Al B. Benson III, Honored by Association of Community Cancer Centers

AL B. BENSON III, MD, received the Association of Community Cancer Centers’ (ACCC) 2011 Outstanding Achievement in Clinical Research Award for his extensive research, leadership, and commitment to individuals with cancer. Benson is a Professor of Medicine in the Division of Hematology/Oncology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Associate Director for Clinical Investigations at the Lurie Cancer Center, and an Attending Physician at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. He received the award at the ACCC 28th National Oncology Conference in Seattle, Washington.

Benson’s research is primarily in the areas of gastrointestinal cancer clinical trials, biologic therapies, Phase I cancer clinical trials, and cancer guideline development.

» Read more

Carla Pugh Wins Highest Presidential Honor

CARLA PUGH, MD, Associate Professor of Surgery and Director of the Center for Advanced Surgical Education at the Feinberg School of Medicine and a member of the Lurie Cancer Center (Cancer Prevention Program), has been awarded the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) for her novel research to develop the first physical test that measures medical students’ and physicians’ ability to perform a clinical exam of breasts and diagnose cancer. Pugh is also an acute care surgeon at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

The PECASE is the highest honor bestowed by the United States government on science and engineering professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers. Awardees are selected for their pursuit of innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology and their commitment to community service as demonstrated through scientific leadership, public education or community outreach.

» Read more
New Top-Down Strategy of Identifying Proteins Could Lead to Early Detection

THE HUMAN GENOME has been mapped. Now, it’s on to proteins, a much more daunting task. There are 20,300 genes, but there are millions of distinct protein molecules in our bodies. Many of these hold keys to understanding disease and targeting treatment.

A team led by chemical biologist Neil Kelleher, PhD, has developed a new “top-down” method that can separate and identify thousands of protein molecules quickly. Many have been skeptical that such an approach, where each protein is analyzed intact instead of in smaller parts, could be done on such a large scale. Kelleher is the Walter and Mary E. Glass Professor of Molecular Biosciences and Professor of Chemistry in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, a member of the Lurie Cancer Center (Cancer and Physical Sciences Program), and Director of the Proteomics Center of Excellence.

The promise of a top-down strategy is that the molecular data scientists do collect will be more closely linked to disease. “Accurate identification of proteins could lead to the identification of biomarkers and early detection of disease as well as the ability to track the outcome of treatment,” Kelleher said. “We are dramatically changing the strategy for understanding protein molecules at the most basic level. This is necessary for the Human Proteome Project -- the mapping of all healthy human proteins in tissues and organs -- to really take off.”

Kelleher says his approach is conceptually simple. “We take proteins -- those swimming around in cells -- and we measure them,” he said. “We weigh proteins precisely and identify them directly. The way everyone else is doing it is by digesting the proteins, cutting them up into smaller bits called peptides, and putting them back together again. I call it the Humpty Dumpty problem.”

One Size Doesn’t Fit All When It Comes to Vitamin D

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN living in areas with low sunlight are up to 3 1/2 times more likely to have Vitamin D deficiency than Caucasian men and should take high levels of Vitamin D supplements, according to Adam Murphy, MD, a Clinical Instructor in Urology at the Feinberg School of Medicine and a member of the Lurie Cancer Center (Solid Tumor Investigations Program). “This study shows that the current one-size fits all recommendations for 600 International Units (IU) of Vitamin D don’t work,” said Murphy. “Skin color and sunlight exposure need to be considered for recommended daily allowances of Vitamin D.”

Vitamin D deficiency causes brittle bones and has been linked to such diseases as prostate cancer, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis. African-American men have lower levels of Vitamin D because the increased melanin in darker skin blocks the ultraviolet rays necessary for the body to produce the vitamin, Murphy said. Thus, African-American men require up to six times more sun exposure than Caucasian men to make adequate Vitamin D levels.

“It takes a dark-skinned male like myself 90 minutes three times a week to absorb enough sunlight to produce the recommended amount of Vitamin D compared to just 15 minutes three times a week for a Caucasian male,” said Murphy, who also is a physician at Jesse Brown VA Medical Center. African-American men living in Chicago would need to take nearly 2,500 IU’s of Vitamin D to reach normal, healthy levels, Murphy said.

The Institute of Medicine recommends adults and children take 600 International IUs of Vitamin D daily, but Murphy says that’s way too low. All men living in the northern third of the country “from Northern California all the way to Virginia” need to increase their Vitamin D supplementation, Murphy said. But the amount likely varies by region because Chicago residents, for example, aren’t outdoors as much as those who live in Washington or California.
Chicago Sister Cities Medical Initiative Program

THE LURIE CANCER CENTER, in cooperation with Chicago Sister Cities International, presented the second Chicago Sister Cities Medical Initiative Program. Funded by the Lynn Sage Cancer Research Foundation, the collaboration presented a unique opportunity for 22 international oncologists to interface with a world-renowned cancer center and learn about practical patient care strategies and breakthroughs in breast cancer research at the 13th Annual Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium.

Represented cities included: Accra, Ghana; Athens, Greece; Belgrade, Serbia; Bogota, Colombia; Busan, Republic of Korea; Casablanca, Morocco; Delhi, India; Durban, South Africa; Galway, Ireland; Gothenburg, Sweden; Hamburg, Germany; Kyiv, Ukraine; Lahore, Pakistan; Lucerne, Switzerland; Mexico City, Mexico; Milan, Italy; Osaka, Japan; Paris, France; Prague, Czech Republic; Shenyang, China; Vilnius, Lithuania; Warsaw, Poland.

The Chicago Sister Cities International Program provides leadership to develop, manage, and coordinate comprehensive programs and projects with Chicago's sister cities.

The International Physician Awardees at a dinner and reception in their honor at Prentice Women’s Hospital

Lurie Cancer Center Holds Inaugural Interventional Oncology Symposium

THE LURIE CANCER CENTER held its inaugural Interventional Oncology Training Symposium on October 15, offering more than 100 medical students and radiology residents the opportunity to learn more about the dynamic field of interventional oncology (IO). “The goal of the symposium was to expose bright minds to this emerging field of medicine, and to inspire future leaders within the field of IO,” says Robert Lewandowski, MD, Associate Professor of Radiology and Director of Interventional Oncology Training at Northwestern.

Lure Cancer Center Member, Reed Omary, MD, Professor and Vice Chair of Research in the Department of Radiology, shared information on how to succeed in academics and the importance of grants to fund research. Omary notes, “Today’s savvy trainees who wish to differentiate themselves from others recognize that IO can provide an advantage in terms of academic advancement and securing grant funding.”

The keynote presentation by Aravind Arepally, MD, Director of Interventional Radiology at Piedmont Healthcare and Chief Scientific Officer at Surefire Medical in Atlanta, Georgia, covered the business aspects of IO and exposed students to entrepreneurship. Participants also visited hands-on workstations where they tried out the equipment used in the field, and took part in panel-based discussions.

» Read more
MELINA KIBBE, MD, will serve as the first Deputy Director of the Institute for BioNanotechnology in Medicine (IBNAM). In this key leadership role, Kibbe will work closely with IBNAM director Samuel Stupp, Board of Trustees Professor of Materials Science, Chemistry, and Medicine, on strategic initiatives that will influence the institute’s future development. In particular, she will help develop new programs designed to foster connections between Feinberg faculty, key collaborators at IBNAM, and other faculty based on the Evanston campus.

MICHAEL C. JEWETT, PhD, has been awarded a Packard Fellowship for Science and Engineering by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. He is among 16 promising science and engineering researchers nationwide named this year to receive an unrestricted research grant of $875,000 over five years. With his Packard Foundation funding, Jewett will advance his research on developing cell-free synthetic biology for biomanufacturing new classes of life-saving drugs, sustainable fuels and novel materials from renewable resources, both quickly and on demand.

STEVEN T. ROSEN, MD, will be honored with the Man of Distinction Award by the Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF) Chicago Chapter at their annual Todah Rabah Gala on November 9.

In honor of his contributions to the field of oncology, November 9, 2011 has been named “Steven T. Rosen Day” by Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. Dr. Rosen is the Genevieve E. Teuton Professor of Medicine and Director of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. He is also Director of Cancer Programs at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. The Mayor’s proclamation emphasizes Dr. Rosen’s “uncommon dedication to patient care, to teaching, and to research.” “It’s a great honor,” said Dr. Rosen. “I have been privileged to care for so many remarkable individuals, and am blessed by the most phenomenal colleagues and staff.”

LIANG ZHOU, MD, PhD, was one of 22 researchers to be named a 2011 Pew Scholars in the Biomedical Sciences by The Pew Charitable Trusts. The Pew Scholars program encourages early-career scientists to advance research that leads to important medical breakthroughs and treatments. Zhou was recognized for his work in immunology and gene regulation.
Professional Programs

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, the Lurie Cancer Center offers professional education on various cancer-related topics. Below is a set of programs scheduled through December 2011.

For more information or to register, visit cancer.northwestern.edu or call 312.695.1304.

DNA Damage Responses: Bedside to Bench to Bedside
15th Annual Joseph C. Calandra Lecture
November 8, 2011
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center
Speaker: Michael B. Kastan, MD, PhD

The von Hippel Lindau Protein: Insights into Cancer, Oxygen-Sensing, and Metabolism
Nathaniel Berlin Lectureship
November 15, 2011
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center
Speaker: William Kaelin, Jr., MD

Translational Mini-Symposium on Cancer and Development
NCI-Funded Training Program in Oncogenesis and Developmental Biology
November 18, 2011
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center
Speaker: Celeste Simon, PhD

Drug Repurposing Symposium
November 29, 2011
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center

14th Annual Oncology Nursing Conference
December 2, 2011
Prentice Women’s Hospital
Chairs: Marcia Mickie, NP and Mary Callaghan, MN, RN

Grand Rounds and TCB

GRAND ROUNDS
Fridays: 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center
303 E. Superior, Chicago
Gray Conference Room (unless otherwise noted)

Presented by the Division of Hematology/Oncology and the Lurie Cancer Center, the weekly Grand Rounds update physicians and healthcare personnel on developing trends and techniques in medicine.

» View the Grand Rounds Schedule here

TUMOR CELL BIOLOGY
Thursdays: 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center
303 E. Superior, Chicago
Baldwin Auditorium (unless otherwise noted)

The Tumor Cell Biology Seminars present weekly updates on novel translational cancer research in the areas of tumor biology, biomedical informatics and cancer prevention and diagnosis.

» View the Tumor Cell Biology Seminar Schedule here

» Sign up for Weekly Email Reminders:
If you would like to receive weekly email reminders for Grand Rounds and/or the Tumor Cell Biology Seminars, please notify Denise Marshall, d-marshall4@northwestern.edu.
Funding Opportunities

SPORE in Prostate Cancer

Developmental Research Program / Pilot Projects
Each year the Prostate SPORE Developmental Research Program funds 4-5 promising translational pilot projects. The goal is to support projects with clear potential to translate between basic science and patient intervention.

» Details and Application Process

Career Development Program (CDP)
The purpose of the CDP is to recruit junior faculty to careers as translational prostate cancer investigators through participation in SPORE activities and a formal mentoring relationship with a SPORE senior scientist.

» Details and Application Process

APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR CDP AND PILOT PROJECT FUNDING: December 1, 2011
Applications should be submitted to Robin Leikin, PhD at rleikin@northwestern.edu.

Mary Kay Foundation

The Mary Kay Foundation, a funding source for cancer research, is currently accepting applications for innovative grants for translational research in ovarian, uterine, cervical, and breast cancer. The awards will be up to $100,000 each (combined direct and indirect costs). The grant period is for two years. Applications must be submitted by one Principal Investigator, selected by the Institution. Only one grant application will be accepted from each accredited medical school and schools of public health in the United States.

Application deadline is Feb. 3, 2012. Those intending to apply should send a proposal abstract and current biosketch to Benette Phillips, schallma@northwestern.edu, by December 12, 2011.

» Details and Application Process

Basic Sciences Research Division

Center for Advanced Molecular Imaging (CAMI) Pilot Project Award
Through the generous support of the H Foundation, full members of the Lurie Cancer Center's Basic Sciences Research Division University can apply for a pilot project award for use in the Center for Advanced Molecular Imaging.

» Details and Application Process

APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR CAMI PILOT PROJECT AWARD: December 1, 2011

H Foundation Incentive and Bridge Award Applications
Through the generous support of the H Foundation, the Basic Sciences Research Division has been able to fund research grant applications to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) through two funding mechanisms: Incentive and Bridge Awards.

- H Foundation Incentive Awards provide funding for faculty who have submitted and received a score on a RO1 grant to the NCI for the first time in their career. If additional funds are available, awards will be made to other faculty for new, first-time NCI RO1 submissions, which are scored but not yet funded.

- H Foundation Bridge Awards provide up to $20,000 of support for competing renewals of NCI-sponsored RO1 research that missed the payline.

» Details and Application Process

Applications for H Foundation Incentive and Bridge Awards will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Lea Charitable Trust Equipment Grants
Through the generous support of the Lea Charitable Trust, a pool of funds is available to full members of the Lurie Cancer Center affiliated with one of the Basic Sciences Research Programs for use by multiple investigators or to support small equipment grants for collaborative research projects.

» Details and Application Process

Lea Charitable Trust Equipment Grants are made on a rolling basis.

Applications for Basic Sciences Research Division Funding Opportunities should be submitted to Tom O’Halloran, PhD via Jenna Ter Molen at jter@northwestern.edu
Patient & Public Programs

THE LURIE CANCER CENTER is committed to educating the public about cancer prevention and treatment, and offers a wide range of community events and patient programs throughout the year. For more information or to register, visit cancer.northwestern.edu or call 312.695.1304.

Cancer Connections
An opportunity for patients and families to learn about local support groups, educational programs, wellness activities and community resources. Offered each month from 10 am to 1pm.

Thursday, November 10, Galter Pavilion, 21st floor
Wednesday, December 28, Prentice Women’s Hospital, 4th floor

Steps to Decrease Risk of Developing Colon & Rectal Cancer
November 9
Gilda’s Club Chicago
537 N. Wells St.

Steven Stryker, MD, Professor of Clinical Surgery at the Feinberg School of Medicine and surgical oncologist at Northwestern Memorial Hospital will discuss dietary, lifestyle and screening measures to decrease the risk of developing colorectal cancer.

Gilda’s Club Chicago at the Lurie Cancer Center
PATIENTS AND FAMILIES at the Lurie Cancer Center have on-site access to a wide range of programs and activities offered by Gilda’s Club Chicago. Designed to be fun, informative and reduce stress, all the activities are offered free of charge. No reservations are necessary —patients and families can drop by any time.

Yoga, Art as Relaxation, Breathing and Meditation, and a Caregiver Workshop are just a few of the options offered in Galter Pavilion and Prentice Women’s Hospital. Some activities do not meet every week.

How Does a Brain Tumor Affect Me and How is it Treated?
November 29
Gilda’s Club Chicago
537 N. Wells St.

Jeffrey Raizer, MD, Director of Medical Neuro-Oncology at the Northwestern Brain Tumor Institute will explain how tumors affect the brain and discuss some of the treatment options available.

Look Good…Feel Better
A FREE WORKSHOP that teaches beauty techniques to women who are actively undergoing cancer treatment, to help them combat the appearance-related side effects of radiation and chemotherapy.

» View schedule
**Net IP Chicago Gala to Benefit Cancer is Colorblind**
The third annual gala honors cancer survivors who have made an impact on the community while raising funds to support research and prevention programs at the Lurie Cancer Center.

Saturday, November 12
DoubleTree Hotel Chicago-Magnificent Mile

» Read more and purchase tickets

**Goldie Hawn Helps Lynn Sage Cancer Research Foundation Benefit Luncheon Raise Funds**
ABOUT 750 PEOPLE attended The Lynn Sage Cancer Research Foundation's 2011 Fall Benefit Luncheon at the Ritz-Carlton Chicago. Academy Award-winning actress Goldie Hawn, whose mother was a breast cancer survivor, was the guest speaker at the event, which raised $640,000 for breast cancer research at the Lurie Cancer Center and Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

**Infusion Suite Dedicated to Memory of Thomas McCoy**
SINCE 1999, Corinne McCoy has helped promote lung cancer research and early detection programs at the Lurie Cancer Center. In addition to her own contributions, she and her sons, Mark and Michael McCoy, have organized the Thomas McCoy Memorial Golf Outing in memory of their late husband and father. The McCoy family has made a new commitment to advance lung cancer research and early detection in the Thoracic Oncology Program at Northwestern, and a named infusion suite in the Lurie Cancer Center on the 21st floor of Galter Pavilion was dedicated in memory of Mr. McCoy.

» Read more

**Minds Matter Benefit Raises More Than $800,000 for NBTI**
MORE THAN $800,000 was raised in support of brain cancer research at the third annual Northwestern Brain Tumor Institute (NBTI) Minds Matter Benefit Dinner. Actress, comedienne and television producer Bonnie Hunt, who previously worked as an oncology nurse at Northwestern Memorial, was a special guest at the event. The 488 guests enjoyed dinner and a live auction at the Ritz-Carlton Chicago, as well as dancing and musical entertainment provided by Gentlemen of Leisure. Minds Matter was made possible through the generosity of presenting sponsors Drs. Rudy, Asma, Elias and Randa Sabbagha.

» Read more
Cancer Center Appoints New Members

Steven T. Rosen, MD. Director of the Lurie Cancer Center, announces the following full member appointments:

Mala Shanmugam, PhD, is Research Assistant Professor at the Lurie Cancer Center. Her primary research focus is on targeting abnormal glucose utilization and the ensuing glycolytic phenotype in hematologic malignancies such as multiple myeloma (MM) and chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). Dr. Shanmugam’s current investigations have led to the identification of a subset of glucose transporters that are uniquely expressed in multiple myeloma.

Contact Dr. Shanmugam at 312.908.5919 or mala@northwestern.edu

Vinzenz Unger, PhD, is Professor of Molecular Biosciences at the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and Director of the Biological Cryoelectron Microscopy Facility. His lab pursues integrated research to understand the structure of function of membrane associated scaffolds and integral membrane proteins. Specifically, they combine structural biology (electron cryomicroscopy in particular) with biochemical, biophysical and cell biological approaches to answer how cells regulate the shape of their various membranes, and how metal ions cross cellular membranes.

Contact Dr. Unger at 847.467.2178 or v-unger@northwestern.edu

New Members

Michael McGee Joins Division of Surgical Oncology

Michael McGee, MD, is Assistant Professor of Surgery in the Division of Surgical Oncology at the Feinberg School of Medicine and a colorectal surgeon at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. Prior to obtaining his medical degree at Drexel University, he was a trained mechanical engineer. After completing general surgery training at Case Western Reserve University, Dr. McGee served as a colorectal fellow at Cleveland Clinic. While at Case Western, Dr. McGee was awarded a Dudley P. Allen Scholarship dedicated to clinical research in minimally invasive surgery.

Dr. McGee’s clinical interests include minimally invasive colorectal surgery, advanced surgical endoscopy, abdominal wall reconstruction, and anorectal surgery. His research interests include surgical technology development, clinical trials, and clinical outcomes analyses. He is an active member of several national surgical organizations and has authored over 30 journal articles, four book chapters, and received multiple awards for research, teaching, and humanism.
Welcome New Staff

Efstathia Bakou
Financial Administrator
PathCore
e-bakou@northwestern.edu

Sara Chung
Data Assistant
Clinical Research Office
sara.chung@northwestern.edu

what’s new

News of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
Office of Public Affairs and Communications - 676 N. St. Clair Suite 1200 Chicago, IL 60611 312.695.1304

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Help Wanted: Reporters

PLEASE SEND SUGGESTIONS for this newsletter to Jennifer Bowker, j-bowker@northwestern.edu

Lurie Cancer Center Weekly Updates

INFORMATION TO BE CONSIDERED for inclusion in the Lurie Cancer Center’s weekly e-mail updates must be received at least one week in advance. Submit suggestions to Denise Marshall at d-marshall4@northwestern.edu.