

Researchers flock to Keck School's Stem Cell Symposium

By Alison Trinidad

It was standing room only at the Stem Cell Symposium hosted by the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC.

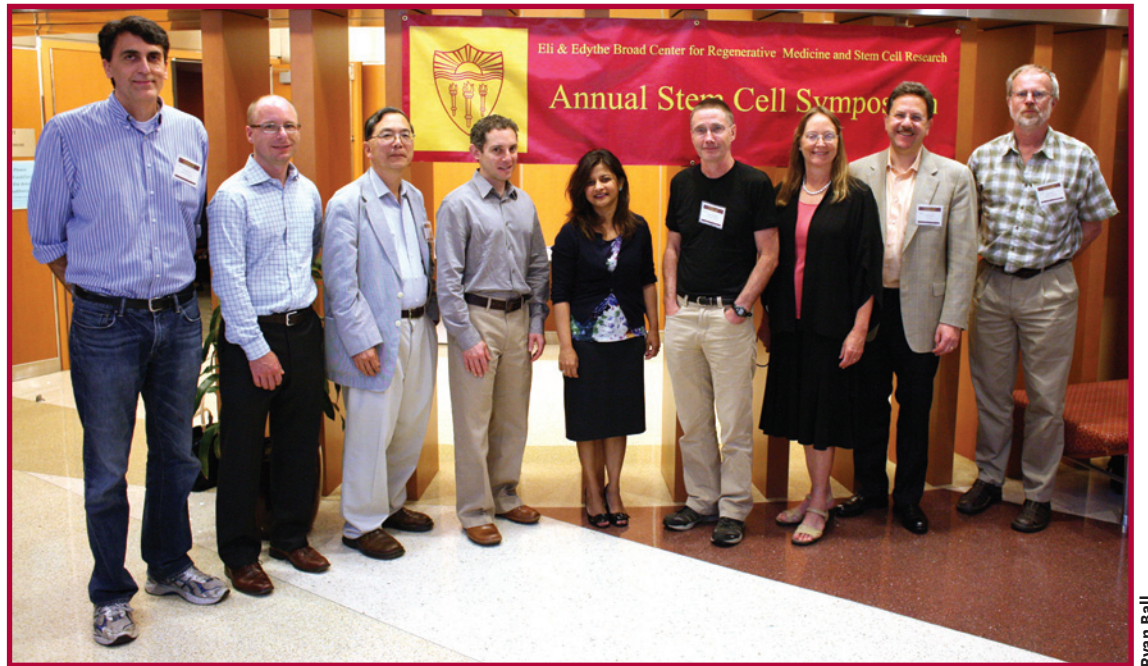
Close to 200 researchers, students and postdocs from all over California and the world packed into Aresty Auditorium and an adjacent conference room June 8, to hear scientists from prestigious universities discuss their stem cell research.

Participants also explored networking and collaboration opportunities that the organizers hope will help further knit together the state's stem cell community, brought to the fore by the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM).

"This symposium is a way to highlight research from USC and to bring together the world's best scientists to talk about their findings and develop connections with each other," said Andrew McMahon, who takes over as director of the Broad Center on July 1. "The CIRM initiative has brought researchers in California together in cross-institutional partnerships, and events like this symposium enable those partnerships to flourish."

'This symposium is a way to highlight research from USC and to bring together the world's best scientists to talk about their findings and develop connections with each other.'

—Andrew McMahon, director designate of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC



From left at the symposium are speakers Paul Khavari, Jeremy Reiter, Cheng-Ming Chuong, Ophir Klein, Tannishtha Reya, Andrew McMahon, Margaret Fuller, Arthur Lander and Roel Nusse.

McMahon was one of nine presenters from USC; Stanford University; University of California, Irvine; University of California, San Diego; and University of California, San Francisco. The speakers focused on the stem cell niche and its role in development and regeneration. The stem cell niche—the microenvironment inside an organism where stem cells live—has attracted increasing attention within the stem cell community of late, said Kathryn Rich, senior program director and a chair of the organizing committee.

"There have not been many conferences about the stem cell niche, and this symposium is an important opportunity to invite stem cell scientists from diverse model systems and backgrounds together to facilitate new ideas and connections," said Rich. "We hope this symposium also encourages more students and postdocs into the field."

The symposium followed an international stem cell techniques course offered by the USC Stem Cell Core Facility, a central repository of knowledge, resources and technology available to

researchers working with stem cells. The course attracted scientists from the United Kingdom, South Korea and Mexico, who stayed for the symposium.

Organizing committee members included Rich, Gregor Adams, Kris Kobiela and Wange Lu. Speakers included Cheng-Ming Chuong, USC; Margaret T. Fuller, Roel Nusse and Paul A. Khavari, Stanford; Arthur D. Lander, UCI; Tannishtha Reya, UCSD; and Ophir Klein and Jeremy Reiter, UCSF.

The symposium was funded in part by a grant from CIRM.

USC School of Pharmacy receives \$12 million grant—its largest ever

By Kukla Vera

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has awarded the USC School of Pharmacy a \$12 million grant—the largest ever received by the school.

The grant will bring pharmacists into safety net clinics in Southern California as a way to improve medication adherence and safe and appropriate use of prescription drugs, with the intended result of optimizing patient health while reducing avoidable hospitalizations and emergency room visits.

"The project is designed to address both the widespread misuse of prescribed medications and the shortage of primary care providers in low-income populations," said Geoffrey Joyce, the principal investigator on the project and an associate professor at the USC School of Pharmacy.

"Further, pharmacists are remarkably underutilized in the U.S. health care system, and this demonstration will test and evaluate the impact of using them in primary care settings."

Joyce is the director of health policy at the Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics at USC, globally recognized for work that promotes health and value in health care delivery through innovative research and policy.

Nationally, poor adherence to prescription drugs is reaching epidemic proportions, resulting in suboptimal health outcomes, avoidable hospitalizations, higher risk of death and as much as \$290 billion in avoidable medical spending each year. More than half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, and for 90 percent of these patients medications are the first line

of treatment. Finding a way to get people to correctly take their medicine is an imperative step in transforming the health care system to improve care and save money, the charge of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, the agency within CMS funding the project.

USC will work with Alta-Med Health Services, initially launching the project in three treatment clinics in Orange County. The clinics are located in communities with large underserved populations vulnerable to health disparities and often with limited access to care.

In many instances, these clinics are the only source of care for this large uninsured population with a high prevalence of uncontrolled diabetes, hypertension, asthma and heart disease.

Lieberman named new Keck School chair of Orthopaedic Surgery

By Leslie Ridgeway

Jay R. Lieberman has been named professor and chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery of the Keck School of Medicine of USC, effective Sept. 1, 2012. Lieberman also has been appointed orthopaedist-in-chief, Keck Medical Center of USC, director of the USC Institute of Orthopaedics, and chief of Orthopaedics at the Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center.



Jay R. Lieberman

An internationally recognized clinician and researcher, Lieberman comes to the Keck School from the University of Connecticut Health Center, where he is professor and chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and director of the New England Musculoskeletal Institute. He is known as a leading authority on total joint arthroplasty and the treatment of osteonecrosis of the hip.

Lieberman succeeds Michael J. Patzak, who is retiring after 21 years as chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery.

"Dr. Lieberman is a distinguished clinician-scientist who has a proven track record as a dynamic clinical program builder," said Carmen A. Puliafito, dean of the Keck School. "Under his leadership, the New England Musculoskeletal Institute has garnered a national reputation for its clinical excellence in orthopaedic surgery. We also thank Dr. Patzak for his leadership

See **LIEBERMAN**, page 3

See **GRANT**, page 4

Eye surgeon awarded prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor

‘I don’t see borders. I see children that have preventable eye diseases, and I want to be sure we do the best of our ability to make sure they are given a chance at sight.’

—Thomas C. Lee, associate professor of ophthalmology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC

By Amanda Hedlund
Thomas C. Lee, associate professor of ophthalmology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, joins an elite group of influential members recognized with the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

Lee, who is also an eye surgeon with The Vision Center at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, received the award on May 12 from the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations.

Lee joined about 100 fellow honorees selected from thousands of nominations at the Great Hall on Ellis Island in New York City. Past recipients include several past U.S. presidents, Muhammad Ali, Deepak Chopra, Yogi Berra, Rudy Giuliani, Nasser Kazeminy, Hillary Clinton and Janet Reno.

“Los Angeles is one of the most diverse cities in America with a multitude of cultural backgrounds,” said Henri Ford, vice dean for medical education at the Keck School and vice president and chief of surgery at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. He said that Lee “represents a legacy of excellence and exemplifies a

strength that doctors hope to attain in their careers.”

The most vivid characteristic that Lee shares with his fellow recipients is one of compassion for those who deserve a better quality of life. Through medicine, education and his delicate precision, Lee prevents blindness in children around the world.

“I don’t see borders. I see children that have preventable eye diseases, and I want to be sure we do the best of our ability to make sure they are given a chance at sight,” explained Lee. “We need to tear down barriers that are based on religious beliefs, wars and cultural disagreements to serve the same mission, and that is to create a better life for our children.”

Through his mission and dedication to teach doctors in underprivileged populations, Lee has helped populations in Armenia, China, Mexico and Mongolia, among other countries.

Lee spearheaded a tele-medicine and distant learning portal to significantly reduce blindness in babies through patient screening and physician education with the



Thomas C. Lee (appearing above at the May 12 ceremony), associate professor of ophthalmology at the Keck School of Medicine, joins past honorees including several past U.S. presidents, Muhammad Ali, Deepak Chopra and Hillary Clinton.

Armenian Eye Care Project. As Armenian doctors diagnose and treat their patients, Lee is able to monitor exams and surgeries using advanced medical equipment from more than 7,000 miles away.

Lee has made significant advances in the understanding of pediatric retinal disorders and has pioneered the use of cutting-edge imaging techniques such as spectral domain optical coherence tomography to identify eye diseases at the earliest possible stage. He was also the first to use

an intraocular endoscope to perform complex surgery in pediatric retinal detachments resulting from retinopathy of prematurity, familial exudative vitreo-retinopathy, x-linked retinoschisis and trauma.

He has identified novel drugs that can induce blood vessel and tumor regression and is currently designing new ways to enhance delivery into the eye. His work has been supported by a number of grants from research foundations, and he has numerous peer-reviewed publications.

Pasadena Magazine includes 273 USC physicians in annual listing of ‘Top Docs’

By Leslie Ridgeway
Two hundred and seventy-three University of Southern California physicians have been included in *Pasadena Magazine’s* June 2012 “Top Doctors” issue, the most since the magazine began publishing the issue five years ago. The number of USC physicians honored on the list increased by 61 percent this year, over the 170 USC faculty physicians listed last year. The “Top Doctors” edition is an annual recognition of more than 950 medical doctors

practicing in the San Gabriel Valley and Los Angeles area, nominated by their peers as the best in their profession.

“This recognition is evidence that the reputation of our faculty physicians is growing,” said Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito. “We’re proud of their accomplishments and achievements, as well as their commitment to education and equipping the next generation of doctors with the skills they need to provide superior health care to patients.”

The Keck School of Medicine includes more than 500 physicians who are full-time faculty members practicing at the Keck Medical Center of USC (including Keck Hospital of USC and USC Norris Cancer Hospital), Doheny Eye Institute, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center and several medical offices, including the Keck Medical Center of USC Pasadena, which opened in April 2012.

To be considered for inclu-

sion in *Pasadena Magazine’s* Top Doctors list, physicians in the San Gabriel Valley and Los Angeles area were nominated and voted on by their peers, who submitted confidential ballots to the magazine. The votes were tabulated and the physicians’ credentials verified by the Yee and Belilove law firm in Pasadena. Doctors cannot pay to be included on the list.

USC doctors appeared in 48 out of 59 specialty categories recognized by the magazine. In 16 of those categories, more physicians from USC appeared than doctors from any other health provider in the area.

The June 2012 issue also includes profiles of more than 50 faculty physicians in specialties including digestive health, gynecological oncology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, cardiovascular surgery

and neurosurgery.

Clinical faculty members of the Keck School of Medicine are among the nation’s leaders in clinical care, research and education. More than 100 USC physicians appear on the national Best Doctors and America’s Top Doctors lists.

Pasadena Magazine is a monthly regional publication serving the greater San Gabriel Valley. It is available for purchase at major newsstands, bookstores and grocers in the Los Angeles metro area. Launched in September 2007, the magazine has published its own “Top Doctors” directory since June 2008.

Keck School faculty physicians also see patients at satellite locations in downtown Los Angeles, La Cañada Flintridge and Beverly Hills.

For a complete list of the magazine’s top doctors, visit <http://tinyurl.com/6wm87dm>.

The Weekly

Next Issue: July 13

The Weekly is published for the faculty, staff, students, volunteers and visitors in the University of Southern California’s Health Sciences campus community. It is written and produced by the Health Sciences Public Relations and Marketing staff. Comments, suggestions and story ideas are welcome. Permission to reprint articles with attribution is freely given.

Interim Assistant Vice President, Health Sciences Public Relations and Marketing: Geoffrey Baum

Executive Director of Communications: Ina Fried
Assistant Director of Publications: Sara Reeve
Editor: Jon Nalick

Contributors: Ryan Ball, Eva Blaauw, Tania Chatila, Amy E. Hamaker, Amanda Hedland, Carol Matthieu, Leslie Ridgeway, Alison Trinidad and Kukla Vera

Senior Vice President, University Relations: Tom Sayles
Vice President, Public Relations and Marketing: Brenda Maceo



Phone: (323) 442-2830 Fax: (323) 442-2832
Email: hscwky@usc.edu Web: theweekly.usc.edu RSS: <http://www.usc.edu/hscw>

Ideas Empowered deadline looms

The Ideas Empowered Program seeks to fund and aid the development of promising research at USC that has the potential to make an impact on the market or society as a startup company or as a new product or service.

The program bridges the gap between basic research and the marketplace by providing mentoring and coaching, connections to resources, and proof-of-concept funding of typically \$50,000-\$150,000 for experiments and prototype development.

The deadline for pre-proposal submissions is June 27. More information and applications are available online at <http://stevens.usc.edu/ideasempowered.php>.

Keck School student receives AMA Minority Scholar Award

By Leslie Ridgeway
First-year Keck School of Medicine of USC student Maria Sandoval is one of only 13 medical students in the nation to win a 2012 Minority Scholars Award from the American Medical Association (AMA).

As part of the award, Sandoval will receive a \$10,000 scholarship in recognition of scholastic achievement and commitment to eliminating health care disparities. According to an AMA news release, Sandoval is the oldest child in a single-parent household, taking on the responsibility of helping to raise her siblings, caring for a disabled brother and managing household finances. After her mother’s untimely death, Sandoval



Maria Sandoval

continued to excel in school and stay involved in the community.

Sandoval is co-president of the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA), which mentors low-income students with a goal of opening doors to medical careers for underrepresented minority students. She is the LMSA

representative to the Student National Medical Association and volunteers at Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center. Her clinical experience

includes the Korean Health Education Information Research Community Clinic, where she served as a health educator and outreach specialist for low-income

underserved communities in Los Angeles.

Her research includes investigating the utilization of Spanish and low literacy informed consent to improve the understanding of sterilization, schistosomiasis infection in children in rural Tanzania, and the effects of charter school lotteries.

The Minority Scholars Award, given in partnership with the AMA Minority Affairs Section, with support from Pfizer Inc., promotes diversity in the medical profession and helps with the rapidly rising cost of medical education. The awards recognize scholastic achievement, financial need and commitment to improving minority health among first- or second-year medical students in groups defined as historically underrepresented in the medical profession.



Jon Nalick

FORESEEING THE END OF ILLNESS—David B. Agus, professor of medicine and engineering at the Keck School and the USC Viterbi School of Engineering, presents “The End of Illness” on June 11, in which he discusses his views on how we think about disease and how to guide the human body toward better health.

LIEBERMAN: New orthopaedic surgery chair aims to expand clinical enterprise

Continued from Page 1
and many contributions to the success of the Keck School.”

Lieberman’s goals include expansion of the clinical enterprise, development of robust basic science and clinical research programs and enhancement of educational opportunities for orthopaedic residents and medical students.

“I am honored by this appointment,” said Lieberman. “The Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at USC has a long tradition of excellence, and I hope to build on the legacy established by Dr. Patzakis. We will not only provide superb clinical care but be on the forefront of the development of new therapies and procedures that will benefit our patients.”

Among his accomplishments, Lieberman is considered a pioneer in the field of musculoskeletal gene therapy to promote bone repair. He is currently the principal investigator for a National Institutes of Health (NIH)–funded RO-1 study on the use

of regional gene delivery to heal critical sized bone defects.

“Our immediate plan is to continue to enhance our understanding of the influence of growth factors on bone repair,” Lieberman said. “This knowledge will help us attain our ultimate goal, which is to move regional gene therapy from the bench to the clinic.”

The New England Musculoskeletal Institute includes a Comprehensive Spine Center, an Osteoporosis Center and the Division of Rheumatology. As director, Lieberman presided over a dramatic increase in the size of the institute’s faculty and led the development of new and outstanding clinical programs in joint preservation and replacement and sports medicine. He also oversaw the opening of two satellite offices and a third now in development.

“We are excited to have been able to recruit such a dynamic clinical leader to the Keck Medical Center,”

said Thomas Jackiewicz, senior vice president and chief executive officer for USC Health. “We look forward to working with Jay and the Department of Orthopaedics as we expand the scope and reach of our programs for the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders, including the future development of a USC Institute of Sports Medicine.”

At the University of Connecticut Health Center, Lieberman also serves as chief of Orthopaedic Surgery Service at John Dempsey Hospital and as an adjunct professor of Biomedical Engineering.

“The Department of Athletics is delighted with the appointment of Dr. Jay Lieberman to such an important post,” said USC Athletic Director Pat Haden. “We look forward to working with him as we strive to make USC a world leader in sports medicine.”

A graduate of the Horace Mann School, Cornell University and Albany Medical College, Lieberman completed a residency in orthopaedic surgery at

Albany Medical Center Hospital and a fellowship in hip surgery and total joint arthroplasty at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City. Prior to his appointment at the University of Connecticut, he served as professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and the director of Resident Education for the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine of the University of California, Los Angeles.

He is an author or co-author of more than 175 peer-reviewed papers and abstracts and approximately 80 review articles and book chapters. In addition, he serves as a consultant reviewer for numerous publications, including the *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* and serves on the editorial board of several prominent orthopaedic journals including the *Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons* (JAAOS) and the *Journal of Arthroplasty*. He is also deputy editor for adult hip and knee reconstruction for JAAOS.

The Weekly NEWSMAKERS

A June 18 article in *U.S. News & World Report* profiled the Keck School, noting that students there benefit from a close working relationship with faculty. Students said that selling points include a broad range of clinical training sites, and supportive faculty and administrators who are willing to listen to student feedback. Clinical sites like Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center allow students to serve underprivileged communities. “I always wanted to work with an underserved community and [LAC+USC] is one of those remarkable places where you see some of the rarest cases,” said Keck School student **Suzanne Shimoyama**.

A June 17 article in *The Herald* quoted **Geoffrey Joyce**, associate professor of clinical pharmacy and pharmaceutical economics & policy at the USC School of Pharmacy, about the Affordable Care Act.

A June 14 report by the Associated Press covered an open-heart surgery performed by **Vaughn Starnes**, the Hastings Distinguished Professor and chairman of the Keck School’s Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, on a child actor who had appeared in a Darth Vader mask in a car commercial.

The surgery was performed at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles on 7-year-old Max Page, who was diagnosed with a congenital heart defect. **Michael Silka**, professor of pediatrics at the Keck School and chief of cardiology at Children’s Hospital, told NBC News’ “Today Show” that the problem restricted blood flow in the boy’s heart.

“It’s like trying to pump gas through a straw,” Silka said. “Running and play was becoming very difficult for him, and as we know Max, he’s a real competitor, so he wanted to keep up with his friends,” Starnes told CBS News Los Angeles affiliate KCBS-TV.

The story was also reported by *Los Angeles Times*, *Daily Mail* (U.K.), Reuters, *People*, City News Service, NBC News Los Angeles affiliate KNBC-TV, Fox News Los Angeles affiliate KTLA-TV, a second KTLA story, a second “Today Show” story, *Kentucky Post* and *Contra Costa Times*.

A June 15 story in *The Washington Post* quoted **Jonathan Samet**, who serves as the Flora L. Thornton Chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine at the Keck School and chairs the Environmental Protection Agency’s independent scientific advisory panel, about EPA soot standards and the health risks of soot.

A June 15 article in *Nature* quoted **Martin Pera**, founding director of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC, about a stem cell biologist who recently grew an “optic cup,” the precursor to the human eye.

A June 14 article in the *Los Angeles Times* mentioned that **Jerome Hoffman**, a clinical professor of emergency medicine at the Keck School, co-wrote an op-ed with a University of California, Davis, professor on prostate cancer screenings.

GRANT: Funded project aims to improve high-risk patients’ care

Continued from Page 1

With pharmacists working collaboratively with physician colleagues, the project aims to use evidence-based treatment regimens to improve patient care and health outcomes while reducing costs.

The clinical aspects of the project will be directed by co-investigators Kathleen Johnson, the William A. and Josephine A. Heeres Chair in Community Pharmacy and vice dean for clinical affairs and outcomes sciences at the USC School of Pharmacy, and Steven Chen, the Hygeia Centennial Chair in Clinical Pharmacy at the USC School of Pharmacy.

Another part of the project, focusing on a Web-based training/credentialing program for pharmacists to replicate the model, will be led by co-investigator Jeffery Goad, the USC School of Pharmacy’s vice chair for continuing professional development, credentialing and distance education.

R. Pete Vanderveen, dean of the USC School of Pharmacy, said, “This is a tremendous opportunity for us to again demonstrate and evaluate a model of care that uses pharmacists to cost effectively improve health outcomes.”

He added, “Our faculty has over a decade of experience in the safety net, and we appreciate the government’s support in allowing us to expand our work through this important project that promises to provide desperately needed medication management services to some of the most vulnerable in our community.”

The project will target high-risk patients with difficult-to-achieve chronic disease control who will receive individualized services from pharmacists. Outcomes of these patients will be measured against similar patients not receiving pharmacist care in other clinics, determining the impact of the program.

The project will eventually extend to AltaMed clinics in Los Angeles County as well. Additionally, working with the East Los Angeles Occupational Center pharmacy technician training program, the project will help develop curricula that support expanded roles for pharmacy technicians.

“This significant award underscores the importance of university-based research in tackling health care transformation and contributing the critical ideas necessary to improve health for all Americans,” said Steven O. Moldin, executive director for research advancement at USC. “We’re delighted that USC researchers were selected in this highly competitive program, which fielded more than 8,000 letters of intent and 3,000 full proposals to fund just over a hundred programs, particularly since they will be working with medically underserved populations here in Southern California.”

Calendar of Events

This Calendar of Events is also online at www.usc.edu/hscalendar for the Health Sciences campus community

Wednesday, June 27

Noon – 1:00 p.m. KSOM Research Seminar. “Complex Regulation of Cellular Events in Prostate Cancer by Suppressors of Cytokine Signaling and Protein Inhibitors of Activated STAT,” Zoran Culig, Innsbruck Medical University, Austria. A light lunch will be served following the seminar. NRT Aresty Auditorium. Info: (323) 442-7732

Friday, June 29

Noon – 1:00 p.m. USC Physical Sciences in Oncology Center Monthly Seminar Series. “All Fitness is Local: The Special Relativity of Cancer,” Robert Austin, Princeton Univ. Pizza and refreshments will be served at 11:45 a.m. CSC 250. Info: kgerber@usc.edu

Saturday, July 7

3 p.m. – 5 p.m. USC Institute for Genetic Medicine Art Gallery. “Layering,” Barbara Strasen, Luisa Mesa. 2250 Alcazar Street, 2nd floor. Info: (310) 479-1817

Notice: Deadline for calendar submission is 4 p.m. Monday to be considered for that week’s issue—although three weeks’ advance notice of events is recommended. Please note that timely submission does not guarantee an item will be printed. Send calendar items to [The Weekly, KAM 400](mailto:The Weekly, KAM 400 or fax to (323) 442-2832, or email to eblaauw@usc.edu) or fax to (323) 442-2832, or email to eblaauw@usc.edu. Entries must include day, date, time, title of talk, first and last name of speaker, affiliation of speaker, location and a phone number for information.



USC HONORS MICHAEL J. PATZAKIS’ STELLAR SERVICE—Keck School of Medicine and university leaders honored Michael J. Patzakis (center) on May 19 and celebrated his 21-year tenure as chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. Patzakis is stepping down from the post, effective July 1. Above at the event, USC President C. L. Max Nikias (left) and Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito congratulate Patzakis on his successful leadership.

Steve Cohn

USC Norris clinicians discuss cancer research results at ASCO

By Alison Trinidad

USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center physician-researchers collaborated on more than 70 research projects presented at the 2012 annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) this month.

Roughly 30,000 cancer specialists from around the world attend the annual meeting to discuss the latest techniques, drugs and research in cancer care. ASCO, founded in 1964, is an offshoot of the American Association of Cancer Research dedicated to clinical oncology.

Studies discussed at the 2012 meeting, held in Chicago June 1-5, included new advances in targeted therapy; clinical trial results for prostate, ovarian, breast, brain, colorectal and other cancers; and findings that are expected to lead to better patient experiences. This year, more than 4,500 abstracts were presented or published at the meeting and are now available on abstract.asco.org.

Poster presentations led by USC investigators included studies that analyze the ability to detect other occult cancers using MRI scanning in newly diagnosed breast cancer patients (Akshara Raghavendra); pinpoint genetic differences that may explain why bevacizumab is not as effective in treating Japanese patients with gastric cancer as it is in treating Caucasian and Hispanic patients (Takeru Wakatsuki); identify the first cancer stem cell signature that may predict recurrence of prostate cancer (Adrian S. Fairey); and examine whether particular obesity-related gene variants might predict tumor

recurrence in colon cancer (Robert D. Ladner).

Heinz-Josef Lenz, associate director for clinical research and co-leader of the gastrointestinal cancers program at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, participated in numerous studies presented at the meeting, including an international phase III trial that found that regorafenib, an experimental drug, significantly improves overall survival in patients with metastatic colorectal cancer who have not responded to other approved therapies. The trial results are expected to change the standard of care for those patients once the FDA approves the drug.

David Quinn, associate professor of medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC and medical director of the USC Norris Cancer Hospital, presented results from a national phase III study

on the efficacy of adding the experimental drug atrasentan to the standard chemotherapy regimen for advanced prostate cancer. The trial found that patients who received the drug did not live any longer or experience longer bouts of remission than patients who received a placebo and the standard chemotherapy.

Quinn also participated in prostate cancer research featured at a plenary session of the meeting. That international phase III trial suggests that, for certain men with prostate cancer, intermittent hormonal therapy may shorten survival, even though it was associated with better quality of life. The study, sponsored by the National Cancer Institute, found that men with minimal disease on intermittent therapy had a median survival of 5.2 years, compared with 7.1 years for those receiving continuous therapy.

USC Health Sciences
Public Relations and Marketing
1975 Zonal Ave. KAM 400
Los Angeles, CA 90033

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
University of Southern California



In case of an emergency...

Call the Emergency Information Phone: (213) 740-9233 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.