It is hard to believe that 2016 is soon coming to a close!

This fall issue reflects on the numerous events during the last few months; we highlight the patient-involved activities of The Richard P. and Dorothy P. Simmons Center for Interstitial Lung Disease, recent promotions and publications, and new clinical initiatives.

Looking back on another successful Pittsburgh-Munich International Lung Conference, we recognize our collaboration with international colleagues and look forward to new opportunities ahead.

The recognition of our committed clinical care has once again been recognized nationwide and our research efforts continue to score exceptionally in grant reviews (42/72 awarded grants in FY16!).

It has been a year of accomplishments and dynamic teamwork.

As we head into this busy holiday season, we hope you will take a moment to recognize these achievements and congratulate each other on another successful year.

A new recognition feature of the Insider is Spotlight of faculty making important contributions to our missions. Finally, I am thrilled that Dr. Keven Robinson will assist on the Insider as Deputy Editor, together with indispensable help from Terri Dobransky.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the PACCM Insider.

—Rama Mallampalli, MD

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**UPMC and Pulmonary Move Up in National Rankings**

US News and World Report has once again recognized UPMC as one of the Nations Best Hospitals.

For the 2016-2017 year, UPMC is #12 (up from #13) on the Honor Roll of Best Hospitals. The subspecialty of Pulmonary moved up to #7 (from #11 in previous year) overall!

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**Faculty Spotlight**

**Mauricio Rojas, MD**—Dr. Rojas brings an international presence and recognition to PACCM given his cutting-edge research activities in cell-based therapeutic studies in ARDS, assessment of ECMO in severe lung injury, and the emerging investigative studies in aging research. Mauricio, together with his PACCM and cardiothoracic surgical collaborators, have set up a unique ex vivo isolated human lung system for small molecule testing, and directs the Core for dissemination of human lung samples. His work is recognized by NIH R01 and US Department of Defense funding. Mauricio is highly active as a mentor and in his spirit of collegiality and generous service to PACCM in organizing our international lung research conference.
Pittsburgh-Munich International Lung Conference

The 2016 Pittsburgh-Munich International Lung Conference, *Lung Immune Responses and Inflammation in Health and Disease* was held on October 6-7 at the University Club.

This year’s course directors, Anuradha Ray, PhD and Janet Lee MD hosted 35 speakers and session chairs during this two day event.

Pre-conference activities included a Young Investigator Session, with short presentations by Marc Gauthier, Keven Robinson, and Anna Zemke from PACCM, as well as three presentations from junior investigators from the Comprehensive Pneumology Center in Munich, Germany.

Three countries and nineteen states were represented within the 226 total participants during the conference itself, with 78 accepted posters.

In addition to the four main conference sessions, there was also an interactive session with journal editors from JCI and Science Immunology and a Banquet Dinner with keynote speaker, Dr. Laurie Glimcher.

Poster award winners included:
- Margaret Bennewitz
- Kong Chen
- Carl Koch
- Jacobo Sellares
- Mareike Lehmann
- Meredith Rogers
- Stefan Jordan
- Ulrich Costabel
- Duo Zhang
- Rachel Scheraga

Be sure to check the website for information regarding future lung conferences!
Role Changes

Phil Lamberty, MD
Director Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU)
at UPMC-Presbyterian

Keven Robinson, MD
Associate Program Director for
Scholarly Activities for the Pulmonary and
Critical Care Medicine Fellowship

Jared Chiarchiaro, MD
Director of PACC M Grand Rounds

Global PF Awareness Month

The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation (PFF) designated September as Global Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month – and the Simmons Center for Interstitial Lung Disease rose to the challenge by wearing blue!

From blue nail polish to blue hair, everyone joined in to support patients and increase awareness of pulmonary fibrosis.
Volunteer Appreciation

Thank you to all the presenters/facilitators for this year’s Pulmonary Workshops!

John Kreit  Jared Chiarchiaro  Bryan McVerry
Frank Sciurba  Bill Slivka  Chris Faber
Rachel Givelber  Joe Pilewski  Jessica Bon
Andrei Petrov  Sally Wenzel  Mike Risbano
David Wilson

Small Group Facilitators:

Stephanie Maximous  Elisabeth Sacks  Julie Barton  Quyen Nguyen
Ian Barbashe  Meghan Fitzpatrick  Sharon Camhi  Kristen Veraldi
Keven Robinson  Phil Lambery  Mike Myerburg  David Kristo
Shikha Gupta  Carl Koch  Eric Nolley  Danny Kass
Jason Rose  Anna Zemke  Joo Yoon  Charlie Atwood
Janet Lee  Bruce Johnson  Faraaz Shah  Will Bain
Dan Zank  Andrea Levine  Alison Lennox  Matt Morrell

Co-Director of Center

The Antonio J. and Janet Palumbo Cystic Fibrosis Center named Daniel Weiner as Director, with Dr. Joe Pilewski as Co-Director, effective October 1, 2016.

Dr. Pilewski directs the adult CF program and is also Chair of the CFF’s Therapeutics Development Network Steering Committee, as well as serving on the CF Foundation’s Strategic Mission Committee and Center Committee.

Violet Rippy 5K

On July 17, the Simmons Center for Interstitial Lung Disease participated in the annual Violet Rippy Walk for Pulmonary Fibrosis on Pittsburgh’s North Shore. Approximately 500 people walked or ran during this years fundraiser. Proceeds from this event benefited the Simmons Center,
Outstanding Service

VA Notice of Outstanding Service—
Charles Atwood, Jr. MD and Julia C. Barton, Sleep Medicine Fellow - Received a thank you note from the secretary or deputy secretary for providing outstanding service or care for veterans during the months of August and September 2016.

COPD and Oxygen Prescriptions

Although oxygen is the standard treatment for COPD patients with low blood oxygen levels, a recent study shows no significant benefit for patients with moderate levels of oxygen in their blood.

Dr. Frank Sciurba discussed the study and findings in a recent Tribune Review article and also in an interview on WTAE news.

Sleep and Pneumonia Link

A New York Times reader asked if there is a link between restful sleep and the ability to combat the onset of colds and other winter illnesses.

The article cited a several studies, most of which found that adults with poor sleep habits were much more likely to become ill with the common cold.

As an inclusion, a study by Dr. Sanjay Patel suggested that women who had too little sleep (five hours or less) or slept excessively (nine hours or more) were also at risk for developing pneumonia.

Holiday Fun

Wednesday, December 21, 2016
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Montefiore Conference Room, NW628

Around-the-world Holiday Luncheon:
Our PACCM Family is rich in cultural backgrounds that extend around the world!
Share your ethnic history and holiday traditions by bringing a traditional covered dish or dessert if you would like to participate in our Annual Potluck Around-the-World Holiday Luncheon.

Misfit Gift Exchange:
The fun way to “REGIFT”...
Did you receive 2 copies of the same DVD movie last year? Or would you like to conveniently “lose” last year’s gift from your in-laws?
Rewrap it in pretty paper (without a gift tag) and see who will bargain for your mystery gift in this playfully competitive tradition.
Appointments and Promotions

Burton Lee, MD, FCCP - Visiting Professor of Medicine
Stacy Rosenberg, MD - Clinical Instructor of Medicine
Stevan Tofovic, MD, PhD - Associate Professor of Medicine
Mike Myerburg, MD - Associate Professor of Medicine
Anna Zemke, MD - Assistant Professor of Medicine
Jing Zhao, MD, PhD - Associate Professor of Medicine
Timothy Oriss, PhD - Research Associate Professor of Medicine
Danny Kass, MD - Associate Professor of Medicine

Holiday Skating Party

PACCM FAMILY Holiday Party!

WHERE:  SCHENLEY ICE RINK
WHEN:  THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2017
TIME:  6:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Reserved Private Banquet Room
Food * Beverages Provided!

SKATING FEES
Adults - $5.00
Youth (17 and under) - $3.00
(one child free with each paying adult)
Senior Citizens - $4.00
Skate Rentals - $3.00

Be sure to RSVP
for the skating party
by December 15!

If attending,
please send
the number of adults
and number of children
to dobranskyta@upmc.edu
Grants, Awards, & Notable Mentions

Janet Lee, MD and Michael Donahoe, MD are editors of the new book titled *Hematologic Abnormalities and Acute Lung Syndromes*.

Jessica Bon Field, MD has been selected to serve on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Joint Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development and Clinical Science Research and Development Services Merit Review Board until June 2019.

Quyen Nguyen, MD has a new F32: Mitochondrial Dysfunction Underlies Right Ventricular Failure in Pulmonary Hypertension.

Faraaz Shah, MD has received a K23: Metabolic Effects of Early Nutritional Support in Sepsis: A Translational Investigation.

Kathy Lindell, PhD, RN has also received a K23: Integrating Palliative Care for Patients with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis and their Caregivers.

Louis Vuga, MD has received an HHS Grant: The role of FBX015 in collagen synthesis in Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis.

The Division also received news of promising scores for the following submissions:

Keven Robinson, MD – K08: The Role of IL-33 during Influenza and Bacterial Super-infection

Tim Corcoran, PhD – U01: Multilevel Models of Therapeutic Response in the Lungs.

Marc Gauthier, MD – NRSA: Interference With GR Function by Cytokines Upregulated in Severe Asthma.

Chris O’Donnell, PhD - R01: Myocardial Infarction and Mechanisms of Impaired Sleep and Breathing.

NHLBI Advisory Council

Sally Wenzel, MD

Congratulations to Dr. Sally Wenzel, who has been selected to serve on the NHLBI Advisory Council from 2016-2020!

Media Links

Online editions of the *Respiratory Reader* newsletter are available by clicking here.

Keep up with weekly divisional conferences by visiting the [PACCM Web Calendar](#)!

Clicking on an event will expand to show speaker information.
Tracheostomy Service

-By Roy Semaan

The MICU trach service is starting to do our own percutaneous tracheostomies at the bedside in the MICU. This allows us to keep the procedure within our own Division and improves convenience by providing same or next day tracheostomies, as well as bedside service. A benefit of this service is that it may limit the need for transfer to the operating room, therefore decreasing cost and improving efficiency. We hope to expand to the CCU in the near future as well.

Pulmonary Artery Balloon Angioplasty

- Contribution by Dr. Catalin Toma

Dr. Takeshi Ogo from Osaka visited Pitt during the first week of November. Thanks to the efforts of Belinda Rivera-Lebron, the PH Association helped to sponsor his special Cardiology/PACCM Grand Rounds lecture. During Dr. Ogo's visit, with the combined effort of Cardiology and PACCM, balloon pulmonary angioplasty procedures were conducted on 3 patients with CTEPH. Rotational angiograms (cone beam CTs) were also performed in these patients. These procedures are done in staged fashion, with an average of 4-5 sessions per patient. Although only a specific anatomic subtype of CTEPH is amenable to this intervention (segmental and subsegmental disease), there are a number of patients with CTEPH who fit the profile. Looking ahead, this may progress to become a useful therapeutic tool for the PH program.

North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference

The North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference (NACFC) was held in Orlando, Florida on October 27-29.

Multiple members of the PACCM division presented science posters/talks, including:

- Joe Pilewski
- Tim Corcoran
- Anna Zemke
- Alison Lennox
- Matt Markovetz
- Florencio Serrano

During the conference, Ray Frizzell, PhD from Pitt's Cell Biology/Pediatrics was awarded the Paul di Sant'Agnese Distinguished Scientific Achievement Award.
Publications


Simmons Center Events

12th Annual Fran Magister Charity Golf Outing – This year’s event was held on August 22 at Wildwood Golf Club in Allison Park. 103 golfers competed during the day and a total of 170 guests joined for dinner. Patients get to golf for free or play bingo, and have complimentary dinner.

Proceeds from this event fund the Simmons Center support group efforts, including the annual Gateway Clipper cruise.

It was perfect weather for this year’s annual Gateway Clipper Cruise, held on Monday, Oct 10th.

The 90 attendees included patients and their guests, and faculty and staff from the Simmons Center.
Fellows

Promising scores for both John Evankovich, MD and Tomeka Suber, MD on two separate F32 applications.

Marc Gauthier, MD – Understanding Steroid-Refractory Severe Asthma to Identify Novel Targets for Therapy abstract accepted for presentation at the Twelfth Respiratory Disease Young Investigator Forum in Chicago.

Jason Rose, MD– Recipient of the 2016 Young Investigator Award - A Carbon Monoxide (CO) Scavenging Agent Reverses CO-Induced Mitochondrial Inhibition in vitro and in vivo at Resuscitation Science Symposium (ReSS) in New Orleans.

Save the Date!

Annual Fellows Research Retreat

- Presentations by Fellows
- Special Guest Speaker
- Center /Institute Highlights
- Research Faculty Presentations
- Traditional Bowling Competition

FELLOWS RESEARCH RETREAT
SAVE THE DATE
FEBRUARY 6-8, 2017
SEVEN SPRINGS
MOUNTAIN RESORT
Celebrations

BIRTHS

Congratulations to our growing PACCM family!

Meghan Fitzpatrick, MD
welcomed twin girls—Kiera Marie (left) and Aubrey Rose (right) on October 30th.

Random Fun

THROWBACK PHOTO TIME!

Recently found in the archives: We are not sure what Dr. Frank Sciurba and Dr. Janet Lee were discussing, but it looks pretty important!

Be sure to notify us of all newsworthy items!

- New Grants
- Honors & Awards
- Promotions & New Appointments
- Special Presentations/Seminars
- Engagements/Marriages/Births
- Share photos of your colleagues!

Send info to: dobranskyta@upmc.edu

www.dept-med.pitt.edu/PACCM