OCTOBER 6, 2009

OF NOTE

Our exceptional research expansion in FY2009

There were no NIH funded grants in the Department of Surgery when Dr. William Wood became Chair in 1991. When Dr. Wood retired in February 2009, however, passing the Chair to Dr. Larsen, the Department had risen to the 5th leading academic department of surgery in NIH funding nationwide. In FY2009, the Department experienced unprecedented growth, up 65% from the prior year. The single grant year receipts rose to a first-time peak of $15.8 million in direct support, $4.2 million in facilities and administration funding, and our total award figure reached $32 million.

The Department acquired 26 new grants in FY2009, eight with more than $100,000 per year in total costs. In Transplantation, Dr. Allan Kirk received three major awards. He will be studying adjuvant therapies improving the anti-rejection effects of costimulation blockade, leading a Phase II tolerance trial of belatacept and alemtuzumab in renal transplantation, and studying methods to improve the efficacy of costimulation blockade by targeting T cell memory.

Also in Transplantation, Dr. Mandy Ford will investigate the ways antigen density impacts T cell programming during transplantation and Dr. Neal Iwakoshi will research methods to track allospecific humoral immunity. General Surgery’s Dr. Collin Weber is investigating the use of encapsulated...
porcine islet xenografts in diabetic non-human primates, **Dr. David Lefer** of Cardiothoracic Surgery will examine the cardioprotective actions of hydrogen sulfide, and **Dr. Theresa Gillespie** of Surgical Oncology has been funded by the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as the PI of a multi-site, national study based at Emory that will investigate informed decision-making regarding treatment options and health disparities in early-stage prostate cancer, primarily in terms of access to care and racial differences.

Additional new studies illustrate the Department's ongoing pursuit of expanding, augmenting, and refining treatment options for patients. These include **Dr. Elliot Chaikof's** examination of vascular wall healing after deployment of bare metal and drug eluting stents, **Dr. John Puskas'** evaluation of outcomes following mitral valve repair/replacements in severe chronic ischemic mitral valve regurgitation, and **Dr. Daniel Miller's** pilot study of radiofrequency ablation in high risk patients with Stage 1A, non-small cell lung cancer.

Please see the listing below of all new grants for FY2009.

Download a PDF of ALL active 2009 Emory Surgery grants as of 8/31/09.

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**OF NOTE**

**New 2009 grants (as of 8/31/2009)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PI</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AGENCY</th>
<th>PROJECT DATES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beus, Jonathan</td>
<td>2009 HHMI Research Fellowship Training Program</td>
<td>Hughes (Howard) Medical Institute</td>
<td>7/1/2009-6/30/2010</td>
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<td>Calvert, John</td>
<td>Cardioprotective mechanism of hydrogen sulfide in the diabetic heart</td>
<td>American Diabetes Association</td>
<td>7/1/2009-6/30/2012</td>
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<td>Name</td>
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<td>Chaikof, Elliot</td>
<td>Vascular wall healing after deployment of bare metal and drug eluting stents</td>
<td>Boston Scientific Corporation</td>
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<td>Force, Seth</td>
<td>Spira-cap study</td>
<td>Spiration, Inc.</td>
<td>7/16/2009-7/15/2011</td>
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<td>Ford, Mandy</td>
<td>Donor-reactive memory responses and recall</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health</td>
<td>8/20/2009-7/31/2010</td>
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<td>Ford, Mandy</td>
<td>Antigen density critically impacts T cell programming during transplantation</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health</td>
<td>2/4/2009-1/31/2011</td>
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<td>Gillespie, Theresa</td>
<td>Active surveillance attitudes and perceptions in prostate cancer</td>
<td>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</td>
<td>9/30/2009-9/29/2011</td>
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<td>Kanter, Kirk</td>
<td>Berlin heart excor pediatric ventricular assist device-pediatric clinical IDE study G050262 Version 8</td>
<td>Berlin Heart</td>
<td>7/10/2009-7/9/2011</td>
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<td>Kirk, Allan</td>
<td>Development of transplant strategies uniquely responsive to the needs of children</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health</td>
<td>8/1/2009-7/31/2011</td>
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</table>

MEET AND GREET

Our Surgery Research Administration Team

With many new members, Surgery Research Administration has reorganized into primary responsibility teams for pre- or post-award activities to enhance overall efficiency in assisting Surgery faculty and staff in their research endeavors, though all new members are experienced in both areas and can move between teams as needed.

Her duties recently expanding to include Surgery and oversight of its Research Administration office, Lisa M. Carlson, MPH, CHES, Director of Academic Programs and Administration, 404-712-4807, came to the Emory Transplant Center five and a half years ago from the Rollins School of Public Health (where she is still an adjunct professor). She has more than 16 years experience in academic, federal contracting, voluntary, and other non-profit environments at the university, state, and national level. Lisa is active in the public health community, an avid runner and cyclist, and enjoys travel, cooking, and her cats.

Gina White, Program Coordinator, 404-727-1625, has been with the Transplant Center for eight years. She supports Lisa’s management responsibilities, Dr. Larsen’s research activities, and Surgery Research in
general through IACUC submissions, Vet consults, Chemical and Safety Protocols, and such components of general program coordination as acquiring keys, arranging access, and managing reimbursements and invoices. Gina enjoys reading, traveling, making scrapbooks, and attending concerts and theater.

**Joann Franko, MHA**, Research Financial Analyst, 404-727-7896, coordinates the many aspects of assisting PIs with their grant submissions and has over 18 years of experience in the research administration offices of academic medical centers. She comes to us from the Department of Neurology, where she supervised pre- and post-award grant administration. Prior to moving to Atlanta in the fall of 2007 with her husband Bruce, she was a Senior Grant Administrator managing pre- and post-awards at Massachusetts General Hospital. To unwind she likes to work-out at the gym, travel, listen to music, and visit family and friends.

**Amy Hartley**, Research Project Coordinator, Sr., 404-712-9511, has been at Emory for eight years. She assists in the preparation and submission of grant proposals and renewals, formulation of budgets, and organization of all of the pre-award documents required for submission outside of the scientific portion. A part-time employee, Amy is available on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. At home, Amy cares for her 16-month-old son Julian, two-year old daughter Lily, and her pets.

**Diane Paulaskas**, Sponsored Program Administrator, 404-712-8322, joined Surgery after seven years with the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. She works closely with Joann Franko and Amy Hartley on pre-award activities. At home she can often be found gardening, remodeling her house, watching do-it-yourself TV, or being entertained by Emma, her nine year old rescue dog and protector of her tomato plants from squirrels.

**Xuandoai Nguyen**, Research Financial Analyst, 404-727-7893, started at Emory in 1990 at Hospital
Financial Services before moving to the Department of Medicine, spending five years in Research Administration doing pre- and post-awards. She joined the Department of Surgery in 2004 and currently handles post-awards for federal grants, non-federal grants, and clinical trials. She enjoys spending time with her family, traveling to visit relatives and friends, reading, watching movies, and working in the garden with her husband.

Before joining the team to do post-award management of all grant accounts, Claudine Houston, MBA, Research Financial Analyst, 404-727-0535, did pre- and post-award work for over eight years in the Research Administration Office of the Department of Neurology. She is an avid reader, loves to travel, enjoys watching sports on TV, and is an active member of her church.

John Hauser has been affiliated with Emory since 1984, joining the Department of Surgery in August 1991 as a Management Analyst. He is presently a Senior Financial Analyst and has been involved with Physician Profit and Loss reporting, departmental budgets, human resources, and other finance-related activities, primarily supporting the clinical end of the department. John recently joined the post award group for three days per week, primarily doing clinical trials billing, invoicing, VA matters, and grant reporting.

**IN MEMORIAM**

**Dr. John Skandalakis, 1920-2009**

John E. Skandalakis, MD, PhD, former Greek resistance fighter during WW II, veteran of the 1946-1949 Greek Civil War, and an Emory alumni and faculty member since the 1950s, lost his brave fight against leukemia on August 29, 2009. He was 89. Over the years, “Dr. Skan,” as he was known to his colleagues, patients, and students, passed on his
impassioned conviction to thousands of Emory medical students that a thorough knowledge of surgical anatomy was essential to practicing modern surgery.

Born in 1920 in Molal, Sparta, Greece, Dr. Skandalakis earned his MD from the University of Athens in 1946. In 1951 he immigrated to the United States, doing his fellowship and residency at Grady Memorial Hospital, St. Joseph's Infirmary, and Piedmont Hospital. In 1956 he began working jointly as an instructor in anatomy at Emory – receiving his doctorate in anatomy from Emory in 1962 – and at Piedmont as Director of Surgical Education, a program he initiated that allowed Emory surgical residents to rotate through the hospital. He was named the Chris Carlos Distinguished Professor of Surgical Anatomy and Technique in 1977 and received distinguished professor status in 1980.

Dr. Skandalakis founded The Thalia and Michael Carlos Center for Surgical Anatomy and Technique at Emory in 1984 and The Alfred A. Davis Research Center for Surgical Anatomy and Technique in 1990, serving as director of both until his death. In 1996, The John E. Skandalakis Professor of Surgery Chair was established in his honor at the Emory University School of Medicine.

Among his over 300 publications were three highly regarded books, "Embryology for Surgeons," "Anatomical Complications in General Surgery," and "Surgical Anatomy and Technique: A Pocket Manual," which have been translated into numerous languages and are still referenced. He was a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons; a founding member of the American Association of Clinical Anatomists and the American Hernia Society; served on the Board of Regents from 1981-1988, particularly as chairman from 1983-1984; was honored with membership in the prestigious Academy of Athens in 1992; and received the Distinguished Medical Achievement Award from the Emory University School of Medicine in 1999. In his later years, Dr. Skandalakis was an international lecturer on anatomy.

### IN THE NEWS

**Georgia's first domino liver transplant and the birthday gift of a new kidney**

As reported recently on WSB-TV Action News, 11-Live News, and FOX-5 News, Dr. Stuart Knechtle and Dr. Christopher Hughes's surgical teams performed Georgia’s first domino liver transplant at Emory University Hospital on July 10, 2009. An extremely rare surgery requiring enormous skill, domino
Liver procedures have been done less than 100 times in the United States since 1996, and involve the transplantation of a viable liver from a deceased donor into the first recipient, followed by transplantation of the first recipient's organ into a second recipient.

In this case, a deceased donor's liver was transplanted into Jean Handler, 24, who had suffered since birth from maple syrup urine disease (MSUD), a rare genetic disease caused by the absence of a particular enzyme in the body. While not exclusively affecting the liver, severe MSUD can eventually cause brain damage and/or slow or retarded mental development. The recipient of Ms. Handler's own liver was Robert Massie, 53, who was born with hemophilia and had contracted hepatitis C and HIV in the early 80s from donated blood products. Since Mr. Massie's non-liver cells made the missing enzyme that characterizes MSUD, he could receive Ms. Handler's liver.

"Domino transplants are still quite rare because there are few illnesses that may impact one liver, but if that organ were to be given to another donor, would fail to negatively impact the health or quality of life in the recipient. In this case, Ms. Handler's disease was one that would not impact Mr. Massie," says Dr. Knechtle. "And now, both patients are, in effect, living with new, perfectly functioning livers."

Liver transplants are typically one of the most challenging types of organ transplant procedures because of the complex vascular nature of the organ. In this case, Dr. Hughes and his team had to actually reconstruct the vascular pathways in Ms. Handler's liver.

"Usually in a liver transplant, a diseased organ is removed from the recipient without the attached veins and arteries, with the new donated liver being attached to the recipient using his or her own tissue," says Dr. Hughes. "Because we had two recipients, one in turn also becoming a donor, we had to ensure that there were enough vascular structures to reattach both organs. Since we had to leave Jean with some of her own vessels, we needed to reconstruct the vessels from her liver in order to transplant it into Bob."

Watch video of the press briefing here.

On September 29, 2009, appropriately her eighth birthday, Quinn Roberts received a new kidney from close family friend Cheryl Thomas. Born with Polycystic Kidney Disease, Quinn’s search for a new kidney began in earnest last December and was featured on 11-Alive News, the centerpiece being Quinn reading her letter to Santa asking for a new kidney: "Dear Santa. . . I went to the kidney doctor and I did not get a kidney."

While Santa did not respond, Mrs. Thomas did. She had already been tested, was a suitable match, and was simply waiting for the call, which came shortly after the 11-Alive news spot. "You buy things just to buy things, because that's what you do during the holidays, but this was something I could really give, and it was meaningful," she says.
"It's really hard to put into words," Quinn's mother, Julia Roberts, says, "because there really isn't a way to thank or repay someone for the gift of an organ."

In 11-Alive’s October 2nd feature on the events leading up to the procedure at Egleston as well as the actual surgery itself, one of the more striking images was a shot of Quinn's diseased kidney beside Mrs. Thomas' healthy kidney. "It was grossly abnormal," says Dr. Chris Larsen, whose team implanted the donor kidney. "Mostly, with these live transplants, though, the new kidney starts to work right away, it's pretty great. It goes from a grey color to a beautiful, healthy pink almost immediately."

After two and a half hours in surgery, Quinn left the operating room with a healthy kidney for the first time in her life.

Watch 11-Alive's coverage here.

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**SPOTLIGHT**

**Faculty Promotions**

**Dr. Seth Force** was promoted to Associate Professor of Surgery. As a fellow at Barnes Hospital at Washington University School of Medicine, Dr. Force worked with Dr. Joel Cooper, who is credited with performing the first successful lung transplant. Since joining us in 2003, he has overseen the tripling of the number of adult lung transplants performed per year at Emory. Dr. Force recently began serving on the Workforce on Surgical Treatment of End-Stage Cardiopulmonary Disease of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons and has initiated the General Thoracic Surgery Service's robotic surgery effort at EUH.

Promoted to Associate Professor of Surgery, **Dr. Christopher Hughes** came to Emory in 2008 from the Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, where he chaired the Division of Transplant Surgery. He was on the surgical teams that performed the clinic's first domino liver transplant, first in-situ split liver transplant, and first organ transplant in an HIV-positive recipient. Shortly after arriving here he was elected associate councilor of Region 3 of the National Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network/United Network for Organ Sharing, and in 2009 he and Dr. Stuart Knechtle performed Georgia's first domino liver transplant (see story above).

**Dr. David Kooby**, who developed a significantly mature database of all pancreatic cancer patients treated at EUH and the Winship Cancer Institute, was promoted to Associate Professor of Surgery. In 2008
Dr. Kooby led a multi-center study that compared open and laparoscopic left-sided pancreatectomy, concluding that the laparoscopic approach offered patients shorter hospital stays and fewer complications, and has conducted similar national research studies in liver tumors and liver surgery. He was appointed to the editorial board of the Annals of Surgical Oncology in 2009.

Recently appointed an affiliate faculty member of the CDC-funded Emory Center for Injury Control, Dr. Jana MacLeod was promoted to Associate Professor of Surgery. Dr. Macleod is co-medical director of a two-site, five year grant totaling $12.5 million from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration which provides screening and brief interventions for alcohol-related hospital visits. She is actively involved in upgrading the facilities and services of the general surgery and trauma clinics at Grady and directs trauma training courses in East, Central, and Southern Africa.

Dr. Barbara Pettitt was promoted to Associate Professor of Surgery. Director of our Surgical Clerkship (M3) and M4 programs, Dr. Pettitt is leading the conversion of our residency programs to a more web-based curriculum using Emory’s Blackboard Learning and Community System. She is actively involved in developing the new School of Medicine curriculum as co-chair of the Competency and Assessment Committee and member of both the Applications and Translations Committee and the Admissions Committee. She serves on several committees of the Association for Surgical Education and recently received the organization’s Philip J. Wolfson Outstanding Teacher Award.

Dr. J. David Vega was promoted to Professor of Surgery. He is on the Board of Directors of the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation; is the Heart Transplant Representative of the OPTN/UNOS Board of Directors, UNOS; and serves as an at large member of the OPTN/UNOS Thoracic Organ Transplantation Committee, UNOS. Dr. Vega was essential to The Joint Commission’s recent accreditation of EUH’s Cardiac Ventricular Assist Device destination therapy program; he and his team implanted the state’s first VAD as a form of destination therapy in 2006.
WELCOME

New faculty

(Assistant Professor of Surgery, Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery) Dr. Felix Fernandez earned his MD from Wayne State University School of Medicine, did a research fellowship focused on translational transplant immunology at the Department of Surgery of Washington University School of Medicine, and completed both his general surgery residency and cardiothoracic surgery fellowship at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, Washington University. His primary clinical site is the Atlanta VA Medical Center, where he focuses on thoracic oncology and lung transplantation.

Felix Fernandez, MD

(Assistant Professor of Surgery, Division of Surgical Oncology) Dr. Shishir Maithel joined our faculty after completing his surgical oncology fellowship and hepatopancreatobiliary surgery fellowship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. His clinical focus is gastrointestinal oncology, hepatobiliary tumors, and pancreatic tumors, while his research interests include clinical investigation and outcomes analysis of hepatopancreatobiliary tumors as well as studying the molecular predictors of outcome and chemotherapeutic response.

Shishir K. Maithel, MD

(Instructor of Surgery, Division of Transplantation) Dr. Erbin Dai earned his MD from Harbin Medical University in Harbin, China, in 1980. He comes to us from the University of Florida, where he was a senior research scientist for the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine. Dr. Dai’s training and research experience, including aortic transplants in mice and rats, stent implants in rabbit aorta, and renal-aorta bypass in rats, will enable him to enhance and expand studies of microvascular surgical techniques at the Emory Transplant Center.

Erbin Dai, MD

UPCOMING
# Events calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>DATE/TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SURGICAL GRAND ROUNDS</td>
<td>7:00 am, October 8, 2009</td>
<td>Auditorium, Emory University Hospital</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Big Cases, Little Babies, Tiny Trocars  
Presented by Matthew Clifton, MD, and Samir Pandya, MD  
Fellows, Division of Pediatric Surgery, Department of Surgery, Emory University School of Medicine | | |
| SURGICAL GRAND ROUNDS | 7:00 am, October 22, 2009 | Auditorium, Emory University Hospital |
| Surgical Technology  
Presented by Jeremiah Deneve, MD  
Chief Resident, Department of Surgery, Emory University School of Medicine | | |
| SURGICAL GRAND ROUNDS | 7:00 am, October 29, 2009 | Auditorium, Emory University Hospital |
| Minimally Invasive Esophagectomy  
Presented by James D. Luketich, MD  
Henry T. Bahnson Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery; Co-Director, Lung Cancer Center; Director, Thoracic Surgical Oncology; Director, Mark Ravitch/Leon C. Hirsch Center for Minimally Invasive Surgery; Chief, Division of Thoracic and Foregut Surgery; Associate Director, Surgical Services; Director, Heart, Lung, and Esophageal Surgery Institute; University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute and Medical Center | | |
| Celebratory Picnic to Honor the Memory of Ellis L. Jones, MD, and the First Ellis Jones Scholar for Cancer Research, Rahul Balusu (First Year Emory Medical Student)  
Tickets: $100 per family | 12:00 pm, November 8, 2009 (RSVP by November 1st to 404-727-0462) | Diastole Farms, 2376 Strickland Road, Concord, GA |
| Chair’s Breakfast with PGY 4s and 5s | 6:30 am, November 10, 2009 | Whitehead Room, Emory University Hospital |
| Surgery Faculty Meeting | 6:00 pm, December 16, 2009 | Auditorium, Emory University Hospital |