Platanias to Receive 2013 Milstein Award

LEONIDAS PLATANIAS, MD, PHD, Deputy Director of the Lurie Cancer Center, has been selected to receive the 2013 Seymour & Vivian Milstein Award for Excellence in Interferon and Cytokine Research. He will receive the prize on September 29 at the annual meeting of the International Cytokine and Interferon Society in San Francisco.

The Milstein Award, which represents the pinnacle of scientific achievement in cytokine and interferon research, is bestowed upon a leading biomedical research scientist who has made outstanding contributions to interferon and cytokine research, either in a basic or applied field. Many Laureates have made seminal advancements that have enabled the successful treatment of disease or have the potential to lead to significant health benefits.

The Milstein Award was established in 1988. Since that time, it has been widely recognized that interferons and the larger class of cytokines play critical roles in the development and progression of many major diseases including cancer, viral diseases such as hepatitis and influenza, and autoimmune disorders like multiple sclerosis and lupus. Past Milstein Award Laureates include Tadatsugo Taniguchi, PhD, Thomas Maniatis, PhD, and James Darnell, Jr., MD.

Platanias, the Jesse, Sara, Andrew, Abigail, Benjamin and Elizabeth Lurie Professor of Oncology, and Professor of Medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, has focused his research efforts on the field of signal transduction in cancer for over 20 years; studying the mechanisms of signaling for cytokines and other ligands in malignant cells. In recent years, he has performed extensive work on the mechanisms of interferon signaling in malignancies and of arsenic trioxide signaling in leukemia. In addition, his laboratory has defined kinase elements as targets for the development of innovative therapeutic approaches in myeloid leukemias.

15th Annual Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium

A FORUM FOR discussing and presenting laboratory and clinical research concerning the care of patients with breast cancer chaired by William Gradishar, MD. Co-Chairs are V. Craig Jordan, OBE, PhD, DSc, and Monica Morrow, MD. Topics include everything from supportive oncology, breast pathology for the non-pathologist and challenging clinical cases. The Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium, held Sept. 26-29 at the Fairmont Chicago, is proud of its tradition of attracting a faculty of experts from around the world.

View the agenda and register today at lynnsagebreastcancer.org
Tim Volpe, Associate Director for Administration, to Retire

TIMOTHY VOLPE will retire on December 31, 2013 after serving as Associate Director for Administration at the Lurie Cancer Center since 1989. “Tim has made significant contributions to the growth and development of this institution,” says Lurie Cancer Center Director, Steven Rosen, MD. “His efforts over the past 24 years helped bring the Lurie Cancer Center to the level of national recognition that we now enjoy.”

Matthew Ruchin, has been named Interim Associate Director for Administration, effective January 2, 2014. As Senior Grants and Contracts Administrator, Ruchin was integrally involved in the preparation of this year’s competing NCI Cancer Center Support Grant. In addition to his current responsibilities, Ruchin will work closely with Volpe until his retirement to insure a smooth transition. Plans for a farewell event in honor of Volpe will be announced later this fall.

New Laparoscopic Procedure Reduces Chance of Infection and Recovery Time

AT FIRST, 24-YEAR-OLD law student, Krista Easom, figured the little red bump on her foot was nothing more than a blister. It didn’t hurt, but after a couple months, it didn’t go away either. It turns out that little red bump was malignant melanoma, the leading cause of skin cancer death in the country. Further tests revealed that Easom’s melanoma had spread to her lymph nodes, which meant she needed a lymphadenectomy to have them removed. This major surgery usually includes a five-day stay in the hospital followed by an extensive recovery period.

Easom was referred to Lurie Cancer Center members Jeffrey Wayne, MD, and Karl Bilimoria, MD, two of the few surgeons in the U.S. using a minimally invasive procedure to remove groin lymph nodes. “Only a handful of surgeons in the country are doing this and it makes a world of difference to the patient,” said Bilimoria, a surgical oncologist at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Assistant Professor of Surgery at Feinberg. “Instead of a 12-inch scar, this laparoscopic procedure has only three very small incisions that total less than one inch. Because these incisions are so small, the chance of infection is far less. Instead of a five-day stay in the hospital, Krista went home the day after her surgery.”

Research Collaboration Reveals Regulator That Drives Majority of Lymphoma

A MULTI-CENTER COLLABORATION that grew out of the lab of Jonathan Licht, MD, Associate Director for Clinical Sciences Research at the Lurie Cancer Center, suggests that combining an inhibitor of EZH2 with other anti-tumor agents may offer a much-improved treatment option for up to 70 percent of adult lymphoma cases.

A study published in Cancer Cell has revealed protein EZH2 to be a powerful regulatory molecule and key driver of B-cell lymphoma, a type of cancer in white blood cells. “Our findings also demonstrated that EZH2 is required for normal B-cell lymphocytes (white blood cells), and if deleted, the lymphocytes cease to develop at a certain stage,” said Licht, Chief of Hematology/Oncology and Johanna Dobe Professor at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

B-cells produce antibodies within the body that fight invading microbes. B-cell lymphomas occur most frequently in older adults and in individuals with compromised immune systems. “Our group was able to map what the mutated EZH2 does to a cell and correlate those findings in animal models with the human data of our collaborators in order to identify the whole program of gene expression that is being shut down,” Licht said.

» Read more
Northwestern Joins Landmark Study of Personalized Vaccine for Brain Tumors

NORTHEASTERN MEDICINE recently joined a landmark clinical trial to investigate if a vaccine made from a patient's own brain tumor is effective in slowing tumor progression and extending survival. The randomized phase II trial will study how well giving the study vaccine with or without Avastin (bevacizumab) works in treating patients with recurrent glioblastoma multiforme (GBM). The study is the largest randomized brain tumor vaccine trial ever funded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and is chaired by Andrew T. Parsa, MD, PhD, who joined Northwestern Memorial Hospital in July as the new Chair of Neurological Surgery.

The trial will enroll more than 200 participants with recurrent glioblastoma that can be surgically removed. Following the participant's surgery, the tumor is sent to an industry collaborator Agenus Inc., where the participant's specific personalized vaccine, designated as HSPPC-96, is created. The vaccine is unique to the individual participant and is engineered to trigger an immune system response to kill tumor cells that may remain following surgery.

"This is truly personalized medicine where the patient's own tumor is being used to help fight their cancer," said Parsa, who is also the Michael J. Marchese Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurological Surgery at the Feinberg School of Medicine, and a member of the Lurie Cancer Center.

Trial participants will be randomized to either receive the vaccine alone, concurrently with Avastin or Avastin only. Jeffrey Raizer, MD, Co-Director of the Northwestern Brain Tumor Institute, is the principal investigator for the trial at Northwestern.

"This vaccine therapy has the potential to extend the lives of patients who often have limited options when their tumor returns," said Raizer, Medical Director of Neuro-Oncology at Northwestern Memorial, Associate Professor of Neurology at the Feinberg School and a member of the Lurie Cancer Center.

Surgical Risk Calculator Offers Personalized Estimates of Complications

THE NEW AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (ACS NSQIP) Surgical Risk Calculator is a revolutionary new tool that quickly and easily estimates patient-specific postoperative complication risks for almost all operations, according to research findings appearing online in the Journal of the American College of Surgeons.

Surgeons and patients have long been seeking an accurate decision-support tool to estimate patients' risks of complications after surgical procedures. This process is essential for patient-centered care, shared decision making with patients, and true informed consent. Moreover, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—through the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS)—may soon provide a financial incentive for surgeons to calculate the risks of operations using the Surgical Risk Calculator and to discuss these patient-specific risks with patients prior to elective operations performed in the U.S.

"Predicting postoperative risks and identifying patients at a higher risk of complications, has traditionally been based on anecdotal experience of the individual surgeon or small studies from other institutions. Importantly, these risk estimates have been generic and not specific to an individual patient's risk factors. To have truly informed consent and shared decision making with a patient, we need the ability to provide customized, personal risk estimates for patients undergoing any operation," according to Karl Bilimoria, MD, faculty scholar, Director of the Surgical Outcomes and Quality Improvement Center at Northwestern University and lead author of the study. Bilimoria is Assistant Professor in Surgical Oncology and Medical Social Sciences at Feinberg, and a member of the Lurie Cancer Center.

Read more
Stupid Cancer Show Highlights Lurie Cancer Center Programs for Adult Survivors of Childhood Cancer

ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 at 7 p.m. Central Time, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Karen Kinahan, RN, and Fertility Preservation Patient Navigator, Kristin Smith will discuss the Lurie Cancer Center’s programs for adult survivors of pediatric cancer, and the new GET EMPOWERED video education series on the Stupid Cancer Show. Together with lymphoma survivor, Colleen Cira, they’ll talk about life after childhood cancer and the progress being made to serve the more than 350,000 Americans in that space. A psychologist and new mother, Cira was treated at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago before making the transition to the Lurie Cancer Center’s STAR Program.

Launched in 2007, The Stupid Cancer Show is a multi-award-winning international talk radio webcast. The show boasts an aggregate listenership exceeding 2.5M worldwide, giving a voice to children, teenagers and young adults with cancer.

» Listen online at blogtalkradio.com/stupidcancershow

Preferred Hospice Partner for Northwestern Memorial Hospital

MIDWEST PALLIATIVE & HOSPICE CARECENTER, a nationally recognized industry leader, is the preferred hospice partner for Northwestern Memorial Hospital. Referrals can be made by calling 312.491.6252 or 847.414.HOSPICE. Onsite offices at Northwestern enable their staff to visit the same day, and talk with patients and families about considering hospice as an option for care.

Team members can coordinate the transition to home hospice, nursing home or hospital, or at their two state-of-the-art hospice centers — The Marshak Family Hospice Pavilion or the Hospice Suite at northwest Community Hospital.

Survivorship Clinic for Older Adults

THE LURIE CANCER CENTER has launched a cancer survivorship program specifically tailored to meet the needs of older individuals. The SENIOR Oncology Outcomes, Advocacy, and Research Program (SOAR) will focus on improving their health-related quality of life and overall health outcomes.

The SOAR program will begin with comprehensive clinical and social assessments (home environment, support system, family dynamics, and community resources). The insights gained from these assessments will guide recommendations and follow-up care; enabling healthcare providers to better meet the unique needs and challenges of older cancer patients and survivors.

SOAR’s co-leaders are Megan Oden, MMS, PA-C, a certified Physician Assistant with expertise in Geriatrics, and June M. McKoy, MD, MPH, JD, MBA, a Board-Certified Geriatrician and Director of Geriatric Oncology for the Lurie Cancer Center.

Clinic hours are Tuesdays from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. on the 18th floor, Suite 200, of Northwestern’s Galter Pavilion’s.

To refer a Lurie Cancer Center patient, call 312.69.4525 and ask for the SOAR Program.

» Read more
Al B. Benson, III, MD, has been invited to serve on the Executive Board of Directors of the National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF) a national non-profit organization providing the patient voice in improving access to, and reimbursement for, high-quality healthcare through regulatory and legislative reform at the state and federal levels. Benson will also serve on the Executive Board of Directors of the Patient Advocate Foundation (PAF), which provides professional case management services at no cost to individuals facing barriers to healthcare access for chronic and disabling disease, medical debt crisis, and employment-related issues. Benson is Professor of Hematology/Oncology at Feinberg and Associate Director for Clinical Investigations at the Lurie Cancer Center.

Thomas O’Halloran, PhD, received the 2013 Bioinorganic Chemistry Award from the Royal Society of Chemistry for his studies that determined the role of intracellular fluctuation of transition metal availability in the regulation of cellular physiology, and the discovery of proteins involved in this process. O’Halloran is the Charles E. and Emma H. Morrison Professor in the Department of Chemistry and in the Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Cell Biology at Northwestern, and serves as Director of the Chemistry of Life Processes (CLP) Institute at Northwestern. He is Associate Director for Basic Sciences Research at the Lurie Cancer Center.

Steven T. Rosen, MD, has been named to the Board of Directors of the Conquer Cancer Foundation of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. “It is an honor to welcome Dr. Steven Rosen to the Conquer Cancer Foundation Board leadership,” said W. Charles Penley, MD, FASCO, Chair of the Foundation’s Board of Directors. “Dr. Rosen has made significant contributions to the cancer community throughout his life and career, and we are fortunate to be able to draw on his passion and expertise as we seek to advance our vision—a world free from the fear of cancer.” Rosen is Genevieve Teuton Professor of Medicine at Feinberg, and Director of the Lurie Cancer Center.

John M. Salsman, PhD, received the 2014 New Investigator Award from the American Psychosocial Oncology Society (APOS). Salsman is Research Assistant Professor of Medical Social Sciences at Feinberg, and a member of the Lurie Cancer Center’s Cancer Control and Survivorship Program.

October 4 Proclaimed NBTI Day in Chicago

IN RECOGNITION OF its commitment to care and cutting-edge research, Mayor Rahm Emanuel has proclaimed October 4 as Northwestern Brain Tumor Institute Day in Chicago.

“Millions of people and families representing all ethnic backgrounds and income levels are affected by brain and spinal tumors and (these) tumors can occur at any age and at different sites in the brain,” Emanuel said. “The Northwestern Brain Tumor Institute maintains a mission of finding cures for brain and spinal tumors while training neuro-oncology researchers and clinicians to meet the highest of standards.”

» Read more
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. Below is a list of programs scheduled through November 2013.

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT cancer.northwestern.edu or call 312.695.1304.

**Ovarian Cancer Survive and Thrive**
Saturday, September 28, 2013
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center, Hughes Auditorium

This one-day course will provide ovarian cancer survivors, families and caregivers – as well as those at increased risk – with information, resources and access to experts from the Lurie Cancer Center.

**Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Town Hall Meeting**
Sunday, October 6, 2013
Arthur Rubloff Building, Thorne Auditorium

This free interactive discussion is a great way for patients and families to discover community cancer resources, and learn about local and national organizations providing support.

Moderated by William Gradishar, MD, a panel of Lurie Cancer Center Experts will lead an interactive discussion on topics including:

- Emily Berry, MD – Managing Menopausal Symptoms
- Mary Jo Graden, LCSW – Managing Anxiety During and After Treatment
- Sarah Jackson, MS, CGC – Understanding Genetics and Breast Cancer
- Sarika Jain, MD – New Breast Cancer Therapies
- Jacqueline Jeruss, MD, PhD – What's New in the Operating Room

**Brain Tumor Patient & Caregiver Forum**
Monday, October 28, 2013
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center, Baldwin Auditorium

Northwestern Brain Tumor Institute experts will discuss what's new in brain tumor treatment, and address skills and resources for coping with issues that face both patients and their caregivers. Boxed meal and discounted parking provided to all pre-registered guests at this free program.

**AIM at Melanoma Patient & Caregiver Symposium**
Saturday, November 2, 2013
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center, Hughes Auditorium

Patients with melanoma and their families will have an opportunity to hear a panel of Lurie Cancer Center experts discuss emerging therapies, the importance of clinical trials and innovation in research. Guests will have a chance to ask questions and meet with others affected by melanoma at this event hosted by the Lurie Cancer Center in partnership with AIM at Melanoma, an organization committed to promoting education and research.

**Cancer Connections**
Saturday, November 16, 2013
Feinberg Pavilion, 3rd Floor

Patients and families learn about techniques and services to help them eat well, move more, and manage stress and fatigue during and after treatment. In addition, the program offers a chance to discover integrative therapies, networking groups, peer support programs, and connect with other communities facing similar challenges.
Fundraising Events

Harold E. Eisenberg Foundation 15th Annual Dinner

Tuesday, October 1, 2013
Supports gastrointestinal cancer research at the Lurie Cancer Center.

Lynn Sage Cancer Research Foundation Fall Benefit Luncheon

Thursday, October 3, 2013
Academy Award-Winning Actress and Director Diane Keaton is the guest speaker. Proceeds will support research and education at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and the Lurie Cancer Center.

Northwestern Brain Tumor Institute Minds Matter Benefit

Friday, October 4, 2013
Chicago’s ABC7 sports anchor Rafer Weigel who lost his father, sportscaster Tim Weigel, to brain cancer in 2001, will be the master of ceremonies at the 5th Anniversary of the NBTI’s biggest annual fundraiser held at the Radisson Blu Aqua hotel.

Proceeds from the evening, which includes dancing and a live auction, will benefit research and programs at NBTI, a nationally recognized leader in the fight against brain and spinal tumors.

2nd Annual Breaststroke4BreastCancer

Wednesday, October 9, 2013
Help Northwestern Women’s Swim and Dive Team raise funds for breast cancer research.

1st Annual “Scope it Out” 5K Chicago

Saturday, October 19, 2013
Proceeds from the Chris4Life Colon Cancer Foundation’s walk/run will help support GI cancer research at the Lurie Cancer Center. Interested in running with “Team Lurie Cancer Center?” Contact Elizabeth Knollman at elizabeth.knollman@northwestern.edu.

Wine & Dine for a Good Cause in October

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is the perfect time to wine and dine for a good cause! Help The Lynn Sage Foundation support breast cancer research at the Lurie Cancer Center when you dine at participating restaurants.
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, the Lurie Cancer Center offers professional education on various cancer related topics. Below is a list of programs scheduled through November 2013.

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT cancer.northwestern.edu or call 312.695.1304.

Endogenous T-cell Responses Throughout Breast Cancer Development
September 17, 2013
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center, Gray Room
Special Lecture: Philipp Beckhove, MD

Bridging Bench to Bedside: Beating Breast Cancer
September 18, 2013
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center, Baldwin Auditorium
Speakers: Kounosuke Watabe, PhD, Andrew Mazar, PhD, Sarika Jain, MD

Surgical Outcomes and Quality Improvement Center (SOQIC) Outcomes Research Course
September 19, 2013
Prentice Women's Hospital, Canning Auditorium
Course Director: Karl Bilimoria, MD, MS

International Society for the Study of Trophoblastic Diseases World Congress XVII
September 20-23, 2013
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center, Baldwin Auditorium
Chairs: John Lurain, MD, and Julian Schnik, MD

15th Annual Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium
September 26-29, 2013
The Fairmont Chicago
Chair: William Gradishar, MD
Co-Chairs: Monica Morrow, MD / V. Craig Jordan, OBE, PhD, DSc
lynnsagebreastcancer.org

Osteomimicry Promotes Prostate Cancer Metastatic Colonization: Biology and Therapeutic Implications
October 11, 2013
Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center, Baldwin Auditorium
Speaker: Leland Chung, PhD
Special Lecture Honoring Chung Lee, PhD

16th Annual Oncology Nursing Conference
November 22, 2013
Feinberg Pavilion, Rooms A-D

Grand Rounds & Tumor Cell Biology

GRAND ROUNDS
Fridays: 8:00 a.m. to 9:00a.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.

» Grand Rounds Schedule

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.

» Tumor Cell Biology Seminar Schedule

If you would like to receive weekly reminders about the Grand Rounds and/or TCB Seminar schedules please contact Denise Marshall at d-marshall4@northwestern.edu.

Cancer & Fertility Virtual Grand Rounds

The Oncofertility Consortium has created a series of Virtual Grand Rounds, primarily for the clinical community, to increase reproductive education among oncology and reproductive providers. Learn more about how specific chemotherapeutic drugs and radiation treatments used to treat brain cancer, can impact fertility. Providers can also get information about the latest fertility preservation options, get access to reproductive specialists in their region, and receive free CME credits through this program, which is accessible via computer or mobile device.

Illinois oncology providers interested in connecting with other providers and reproductive specialists in the Illinois area can participate in the Consortium’s pilot program to increase oncofertility communication and education.

E-mail Angie Krausfeldt or call her at 312.503.2506 to learn more.

» View the Oncofertility Virtual Grand Rounds Schedule
Funding Opportunities

Travel Grants

The Katten Muchin Rosenman Travel Scholarship Program allows doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows to present the results of their basic cancer research.

The Center for Genetic Medicine (CGM) Travel Fellowship allows doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows to present the results of their basic cancer research showing its genetics relevance.

The Cancer Prevention Travel Scholarship Program allows doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows to present the results of their laboratory, clinical, population or behavioral research with implications for cancer prevention.

The next deadline to apply for 2013 Travel Fellowship Awards is Friday, November 1, 2013.

» Details and Application Process for Academic Year 2013-2014

Basic Sciences Research Division

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.

Applications for H Foundation Incentive and Bridge Awards are reviewed on a rolling basis and accepted until funds for the year are expended.

» Details and Application Process

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.

Lea Charitable Trust Equipment Grants are made on a rolling basis as funds become available.

» Details and Application Process
Jessica MacLean has joined the Lurie Cancer Center as Manager of Community Relations, managing public education and community outreach programs. In this role Jessica will work closely with advocacy organizations, volunteers and the Lurie Cancer Center’s Patient and Family Advisory Board. Most recently, Jessica managed patients and caregiver programs at the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois. Prior to that, she worked as the hospital liaison for the organ procurement organization in New Mexico, planning community outreach events and promoting organ and tissue donation.

Contact Jessica at jessica.maclean@northwestern.edu or 312.695.1390.