality of premenopausal ovarian function, and in turn, the effect of ovarian function on risk for chronic disease, including coronary heart disease and osteoporosis. This research has demonstrated that much of the postmenopausal trajectory for atherosclerosis and bone loss is established premenopausally, suggesting that primary prevention of postmenopausal disease should begin before menopause. His achievements include more than 150 peer-reviewed publications, the Irvin H. Page Arteriosclerosis Award for Young Investigators from the American Heart Association, the Presidency of the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research, and the awarding of numerous grants from the National Institutes of Health. He currently serves as PI of the NIH grant that supports the Vervet Research Colony. He reviews for numerous journals and for the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and has served as a member of the National Academies Institute for Laboratory Animal Research, and a member of the Animal Resources Review Committee of the National Center for Research Resources. At present he is Chair of the National Scientific Advisory Board for the Southwest National Primate Research Center. Most recently, he was invited to be a member of the Society for Women's Health Research Interdisciplinary Studies in Sex Differences (ISIS) Fund for Cardiovascular Disease Network.

Established Investigator in Clinical Sciences

Center member Dr. Stephen Kritchevsky was the recipient of the 2011 Establish Investigator in Clinical Science Award in May 2011. Stephen B. Kritchevsky, PhD is Professor of Internal Medicine-Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine a Professor of Translational Science. He received his PhD in epidemiology from the University of North Carolina to Chapel Hill in 1989, after which he joined the faculty at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. While there, he founded the Masters of Epidemiology Program, and was the first Director of the Memphis Field Center of the Health Aging and Body Composition (Health ABC) Study, a study of trajectories of function in 3,075 older adults. Dr. Kritchevsky came to Wake Forest in 2003 to become the Research Director o the Sticht Center on Aging. He became the Center's Director in 2006. In 2009, Dr. Kritchevsky was named the Deputy Director of the WFU Translational Science Institute. Dr. Kritchevsky's research centers on the role of nutrition in modulating functional trajetories in older adults. He has studied both micro-nutrients and macro-nutrients, including protein, fats, carotenoids, and vitamin D. Most recently, his work has focused on the clinical response to obesity in older adults. Dr. Kritchevsky is the author of over 200 peer-reviewed publications and serves as an Associated Editor for both the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition and the Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences. He was elected a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America in 2008. He holds leadership positions in a number of important epidemiologic studies, including the Health ABC Study, the CHS All-Stars Study, and the Lifestyle Interventions and Independence for Elders Study. He is the Director of Wake Forest's Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center supported by the National Institute on Aging.

Team Service Award

ACCORD Study Team
The Action to Control Cardiovascular Risk in Diabetes (ACCORD) Trial has made fundamental contributions to clinical care of individuals with type 2 diabetes mellitus. The overall goad of the ACCORD trial was to test three complementary medical treatment strategies for type 2 diabetes to enhance the options for reducing the very high rate of major CVD morbidity and mortality in this disease. It was an NHLBI-sponsored, randomized, multicenter, double 2 X 2 factorial design in 10,251 patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus and was designed to test the effects on major CVD events of intensive glycemia control, of treatment to increase HDL-cholesterol and lower triglycerides (in the context of good LDL-C and glycemia control), and of intensive blood pressure control (in the context of good glycemia control).

ACCORD was conducted in 77 clinical centers (aggregated within 7 networks) across the United States and Canada. The WFUSM ACCORD study team led one of the seven clinical networks, and within this network it led three clinical centers. The WFUSM ACCORD study team managed the trial, serving as its coordinating center. It led three sub-studies, served as the ECG reading center for the trail and represented nine different academic units within WFUSM.

The ACCORD trial is a remarkable model of team science and how well-designed and well-conducted experiments can have profound influence on medical care. The leadership that WFUSM faculty provided for this trial has been critical to its success and adds greatly to the stature of our institution.

The ACCORD Study Team
Walter T. Ambrosius, PhD, Hal Atkinson, MD, MS. Alain Bertoni, MD, MPH, Robert P Byington , PHD, Jorge Calles, MD, Laura H. Coker, PhD, John R. Crouse, MD, Jingzhong Ding, MD, PhD, Gregory W. Evans, MA, Curt Furberg, MD, PhD, Craig Greven MD, David C. Goff, Jr., MD, PhD, Julienne Kirk, PharmD, David Lefkowitz, MD, Michael E. Miller, PhD, Timothy Morgan, PhD, Carolyn Pedley, MD, Ronald Prineas, MD, PhD, David Reboussin, PhD, Scott Rushing, BS, Elsayed Soliman MD, MS, Janet Tooze, PhD, Jeff D. Williamson, MD, MHS.

Research Recognition Awards

The Hypertension Core Laboratory was re-certified by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Service in the CLIA program. The Hypertension Core laboratory serves as a reference laboratory for NCBH Pathology. It conducts measurements for research investigators in the institution and nationally. Dr. K. Bridget Brosnihan is Director of the Hypertension Core Laboratory and is certified as a high complexity laboratory director.

A Training Partnership Between US and Brazil Universities

We are proud to announce the arrival of five new Brazilian students: Ariel daSilva, Daniela Farah, Livia Farah, Tahira Melo and Cynthia Muller. These students are participants in the "Translational Biomedical Training for Underrepresented Minorities" (BIOST), a training partnership between schools in the US and Brazil. The program is led by Mariana Morris, PhD, from Wright State University (WSU) and Maria Claudia Irigoyen, MD, PhD, from InCor Heart Hospital - University of São Paulo (USP). Other Ohio partners are Central State University (CSU) and Cuyahoga Community College (CCC). In North Carolina, Wake Forest University (WFU) is the lead institution under the direction of Dr. Mark Chappell and partners are Winston Salem State University (WSSU) and North Carolina Central University (NCCU). In Brazil the other university partners are Mackenzie University (MU), University São Judas Tadeus (USJT), University Federal Minas Gerais (UFMG) and University Federal Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). Four of the six US schools serve minority populations and will provide a pipeline of African American science students to serve as BIOST Scholars. Students with disabilities will be recruited from the WSU student pool. Three of the Brazilian schools have a concentration of students from underrepresented groups (SJIT, MU and UFRGS). Pictured above are Livia Farah, Daniela Farah, Ariel daSilva, Cynthia Muller, and Tahira Melo, (left to right).

Ariel daSilva attends the Universidade Luterana da Brazil in Canoas, Rio Grande do Sul. He is working with Dr. Sarah Lindsey, Surgery/Hypertension, investigating gender differences in the microvascular responses to sex hormones and angiotensins in normotensive and hypertensive rats. Daniela Farah, Livia Farah, Tahira Melo and Cynthia Muller all attend Mackenzie University in Sao Paulo. Daniela is working with Drs. Ann Tallant and Patricia Gallagher, Surgery/Hypertension, on their Translational Science Institute-funded grant, "Inhibition of Pediatric Sarcoma by Angiotensin-(1-7)". Livia Farah is working with Dr. Bridget Brosnihan, Surgery/Hypertension, studying the role of Ang-(1-7) on prostaglandins in the uterus. Cynthia Muller is working with Dr. Mark Chappell, Surgery/Hypertension, to assess angiotensin peptide metabolism in the kidney brush border of mice, rats, and sheep. Tahira Melo is working with Dr. Weiling Zhao in Radiation Oncology. Her project is to evaluate whether histone deacetylase inhibition attenuates the radiation-induced inflammatory response in lung fibroblasts.

Research Recognition Awards

HVRC Fellow Honored by WFUBMC

Hossam Shaltout, PhD, was awarded the 2010 WFU Postdoctoral Fellow of the Year Award for his outstanding research, scholarship, and service to the university. The Postdoctoral Scholar of the Year Award is designed to honor the achievements of a postdoctoral scholar at Wake Forest. Dr. Shaltout gave his presentation on April 6th, entitled "Neurogenic Control of the Vascular System." Dr. Shaltout has been a post-doctoral fellow for the past 4 years, joining center faculty Drs. Averill, Chappell and Diz after his PhD work at East Carolina University. He not only excels in basic science research, where he is a key contributor to two program project grants, but has been instrumental in developing clinical research projects in autonomic function for the Center. He has also assisted many foreign trainees throughout WFU in the transition to life in Winston-Salem. Dr. Shaltout was recently appointed as an Assistant Professor in OB/GYN and the Center.

The Eleventh Annual Graduate Student & Postdoc Research Day was held on March 22, 2011 and Graduate Student, **Bhavani Krishnan** won 2nd place in the Basic Science division. Bhavani is in the Molecular Genetics & Genomics department. The title of her poster was "Angiotensin-(1-7) Inhibits Prostate Cancer Angiogenesis and Metastasis to Bone."

E. Ann Tallant, PhD was accepted in the fourth class of the *Career Development for Women Leaders* Program.

Presentations

K. Bridget Brosnihan, PhD gave a presentation entitled "Restricted Maternal and Fetal Growth in Angiotensin Converting Enzyme 2 Knockout Mice is Associated with Elevated Placental Angiotensin II Levels" at the VIII International Symposium on Vasoactive Peptides in Brasil on 4/30/2011.

Mark Chappell, PhD gave a presentation for the Women's Health Center on January 14th entitled "Evidence of the Cardiovascular Actions of the Novel Estrogen Receptor GPR30".

Mark Chappell, PhD co-chaired the 2011 APS Symposium Intracellular Renin-Angiotensin System; and presented "Nuclear Angiotensin Receptors: Pathophysiological Significance?" on April 10, 2011.

Mark Chappell, PhD gave a presentation entitled "Cardiovascular actions of the novel estrogen receptor GPR30" at the VIII International Symposium on Vasoactive Peptides in Brasil on 4/28/2011.

Debra I. Diz PhD gave a presentation at the Commonwealth Medical Center, PA on January 13th and at the University of Florida in Gainesville on February 3rd, entitled "Baroreflex Dysfunction in Aging and Hypertension".

Debra I. Diz PhD gave a presentation entitled "Fetal Programmed Hypertension in Sheep: Functional Imbalance of Ang II and Ang-(1-7) Contributing to Baroreflex Dysfunction" at the VIII International Symposium on Vasoactive Peptides in Brasil on 4/29/2011.

Joyner J, Forrest B, Lackland D, Yu-Isenberg K, **Simmons D**. Value Driven Vascular Risk Factor Management: An Evaluation of the COSEHC CuStomized Model of Intervention and Care (COSMIC) – Design and cohort 1 Baseline Assessment. This abstract was presented at the North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians Meeting in December 2010 and was awarded the "Physician Poster Award."

Travel Awards

Graduate Students, **Alison Arter** and **Bhavani Krishnan,** were awarded 2010-2011 Alumni Student Travel Award in the amount of $300 to defray travel costs to the American Association for Cancer Research in Orlando, FL in April.

US - Brazil Partnership

Christopher Schaich, graduate student in the Physiology & Phamacology Program working in the Hypertension and Vascular Research Center with thesis advisor Dr. Debra Diz, recently attended the VII International Symposium on Vasoactive Peptides at Hotel Estalagem das Minas Gerais in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, Brazil. While in Brazil he spent time in the laboratory of Dr. Marco Antônio Peliky Fontes at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais to obtain training in the technique of renal nerve activity measurements. Dr. Fontes is an expert in this area of neural control of the circulation in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at the university. Chris plans to employ this technique in his research and this interaction with Dr. Fontes is the start of collaborative studies made possible by the US-Brazil Biomedical Sciences Exchange Program. We hope to foster the collaboration by having Dr. Fontes visit with the research investigators in the Hypertension and Vascular Research Center in the future.

Grants

Mark C. Chappell, PhD and James Rose, PhD, NIH/National Institute Child Health and Development, PPG Prenatal Events-Postnatal Consequences: Project 1 "The Impact of Antenatal Steroid Exposure on the Intrarenal Renin-Angiotensin System, Renal Function and Blood Pressure".

Debra I. Diz, PhD and **Hossam Shaltout, PhD**, NIH/National Institute Child Health and Development, PPG Prenatal Events-Postnatal Consequences: Project 3 "Antenatal Steroid Exposure and Neural Control of Blood Pressure".

Lisa Washburn, MD, Michael O'Shea, MD and **Pat Nixon, PhD** additional projects on the PPG Prenatal Events-Postnatal Consequences.

Grants Continued

Leanne Groban, MD, Department of Anesthesiology January 2011 Dubie H. Holleman Cancer and Heart Fund Award. The title of her grant is "Modeling Diastolic Dysfunction in Women Using GPR30 Conditional Knockout Mice".

Sarah Hoffmann Lindsey, PhD, NIH/National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, K99/R00 "Vascular Interactions of Estrogen Receptor GPR30 and the Renin-Angiotensin System".

Manisha Nautiyal, PhD (Mentor: **Debra I. Diz, PhD**), TSI Ignition Fund Award, "Angiotensin-(1-7) Signaling and Brain Mitochondrial Function".

E. Ann Tallant, PhD and **Patricia Gallagher, PhD**, Komen for the Cure, "Inhibition of Metastatic Breast Cancer by Angiotensin-(1-7)".

Dr. Mesia Steed received a post-doctoral diversity supplement (PDS) research fellowship effective June 1, 2011, to work with Dr. Debra Diz on her project on the Program Project Grant HL-051952, Vasodepressor Mechanisms in Hypertension. The project is entitled 'Brain Ang II versus Ang-(1-7): Arterial Pressure, Baroreflex, and Metabolic Control'. The fellowship is for two years and will address changes in the brain microvessels and indices of blood-brain barrier function in transgenic rats with alterations in brain angiotensin peptides.

Dr. Steed joined the Hypertension and Vascular Research Center recently, having completed a post-dotoral fellowship with Dr. David Busija, where she studied the role of oxidative stress and matrix metalloproteinases in the cerebrovascular dysfunction accompanying insulin resistance. She obtained her PhD under the direction of Dr. Suresh Tyagi at the University of Louisville in 2008 where she focused on vascular signaling and structural mechanisms associated with lipid disorders. She is active in the Graduate School Office for post-doctoral affairs initiatives here at Wake Forest University and provides research mentoring and career guidance to minority graduate and undergraduate students.

Dr. Diz comments 'We are fortunate to have such a well-trained scientist to assist in our research studies and it is an added bonus that she is also committed to the development of junior scientists. We look forward to working with her as she completes her project, and as a senior post-doctoral fellow, progresses towards an independent investigator.'

Promotions

Pat DePaulis was promoted to Administrative Secretary for the Clinical Research component of the center. She also serves as secretary to Drs. Levy and Ferrario, Vascular and General Surgery.

Recent Publications

Journal Articles

ACCORD Study Group; ACCORD Eye Study Group, Chew EY, Ambrosius WT, Davis MD, Danis RP, Gangaputra S, Greven CM, Hubbard L, Esser BA, Lovato JF, Perdue LH, Goff DC Jr, Cushman WC, Ginsberg HN, Elam MB, Genuth S, Gerstein HC, Schubart U, Fine LJ. Effects of medical therapies on retinopathy progression in type 2 diabetes. N Engl J Med. 2010 Jul 15;363(3):233-44. Epub 2010 Jun 29. Erratum in: N Engl J Med. 2011 Jan 13;364(2):190. PMID: 20587587

ACCORD Study Group, Gerstein HC, Miller ME, Genuth S, Ismail-Beigi F, Buse JB, Goff DC Jr, Probstfield JL, Cushman WC, Ginsberg HN, Bigger JT, Grimm RH Jr, Byington RP, Rosenberg YD, Friedewald WT. Long-term effects of intensive glucose lowering on cardiovascular outcomes. N Engl J Med. 2011 Mar 3;364(9):818-28. PMID: 21366473

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Recent Publications Continued

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Recent Publications Continued

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Future Events

The Excellence in Cardiovascular Sciences (EICS) Symposium is July 29, 2011.

The Council for High Blood Pressure Research meeting is September 20 – 24, 2011 at The Dolphin Hotel, Orlando, Florida.

American Heart Association 2011 Tanglewood Heart and Stroke Walk is October 15, 2011 at Tanglewood Park in Clemmons, North Carolina.

COSEHC 2011 Annual Scientific Sessionsis at the Renaissance Charlotte South Park Hotel, Charlotte North Carolina on November 3 – 6, 2011.

Attention Faculty Affiliates of the Center:
If you have news you would like to include in our upcoming quarterly newsletter; please send suggestions or information to Rachel Reynolds (rreynold@wakehealth.edu).

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