Dr. Phillip Burns Named President of the Southeastern Surgical Congress

Phillip Burns MD, Chair of the Department of Surgery at the UT COM-C, has been named president of the Southeastern Surgical Congress, the largest regional organization of surgeons in the country. According to Dr. Burns, the congress’ mission is to educate its roughly 3,000 members and to facilitate discussion of changes in the surgical field. The group also publishes the medical journal, The American Surgeon.

Dr. Burns’ duties will be to preside over the society’s annual meeting and to help organize smaller training sessions. He has served on the congress’ executive committee for several years and has been a member of the congress for 33 years.

Dr. J. Mack Worthington Is New Tennessee Medical Association President-Elect

J. Mack Worthington MD, Family Medicine Chair and Program Director, has been elected President-Elect of the Tennessee Medical Association. He will serve as President for the 2007-2008 term. Dr. Worthington has held national positions with the American Academy of Family Physicians, the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, and the American Medical Association.

The mission of the Tennessee Medical Association is definition and promotion of high standards of medical knowledge and education, medical ethics, laws and regulations that promote and enhance the patient-physician relationship, and understanding between the public and the medical profession.

Comments, articles, and announcements for the COMmunicator can be submitted in publishable format to Sylvia Friedl, Office of Human Subject Protections, Sylvia.Friedl@erlanger.org, 423.778.3899.
Congratulations

Joseph Cofer MD, Professor and Program Director in Surgery, just completed a one year term as the President on the Association of Program Director’s in Surgery. He gave his Presidential Address at the annual meeting in Tucson, Arizona on March 22, 2006, with the topic being ‘This is Not Your Mother’s APDS’. His address gave the history of this national organization and discussed the issues facing surgery residency program directors in the 1960’s as well as the current issues of reduced work hours and competencies. His well researched and prepared presentation won him applause and a spontaneous standing ovation.

Harsha Gadadhar MD, Steven Hawkins MD, Peter Hunt MD and Mukta Panda MD. Getting to the “Cor”: Cutaneous Mucormycosis in a Patient with Rheumatoid Arthritis on Infliximab has received the Poster Presentation of the Year award from among the 80 posters presented at the Society of General Internal Medicine chapter meeting in Atlanta.

Jeannette Martin MD, Department of Pediatrics, was recently elected as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She will serve in this capacity for a two year term.

The Internal Medicine Education Foundation, Inc. has received a grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee to support the scholarly presentations of residents in the Department of Medicine at state and national meetings. In making the award, Rick Mathis PhD, Senior Manager of Medical Policy, Research and Development, cited the great job the Department is doing in preparing and presenting evidence-based medical research. Norman Desbiens MD, Professor of Medicine and Chair of the Department, thanked Dr. Mathis and Dr. Ken Patric, Corporate Medical Director, for their contributions as members of the Department’s Research Committee and for their previous support of the Department’s scholarly activity. He also thanked the residents and the Departmental faculty who assist them with their presentations and research.

UT COM-C Faculty Honored for National Doctor’s Day
Material used with permission from the Chattanooga.com 3/31/06

Four UT COM-Chattanooga faculty were honored by the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Medical Society and Project Access for Doctor’s Day Appreciation week. The honorees were selected from nearly fifty nominations submitted by local residents.

The UT COM-C honorees are:

Marc Cromie MD (Chattanooga Allergy Clinic)
Charles Portera Sr. MD (Women’s Institute for Specialized Health)
Larry Schlabach MD (University Oncology and Hematology Assoc.)
Robert Wood MD (Highland Pediatrics)

Since initially conceived in 1993, Doctor’s Day has been observed as a time for patients to show appreciation for their physicians. It became a national day of honor when adopted by the Senate and House of Representatives in 1991. Congratulations to these outstanding for physicians for their exceptional patient care.
Transitions

**Colleen Schmitt MD MHS** recently stepped down as Director of Research for the UT COM-C, a position she has held since it was created October 1, 1996.

As Director of Research, Dr. Schmitt was instrumental in the creation of the Institutional Core Curriculum for Research Methods. In recent years this curriculum has been presented as a one- or two-day symposium addressing such topics as choosing a research project and mentor, developing a study hypothesis, designing a study protocol, collecting and analyzing data, writing an abstract, and poster and oral presentations. Dr. Schmitt was also committed to the institution-wide Annual Resident Research Week, which was established to encourage and recognize scholarly research efforts.

She has generously shared her energy and expertise and her efforts on behalf of the College of Medicine are truly appreciated.

**Jackson Yium MD** is retiring from active medical practice with Nephrology Associates and was recently honored for his service to Erlanger Health System.

Dr. Yium is credited with the founding of the hemodialysis and kidney transplant programs at Erlanger, served as medical director of the hemodialysis unit from 1973-2005 and as medical director of the transplant program from 1989-2005.

Dan Fisher MD, Surgical Director of the Erlanger Kidney Transplant Program, presented a resolution in Dr. Yium’s honor at the March Erlanger Board Meeting. He and Dr. Yium performed the first kidney transplant at Erlanger in 1989 and have since performed 450 transplants together.

Dr. Yium’s medical staff duties included chairing the Medical Ethics Committee and teaching generations of physicians through his tenure on the faculty of the UT COM-C.

We extend our wishes to Dr. Yium as he begins his retirement.

**Chancellor Owen Returns for Second Town Hall Meeting**

Chancellor William F. Owen, Jr. MD held his second faculty town hall meeting in Chattanooga on February 27, 2006. He discussed process improvements for promotions and tenure, research administration (including IRB consolidation), and legal resources. His presentation included an update on several searches that are in progress. He expects the Executive Dean of the College of Medicine to be named in the next few weeks. Once this position is filled the Dean searches on all three HSC campuses should proceed quickly. In addition, Dr. Owen continues to develop the Health Science Center as a statewide organization and has established goals of promoting fair allocation of resources and enhanced communication. [Note: Leonard Johnson, PhD has been named permanent Vice-Chancellor for Research as of 4/5/06.]
Publications and Presentations


Heath G. Physical activity epidemiology and interventions to promote physical activity: A community toolkit. Lecture, Pan American Congress on Sports Medicine, Cartagena, Colombia, South America, Feb 15-18, 2006.


Mantha B, Panda M. No Poinsettia this Christmas. Accepted for publication, Southern Medical Journal.

Noe JA, Pittman HC, Burton EM. Congenital absence of the portal vein in a child with Turner's Syndrome. Accepted for publication, Journal of Pediatric Radiology.

Sholar A. The medical and surgical treatment of an unusual case of primary cutaneous craniofacial mycrociosis. Oral presentation at the Thuss Lecture, Vanderbilt University, April 1, 2006.


Stephenson E. Dexmedetomidine for sedation in the burn unit. Oral presentation at the Thuss Lecture, Vanderbilt University, April 1 2006.


Wong LK, Nesbit RD, Turner LA, Sargent LA. Management of a circumferential lower extremity degloving injury with the use of a vacuum assisted closure. Accepted for publication, Southern Medical Journal.

Did you know that John Stroud, UT COM-C graphic specialist, created over 200 projects for presentations in the last 12 months?
Implementing Local IRB Policies

The UT COM-C Research Abstract Selection Committee recently read abstracts that were submitted for the Annual Research Week presentations. During the process, it became evident that there was some confusion and misunderstanding regarding the necessity of submitting case studies for review.

The UT COM-C/Erlanger IRB is responsible for the protections of the rights and welfare of research participants. This is reflected in the IRB Policies and Procedures Handbook and the Investigators’ Manual which were updated and distributed via email in 2003 and are currently available at http://www.utcomchatt.org/Research/Research.asp?dpage=irbforms.

The UT COM-C policy (I.C.6.h) notes:

Case studies can constitute “research” that is subject to IRB review and approval... This type of activity must always be reviewed by the IRB when there is intent to publish or disseminate the data or findings. If an Investigator begins a project and later finds that... he or she may wish to publish the results, it is important that the Investigator submit a proposal to the IRB for review as soon as possible.

Once a case study evolves into a poster presentation or a case that will be presented at a meeting it crosses the threshold of educational training to “dissemination of findings” and requires IRB review. The IRB may determine that it is exempt from full board review, but the submission process will help protect the privacy and rights of our subjects and is required for publication in some journals.

If you have questions regarding IRB review of a presentation, poster, or research project you are working on, please contact Stacey Hendricks, IRB Administrator (778-3818), Sylvia Friedl, Office of Human Subject Protections (778-3899), or Dr. John Morgan, IRB Chair (JohnRMorganMD@ATT.NET).

June 30, 2006 deadline approaches ...

From Leonard Johnson, PhD, University of Tennessee Health Science Center Vice-Chancellor for Research

UTHSC is updating its required educational training program for faculty investigators/mentors, IRB members, administrators, and all other individuals who participate in the conduct of human subject research, including those using human-derived materials. Investigators are responsible for documenting training for personnel that perform research procedures, handle investigational materials, or participate in the conduct of research. The CITI training program can be accessed by linking to www.citiprogram.org. Specific instructions for registering are on the home page. Documentation of completion of training will be a requirement of IRB protocol submissions after June 30, 2006.
Clinical Research Goes to Court

Investigators, nurse coordinators, residents, IRB members, and ethicists participated in a mock trial at the UT COM-C on February 23, 2006. The Honorable Neil Thomas, III presided over the court with local attorneys, Sue Scruggs (Spears, Moore, Rebman & Williams) and Mike Richardson (Lawrence, Lawrence & Richardson) providing counsel for the plaintiff and defendants. The plaintiff, who claimed damages as a direct result of participating in a clinical trial, was convincingly portrayed by Dr. Mukta Panda. The defendants were the principal investigator (played by Dr. Raymond Enzenauer), and the IRB Chair (Dr. John Morgan). In addition, Lorrie Mason testified as the nurse coordinator in the trial.

Although jurors were far from impartial (they were randomly drawn from the investigators, IRB members and study staff who attended the mock trial) they returned a verdict for the plaintiff and awarded one million dollars in damages. Their deliberations were simulcast into the Probasco Auditorium so attendees could view the process.

The day provided a graphic representation of the ethical dilemmas that are inherent in clinical trials: Was the patient properly consented? Did the IRB adequately review the trial and protect the rights and welfare of the subject? Did payment to the investigator for “administrative costs” create a conflict of interest?

The animated debate following the trial contributed to the learning process. Was the issue of clinical equipoise addressed? Did the attorneys understand that there should not have been any claim of cure or improvement of disease offered to the plaintiff? Was the jury unduly influenced by the emotional plaintiff? Based on the enthusiastic response from conference participants, it is likely that another episode of the mock trial conference will be presented in the not-too-distant future.

Research Blog Launched
http://chattmedresearch.blogspot.com

In an effort to stimulate and support medical and health research in Chattanooga, the UT COM-C has launched a new Blog at http://chattmedresearch.blogspot.com. A “blog” is short for Web Log and is a journal that is available online. Physicians can visit this site to discover resources, opportunities and other information that may be useful in research. If you have information that would be appropriate for this blog, contact larry.miller@erlanger.org.

Correction: The December 2005 COMmunicator reported that Dr. Currey was elected to the “American Academic of Orthopaedic Surgeons Board of Councilors.” This correct title is the “American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Board of Councilors.”
Dates to Save

Remember to save Friday, May 12, 2006 for the Resident Research Day, including Poster Walking Rounds during the day and the awards ceremony at the Hunter Museum of American Art in the evening. Invitations will be arriving in the mail soon.

The Annual Research Symposium is scheduled this year for Friday, September 29, 2006. Drummond Rennie MD, Deputy Editor (West) of the Journal of the American Medical Association and former Deputy Editor of the New England Journal of Medicine will be the keynote speaker. Dr. Rennie is interested in editorial issues such as authorship; in ethical issues in science and publication; in the peer review system, and in the integrity of biomedical literature. He is currently a Professor of Medicine in the Institute for Health Policy Studies, University of California--San Francisco.

Continuing Medical Education

4th Annual Cancer Symposium
April 21, 2006 at The Chattanoogan
Program Director: Donald Chamberlain MD
Associate Professor and Director of Gynecology/Oncology

This conference is designed to bring current diagnostic and treatment information to physicians and other health care professionals who work with cancer patients. Coming to Chattanooga to discuss the epidemiology and risk factors of head and neck cancers, lung cancer, skin cancer, and gynecologic cancers are:

F. Chris Holsinger MD (Head and Neck Surgery University of Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center)
Alan B. Sandler MD (Hematology/Oncology Vanderbilt University Medical Center)
Darrel Ellis MD (Dept. of Medicine, Div. of Dermatology, Vanderbilt University and Nashville VAMC)
Kevin Reynolds MD (Div. of Gynecology/Oncology, University of Michigan)
Gregory Heath DHsc (Dept. of Health and Human Performance, University of Tennessee Chattanooga)
Reid Blackwelder MD (Family Medicine, Quillen School of Medicine, East Tennessee State University)

The target audience for the Cancer Symposium is primary care and OB/GYN physicians, medical and radiation oncologists, radiation therapists, nurses and other healthcare professionals who work with cancer.

21st Annual Family Medicine Update
June 14-17, 2006 at The Chattanoogan
Program Director: John Standridge II MD, Associate Professor of Family Medicine

For additional information on these programs, please contact Larry Miller PhD, Director of Continuing Medical Education, UT COM-C and Erlanger Health System. 423-778-6884, or email CME@erlanger.org.