

# PVARF NEWS

## A Message from the Executive Director

Wow! When looking back at the last year, the first thing that comes to mind is “I cannot believe it has been a year already” What a year it has been! I would like to take this opportunity to share a few of our positive events with you.

- PVARF just completed our annual audit, and our revenues continue to grow. We administered over 6 million in direct costs in research and education programs.
- We have had a very positive year for new grants and contracts being awarded to PVARF...see in this newsletter for some highlights.
- We launched our new Payroll I-pay statements, CLINCARD, and Newsletter Programs.
- We supported over 25 Principal Investigators to attend conferences to present their scientific results.
- We supported 10 Summer Students over the summer providing them funds that allowed college students to work in VA labs under a VA mentor.
- We sponsored 4 Visiting Scientists to visit the VA Portland Health Care System for the purpose of delivering a seminar & meeting with VA scientists to discuss research and education.

Through our Board of Directors, our strong Researchers and dedicated staff, we are in an excellent position to continue to support our mission; enhancing the health of veterans of all generations through medical research by facilitating research and education activities conducted at the VAPORHCS.

Shelley Cobb, PVARF Executive Director

## RECENTLY AWARDED GRANTS & CONTRACTS

**Dr. Cong Qui Chu**- Cartilage Regeneration; **Sponsor: VivoScript Inc.**

**Dr. Jane Kelly**- Novel Synergistic Antimalarials w/Gametocytocidal Activities; **Sponsor: DOD**

**Dr. Michael Riscoe**- ELQ-300 Reformulation; **Sponsor: DOD**

**Dr. Miranda Lim**- (1) Sleep-wake Disruptions in TBI & (2) Enhancing Wakefulness in Mild TBI; **Sponsor: American Sleep Medicine Foundation**

**Dr. Jason Taylor**- (1) Factor XIII as a Hemostatic Agent in Hemophilia; **Sponsor: Novo Nordisk and** (2) Evaluating the Immunogenicity of Factor VIII; **Sponsor: Kedrion**

**Dr. Kathleen Carlson**- (1) Stepping on Program; Sponsor: **Oregon Health Auth.** (2) Veterans MVC; **Sponsor: OHSU Foundation**

**Dr. James Henry**- Tinnitus Coach Sponsor: **GN Resound**

**Dr. Sarah Theodoroff** “MRI verification of the TMS target for tinnitus treatment”; **Sponsor: OHSU Foundation**

**Dr. Sunwen Chou** “Recombinant phenotyping of letermovir-resistant cytomegalovirus mutants”; **Sponsor: Merck**

**Dr. Amir Azarbal** (1) “Randomized, Multicenter, Controlled Trial to Compare Best Endovascular versus Best Surgical Therapy in Patients with Critical Limb Ischemia (BEST)”; **Sponsor: NERI and** (2) “Non-Invasive Treatment of Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Clinical Trial (N-TA3CT)” ; **Sponsor: NIH/OHSU**

## WHATS HAPPENING

### VISITING SCIENTIST PROGRAM



Dr. Victor Montori, an endocrinologist and health services researcher at the Mayo Clinic will be traveling to the Portland VA to visit with investigators from August 31-September 1, 2015. Dr. Montori serves as director of community engagement and of late stage translational research for the Mayo Clinic Center for Clinical and Transitional Science.

Dr. Montori is interested in how knowledge is produced, disseminated and taken up in practice — and how this leads to optimal health care delivery and patient outcomes.

Dr. Montori will visit with VA investigators for a formal research seminar to discuss potential collaborations, provide feedback on works in progress, including grant applications. He will also give medicine grand rounds at OHSU (target audience including the entire Research Service) followed by 2 hours of informal meetings with individual investigators.

For questions and additional information please contact:

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## FEATURED RESEARCHER



**Dr. Mark Garzotto** is an Associate Professor of Urology and Radiation Medicine at Oregon Health & Science University. He is also Director of Urologic Oncology at the Portland VA Medical Center. Dr. Garzotto's research interests are focused in three primary areas including:

**1. Chemoprevention:** Current preventive measures for prostate cancer are limited. Our group was the first to report that cholesterol lowering drugs such as statins have the potential to reduce the risk of prostate cancer including its most lethal subtypes (Am J Epidemiol. 2005 Aug 15;162(4):318-25). We are currently examining the molecular effects of statin therapy on prostate cancer biomarkers in the pre-operative setting in a randomized multicenter, placebo-controlled trial with funding from a VA Merit Review Grant (PI: Garzotto). Additionally we have been awarded an NIH RO3 grant (1R03CA159428-01) to study the effects of statins on cancer recurrence in prostate cancer patients (PI: Weinmann). Current efforts focus on the study of sulphoraphane on epigenetic changes in prostate cancer chemoprevention.

**2. Improved Diagnostic Approaches:** Our group has led the effort to identify patients who are most appropriate for a prostate biopsy based on presenting characteristics. Recently we discovered a strong association with Agent Orange Exposure and the development of the most aggressive forms of prostate cancer (Cancer 2013). These models have shown the promise of decision models for clinical use. These have been developed for both the initial and repeat biopsy settings. These data have enabled us to design and validate novel tools for the detection of prostate cancer.

**3. Novel therapy for High-risk localized prostate cancer:** Currently there are only limited means of improving the outcomes of surgical patients with the most lethal forms of prostate cancer. Survival and other outcome measures are markedly improved by the use of neoadjuvant chemoradiation in a number of tumor types; however, this has not been studied in prostate cancer. Thus we were the first to initiate a Phase I/II trial to investigate the use of combined chemotherapy and localized radiation for human prostate cancer prior to radical prostatectomy. This study will enable us to specifically look at the effect of combined therapy on prostate cancer and indicate the degree of improvement of tumor respectability.

Additionally, Dr. Garzotto serves as a study coordinator and/or executive board member for a number of trials of high-risk prostate cancer including VA CSP #553, Chemotherapy after Prostatectomy ([Urology](#). 2008 Sep;72(3):474-80.); SWOG 0421, "Phase III Study of Docetaxel and Atrasentan Versus Docetaxel and Placebo for Patients with Advanced Hormone Refractory Prostate Cancer" and RTOG -0521 "A Phase III Protocol of Androgen Suppression (AS) and 3DCRT/IMRT vs. AS and 3DCRT/IMRT Followed by Chemotherapy with Docetaxel and Prednisone for Localized High, Risk Prostate Cancer."

### National VA Research Week 2015

Research Week this year is from **May 18-22**, and the theme is **VA Research: 90 Years of Excellence!** Research Week is celebrated all over the country at VAMCs, and is an annual event that celebrates the accomplishments of the VA Research Program and recognizes the researchers, Veterans, and partners who support the program.

Research Week provides an opportunity to honor Veterans and to highlight outstanding achievements in VA research advancements in the health care for Veterans and improved upon existing medical knowledge. VA Portland Health Care System (VAPORHCS) will be celebrating Research Day 2015 on Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015. The day's activities are designed to highlight and showcase the impressive research efforts of VAPORHCS investigators.

VAPORHCS is proud to house one of the VA's premier Research Programs. The Research & Development Program is an integral part of the hospital's mission and plays an important role in the health care Veterans receive. Researchers at VAPORHCS have received national and international attention for their groundbreaking research on Alcoholism, traumatic brain injury treatment, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, drug discovery for treatment of malaria, and much more. Research conducted by VAPORHCS investigators helps ensure Veterans access to cutting-edge medical and health care information and technology. The VAPORHCS currently has approximately 150 Principal Investigators and a research budget exceeding \$32 million in direct costs.

This year's Research Day will kick off at 10:00am in the Auditorium. Veterans and the general public are welcome to attend all or part of the Research Day activities.

## HR CORNER

**I-Pay** - It has been 5 pay statements since we made the switch to I-Pay. We are hoping you have not run into any issues. We hope you have noticed that many popular payroll forms, the payroll schedule, the newsletter and any special announcements can all be accessed on the home page. If you have any questions, please contact Marcia at extension 54119.

**Open Enrollment /401k** - Remember April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 is the next quarter that you can start deferring money into your 401k or change your deferral percentage. All requests must be submitted at least one week prior to April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015. We will be hosting a 401k meeting with Ron Barry PhD, CFP on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015 from 10am – 11am, or 11am – noon in building 101 / Room 201. Refreshments will be served!

**Health, Dental and Life Insurance** - Open enrollment for these Benefits is scheduled in May for a June effective date. We will be providing new costs and options for Health benefits. Please look for future announcements.

### **NEW EMPLOYEES - Welcome to PVARF!**

Dayna Morrison	Nicole Walter
Laura Kozell	Michael Rollins
Maarvi Khawaja	Jack Simon
Maura Pisciotta	Stephanie Veazie
Jane Yates	Dan Merrell

At PVARF we always are open for suggestions. If there are specific issues that you would like to see addressed please contact either Marcia Hinsvark @ 54119 or Shelley Cobb @54659.

*Your feedback and input is very much appreciated.*

## NEW RESEARCHERS

**Jennifer Barton, MD**- Dr. Barton received her MD from Stony Brook School of Medicine, her residency at University of Rochester and her rheumatology fellowship at UC San Francisco. Dr. Barton is a research expert on health communication and rheumatic diseases. Dr. Barton can be reached at Jennifer.Barton@va.gov or Extension: 54785.

**Samuel Edwards, MD** - Dr. Edwards received his MD from Case Western Reserve University, his residency at Beth Israel Deaconess, and his fellowship in Health Services Research at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Edward's research focuses on the role and function of primary care in health systems. Dr. Edwards can be reached at [Samuel.Edwards@va.gov](mailto:Samuel.Edwards@va.gov) or Extension: 59618

**Miranda Lim, MD, PhD**- Dr. Lim received her MD from Emory University, her neurology residency at Washington University in St Louis, and her sleep fellowship and post-doc at University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Dr. Lim is a research expert in sleep, EEG, TBI and PTSD. Dr. Lim can be reached at [lmir@ohsu.edu](mailto:lmir@ohsu.edu) or Extension: 57404

## Administrative News

- The new FY15 PerDiem rates have been updated. PVARF's full travel policy and forms can be found on our website at [www.pvarf.org](http://www.pvarf.org)
- **ClinCard Launch!** PVARF's transition to a prepaid credit card system for clinical trial subject payments will launch the week of March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **Tips from Mandy's corner:** Just a reminder to please attach your packing slips when submitting Foundation purchase orders. In addition, to ensure a timely turnaround, please include your original receipts when requesting reimbursement of any kind. Thanks!