USC surgeons save a little girl beset by a big tumor

By Lee Densahl

For Adrianna Bowman, a life of promise and potential was quickly beset by a large tumor — a massive acoustic neuroma that grew over five years to compress her brain and jeopardize basic life function. It was only after Adrianna’s quick and decisive surgery that the entire tumor was resected in one treatment that she could be able to lead an active life that seemed perfectly healthy, a child posed an immediate threat to Adrianna’s life function. It was compressing her brain stem and could be deadly if not removed.

Quick and decisive action was needed. So on Sept. 8, just one week after Adrianna started kindergarten, she underwent brain surgery performed by Rick A. Friedman and Steven L. Giannotta, two world-class surgeons from USC’s Acoustic Neuroma Center.

“It was imperative that the entire tumor was resected in one treatment to preserve the quality of life for Adrianna,” said Giannotta, MD, chair of neurological surgery for the Keck School of Medicine of USC. “This was a challenging tumor considering the size and Adrianna’s age,” he explained, “requiring delicate dissection around her significantly impaired facial nerve.”

The result? Complete and gratifying success.

“We saved her life,” Friedman proudly said later. “Adrianna is my youngest acoustic neuroma patient, and it was incredibly humbling to be able to help her and provide such a successful outcome.”

Friedman, MD, PhD, the director of otology, neurotology and skull base surgery who offered tributes to former Keck School dean Brian Henderson, said, “We saved her life,” Friedman proudly said later. “Adrianna is my youngest acoustic neuroma patient, and it was incredibly humbling to be able to help her and provide such a successful outcome.”

Friedman, MD, PhD, the director of otology, neurotology and skull base surgery who offered tributes to former Keck School dean Brian Henderson, said, “We saved her life,” Friedman proudly said later. “Adrianna is my youngest acoustic neuroma patient, and it was incredibly humbling to be able to help her and provide such a successful outcome.”

USC’s Acoustic Neuroma Center.

Six days after surgery, Adrianna Bowman works with physical therapist Jenny Tanaka as parents Alona and Darryl Bowman observe. Adrianna Bowman with USC surgeon Rick Friedman.

Leadership Awards recognize pillars of Keck Medicine of USC

K ceck Medicine of USC recently recognized its 2015 Leadership Awards to a handful of department leaders whose work exemplifies the pillars of the organization.

Tom Jackiewicz, senior vice president and CEO of Keck Medicine of USC, announced the award recipients at a breakfast event on Sept. 16.

The winner of the Quality Award is Kim Le, director of pharmacy and investigational drug services at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center. She was recognized for efforts that included implementation of a USP 797-compliant sterile compounding room and process changes to enhance physician, coordinator and patient experiences.

The People and Collaboration Award went to Susana Perez, director of noninvasive cardiovascular diagnostic services at Keck Hospital of USC, who was recognized as a “truly reliable partner to any and all who work with her.” She is also credited with achieving important accreditation standards for her area.

Jeana Rettig, executive director of clinical marketing, received the Growth Award for her efforts to promote clinical stars and programs, as well as her capacity to make tactical recommendations that are always cost effective.

New facility brings gene editing to USC and beyond

By Cristy Lytal

O nce the stuff of science fiction, gene editing is now a reality at USC. The new facility genetically modifies embryonic stem cells and induced pluripotent stem cells, which can be derived and propagated by the existing CIRM Stem Cell Core Facility, also located at USC’s stem cell research center. They are genetically modified stem cells derived from human patients or animals provide an opportunity to investigate the mechanisms of disease and to develop treatments.

With these genetic modifications, investigators can expose some of the investigator’s gift in a way that can be used to develop new treatments for a variety of diseases. The new facility will serve researchers at USC as well as at other institutions.

“My hope for this facility is to change people’s lives and make people live longer and better,” said alumna Daniel Chang, who gave the gift with his wife Gai Li, son Jorlly, and daughter and USC freshman Carissa. “USC is our first stop in searching for the American dream. At USC, not only did I learn a lot, but I also started to get to know America and meet my mentor for life, Dr. Ferdinand A. Kröger, a professor of pharmacy and investigator at Keck Medicine of USC. ‘The Keck School of Medicine and founding chair of the school’s nationally-ranked Department of Preventive Medicine, passed away June 20 in his San Marino home after a 13-month battle with lung cancer. He was 77.

Several hundred faculty members, students, friends and family members gathered Sept. 16 at Mayer Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus to remember Henderson, one of the world’s preeminent authorities in cancer epidemiology. Among those in attendance were USC President C. L. Max Nikias, Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito and USC Norris Director Stephen B. Gruber.

“A towering figure in medicine, Dr. Henderson’s contributions as a physician, scholar and leader transformed our understanding of the hormonal basis of many human cancers, and led the way to effective medicines to prevent and treat cancer,” Gruber said after Henderson died. “He saved countless lives.”

HSC remembers former Dean Brian Henderson

By Douglas Morino

They gathered to remember a colleague, mentor and leader — a “towering figure in American medicine” — whose work in cancer research at Keck Medicine of USC echoed across the globe.

Brian Henderson, former dean of the Keck School of Medicine and founding chair of the school’s nationally-ranked Department of Preventive Medicine, passed away June 20 in his San Marino home after a 13-month battle with lung cancer. He was 77.

Several hundred faculty members, students, friends and family members gathered Sept. 16 at Mayer Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus to remember Henderson, one of the world’s preeminent authorities in cancer epidemiology. Among those in attendance were USC President C. L. Max Nikias, Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito and USC Norris Director Stephen B. Gruber.

“A towering figure in medicine, Dr. Henderson’s contributions as a physician, scholar and leader transformed our understanding of the hormonal basis of many human cancers, and led the way to effective medicines to prevent and treat cancer,” Gruber said after Henderson died. “He saved countless lives.”

Leadership Awards recognize pillars of Keck Medicine of USC

K eeck Medicine of USC recently presented its 2015 Leadership Awards to a handful of department leaders whose work exemplifies the pillars of the organization.

Tom Jackiewicz, senior vice president and CEO of Keck Medicine of USC, announced the award recipients at a breakfast event on Sept. 16.

The winner of the Quality Award is Kim Le, director of pharmacy and investigational drug services at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center. She was recognized for efforts that included implementation of a USP 797-compliant sterile compounding room and process changes to enhance
Quality counts in new master’s degree at School of Pharmacy
By Laura Stirratt

On the road to success is a concern for every major industry. It links customer satisfaction, business practices and success. We’ve all been asked, “Would you be willing to stay on the line for a brief quality survey?”

In spring 2016, the International Center for Regulatory Science at USC will roll out its newest program MS in Medical Product Quality (MPQ), which offers advanced training for health care careers in quality management.

Professionals working in quality assurance and quality control ensure the safety of drugs, biologics and medical devices in the United States and internationally. The biomedical industry and government cannot function enough highly trained personnel. “We developed this program to provide feedback from industry,” said Program Director Michael Jamieson, DBE. “They told us these are hard positions to fill.”

Indeed, Joann Kurr, senior director for Johnson & Johnson’s Complaint Management and Post-Market Surveillance program, said, “This program fills a critical gap in the industry...because traditionally there hasn’t been a place where people could get training in medical device quality.”

The MS in Medical Product Quality is designed for those interested in a career in medical devices, pharmaceuticals or combination products. Prospective students may already be working in related industries or looking for a change of career. Others may be completing undergraduate or graduate work in biological, pharmaceutical and biomedical sciences or biomedical engineering.

The program develops leaders who can expedite delivery of medical advances to the people who need them while ensuring that safety standards are met. Students learn the theory behind regulations that impact product quality and engage in practical projects that typify industry careers.

Moving Targets hits a bulls-eye

With the theme of “Breakthrough Therapies in Immunology, the 14th annual Moving Targets Symposium addressed novel paradigms and how to transform regulatory hurdles in harnessing the immune system to treat neurological disorders, infectious diseases and cancer.

Topics included stem cell biology, delivery to the central nervous system, global health and infectious diseases, and immunology.

The USC chapter of the American Association of Immunologists (AAAI) presents this daylong research symposium each year. The event attracts nearly 240 students, faculty and scientists from industry and the academy — the largest attendance for Moving Targets’ history.

Robertta Dase Brin, PhD, holder of the R. Pete Vanderven Chair in Therapeutic Discovery and Development at the School of Pharmacy, delivered the keynote address.

Gene Olinger, principal scientist at Merck Global, spoke on crossing the blood-brain barrier for neurotherapeutics. “I had hoped to impart some of my experience and knowledge to the attendees. Reflecting, I realize now that the topics and engagement of the other speakers and students clearly provided me with greater knowledge and understanding than I contributed.”

Continued from page 1

James: “This was amazing to hear. The room,” Haiman said. “The more people I met, the more they told me about themselves.”

Henderson and his wife, Judith, worshipped for more than 30 years. Henderson, who believed in his ability to influence people and touch their lives with his compassion, had a deep connection to the attendees. “To not only minister to those in need, but to belong to those in need,” Haiman said. “The scientific footprint he left on this world is much larger than any of us will know.”

Henderson served as Keck School of Medicine professor Christopher Haiman, ScD, Henderson’s son, Sean O’Brien Henderson, MD. “His work inspired me and many others in this room,” Haiman said. “The scientific footprint he left on this world is much larger than any of us will know.”

Henderson said his father had tremendous vision, and he felt a deep connection to USC and the Health Sciences community. “His relationship with USC was an intimate one,” Haiman said. “He was very comfortable here. He was at home here, and proud to be a member of the Trojan Family.”

Friday, Oct. 9, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. USC Caruso Department of Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery Symposium. Conference. Audrey Auditorium. Info: Brenda Villegas (323) 442-5790, medlib@usc.edu. RSVP: www.usc.edu/swsp code: larotergermeet15

Wednesday, Oct. 14


Tuesday, Oct. 20

11 a.m., USC Stem Cell Seminar. Arturo Alvarez-Blaya, UC San Francisco. Eli and Edythe Broad GRM Center Auditorium. Info: Crisy Lartey (323) 442-2172, tyrah@med.usc.edu. Info: (323) 442-8715, ucpa@hls.usc.edu

Professor Sean O’Brien Henderson, MD, said his father was “proud to be a member of the Trojan Family.”

Continued from page 1

It was the first director of the Zilkha Neurogenic Institute and was director of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center when the USC Norris Cancer Hospital opened in 1983.

In 1972, Henderson set up the Los Angeles Cancer Surveillance Program — the county’s cancer registry — at USC. It remains a valuable resource to researchers across the globe.

A Bay Area native, Henderson loved spending time with his family, enjoying the outdoors and taking road trips to Yosemite.

Henderson said his father had tremendous vision, and he felt a deep connection to USC and the Health Sciences community. “His relationship with USC was an intimate one,” Haiman said. “He was very comfortable here. He was at home here, and proud to be a member of the Trojan Family.”

School of Medicine dean between 2004 and 2007. He steered some of the school’s most prominent research centers and held the Kenneth T. Norris Jr. Chair in Cancer Prevention. He was the first director of the Zilkha Neurogenic Institute and was director of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center when the USC Norris Cancer Hospital opened in 1983.

In 1972, Henderson set up the Los Angeles Cancer Surveillance Program — the county’s cancer registry — at USC. It remains a valuable resource to researchers across the globe.

A Bay Area native, Henderson loved spending time with his family, enjoying the outdoors and taking road trips to Yosemite.

Henderson said his father had tremendous vision, and he felt a deep connection to USC and the Health Sciences community. “His relationship with USC was an intimate one,” Haiman said. “He was very comfortable here. He was at home here, and proud to be a member of the Trojan Family.”
In the kidney, injured cells can be kicked into reparative mode by a gene called Sox9, according to a new paper published in Cell Reports.

First author Sanjeev Kumar, MD, PhD, a postdoctoral research associate in the USC Stem Cell laboratory of Andy McMahon, PhD, found that surviving injured cells switch on the Sox9 gene as a response to kidney damage. This regenerates the injured cellular lining of the nephron, the functional unit of the kidney, and repairs the kidney after acute kidney injury (AKI).

By recruiting the majority of the surviving cells of the epithelium to aid in the timely repair of a severely injured organ, the kidney’s Sox9 strategy contrasts with the stem cell-based repair strategy of many other organ systems.

“Currently, no treatment exists to treat AKI per se. Identifying the kidney’s intrinsic mechanisms of repair is critical for developing treatments to kick start the kidneys after AKI, a serious condition with an in-hospital mortality rate exceeding 50 percent,” said Kumar.

In sections of the kidney that fail to repair, Sox9 remains down regulated, demarcating regions of inefficient repair responses. Further interrogation of such regions could provide a crucial link between AKI and its transition to chronic and end-stage kidney disease.

Sox9 also plays a key role in the normal development of the kidney. Additional co-authors include Jing Liu, PhD; Paul Pang, A. Michael Krautzberger, DVM, PhD, and Andy McMahon, PhD, FRS, from USC, and researchers at the Centre de Biochimie in Nice, France, Gifu University in Japan and Harvard Medical School.

Gene activates cells to repair an injured kidney

By Cristy Lofland

The new surgical method was first performed in 2014 by a team led by Inderbir S. Gill, MD, founding executive director of the USC Institute of Urology, for treatment of a type of cancer of the kidney that causes severe vomiting, nausea, and vomiting in patients who have had surgery for renal cancer. The new surgical method was first performed in 2014 by a team led by Inderbir S. Gill, MD, founding executive director of the USC Institute of Urology, for treatment of a type of cancer of the kidney that causes severe vomiting, nausea, and vomiting in patients who have had surgery for renal cancer.

P

P

A closer look: The USC Eye Institute held an open house at its Beverly Hills facility on Sept. 9 for USC Associates and other invited guests. Jill Petty, above, examines some of the equipment during a tour. Among the speakers was Carmen A. Puliafito, dean of the Keck School of Medicine, shown right with Karen Wong and Michael and Jacqueline Quon.

Groundbreaking robotic procedure detailed in journal

By Les Dunseith

A new article in the Journal of Urology details a pioneering robotic surgical procedure developed in the Department of Urology for treatment of a particularly challenging type of kidney cancer.

The new surgical method was first performed in 2014 by a team led by Inderbir S. Gill, MD, founding executive director of the USC Institute of Urology, for treatment of a type of cancer of the kidney that causes severe vomiting, nausea, and vomiting in patients who have had surgery for renal cancer. The new surgical method was first performed in 2014 by a team led by Inderbir S. Gill, MD, founding executive director of the USC Institute of Urology, for treatment of a type of cancer of the kidney that causes severe vomiting, nausea, and vomiting in patients who have had surgery for renal cancer.

Previously, the standard treatment involved a complicated procedure — inferior vena cava (IVC) thrombectomy — that was performed using a large open incision, primarily because the vein is often difficult to reach. In the Journal of Urology article, surgeons from Keck Medicine of USC describe the world’s first cases in which this procedure was successfully performed robotically, using the new Da Vinci scissor and four robotic tools.

Gill, chairman and professor, Catherine and Joseph Arefrey Department of Urology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, said, “Level III IVC tumor thrombectomy for renal cancer is one of the most challenging open urologic oncologic surgeries. While IVC tumor thrombus occurs in only 4 to 10 percent of all patients with otherwise organ-confined kidney cancer, surgery is the only cure. The ability to perform this complicated procedure in a minimally invasive way represents a major advancement.”

In the article, the authors report on nine patients with renal cancer and Level III thrombi treated with robotic IVC thrombectomy. After about seven months of follow-up, all have survived and eight show no evidence of disease. One patient had a preexisting spinal tumor and has since undergone further surgery.

The report also details seven additional robotic surgeries on patients with smaller thrombi (Level II), and compares tumor sizes, operating room times, blood losses, length of hospital stays, and other details for Level III and Level II cases.

Because the surgery involves removal of the thrombus as well as removal of the diseased kidney, the surgeon must remove the clot first to prevent it from breaking off and causing a potentially fatal embolism. This requires many blood vessels to be clamped.

“Any necessary surgical maneuvers could be performed completely robotically without open conversion or mortality,” according to the article. “This is a big deal because it allows for a robotic performance of the challenging vascular, oncologic and reconstructive procedures inherent herein opens the door for major renal, caval and hepatic robotic surgeries in the future,” writes Gill and his colleagues.

“Our approach is different because it has a robotic approach and it is able to perform this surgery minimally invasively,” said Gill.

The authors of the article include Gill and fellow Keck Medicine of USC physicians Charles Mercafte, Andre Abreu, Vinay Duddalwar, Sameer Chopra, Mark J. Cunningham, Duraiyah Thangathurai, Daisyu Ukimura, Raj Narasimavasam, Andrew Hung, Rocco Papilla, Monish Aton, Mihir Desai and Michele Gallucci.

GIRL: 5-year-old has life-saving surgery

Continued from page 1

base surgery for Keck Medicine of USC, had come to the attention of Alona Bowman and her husband Darryl as a result of their frantic search for help upon first learning of her daughter’s condition. Alona Bowman found an online community of acoustic neuroma patients, which in turn embraced the family and helped connect them with Kristine Sroek, a patient navigator at the USC Acoustic Neuroma Center.

“I was determined to find the best team,” a relieved and grateful Alona Bowman recalled just a few days after the surgery. “We felt reassured after speaking with Dr. Friede, hearing the compassion in his voice.”

Alona Bowman also credited the guidance and compassion she received from non-surgical staff members who assisted with her daughter’s care.

“It was a relief to have the patient navigator, who listened to my concerns and guided me through every step of the process,” Alona Bowman said. “For once, I didn’t have to do all the work; someone was making sure the process was working.”

Acoustic neuromas are usually diagnosed in adults ages 30 to 60, but they can occur at any age. Located on the eighth cranial nerve, the tumors can affect balance, hearing and facial nerve function. In Adrianna’s surgery, the tumor was removed via a trans labyrinthine approach, which means an incision made directly behind her left ear.

Just six days after the operation, Adrianna and her parents were back at the Acoustic Neuroma Center to complete follow-up appointments. Adrianna, recovering more quickly than the family ever imagined, danced playfully in sparkly sneakers and a colorful dress. She joked with Dr. Friede, soon stopping by to check her progress and make sure she was healing well. He praised the little girl’s courage and optimism during the ordeal and reassured Adrianna’s parents that everything was going great.

“We were a team — a family team — working together to test the little girl’s balance. Friedeman soon stopped by to check her progress and make sure she was healing well. He praised the little girl’s courage and optimism during the ordeal and reassured Adrianna’s parents that everything was going great.

“This doesn’t work! — often a robotic performance of the challenging vascular, oncologic and reconstructive procedures inherent herein opens the door for major renal, caval and hepatic robotic surgeries in the future,” writes Gill and his colleagues.

“Our approach is different because it has a robotic approach and it is able to perform this surgery minimally invasively,” said Gill.

The authors of the article include Gill and fellow Keck Medicine of USC physicians Charles Mercafte, Andre Abreu, Vinay Duddalwar, Sameer Chopra, Mark J. Cunningham, Duraiyah Thangathurai, Daisyu Ukimura, Raj Narasimavasam, Andrew Hung, Rocco Papilla, Monish Aton, Mihir Desai and Michele Gallucci.

Jenny Tanka, a physical therapist, who used a scene from the animated movie to gauge Adrianna’s sensory responses. Then they took a walk — followed by a test of the little girl’s balance. Friedeman soon stopped by to check her progress and make sure she was healing well. He praised the little girl’s courage and optimism during the ordeal and reassured Adrianna’s parents that everything was going great.

“All necessary surgical maneuvers could be performed completely robotically without open conversion or mortality,” according to the article. “This is a big deal because it allows for a robotic performance of the challenging vascular, oncologic and reconstructive procedures inherent herein opens the door for major renal, caval and hepatic robotic surgeries in the future,” writes Gill and his colleagues.

“Our approach is different because it has a robotic approach and it is able to perform this surgery minimally invasively,” said Gill.

The authors of the article include Gill and fellow Keck Medicine of USC physicians Charles Mercafte, Andre Abreu, Vinay Duddalwar, Sameer Chopra, Mark J. Cunningham, Duraiyah Thangathurai, Daisyu Ukimura, Raj Narasimavasam, Andrew Hung, Rocco Papilla, Monish Aton, Mihir Desai and Michele Gallucci.

LEADERS: Accomplishments recognized

Continued from page 1

effective and impactful. Director of Pan-Asian Andy Stringfellow received the Resource Management Award for oversight of space planning and capital management, consistently working to install processes that ensure space is put to the best use.

Receiving the Service and Access Award was Armin Karsavi, director of clinical applications, in recognition of his effort to keep KeckCare intact. Karsavi, who has had his hand in almost every operational aspect of the health system, was also lauded for going above and beyond by providing direct support to end users while also operating at a senior level.

Henry Oedel, director of anatomic pathology laboratory services, was recognized as the Roskie WOW Award recipient. His immediate impact upon joining Keck Medicine of USC included efforts to bring his team of faculty and staff together in a way that elevates the professionalism of pathol- ogy services, improving turnaround times and report quality. His efforts also helped to produce significant cost savings.
**USC Norris gets funds for breast cancer outreach**

By Kenneth Hallows, MD, PhD, an internationally recognized expert in ion transport physiology, Hallows joined Keck Medicine of USC on July 1 from the University of Pittsburgh where he was a core director in the O’Brien Pittsburgh Center for Kidney Research. Along with Hallows, researcher Nura M. Pastor-Soler, MD, PhD, a former associate professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh, has joined the center.

"I am excited for the potential of the research that will be done here," said Hallows, chief of the division of Nephrology and Hypertension. "It’s a great opportunity to forge new collaborations across Keck Medicine of USC. We’re looking forward to building a core group of researchers dedicated to finding better treatments and cures for various kidney diseases."

**New USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center unveiled**

The goal of the program is to increase minority accruals into USC’s breast cancer clinical protocols through the Clinical Investigations Support Office led by Anthony E. Khoury, MD, assistant professor of clinical medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Other key participants include Research Coordinator Elena Nieves, Zul Surani, executive director of the USC Community Partnerships Office; Clinic Engagement and Julie Lang, MD, a breast surgeon and associate professor at the Keck School. The V Foundation for Cancer Research was founded in 1983 by Jim Valvano, the head basketball coach at North Carolina State University, who died of cancer in 1993. His "don’t give up... don’t ever give up!" mentality was an instrumental aspect of Valvano’s battle against cancer, and the V Foundation carries on that legacy. Over the years, the V Foundation has supported many USC Norris physicians and scientists with cancer research grants.

---

**Surgeons pioneer robotic procedure**

By Douglas Morlino

Research dedicated to finding a cure to kidney disease now have a new home at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. The newly established USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center features modern labs and state-of-the-art equipment for conducting critical research into the causes and treatments for kidney disease, which, at the 9th leading cause of death in the U.S. and affects about 29 million Americans. Supported by an initial $3.5 million pledge from the University Kidney Research Organization, the USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center will be led by Kenneth Hallows, MD, PhD, an internationally recognized expert in ion transport physiology. Hallows joined Keck Medicine of USC on July 1 from the University of Pittsburgh where he was a core director in the O’Brien Pittsburgh Center for Kidney Research. Along with Hallows, researcher Nura M. Pastor-Soler, MD, PhD, a former associate professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh, has joined the center.

"I am excited for the potential of the research that will be done here," said Hallows, chief of the division of Nephrology and Hypertension. "It’s a great opportunity to forge new collaborations across Keck Medicine of USC. We’re looking forward to building a core group of researchers dedicated to finding better treatments and cures for various kidney diseases."

The center occupies two floors in the Mudd Memorial Research Building building on the Health Sciences Campus, and includes six labs.

---

**Family from China makes donation to USC Norris cancer researcher**

By Claire Orphan and Cristy Lytal

Andy McMahon, PhD, director of USC’s stem cell research center, said, “This is a unique pipeline that no other institution has, and it will provide the technical platform to enable scientists at USC and beyond to take their pluripotent stem cell research to the next level creating sophisticated disease models and ultimately developing translational therapies.”

The goal of the program is to increase minority accruals into USC’s breast cancer clinical protocols through the Clinical Investigations Support Office led by Anthony E. Khoury, MD, assistant professor of clinical medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Other key participants include Research Coordinator Elena Nieves, Zul Surani, executive director of the USC Community Partnerships Office; Clinic Engagement and Julie Lang, MD, a breast surgeon and associate professor at the Keck School. The V Foundation for Cancer Research was founded in 1983 by Jim Valvano, the head basketball coach at North Carolina State University, who died of cancer in 1993. His “don’t give up... don’t ever give up!” mentality was an instrumental aspect of Valvano’s battle against cancer, and the V Foundation carries on that legacy. Over the years, the V Foundation has supported many USC Norris physicians and scientists with cancer research grants.

---

**The cutting-edge cancer research being done by Nii-Yi Chen, MD, PhD, of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center recently received a generous donation and a pledge totaling $1.45 million from Yi-Lin Zhu and his family, who live in China. The gift will support Chen’s efforts to develop tumor immunotherapy by Chen, who is a professor of molecular microbiology and immunology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Chen is an internationally recognized expert in tumor immunology and immunotherapy. For two decades, he has been an internationally recognized expert in tumor immunology and immunotherapy. For two decades, he has been a core group of researchers dedicated to finding better treatments and cures for various kidney diseases.”

The center occupies two floors in the Mudd Memorial Research Building building on the Health Sciences Campus, and includes six labs.

---

**Family from China makes donation to USC Norris cancer researcher**

By Claire Orphan and Cristy Lytal

Andy McMahon, PhD, director of USC’s stem cell research center, said, “This is a unique pipeline that no other institution has, and it will provide the technical platform to enable scientists at USC and beyond to take their pluripotent stem cell research to the next level creating sophisticated disease models and ultimately developing translational therapies.”

The goal of the program is to increase minority accruals into USC’s breast cancer clinical protocols through the Clinical Investigations Support Office led by Anthony E. Khoury, MD, assistant professor of clinical medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Other key participants include Research Coordinator Elena Nieves, Zul Surani, executive director of the USC Community Partnerships Office; Clinic Engagement and Julie Lang, MD, a breast surgeon and associate professor at the Keck School. The V Foundation for Cancer Research was founded in 1983 by Jim Valvano, the head basketball coach at North Carolina State University, who died of cancer in 1993. His “don’t give up... don’t ever give up!” mentality was an instrumental aspect of Valvano’s battle against cancer, and the V Foundation carries on that legacy. Over the years, the V Foundation has supported many USC Norris physicians and scientists with cancer research grants.

---

**New USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center unveiled**

By Douglas Morlino

Research dedicated to finding a cure to kidney disease now have a new home at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. The newly established USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center features modern labs and state-of-the-art equipment for conducting critical research into the causes and treatments for kidney disease, which, at the 9th leading cause of death in the U.S. and affects about 29 million Americans. Supported by an initial $3.5 million pledge from the University Kidney Research Organization, the USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center will be led by Kenneth Hallows, MD, PhD, an internationally recognized expert in ion transport physiology. Hallows joined Keck Medicine of USC on July 1 from the University of Pittsburgh where he was a core director in the O’Brien Pittsburgh Center for Kidney Research. Along with Hallows, researcher Nura M. Pastor-Soler, MD, PhD, a former associate professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh, has joined the center.

"I am excited for the potential of the research that will be done here,” said Hallows, chief of the division of Nephrology and Hypertension. “It’s a great opportunity to forge new collaborations across Keck Medicine of USC. We’re looking forward to building a core group of researchers dedicated to finding better treatments and cures for various kidney diseases.”

The center occupies two floors in the Mudd Memorial Research Building building on the Health Sciences Campus, and includes six labs.

---

**Family from China makes donation to USC Norris cancer researcher**

By Claire Orphan and Cristy Lytal

Andy McMahon, PhD, director of USC’s stem cell research center, said, “This is a unique pipeline that no other institution has, and it will provide the technical platform to enable scientists at USC and beyond to take their pluripotent stem cell research to the next level creating sophisticated disease models and ultimately developing translational therapies.”

The goal of the program is to increase minority accruals into USC’s breast cancer clinical protocols through the Clinical Investigations Support Office led by Anthony E. Khoury, MD, assistant professor of clinical medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Other key participants include Research Coordinator Elena Nieves, Zul Surani, executive director of the USC Community Partnerships Office; Clinic Engagement and Julie Lang, MD, a breast surgeon and associate professor at the Keck School. The V Foundation for Cancer Research was founded in 1983 by Jim Valvano, the head basketball coach at North Carolina State University, who died of cancer in 1993. His “don’t give up... don’t ever give up!” mentality was an instrumental aspect of Valvano’s battle against cancer, and the V Foundation carries on that legacy. Over the years, the V Foundation has supported many USC Norris physicians and scientists with cancer research grants.