

USC surgeons save a little girl beset by a big tumor

By Les Dunseith

For Adrianna Bowman, a vibrant 5-year-old preparing to start kindergarten, what seemed to be a routine health screening turned out to be a potentially life-saving event.

As part of their preparations for school, Adrianna's mother, Alona, took her to a well-child checkup earlier this summer.

There was no reason for concern — the little girl seemed perfectly healthy, leading an active life that included karate, piano, drum lessons and even some modeling.

Then Adrianna failed her hearing screening.

She was deaf in her left ear, as further testing that would soon involve specialists at Keck Medicine of USC would confirm.

The underlying culprit turned out to be a benign brain tumor, known as an acoustic neuroma. And it was a big one.

A large tumor in such a child posed an immediate threat to Adrianna's basic 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



Adrianna Bowman with USC surgeon Rick Friedman.



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

and Adrianna's age," he explained, "requiring delicate dissection around her significantly impacted 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

See **GIRL**, page 3

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 echoes 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 who offered tributes 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



USC President C. L. Max Nikias speaks about former Dean Brian E. Henderson during a memorial service at HSC.

American 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."

See **HENDERSON**, page 2

Leadership Awards recognize pillars of Keck Medicine of USC

Keck 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 during 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 Perese, 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 areas of responsibility.

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

See **LEADERS**, page 3

New facility brings gene editing to USC and beyond

By Cristy Lytal

Once the stuff of science fiction, genetic engineering is now offered at USC on a fee-for-service basis.

On Sept. 19, USC Stem Cell faculty and staff welcomed their supporters, the Chang and Choi families, and nearly 100 of their friends to celebrate the grand opening of the Chang Stem Cell Engineering Facility, which is situated on the second floor of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC. Established with a gift from the Chang family, the stem cell engineering

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 alumnus Daniel Chang, who gave the gift with his wife Cai Li, son Jorly, and daughter and USC freshman Carrisa. "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 met my mentor for life, Dr. Ferdinand A. Kröger, a professor at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering. Because of his influence, I

became the founder of a science and technology enterprise."

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. The 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

See **CENTER**, page 4



Qi-Long Ying, director of the new Chang Stem Cell Engineering Facility, with Daniel Chang and his wife Cai Li Chang.

Quality counts in new master's degree at School of Pharmacy

By Laura Sturza

Quality control is a concern for every major industry. It links customer satisfaction with business 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, the 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 find enough highly trained personnel.

"We developed this program with feedback from industry," said Program Director Michael Jamieson, DRSc. "They told us these are hard positions to fill."

Indeed, Joaquin Kurz, senior director for Johnson &

Johnson's Complaint Management and Post-Market Surveillance program, said "this program fills a critical gap in 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.



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

Photos by Steve Cohn

HENDERSON: Memorial for former dean

Continued from page 1

In a video tribute played for the audience, Msgr. Clement J. Connolly described Henderson as a deeply compassionate leader who was passionate about medicine and social justice.

"He was a cherished friend who guided me many times in my life," said Connolly, spiritual director of the Holy Family Parish in South Pasadena, where Henderson and his wife, Judith, worshipped for more than 30 years. "His power lied in his ability to influence people and touch their lives with his compassion."

Connolly said he met Henderson while working on Skid Row in Los Angeles, where the physician provided Skid Row residents with basic health care services. Henderson would often give them his home telephone number.

"That was amazing to me," Connolly said. "To not only minister to those in need, but to belong to those in need."

The two men forged a close friendship. Connolly visited Henderson during the last weeks of his life.

Connolly recalled how



Judith Henderson with USC Norris Director and memorial speaker Stephen B. Gruber.

Henderson marched alongside African-Americans in the south during the Civil Rights Movement and was arrested for demonstrating against the use of nuclear weapons.

"I remember him for his soul and the gift of who he was in his humanity," Connolly said.

Also offering tributes were Keck School of Medicine professors 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 served as Keck

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 Neurogenetic 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.

Sean Henderson said his father had tremendous vision in the field of medicine and felt a deep connection to USC and the Health Sciences community.

"His relationship with USC was an intimate one," Henderson said. "He was very comfortable here.

He was at home here, and proud to be a member of the Trojan Family."

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 face regulatory hurdles in harnessing the immune system to treat neurological disorders, infectious diseases and cancer.

Topics included stem cells and drug delivery to the central nervous system, global health and infectious diseases, chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy for cancer and safety considerations.

The USC chapter of the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) presents this daylong research symposium each year. The event attracted nearly 240 students,

faculty and scientists from industry and the academy — the largest attendance in Moving Targets' history.

Roberta Diaz Brinton, PhD, holder of the R. Pete Vanderveen Chair in Therapeutic Discovery and Development at the School of Pharmacy, delivered the keynote address.

Gene Olinger, principal science adviser at MRI-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."

Calendar of Events

Monday, Sept. 28

Noon. KSOM Research Seminar Series Seminar. "Transposable Elements and Epigenome Evolution," Ting Wang, PhD, Washington University School of Medicine. Aresty Auditorium. Info: Mary Jane Chua, (323) 442-7732, maryjane.chua@med.usc.edu

Tuesday, Sept. 29

5:30 p.m. Ophthalmology Grand Rounds. Ananth Sastry, MD, USC. HC4 Conference Room. Info: Tyaisha Christopher, (323) 409-5233, Tyaisha.Christopher@med.usc.edu

Friday, Oct. 2

Noon. Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar. "One-Component Nanomedicine," Honggang Cui, PhD, Johns Hopkins University. John Stauffer Pharmaceutical Sciences Center, PSC 104. Info: Ruth Ballard, (323) 442-3400, ellisball@usc.edu

9 a.m.-1 p.m. USC Stevens Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute Workshop. "Pipeline Demo Day," Rosen Family Screening Theatre, Tutor Campus Center, UPC. Info and RSVP: Henrietta Movsessian, (323) 442-7246, henrietta.movsessian@loni.usc.edu, <http://loni.usc.edu/>

Saturday, Oct. 3

8 a.m. Center for Cerebrovascular Disorders, departments of Neurosurgery and Neurology, and the USC Office of Continuing Medical Education. "2015 Cerebrovascular Disease Symposium," Arun Paul Amar, MD. Aresty Auditorium. Info: Teresa Ball, (323) 442-2555, uscme@usc.edu

Thursday, Oct. 8

5:30 p.m. Norris Medical Library Movie Night. "The Fault in Our Stars," Rima Jubran, MD, USC. Aresty Auditorium. Pizza, cookies and bottled water will be

served prior to the movie screening. Info: Luis Franco, (323) 442-1483, medlib@usc.edu, <http://tinyurl.com/filmology-TFIOS>

Friday, Oct. 9, and Saturday, Oct. 10

8 a.m.-6 p.m. USC Caruso Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Symposium. California Laryngectomy Conference. Aresty Auditorium. Info: Brenda Villegas (323) 442-5790, Brenda.Villegas@med.usc.edu RSVP: www.usc.edu/esvp code: laryngectomee15

Wednesday, Oct. 14

Noon. Saban Research Institute Seminar. Samir S. Shah, MD, MSCE, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. Auditorium, Saban Building, 4661 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. Parking available at the main hospital garage across the street from the Saban Building. Info: Ritu Gill, (323) 361-8715, tecpad@chla.usc.edu

Friday, Oct. 16

9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. USC Pain Center, Quench the Fire and the U.S. Pain Foundation Seminar. "2015 Take Control of Your Pain — Los Angeles," Steven Richeimer, USC Pain Center. Soto Building II, Rooms 2902 and 2904. Register online or at 9 a.m. on the day of the event. Lunch provided. Info: Popadak Lynne, (818) 288-0754, lynnepop@aol.com, <http://www.QuenchTheFire.org> RSVP: Nicole Hemmenway, (800) 910-2462, nicolehemmenway@nicolehemmenway.com, <http://www.tiny.cc/takecontrolofyourpainla>

Tuesday, Oct. 20

11 a.m. USC Stem Cell Seminar. Arturo Alvarez-Buylla, UC San Francisco. Eli and Edythe Broad CIRM Center Auditorium. Info: Cristy Lytal (323) 442-2172, lytal@med.usc.edu <http://stemcell.usc.edu>

Gene activates cells to repair an injured kidney

By Cristy Lytal

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," Kumar said.

In sections of the kidney that fail to repair, Sox9 remains activated, 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. Michaela 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.



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 at right with Karen Wong and Michael and Jacqueline Quon.



Photos by Steve Cohn

Groundbreaking robotic procedure detailed in journal

By Les Dunseith

A new article in the *Journal of Urology* details a pioneering robotic surgical procedure developed at the USC Institute 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 a Level III tumor thrombus, or clot, to develop in the major vein leading back to the heart.

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 only six or seven small incisions and four robotic tools.

Gill, chairman and professor, Catherine and Joseph Aresty Depart-

ment 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 do 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.

"All necessary surgical maneuvers could be performed completely robotically without open conversion or mortality," according to the article.

"This demonstration of efficient 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. "Although our experience is yet initial, we believe that robotic IVC thrombus surgery has considerable potential for the future."

The authors of the article include Gill and fellow Keck Medicine of USC physicians Charles Metcalfe, Andre Abreu, Vinay Duddalwar, Sameer Chopra, Mark J. Cunningham, Duraiyah Thangathurai, Osamu Ukimura, Raj Satkunavivam, Andrew Hung, Rocco Papilla, Monish Aron, 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 Siwek, 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. Friedman and hearing the compassion in his voice."

Alona Bowman also credits 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



Surgeon Rick Friedman exchanges a high five with patient Adrianna Bowman.

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

Jenny Tanaka, a physical therapist, who used a toy from the *Minions* movie to gauge Adrianna's sensory responses. Then they took a walk — frontward and backward — down a hallway to test the little girl's balance.

Friedman 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.

"High five?" Alona Bowman urged. With that, the little girl with the big tumor lifted her tiny hand and reached out toward the hand that the surgeon had used just a few days before to save her life. They smacked palms.

"High five," Adrianna said.

Kristine Siwek and Sunny Jones also contributed to this story.

LEADERS: Accomplishments recognized

Continued from page 1

effective and impactful.

Director of Planning Andy Stringfellow received the Resource Management Award for oversight of space planning and capital management, consistently working to instill processes that ensure space is put to the best use.

Receiving the Service and Access Award was Armin Kasravi, director of clinical applications, in recognition of his effort to keep KeckCare intact. Kasravi, who has 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 Odell, director of anatomic pathology laboratory services, was recognized as the Rookie 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 pathology services, improving turnaround times and report quality. His efforts also helped to produce significant cost savings.



The Leadership Award trophy

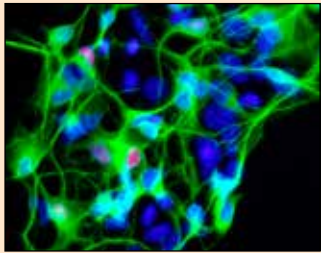
Les Dunseith

HSC Newsmakers

A roundup of news items related to Keck Medicine of USC, which may include philanthropic donations, research grants, publication in academic journals and mentions in the news media:

USC's Ichida receives grant from Muscular Dystrophy Association

A MUTATION in the same gene is found in 10 percent of patients with two neurodegenerative diseases — frontotemporal dementia (FTD) and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Determining how this mutated gene contributes to ALS will be a focus



Motor neurons derived from ALS patients.

of research by Justin Ichida, PhD, assistant professor of stem cell biology and regenerative medicine, who has received a Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) research grant totaling \$300,000 over three years. Ichida's lab will use "cellular reprogramming" to transform the blood cells of ALS patients with the mutation into motor nerve cells in a Petri dish. Because the mutated gene contains faulty instructions for producing a protein called C9ORF72, these cells are expected to degenerate in the protein's absence. Ichida hopes to rescue the cells by exposing them to a normal level of the protein, and to reveal the mechanism that allows the protein to protect motor nerve cells. "This work will establish C9ORF72 protein as a key therapeutic target for ALS patients," Ichida said. "I'm grateful to the Muscular Dystrophy Association for its commitment to helping patients with a wide range of neuromuscular diseases, including ALS." — **Claire Orphan and Cristy Lytal**

Surgeons pioneer robotic procedure



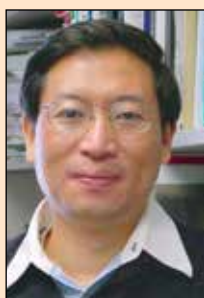
Sung Wan Ham

VASCULAR SURGEONS Sung Wan Ham, MD, and Sukgu Han, MD, of Keck Medicine of USC recently completed the first procedure of its kind in the United States with a newly available robotic catheter. The device, known as the Magellan Robotic System10Fr catheter, was utilized in a peripheral endovascular procedure on a patient with bile duct cancer. The new robotic catheter was used to stent open the two main arteries that

supply the abdominal organs, giving the best chance for a successful surgery by the liver surgeons. The device is the newest and largest in a line of robotic catheters available to surgeons using the Magellan Robotic System, which has been in use at Keck Hospital of USC for about a year to treat peripheral vascular disease. The system deploys catheters during minimally invasive endovascular procedures. Ham, an assistant professor of surgery in the division of vascular surgery for the Keck School of Medicine of USC, said the Magellan robot lets a physician control a guide wire, catheter and supporting sheath from a centralized remote workstation. This allows for precise navigation even through difficult bends in the vasculature, which can reduce procedure times and lessen radiation exposure to physicians, patients and staff. "The new Magellan catheter gives us the ability to deliver larger devices with robotic control, broadening the breadth of robotic procedures we can offer to additional patients," Ham explained.

Family from China makes donation to USC Norris cancer researcher

THE CUTTING-EDGE cancer research being done by Si-Yi Chen, MD, PhD, of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center recently received a generous donation and pledge totaling \$1.45 million from Yi-Lin Zhu and his family, who live in China. The gift will support efforts to develop tumor immunotherapy by Chen, who is a professor of molecular microbiology and immunology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.



Si-Yi Chen

Chen is an internationally recognized expert in tumor immunology and immunotherapy. For two decades, he has studied signaling transduction in immune cells, including genetically modifying T cells and dendritic cells for tumor and HIV immunotherapy. In recognition of the gift from the Zhu family, a plaque inscribed as "The Y.L. Zhu Tumor Immunotherapy Research Laboratory" has been installed outside Chen's laboratory in the Norris Research Tower. "I am very grateful to Mr. Zhu and his family for their generous donation to advance our translational cancer research," Chen said.



Jacqueline (Andrejich) Bertole

Jaime Valvano of the V Foundation for Cancer Research and representatives from Hooters of Orange County present a check to USC Norris Director Stephen B. Gruber. From left are Valvano, Gruber, Zul Surani of the HSC Community Partnerships Office in Civic Engagement, Jordyne Chessmore, Shelby Tweeten, Elena Nieves of USC Clinical Trials Outreach and Enrollment, and Melissa Fry, director of marketing for Hooters.

USC Norris gets funds for breast cancer outreach

THE V FOUNDATION and Hooters of Orange County have donated \$65,000 to support the clinical trials outreach and enrollment program in breast cancer at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Jaime Valvano, daughter of the late Jim Valvano, who founded the V Foundation for Cancer Research, and three representatives from Hooters visited USC Norris on Aug. 13 to meet with Director Stephen B. Gruber, MD, PhD, MPH.

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 El-Khoueiry, 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 HSC Community Partnerships Office in Civic Engagement, and Julie Lang, MD, a breast surgeon and associate profes-

sor 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 Morino

RESEARCHERS 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 is 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 Nuria 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.

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CENTER

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cells to thousands of potential drugs at the existing Choi Family Therapeutic Screening Facility.

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 support 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."

Qi-Long Ying, PhD, director of the Chang Stem Cell Engineering Facility, added: "By combining the power of genome editing and stem cell technology, this new facility provides a versatile and efficient stem cell engineering platform to help investigators from USC and beyond create disease models in a dish and develop new treatments."

HSC News

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Next Issue:
Oct. 9