New Surgical Education Office underscores Emory Surgery’s commitment to resident education

Once a maze of right angles, tight hallways, isolated Department of Surgery faculty and staff office units, and a single room for resident use that felt like an underground bunker, the H-Wing located on the 1st floor of Emory University Hospital has been transformed into an appealing, comfortable, and contemporary space suffused with natural light. With only minor tweaks and adjustments remaining, the new Department of Surgery Office of Surgical Education—which also houses the Thalia and Michael Carlos and Alfred A. Davis Center for Surgical Anatomy and Technique and the Jurkiewicz Library—is up and running as a central location completely dedicated to the day-to-day pursuits and long-term career goals of our surgical residents and medical students.

The re-purposing of the H-Wing as a space devoted to education was originally conceived by former department chair Dr. Chris Larsen, now dean of the Emory University School of Medicine. Heather Hamby, executive associate dean and COO of Emory University School of Medicine, was the executive administrator of the Department of Surgery at the time and managed the start-up for the project. The physical renovation took approximately six months from start to finish. "Dr. Larsen’s vision for what the space could be, and Heather's
translation of that vision into reality, demonstrated their understanding that a solid and versatile infrastructure contributes greatly to promoting excellence in surgical training and clerkship," says Johanna Hinman, associate director of education for the Department of Surgery and one of the primary players in fine-tuning the office's components and communicating with various contractors.

The office features a variety of training resources that are not commonly contained in one location. Its simulation lab gives trainees 24-hour access to computer based instrument and skills training, a welcome change after complete dependence on the virtual training facilities in the James B. Williams Medical Education Building. The new space also houses various work stations, dedicated office space for chief residents, a smart board that facilitates such interactions as chiefs reviewing cases with medical students, a classroom with a large, interactive digital projection screen where such events as plastic surgery grand rounds are already being held, a common area and kitchen, and two call-rooms where residents can shower or rest while on-call in the hospital.

The Office of Surgical Education is also the new home of the Carlos and Davis Center for Surgical Anatomy and Technique, which was originally founded by the late Dr. John Skandalakis in 1984 to advance the discovery, knowledge, and understanding of surgical anatomy, while emphasizing the critical role that surgical anatomy plays in modern surgery. "We're in the process of transitioning the center to focus on digital media and global education, keeping true to Dr. Skandalakis' legacy while leveraging the technology of the 21st century," says Dr. Keith Delman, program director of the general surgery residency and Chris Carlos Chair of Surgical Anatomy and Technique. "While his media emphasis was on disseminating knowledge through print and books, we will focus on internet-based media and handheld devices for doing the same. It is my hope to capitalize on the exceptional teaching that occurs at Emory and distribute to a greater audience."

At the invitation of Dr. Delman, Emory plastic surgery chief Dr. Grant Carlson oversaw the relocation of the Jurkiewicz Library to the office. Dr. Maurice Jurkiewicz was the first chief of plastic surgery at Emory from 1971-1993 and helped shape modern reconstructive surgery during its formative stages. "The library is a treasure trove of historically significant plastic surgery texts," says Dr. Carlson. "I think Dr. J would be happy that it's found a new home where the entire department can easily access it."

The use of the space's resources and the activities it will host will only expand and increase from this early stage."One of the most exciting aspects of this area's design is its inviting openness," says Ms. Hinman. "That evokes a feeling of potential, that innovation and creativity are encouraged, and that the department's educational mission has a tangible home where residents, faculty, staff, and students can collaborate."

---

**Dr. Coopersmith and Dr. Ford receive NIH R01 grant for study of cancer's effect on sepsis**

In 2006, the NIH implemented a multiple principal investigator policy to encourage multidisciplinary efforts and collaboration, particularly in instances where cooperation between equals from different disciplines is the most appropriate way to address a scientific problem. Dr. Craig Coopersmith, an investigator of several ICU-associated issues and associate director of the Emory Center for Critical Care, and Dr. Mandy Ford, a transplant immunologist and assistant professor of the Emory Transplant Center, decided to combine
Dr. Coopersmith and Dr. Ford, in their respective areas of expertise, and have been awarded an NIH Co-PI R01 grant upon first submission for "The Impact of Cancer on the Pathophysiology of Sepsis."

In addition to being the most common comorbidity in septic patients, resulting in nearly 93,000 cases annually, cancer is the comorbidity most associated with septic patient mortality. Dr. Coopersmith's experience studying the consequences of and adaptation to sepsis and shock and Dr. Ford's focus on examining pathologic immune responses will be applied to defining the possible mechanisms through which pre-existing cancer increases mortality when a host develops sepsis.

The co-PIs will perform experiments in multiple models of sepsis with diverse tumor lines to determine if results can be generalized or if they must be separated into specific responses to types of sepsis or types of cancer. "We have created a murine model that replicates the increased mortality seen in septic patients with cancer compared to previously healthy patients who develop sepsis," says Dr. Coopersmith. "Based upon preliminary data, both the immune system and gut integrity appear to be involved, so each of these will be examined in detail."

The second goal of the study is to discover why apoptosis prevention—widely considered a beneficial therapy for septic patients—turns deadly if sepsis occurs in the setting of cancer. Numerous studies have found that apoptosis prevention in either lymphocytes or the gut epithelium improves survival in previously healthy rodents with sepsis. However, Dr. Coopersmith discovered that when the strategy is used in septic mice with cancer, it markedly increases mortality when applied to lymphocytes, or loses its efficacy when applied to the intestine.

"In the face of current efforts to translate apoptosis prevention to the bedside for treatment of septic patients, the results of this work could potentially change entry criteria and/or prevent inadvertent mortality in patients undergoing clinical trials of apoptosis prevention in sepsis," says Dr. Ford. "We seek to understand a subpopulation within sepsis that may require a different therapeutic approach than the typical septic host, and our conclusions may have significant implications in a disease that is both very common and highly lethal."

---

**Emory Surgery faculty contribute to ETC presentations at national, international meetings**

Under the multi-disciplinary banner of the Emory Transplant Center (ETC), Department of Surgery transplant faculty collaborated with other members of the Emory University School of Medicine on various studies that were presented at the annual meetings of the International Society of Heart and Lung Transplantation (ISHLT) and the American Transplant Congress (ATC).

**ISHLT MEETING**

"Clinical Scores and Echocardiography for Right Ventricular Failure Risk Prediction after Implantation of Continuous-Flow Left Ventricular Assist Devices": For Emory patients experiencing heart failure, implantation of continuous-flow left ventricular assist devices (LVADs) has virtually replaced older-generation pulsatile-flow LVADs. However, risk prediction methods for the newer devices have not been standardized. As presented by Emory cardiologist **Dr. Andreas Kalogeropoulos**, this study found that clinical scores and
echocardiographic methods need improvement in order to help predict risk of right ventricular failure in the newer devices. Dr. Duc Nguyen, faculty CT surgeon, and Dr. David Vega, director of heart transplant at Emory Hospital, participated in the study.

"Exhausted T Helper Cells in Lung Transplantation Portend Worse Outcome": Emory pulmonology fellow Dr. Fang-Yu Chao presented an analysis of the complex clinical implications of T cell activation, which seeks to prevent rejection while also preserving long-term ability to fight rejection. Study results indicated that high levels of CD4 T cell exhaustion correlate with worse lung function and are associated with substantial defects in protective immunity that can cause impaired pathogen containment. Emory faculty pulmonologist Dr. David Neujahr was senior author, and Emory CT surgeons Drs. Seth Force, Felix Fernandez, Allan Pickens, and Emory Surgery's vice chair of research Dr. Allan Kirk were coauthors.

ATC MEETING

"Preservation of CMV-Specific Memory T Cell Responses with Belatacept": Kidney transplant recipients treated with belatacept have demonstrated better renal function when compared with those receiving the calcineurin inhibitors (CNIs) cyclosporine and tacrolimus. But belatacept has emerged with a clinical picture of higher rejection rates and a potential signature of impaired viral immunity in predominantly viral-naive patients. Leading a team that included SOM Dean Dr. Chris Larsen and Dr. Kirk, transplant researcher Dr. He Xu set out to better understand the mechanism by which CNIs and belatacept could present with starkly different immune effects against viral- or allo-specific targets. In simplest terms, the researchers found that belatacept's response patterns are consistent with its emerging clinical effects and argue against the fact that the drug produces a different effect on viral agents versus alloantigens.

"Outcomes and Survival Analysis of Old-to-Old Simultaneous Pancreas and Kidney Transplantation": This review of 10-year data from the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR) showed that using older organs for older simultaneous kidney and pancreas transplant recipients produces worse results over time. "The impetus for using older donors for kidney/pancreas transplantation is presumably to reduce waiting time. However, there was no difference in waiting time between older recipients who received younger vs. older grafts and there were significantly worse outcomes with older grafts," said senior author and Emory transplant surgeon Dr. Joseph Magliocca.

"T Cell Senescence and Accelerated Immunologic Aging in Children Awaiting Kidney Transplantation": Presented by pediatric nephrology fellow Dr. Roshan George, this study provided clinical information about how chronic renal insufficiency (CRI) accelerates T cell maturation in pediatric patients. The study concluded that a better understanding of CRI and its associated therapies should help clinicians provide more customized medical therapy to improve the balance between risk of infections and adequacy of immunosuppression in children. Dr. Kirk participated in the study.

Dual transplant and epidemiology investigator Dr. Rachel Patzer participated in the following studies presented at the ATC.

"Survival Benefits of Preemptive Renal Transplantation for Pediatric End Stage Renal Disease Patients": Transplant before dialysis significantly improves survival rates for pediatric patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD). A comparison of adjusted graft failure and mortality rates of over 7,000 ESRD pediatric patients from the United States Renal Data System (USRDS) showed that preemptive transplant provided a marked increase in graft survival
and a decrease in mortality rate over treatment with dialysis and then a transplant. Emory general surgery resident Dr. Blayne Sayed was 1st author and presenter, and Dr. Patzer was senior author.

"Neighborhood-Level Factors Associated with Low Kidney Transplant Rates among U.S. Dialysis Facilities": Chosen as one of only 25 abstracts highlighted in the ATC's "what's hot/what's new" section of its scientific sessions, this abstract showed that knowledge of the factors affecting transplant access at the dialysis facility level can help target interventions for low-performing dialysis centers in neighborhoods with the highest need. "Facility neighborhoods with a greater proportion of unemployed individuals, households living in poverty, and with vacant housing had lower standardized transplant ratios (STRs). A greater percentage of high school graduates in a dialysis facility neighborhood was associated with a 13% higher facility-level transplant rate," reported Dr. Patzer.

"The Standardized Referral Ratio (SRR): A New Quality Measure": In an abstract reporting a component of an R24 funded grant by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, Drs. Patzer and Stephen Pastan, medical director of the kidney and pancreas transplant program at Emory, proposed the standardized referral ratio (SRR) as a new measure to address the limitations of STR. By working with transplant centers throughout the Southeast, the researchers obtained data needed to calculate SRR that could then be used as a quality of care indicator of dialysis facilities with low transplant referral.

---

**Congratulations to the winners of the 2013 Surgery Research Symposium**

(From left) Bryant McIver, Hart Squires, research day visiting professor Dr. Jonathan Bromberg, Steven Kim, Jaclyn Espinosa, and vice chair of research Dr. Allan Kirk. Due to prior commitments, Scott Krummey and Hongyu Zhou were unable to attend.

Beginning with Surgical Grand Rounds on June 13, which featured Dr. Jonathan Bromberg of the University of Maryland School of Medicine speaking on "The Anatomy of Tolerance," the 12th Annual Emory Surgery Research Symposium was a grand success. The event resumed in SOM Lecture Hall 130 and showcased the research of the Department of Surgery’s medical students, postdocs, residents, and fellows. The winners in the various categories are listed below. Save the date for next year’s symposium: April 17, 2014.
BASIC SCIENCE ORAL PRESENTATION

Bryant McIver (1st place): 2012-2013 PGY2 general surgery resident on research sabbatical in Dr. Muralidhar Padala and Dr. Vinod Thourani's labs.

Scott Krummey (2nd place): PhD program graduate student, Department of Immunology and Molecular Pathogenesis, Dr. Mandy Ford's lab.

CLINICAL SCIENCE ORAL PRESENTATION

Steven Kim (1st place): 2012-2013 M4 medical student, Dr. Allan Kirk's lab. Will be a 2013-2014 PGY1 general surgery resident.

Hart Squires (2nd place): PGY3 general surgery resident on research sabbatical working with Dr. Shishir Maithel and Dr. David Kooby.

BEST BASIC SCIENCE POSTER

Hongyu Zhou: Surgical Oncology Post-doctoral Fellow, Dr. Lily Yang’s lab.

BEST CLINICAL SCIENCE POSTER

Jaclyn Espinosa: PhD program graduate student, Department of Immunology and Molecular Pathogenesis, Dr. Allan Kirk’s lab.

M3 student receives young investigator award

Patrick Walker, a 3rd-year Emory medical student, was awarded the 2013 Robert Emery Young Investigator Award for Best Resident Presentation and Paper at the annual scientific meeting of the International Society for Minimally Invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery (ISMICS) in Prague, Czech Republic. Mr. Walker presented "The Accuracy of Transit Time Flow Measurement in Predicting Graft Patency after Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting" on behalf of senior author Dr. Michael Halkos, Emory CT surgeon and associate program director of the integrated cardiothoracic surgery residency. Co-authors included Emory CT surgeon-scientists Dr. John Puskas and Dr. Vinod Thourani.

Mr. Walker's presentation and subsequent award was the grand finale of the Discovery Phase of his academic year. The Discovery Phase of the medical curriculum gives medical students a five-month opportunity to conduct hypothesis-driven research while working closely with a faculty mentor, who in Mr. Walker's case was Dr. Halkos. The project must involve both medicine and the discovery or research process, and can also draw from such areas as clinical, translational, or basic research; creative writing; or health policy.

The study compared flow assessments using transit time flow measurement (TTFM)—a method of assessing intraoperative blood flow after coronary anastomoses using the Medistim probes and the VeriQ Flowmeter System (Medistim, ASA, Oslo, Norway)—with diagnostic angiography, which is considered the gold standard for the assessment of graft quality and flows after coronary artery bypass surgery (CABG). The study found that while TTFM can be useful for graft assessment after CABG, false negatives can occur, thereby concluding that angiography remains the most dependable method of determining graft patency and quality of the anastomosis after CABG.

The Robert Emery Award is open to fellows and young surgeons in clinical practice for less than five years, and is named for the co-founder and first president of ISMICS.
New arrivals: Dr. Stacy Dougherty and Dr. Bryan Morse

Trauma/Surgical Critical Care at Grady Memorial Hospital

(Assistant Professor of Surgery) Trauma surgery, emergency general surgery, and surgical critical care are the clinical specialties of Stacy Dougherty, MD. Her primary research area is outcomes research for emergency general surgery and trauma. Dr. Dougherty is joining the Department of Surgery of the Emory University School of Medicine after completing her general surgery residency at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. She received her medical degree at St. George’s University School of Medicine in 2006, began her general surgery residency at Our Lady of Mercy Medical Center in the Bronx, and did her surgical critical care fellowship at Wake Forest from 2009-2010.

(Assistant Professor of Surgery) Bryan Morse, MD, received his medical degree and did his general surgery residency at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, after which he came to the Emory University School of Medicine and did his surgical critical care residency and trauma fellowship at Grady Memorial Hospital. Upon completion of his postgrad work in 2011, he returned to Greenville and joined the Academic Department of Surgery of the South Carolina School of Medicine. He is certified as an instructor of the ACS Basic Ultrasound for Surgeons and Advanced Ultrasound for Surgeons courses, as well as course director of the ACS Advanced Surgical Skills for Exposure in Trauma course (ASSET).

Residency/Fellowship transitions

GENERAL SURGERY

Outgoing chief residents

I. Raul Badell, transplant surgery fellowship, Emory; Keren Bashan, burns fellowship at Grady Memorial Hospital; Colin Brady, plastic surgery fellowship, Emory; Renee Gasgarth, plastic surgery fellowship, University of Miami; Harrell Lightfoot, cardiothoracic fellowship, University of Texas, Southwestern; Andrew Page, surgical oncology fellowship, Johns Hopkins University; Neil Saunders, surgical oncology fellowship, Ohio State University.

Incoming categorical residents

Katherine Baxter, Emory University School of Medicine
Michael Cormican, Medical College of Georgia
Cecilia Ethun, Baylor College of Medicine
Katherine Fay, Emory University School of Medicine

Kimberly Hemphill, Florida State University

Steven Kim, Emory University School of Medicine

Andrew Morris, Northwestern University

Priya Rajdev, University of Michigan

Andrew Stahl, University of North Dakota

Incoming non-designated, preliminary residents

Annie Bailey, Emory University School of Medicine

Ryan Dobbs, Emory University School of Medicine

Salila Hashmi, Aga Khan Medical College

Sameer Kapadia, Emory University School of Medicine

N. H. Mina Tran, Emory University School of Medicine
Incoming surgical subspecialty urology residents

Usama Al-Qassab, University of Baghdad; Robert Gerhard, Emory University School of Medicine; Charles Lorentz, Emory University School of Medicine.

Incoming surgical subspecialty oral surgery resident

Lisa Tran, University of California, Los Angeles.

BREAST FELLOWSHIP

Outgoing fellow Erin Bowman is joining Atlanta Breast Care (formerly known as Barber & Richardson, P.C.) at Piedmont Hospital. The incoming breast fellows are Veronica Jones, who did her general surgery residency at Baylor University Medical Center, and Lucy Brannon Traxler, who completed her residency at Greenville Hospital System University Medical Center.

CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY

Outgoing residents

George Comas, Gulfcoast Cardiathoracic and Vascular Surgery Associates, Naples/Fort Myers; Christian Shults, Washington Hospital Center, Washington, DC; and William Stein, Emory congenital cardiac surgery fellowship, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

Incoming three-year residents

Aaron Abarbanell, Indiana University, Indianapolis; Steven DeBeer, Mount Sinai Medical Center, Miami Beach; and Onkar Khullar, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston.

Incoming six-year integrated program residents

John Nicholas Melvan, Louisiana State University School of Medicine, New Orleans; Christopher Piercecchi, University of Arizona College of Medicine.

ENDOSURGERY FELLOWSHIP

Outgoing fellows

Nathaniel Lytle is joining Kaiser Permanente in Atlanta, and Ankit Patel will join Emory Surgery as an assistant professor of surgery.

Incoming fellows

Aliu Oladipupo Sanni, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Brooklyn; and Hernan Dario Urrego, Ochsner Clinic Foundation, New Orleans.

ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

Outgoing residents

Sung Hee Cho, microvascular head and neck reconstruction fellowship, Emory; Damien Jimenez, private practice, Atlanta; Kael Rogers, private practice, Stockbridge; Brian Tallent, private practice, Charlotte.

Incoming four-year residents

Geoffrey Schreiber, Virginia Commonwealth University; Shaun Young, University of Florida.
**Incoming six-year residents**

Joshua Levy, University of Pennsylvania; Sahil Patel, University of California, Los Angeles.

**PEDIATRIC SURGERY**

Drew Rideout, the outgoing fellow, is going to the University of South Florida, Tampa. Incoming fellow Avraham Schlager is from the New York University Medical Center.

**PLASTIC SURGERY**

**Outgoing residents**

Jarrod Daniel, private practice, Charlotte; Wright Jones, private practice, Atlanta; Ben Moosavi, private practice, Huntington, WV.

**Incoming independent residents**

Colin Brady, Emory; Kevin Bridge, University of Iowa; Meredith Wetterau, State University of New York.

**Incoming integrated resident**

Paul Ghareeb, West Virginia University.

**TRANSPLANTATION FELLOWSHIP**

The outgoing fellow is Alexandra Turner, who will be doing a hepatobiliary fellowship at Indiana University. The new fellow is I. Raul Badell from Emory.

**TRAUMA/SURGICAL CRITICAL CARE**

**Outgoing surgical critical care residents**

Alisa Melton Cross (formerly Alisa Cavitt), Temple University School of Medicine, Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh; Britani Hill, St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center, Boise; Gregory Peck, Rutgers University Medical Center.

**Incoming trauma fellows**

M. Andrew Davis, Virginia Commonwealth University, Medical College of Virginia; Katherine Kohler, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, Winston Salem; Phillip Prest, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.

**Incoming surgical critical care residents**

Leslie Ghisletta, Drexel University College of Medicine, Philadelphia; Elijah Kim, Morristown Medical Center, Morristown.

**VASCULAR SURGERY AND ENDOVASCULAR THERAPY**

**Outgoing residents**

Shannon Beal, Mercy General Hospital, Sacramento; Siddhath Patel, Northside Hospital, Atlanta.

**Incoming residents**

Reshma Brahmbhatt, Baylor College of Medicine; Michele Taubman, University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital.
Kristin Onken passes CRA

After working for the Department of Dermatology at Emory for almost four years, with the last two spent as an accountant with responsibilities in post-award and managing departmental accounts, Kristin Onken joined the Department of Surgery in 2011 as an accountant for the post-award team of the Surgery Research Administration office. Her primary responsibility was tracking transplant research grants.

Ms. Onken acquired certification in Research Administration at Emory (cRAE) in May of that year. A comprehensive and highly concentrated training program, the cRAE is designed to provide Emory research administration staff with the knowledge base required to meet their professional responsibilities.

The next logical step in Ms. Onken’s career trajectory was to become recognized by the Research Administrators Certification Council as a professional research or programs administrator. Earlier this month she was informed that she had successfully attained this goal by passing the Certified Research Administrator (CRA) exam, no small feat considering that the exam has an extremely demanding and time-intensive format. Candidates must have a nearly photographic familiarity with the details of the "body of knowledge": project development and administration, legal requirements and sponsor interface, financial management, and general management.

"Research administration is a complex environment that is always evolving," says Lisa Carlson, director of academic affairs for the Department of Surgery. "Kristin's efforts are representative of her commitment to quality and reflective of the skill she brings to her work. We are proud of Kristin for voluntarily seeking this professional designation and congratulate her on this significant accomplishment."

Upcoming events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>DATE/TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| SURGICAL GRAND ROUNDS  
37th Annual J.D. Martin Visiting Professorship  
Evaluating and Improving Resident Performance  
Presented by Gary L. Dunnington, MD  
– Chairman, Department of Surgery, Indiana University School of Medicine  
– Jay L. Grosfeld Professor of Surgery | 7:00 - 8:00 a.m., July 11, 2013 | EUH auditorium |
| SURGICAL GRAND ROUNDS  
Multimodality Therapy for Soft Tissue Sarcoma—Too Much, Too Often, and Not | 7:00 - 8:00 a.m., July 18, 2013 | EUH auditorium |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date and Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enough</td>
<td>5:30 - 7:00 p.m., July 30, 2013</td>
<td>TEC, B6300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgery Faculty Meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Surgery Research Seminar: Learning the Basics of Research, Funding Sources, Effort Reporting, Conflict of Interest, Compliance</td>
<td>5:00 - 6:30 p.m., August 13, 2013</td>
<td>EUH H-Wing Surgery Education Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgery Division Chiefs Meeting</td>
<td>5:30 - 7:00 p.m., August 27, 2013</td>
<td>EUH Whitehead Room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>