USC surgeon performs first-of-its-kind robotic kidney surgery

By Leslie Ridgeway

Surgeons at the USC Institute of Urology, part of Keck Medicine of USC, recently used a Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-cleared laparoscopic device, the high intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) surgical ablation system to ablate intra-abdominal tumors. The system enables surgeons to penetrate the abdominal cavity with keyhole cuts to eliminate tumors of four centimeters or less. Inderbir Gill, MD, founding executive director, USC Institute of Urology, and chairman and professor, Catherine and Joseph Aresty Department of Urology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, performed the surgery on patient Gary Fraadkin, a 62-year-old Van Nuys resident, who went home the same day, three to four days less than patients typically experience with kidney cancer surgery.

“Using a focused beam of ultrasound directly on the tumor and minimally invasive surgery, we destroyed the tumor without surgically removing it from the body,” Gill said. “The most important aspect of this technology are the reduced trauma to the patient and the ability to save the kidney, without the tumor, for a healthier lifestyle post-surgery. This surgery offers fewer chances for infection and post-operative complications. Our goal is to save as much of the good kidney as possible and help patients return to a normal lifestyle quickly.”

According to the American Cancer Society, nearly 64,000 new cases of kidney cancer will occur in 2014, of which nearly 14,000 Americans will die from the disease. Kidney cancer is one of the 10 most common cancers in men and women and has been on the increase since the 1990s. A typical patient at an average age of 65. Some research indicates the possible increase may be because of improved imaging tests. Yet, while diagnoses are increasing, survival rates are also increasing, especially among expert surgeons using advanced technology.

HIFU surgery is an option for patients whose tumors are four centimeters or smaller, which accounts for about 18 percent of all kidney tumors, Gill said. Although this surgery was on a kidney, HIFU surgery can also be an option for cancer of the prostate, liver, pancreas and other organs.

Open enrollment runs now through Nov. 14

By Talour Shahnian

The open enrollment period for benefits-eligible faculty and staff of the University is taking place now through Nov. 14, and employees are encouraged to choose Keck Medicine of USC physicians by signing up for the USC Network Medical Plan.

This plan gives you access to Keck Medicine of USC physicians who are leaders in their fields, including those at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, where patients have access to the latest treatment and clinical trials.

You also have a choice of physicians and convenient locations at competitive costs. Keck Medicine of USC has grown exponen-
tially, with locations in areas where staff and faculty live and work, including multi-specialty clinics in Downtown Los Angeles, Parkland, Beverly Hills and La Cañada Flintridge.

Many Keck Medicine of USC physicians have practices throughout Southern Californi-

a, specializing in primary care, obstetrics/ gynecology, surgery, oncology/hematology and urology.

A multi-specialty clinic at University Park Campus (UPC), on the fourth floor of the Engemann Student Health Center, is also a convenient option for staff and faculty working at UPC. The office is open 8 a.m. to noon and from 1-5 p.m. with same-day appointments available. Services provided there include dermatology, primary care, lab blood draw, orthopaedic surgery, endocrinology, gynecology and rheumatology.

In addition, USC Eye Institute locations now offer general ophthalmology services and take VSP insurance. These locations include Los Angeles, St. Jude Medical, is a tiny wireless sensor, powered by radiofrequency energy that is implanted into the pulmonary artery (PA) with minimally invasive surgery. The sensor tracks PA pressure through short, daily readings that the patient conducts using a special pillow with an antenna. Physicians access the readings on a secure website. Clinical trials conducted prior to FDA approval demonstrated a 30 percent reduction in hospital readmissions.

David Shavelle, MD, associate professor of clinical medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, implanted the device in patient Alfredo Delatorre, 71, of La Puente, Calif. on Oct. 15, 2014. “This device is a game changer for heart failure patients.” said Shavelle.

“Before this device, we made medication changes based upon a patient’s symptoms and changes in their weight. Changes in pressures within the heart often occur prior to the onset of a patient’s symptoms.”

The pivotal CHAMPION...
USC rolls out the cardinal carpet for guests on Stem Cell Awareness Day

By Cristy Lytal
When asked why stem cell research matters, guests at this year’s Stem Cell Awareness Day gave many creative answers.

“What is the most important potential of stem cells?”

“Because it has unlimited potential to treat human diseases.”

“Because every part of us except the soul comes from stem cells.”

“Because it’s the future.”

Held on October 8 at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, this annual open house attracted more than 100 guests ranging from high school students to patients.

“All the guests had the opportunity to enjoy stem cell-inspired paintings, sculpture and images; tour the labs; view research posters; participate in a wide array of fun activities; and nibble on light refreshments.”

Keck School of Medicine honors top teachers

The Keck School of Medicine of USC Dean’s Recognition Ceremony was held Sept. 24 on campus.

Honorees included:

• Outstanding Teaching as a Resident: Rayhan Lal, MD, Pediatrics
  • Daniel Martinez, MD, Medicine
  • Barbara Rubino, MD, Medicine
  • Allison Speet, MD, Surgery
• Outstanding Teaching in ICM: Year I: Bartlett Saunders, MD
  Year II: Howard Canewell, MD, Steve Morrison, MD
• Outstanding Teaching in PPM: Richard Clark, MD, Otolaryngology
  • Mark Katz, MD, Family Medicine
  • Ankit Shah, MD, Pediatrics
• Year I Faculty Teaching Awards: Gene Albrecht, PhD, Cell & Neurobiology
  • Rayudu Gopalakrishna, PhD, Cell & Neurobiology
  • Michael Habish, PhD, Cell & Neurobiology
  • Mikkel Snow, PhD, Cell & Neurobiology
  • Trivel Taylor, MD, PhD, Pathology
• Year II Faculty Teaching Awards: Rayudu Gopalakrishna, PhD, Cell & Neurobiology
  • Enrique Ostrzega, MD, Medicine
  • Seth Poliatno, DO, Medicine
  • Mikkel Snow, PhD, Cell & Neurobiology
  • Ruth Wood, PhD, Cell & Neurobiology
• Year III Faculty Teaching Awards: Jenny Jaque, MD, OB/GYN
  • Kenji Inaba, MD, Surgery
  • Enrique Ostrzega, MD, Medicine
  • Seth Poliatno, DO, Medicine
• Year IV Faculty Teaching Awards: Paral Bhatia, MD, Pediatrics
  • Enrique Ostrzega, MD, Medicine
  • Non-Faculty Instructor Award: Year I: Ryan Caserly, MD
  Year II: Sarah Norgaard, MD
  • Required Scholarly Project Outstanding Mentor Awards:
    • Jon Dettreisch, MD, Pediatrics
    • Kenji Inaba, MD, Surgery
    • William Mack, MD, Neurological Surgery
    • Neres Sanonssan, MD, Neurology
new Edmondson Faculty Center is lighter, brighter and open to all

By Leslie Ridgeway

An international study co-led by Keck School of Medicine scientists and researchers in the United Kingdom has revealed 23 new genetic susceptibility locations indicating risk for prostate cancer.

“The study, analyzing more than 87,000 individuals of European, African, Japanese and Latino ancestry, is the largest of its kind and is the first that combines multiple studies across different ethnic populations,” said principal investigator Christopher Haiman, ScD, professor of preventive medicine, Keck School of Medicine of USC. “This goal of this research is to identify regions of the genome that contribute susceptibility to prostate cancer that could be used for understanding a man’s future risk of developing this disease,” said principal investigator Christopher Haiman, ScD, professor of preventive medicine, Keck School of Medicine of USC. “This research also gives us new genetic susceptibility locations indicating risk for prostate cancer.”

The new room in the new study “gives us the ability to identify and to understand the causes of prostate cancer.”

The combined studies that are part of this research have been conducted around the world over the past seven years. The research is supported by the NCI GAME Consortium, formed to encourage interdisciplinary international collaborations. The study, “A meta-analysis of 87,040 individuals identifies 23 new susceptibility loci for prostate cancer,” was published Sept. 14, 2014 in Nature Genetics.

change with the seasons. Probably the biggest change is that they have done away with the membership rule and made the faculty center open to all faculty and senior staff who want to have a relaxed meal at the only sit down restaurant on the Health Sciences Campus.

Doing away with the membership was the only way to achieve another goal of the remodel, which was to create an elegant and welcoming space for faculty, staff and even visitors to the Health Sciences Campus.

USC Hospitality also decided to expand the hours. While the Edmondson only served lunch in the past, it will now also be open for breakfast and for what they are calling lounge hours in the late afternoon. The bar, too, has a new menu including several locally-sourced craft beers and specialty-crafted cocktails and mocktails with medically-themed names such as ‘doctor’s orders.

Just about the only thing that hasn’t changed at the Edmondson is the name. Although almost everything about the Edmondson needed a change, a decision was made to keep the name as a nod to its past and its history on campus.

Reservations can be made on OpenTable.com or through the Edmondson’s Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/TheEdmondson.

For more information, visit: http://www.theedmondson.com.

Open Enrollment: What You Need to Know

The USC Network Medical Plan offers the best choice of esteemed physicians, convenient locations and quality health care from Keck Medicine of USC, including:

- Personal appointment scheduling assistance through the Trojan Family Navigator at (323) TROJANS
- More than 600 Keck School of Medicine of USC faculty physicians
- Access to Keck Medical Center of USC and USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, as well as our physicians in more than 40 locations
- Access to USC Verdugo Hills Hospital in Glendale and its more than 300 physicians
- General ophthalmology care from the USC Eye Institute, ranked in the Top 10 nationally for 20 years by U.S. News & World Report (accepting VSP for employees and students)
- Access to PIH Health’s hospitals in Whittier and Downey, urgent care centers in Whittier and Hacienda Heights and its more than 300 physicians
- Personal appointment scheduling assistance through the Trojan Family Navigator at (323) TROJANS

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- Personal appointment scheduling assistance through the Trojan Family Navigator at (323) TROJANS

We encourage our participants to take advantage of the USC Network Medical Plan and its associated resources. We want our faculty and staff to see the benefits of the USC Network Medical Plan and to encourage their colleagues to do the same.

We offer right here at USC,“ said Tim Jackiewicz, MPH, senior vice president and CEO for USC Health which operates Keck Medicine of USC. “As we are expanding our locations, and whether you’re looking for a primary physician or a specialist, we want you to be our first choice.”

Signed benefits enrollment forms for changes or additions to medical, dental, vision, flexible spending accounts and disability insurance plans must be submitted by Friday, Nov. 14.

Forms are available for download at tinyurl.com/le6ntja.
Calendar of Events

Monday, Nov. 3

**Neon.** 830MB Research Seminar Series: “Regulation of Apoptotic Machinery to Overcome Melanoma Dual Resistance to Targeted Therapy and Immunotherapy by Chromatin Remodeling Drugs,” Ali R. Jaziri, UCLA. Anvaya Auditorium. Info: Mary Jane Chua, (323) 442-7732, maryjane.chua@med.usc.edu

Tuesday, Nov. 4

**Neon.** Institute for Global Health Lecture. “Character. The Ultimate Survival Tool,” Ethan Zohn, Grassroot Soccer. TCG 450. Info: globalhealth.usc.edu/ethanzohn

**Neon.** Psychiatry and the Behavioral Sciences Grand Rounds. “Hypnosis in Psychiatry: Using Hypnosis to Manage Symptoms as An Adjunct to Psychotherapy,” Marc Schoen, UCLA. Hollenback Seminar Room, ZNI 312. Info: Gracie Vargas, (323) 442-4065, grvargas@usc.edu

1 – 4 p.m., CTSI Workshop. “Utilize Digital & Social Media Data for Your Research (Workshop 4: Digital Scholar Initiative),” Ranja Reuter, USC. Harkness Auditorium. Info: Francesco Ugolo, (323) 442-1996 francisco ugolo@med.usc.edu, tinyurl.com/c2pmznx

4 p.m., Dean’s Distinguished Lecturer Series. General (Ret) David H. Petraeus, USC. Mayer Auditorium. Info and RSVP: www.usc.edu/cgsp (code: Petraeus). Live webcast: keckmedia.usc.edu

**Tuesday, Nov. 4**

**ZNI 112. Info: Julie Carl, (323) 442-3219, jcarl@usc.edu**

Tomer, PhD”, Stanford University. Herklotz Seminar Room, ZNI 112. Info: Gracie Vargas, (323) 361-8715, lrabin@chla.usc.edu, chla.org/tecpad

**Thursday, Nov. 6**

8:30 a.m., Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine Lecture. “Recrulation Injury.” Baljinder Bhatia, USC. BRD 734. Info: Elva Rubio, (323) 226-7923, elvarubi@usc.edu

**Neon.** The Saban Research Institute Seminar. “Structure and Function of the Helicobacter pylori CagA Oncoprotein,” Masanori Hatakeyama, University of Tokyo. Saban Research Building, first-floor auditorium. CBLA. Info: Laura Rubin, (323) 361-8715, lrubini@chla.usc.edu, chla.org/cpbspd

**Friday, Nov. 7**

11 a.m., Jane Ann Nohl Division of Hematology and Center for the Study of Blood Diseases Grand Rounds. “Adult ALL-Chemotherapy Revisited and Novel Agents,” Dan Donner, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. LAC+USC Medical Center Inpatient Tower Conference Room D. Info: Carolyn Castellanos, (323) 865-3913, carolyn.castellanos@med.usc.edu


**Saturday, Nov. 8**

7 a.m. – 5 p.m., Continuing Medical Education. “An Update on Esophageal Diseases.” University Club of Pasadena, 175 East Sierra Madre Villa, Pasadena. Info: Teresa Ball, (323) 442-2555, teresa.ball@med.usc.edu, emcetracker.net/KECK/ Catalog/eventid=32120

In case of an emergency...

**Call the Emergency Information Phone:** (213) 740-3323 The emergency telephone system can handle 1,400 simultaneous calls. It also has a backup system on the East Coast.

Visit the USC Web: http://emergency.usc.edu This page will be activated in case of an emergency. Backup Web servers on the East Coast will function if the USC servers are incapacitated.

HEART: Wireless device paves way for heart failure diagnosis and treatment

Continued from Page 1

Clinical study that evaluated the CardioMEMS device showed that medication changes based upon changes in pressures measured by the device reduced future hospitalizations.

He added, “Now that we have access to pressure data in real time, this will allow us to respond and adjust treatment much faster; responding faster will allow us to reduce future hospitalizations for heart failure.”

Delatorre said the implant offers him a chance to celebrate his 50th wedding anniversary in 2015 with his wife and two daughters, and to watch his five grandchildren grow up. Raised outside a small town in Zacatecas, Mexico, that had only two doctors, Delatorre says he is amazed by the technology that is helping him live longer.

“My mother used home remedies,” said Delatorre, “but this is different.”

In October 2012, Delatorre received the first implant in the United States, according to the American Heart Association, taking more than 380,000 American lives each year. Cardiovascular diseases kill more Americans than all forms of cancer combined, with heart disease accounting for one in six deaths in the U.S.

Heart failure occurs when the heart cannot pump enough blood throughout the body. Causes include a past heart attack, high blood pressure, abnormal heart valves and diabetes. Those suffering from heart failure experience shortness of breath, fatigue, nausea, increased heart rate and water retention leading to swelling of the abdomen, legs and feet and an inability to sleep lying flat due to fluid buildup in the lungs. Some patients can recover heart function and lead normal lives, some require transplants or an implanted ventricular assist device and some have limited physical function and require frequent hospitalizations.

Typically, heart failure affects people age 65 or older, although it can strike at any age and sometimes during pregnancy in younger women.

**Useful Links**

**USC Health Sciences**

Public Relations and Marketing

213 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 210

Los Angeles, CA 90025

(213) 740-3323

www.usc.edu

Newspaper:

Jon Nalick

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