Announcements

YCC, SCH, and SCRI Sign Agreement
I am pleased to announce that after a year of planning, Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital have signed an agreement with Sarah Cannon Research Institute (SCRI) to collaborate. Our relationship with SCRI will bring their broad clinical trial management experience and knowledge together with Yale’s drug discovery expertise to benefit our patients.

As part of the collaboration, SCRI physician scientists will partner with physician scientists from Yale Cancer Center to discuss strategic scientific priorities and develop clinical research protocols. SCRI’s role in the management of the clinical trials office will be to provide assistance in opening research studies at Yale and within their community network, as well as to augment clinical trial availability and participation of patients in Yale’s service area. Learn More >>

Dell Yarbrough to Lead Head and Neck Cancer Program
I am happy to announce that Wendell G. Yarbrough, MD, MMHC, has been proposed for appointment as section chief of otolaryngology at Yale-New Haven Hospital and Yale School of Medicine. He will also be director of the head and neck cancer program in Smilow Cancer Hospital and co-director of the molecular virology research program for Yale Cancer Center.

Dr. Yarbrough joins us from Vanderbilt University, where he is professor of otolaryngology and of cancer biology. Dr. Yarbrough is also the Ingram Professor of Cancer Research and co-leader of the thoracic and head and neck program at the Vanderbilt Ingram Cancer Center.

Countdown to the CCSG Submission
109 days
until our CCSG grant is due on September 25, 2012.

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I am confident that Dell's experience and leadership and his goals for head and neck cancer research and care will strengthen our head and neck cancer program at Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven and look forward to welcoming him on August 1.

ASCO Booth Sees Lots of Visitors
Smilow Cancer Hospital and Yale Cancer Center participated in the Exhibit Hall at the annual American Society of Clinical Oncology meeting last week in Chicago with a booth highlighting our Closer to Free campaign. The booth was staffed full time for three days and welcomed many visitors from around the world who were interested in learning more about our research and clinical care missions.

ASCO Review on June 22
Members of the Yale Cancer Center faculty will host an ASCO Review CME Symposium on Friday, June 22 at the New Haven Lawn Club. The presentations will include the latest information presented at ASCO earlier this month on the treatment of lung, breast, colorectal, gynecological, prostate cancers and hematological malignancies. Cancer genetics and case studies will also be presented, as well as a lecture on novel agents.

YCC Retreat Survey
Please take a moment to complete the survey on the Yale Cancer Center Annual Retreat, held on May 15, 2012. The results of the survey will help to plan for next year's retreat and will ensure that we meet the needs of our membership.
Congratulations to the following Yale Cancer Center/Smilow Cancer Hospital physicians who were named to the 2012 New York Magazine Best Doctors List:

Rebecca Sipples, Marianne Davies, Amanda Reid, and Emily Duffield recently published chapters in a new resource for patients with lung cancer, Lung Cancer Choices. Learn More>>

Roy Herbst will be hosting a Briefing on Capitol Hill with AACR on Tuesday, June 12 on "The Science Behind Tobacco Control: How Research Informs Policy to Save Lives and Money." Senator Richard Blumenthal is also scheduled to give remarks.

Kelly Chacon, a student in the DiMaio Laboratory, graduated from Yale College in May with an Intensive Bachelor of Science in Biology degree with distinction in the major. She was named the recipient of the Edgar J. Boell Prize, which is awarded annually to a Yale College senior for excellence in biology and senior research. The title of her senior research project was Unintelligent Design of an Oncoprotein. She will continue this work in the DiMaio laboratory next year.

Tom Magaldi obtained his PhD degree for research done in the DiMaio Laboratory concerning the interactions of tumor viruses with their host cells. His doctoral dissertation, Genetic Analysis of SV40 Receptor Usage, received the Outstanding Thesis Award from the Department of Genetics. This summer, he will begin a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Institutes of Health.

In the News

New antibody drug engages the immune system in fight against cancer
About a quarter of patients with deadly cancers had significant reductions of tumor size after taking a new antibody drug, according to results of a large early-stage clinical trial conducted by scientists from Yale School of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University, Harvard University, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and other major institutions. The study appears in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Nearly 300 patients with advanced melanoma, non-small cell lung cancer, or renal cell cancer whose cancer progressed after receiving standard treatments were given the drug, which boosts the
immune system's capacity to fight cancer.

The study drug - BMS-936558 - is an antibody designed to block a protein known as "programmed death-1" (PD-1), which is present on the surface of immune lymphocyte cells and inhibits their function. Administration of BMS-936558 is thought to restore the function of cancer-fighting lymphocytes.

Learn More >>

A Retrospect on Cancer Research: 200 Years of Progress
The study and treatment of cancer has evolved from a black box to a blueprint, according to Vincent T. DeVita, Jr., MD, co-author of Two Hundred Years of Cancer Research published in the New England Journal of Medicine. Beginning with the description of the cellular origin of cancer in 1863, and the discovery of metastatic disease in 1889, the black box began to reveal what cancer was, and how it developed and affected the human body. In 1943, the first successful administration of anticancer drugs was given at Yale-New Haven Hospital for the treatment of lymphoma using nitrogen mustard.

Read More >>

Top Lung Cancer Studies from ASCO

Watch Video >>

News Clips from ASCO
View Clips >>

Closer to Free Bike Ride
Join us on September 8, 2012

opportunity to nominate one person for consideration for a 2012 V Scholar Grant, which provides $100,000/year for two years for cancer research.

Candidates must have completed at least two years of fellowship training, hold a tenured track faculty position, have been at the assistant professor level for no more than five years, and be no more than 10 years since since obtaining their MD or PhD degree. Researchers who have secured their own R01 funding are not eligible, but K08 recipients are eligible.

Please submit by email a one-page letter of introduction, a two-page outline of a proposed research project and its rationale, and a current CV for consideration to Janice Zulkeski in Daniel DiMaio’s office by Friday, June 29th at 5:00 PM.

Department of Defense Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program Funding Opportunities

Visionary Postdoctoral Fellowship Award
Eligibility - Principal Investigator: M.D./Ph.D. graduate with a total of less than 4 years of postdoctoral research experience

Mentor(s): Independent investigator at the level of Assistant Professor or equivalent at the time of the award

Research must be in one or more of the FY12 PRCRP Topic Areas

Supports training of postdoctoral fellow in the laboratory of an early-career investigator (mentor) with expertise in one or more of the FY12 PRCRP Topic Areas

Supports training of postdoctoral fellow to include a
Employee Profile: Lisa Schlenk

The Employee Profile recognizes the diverse contributions made by Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital staff to meet our patient care, research, education, and outreach goals. The staff profiled are examples of the great work being done here, and the dedication and values we possess. To suggest someone to be profiled, please contact Emily Fenton.

The Rapid Case Ascertainment (RCA) Shared Resource at Yale Cancer Center facilitates population-based studies of cancer for YCC investigators, as well as outside investigators. Lisa Schlenk is a Research Associate for the RCA and is responsible for obtaining re-approvals from the state of Connecticut, and Connecticut hospitals, for the studies. She also keeps track of the information throughout the study, such as how many patients are enrolled, and any preliminary results, in order to create a progress report for the hospital's Institutional Review Boards.

"The challenges I face are keeping track of all the studies and meeting the various deadlines. Each study needs to receive re-approval yearly, and it is my job to make sure this gets done. It requires you to be very good at coordinating several things at once, and staying organized," said Lisa. Currently she is working on about 20 studies that require annual re-approval.

Lisa has been with the Medical School for 25 years and with the RCA since 2004. 2 years ago she was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer and commented that she is grateful for all the amazing and caring staff at Smilow, and realizes that the administrative support the RCA provides is an important factor that contributes to cancer research.

Lisa Calvocoressi, PhD, is the Project Director on one of the studies Lisa and the RCA support. She commented, "Lisa Schlenk has redesigned and streamlined much of the reporting that we need to do and we are so fortunate to have such a knowledgeable, organized, and efficient member of the RCA working with us. In addition to the outstanding quality of her work, Lisa is such a pleasure to work with. She is always willing to extend herself to help others to get the job done while remaining cheerful, upbeat and flexible."
Development Update

First Annual Jim McNiff Golf Outing Yields $18,000 for Closer to Free Fund and Renal Cell Carcinoma Research

Mary McNiff of Orange, CT lost her husband Jim to renal cell carcinoma in 2008. To honor him and raise funds to support research in this disease area, she recently organized a golf outing at Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course, in Fairfield, CT. The event was an overwhelming success, raising $18,000 in its first year. The proceeds donated to the Closer to Free Fund will cover the costs of important research being conducted by Dr. Harriet Kluger at Yale Cancer Center. The funds from the Jim McNiff Golf Outing will allow Dr. Kluger to create a renal cancer tissue bank at Yale. The tissue bank will provide her team of investigators access to the important tissue samples used to conduct research in renal cell carcinoma.

Recent Publications

Safety, Activity, and Immune Correlates of Anti-PD-1 Antibody in Cancer.
Read More>>

The Duality of OncomiR Addiction in the Maintenance and Treatment of Cancer.
Cheng CJ, Slack FJ.
Read More>>

Two Hundred Years of Cancer Research.
Devita VT Jr, Rosenberg SA.
Read More>>

Gaucher disease gene GBA functions in immune regulation.
Current status of lung cancer screening.
Ahmad U, Detterbeck FC.

National Residency Matching Program (NRMP) Results for Radiation Oncology: 2011 Update.
Aneja S, Wilson LD, Haffty BG, Yu JB.

A fluorodeoxyglucose avid mediastinal parathyroid adenoma masquerading as metastatic bladder cancer.
Adewole AD, Roman SA, Kraev Al, Kim AW.

Treg depletion through CD127 positive selection results in a population enriched in memory T cells: implications for anti-tumoral cell therapy.
Haematologica. 2012 May 11.

A Prospective, Multicenter Study of Complementary/Alternative Medicine (CAM) Utilization During Definitive Radiation for Breast Cancer.

Radiation Therapy Oncology Group Protocol 02-29: A Phase II Trial of Neoadjuvant Therapy With Concurrent Chemotherapy and Full-Dose Radiation Therapy Followed by Surgical Resection and Consolidative Therapy for Locally Advanced Non-small Cell Carcinoma of the Lung
Mohan Suntharalingam, Rebecca Paulus, Martin J. Edelman, Mark Krasna, Whitney Burrows, Elizabeth Gore, Lynn D. Wilson, Hak Choy

Patterns of Cellular and HPV 16 Methylation as Biomarkers for Cervical Neoplasia.
Patel DA, Rozek LS, Colacino JA, Van Zomeren-Dohm A, Ruffin MT, Unger ER, Dolinoy DC, Swan DC, Onyekwuluje J, Degraffinreid CR, Paskett ED.
Basal cell adenocarcinoma arising in salivary gland metaplasia of the breast: a novel salivary gland-type tumor developing in the breast.
Flynn C, Kadivar M, Kwon MY, Bonzanini M, Haines GK 3rd, Tavassoli FA.
Hum Pathol. 2012 Jun 1.

Histone ubiquitination and deubiquitination in transcription, DNA damage response, and cancer.
Cao J, Yan Q.

Genetic polymorphisms in IL10RA and TNF modify the association between blood transfusion and risk of non-Hodgkin lymphoma.
Am J Hematol. 2012 Apr 26

Ultrasensitive measurement of hotspot mutations in tumor DNA in blood using error-suppressed multiplexed deep sequencing.

Evidence of a stabilizing mutation of β-catenin encoded by CTNNB1 exon 3 in a large series of sporadic parathyroid adenomas.
Endocrine. 2012 May 11.

Neoadjuvant chemotherapy (NACT) is an effective way of managing elderly women with advanced stage ovarian cancer (FIGO Stage IIIC and IV).
Glasgow MA, Yu H, Rutherford TJ, Azodi M, Silasi DA, Santin AD, Schwartz PE.

Etiology, assessment, and management of aromatase inhibitor-related musculoskeletal symptoms.
Park SH, Knobf MT, Sutton KM.
Intermedin is Overexpressed in Hepatocellular Carcinoma and Regulates Cell Proliferation and Survival.

Multilevel interventions: study design and analysis issues.


Quantitative in situ measurement of estrogen receptor mRNA predicts response to tamoxifen.