Dr. Edward Chu Named
Chief of Medical Oncology

AS YALE CANCER CENTER continues to work to make patient care a priority, the medical oncology clinics will benefit from the leadership of the newly appointed Chief of Medical Oncology, Dr. Edward Chu. In this position, Dr. Chu will be responsible for the clinical and research activities of the Section which is now poised for substantial faculty expansion and programmatic development. Dr. Robert Alpern, Dean of the Yale School of Medicine, said, “We are extremely fortunate to have someone with Dr. Chu’s experience and talent to lead us forward in medical oncology. This program is central to our outstanding programs in cancer research.”

Among Dr. Chu’s first tasks will be the recruitment of new clinical oncologists and the enhancement of the translational clinical research program. These recruitment efforts will be coordinated with the leadership of the Cancer Center, the Department of Internal Medicine and other major clinical and basic research cancer units at the Yale University School of Medicine, and Yale-New Haven Hospital.

“I am delighted that Ed Chu has agreed to serve as the Chief of Medical Oncology at the Yale Cancer Center. A distinguished committee of senior leaders made his selection after a careful national search. Dr. Chu brings a special blend of clinical skills, major accomplishments as an innovative cancer researcher, familiarity with our School and Hospital, and demonstrated leadership talents to the Center,” Dr. Edelson said.

A graduate from Brown University with BS, MMS, and MD degrees, Dr. Chu remained at Brown to complete his residency training in Internal Medicine. He then moved to the National Cancer Institute where he completed a fellowship in Medical Oncology and subsequently served as a tenured Senior Clinical Investigator. In 1996 Dr. Chu was recruited to Yale to assume the positions of Chief of Medical Oncology and Director of the VACT Cancer Center at the West Haven Veterans Administration Hospital.

“Dr. Chu has achieved international acclaim for his seminal research in fundamental aspects of aberrant cellular proliferation in cancer. In particular, his research group has elucidated the regulation of thymidylate synthase, a critical target in cancer chemotherapy, with specific focus on novel translational autoregulatory mechanisms. Currently Dr. Chu and his research team are actively involved in developing novel compounds and strategies for the treatment of colorectal cancer as well as other human malignancies.”

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Amy and Joseph Perella Professor:
Endowed Chair at Yale to Honor Dr. Vincent T. DeVita

THE YALE CORPORATION appointed Vincent T. DeVita, Jr., MD the Amy and Joseph Perella Professor of Medicine on February 6 in recognition of his seminal and enduring contributions to cancer research and treatment. Joseph R. Perella, a member of the Yale Cancer Center Advisory Board, is Chairman of Institutional Securities and Investment Banking Group at Morgan Stanley. His wife, Amy Perella, is a survivor of Hodgkin’s disease.

“I feel so fortunate that Joe and I are able to honor the man who developed a cure for the disease that I had. Dr. DeVita has devoted his life to the examination of cancer and the development of the therapies to cure it. It is our privilege to be able to ensure the recognition of such a great physician and humanitarian,” Mrs. Perella said.

Director of Yale Cancer Center from 1993 to July 2003, Dr. DeVita currently serves as Chairman of the Yale Cancer Center Advisory Board and is a Professor of Internal Medicine and Epidemiology and Public Health at Yale University School of Medicine. Dr. DeVita spent the early part of his career at the National Cancer Institute (NCI). In 1980, the President of the United States appointed him as Director of the NCI and the National Cancer Program, a position he held until 1988. Dr. DeVita currently serves on the editorial boards of numerous scientific journals and is the author or co-author of more than 450 scientific articles. He is one of the three editors of Cancers: Principles and Practice of Oncology and serves as the Editor-in-Chief of The Cancer Journal for Nursing.

Dr. DeVita has earned international recognition for his accomplishments as a pioneer in the field of oncology. While at the NCI, he was instrumental in developing combination chemotherapy programs that ultimately led to an effective regimen of curative chemotherapy for Hodgkin’s disease and diffuse large cell lymphomas. Along with colleagues at the NCI, he developed the four-drug combination, known by the acronym MOPP, which increased the cure-rate for patients with advanced Hodgkin’s disease from nearly zero to over 70 percent. In 1972, Dr. DeVita received the Albert and Mary Lasker Medical Research Award for his contribution to the medical oncology field.
Early Detection Screening: The Key to Conquering Colorectal Cancer

**COLORECTAL CANCER** is a major public health problem in the United States and worldwide. An estimated 146,940 new cases of colorectal cancer will be diagnosed in the United States in 2004, making it the third most common cause of cancer in men and women. It is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths, resulting in nearly 60,000 deaths this year. Although these statistics are alarming, when detected in its earliest stage 90% of patients will be cured; however, because early colorectal cancer causes no symptoms and screening rates are so low, only 38% of colorectal cancers are detected at this stage.

“People need to understand that colorectal cancer is preventable and highly treatable when discovered and diagnosed in its early stages. In fact, more than 90% of colorectal cancer is preventable with early screening and treatment, this is why it is critically important for all men and women above the age of 50 to seek out screening for colorectal cancer. What is quite surprising is that only about 25-30% of people in this country are screened for colorectal cancer,” Dr. Ed Chu, Professor of Medical Oncology and Pharmacology and an expert in colorectal cancer at Yale Cancer Center, explained.

The National Cancer Institute currently recommends that men and women aged 50 years and older be screened for colorectal cancer. Patients with a family history of colorectal cancer and/or other cancers as well as those with a history of polyps or inflammatory bowel disease are urged to begin screening at an earlier age. Conventional screening methods are able to detect and remove benign polyps, which are felt to be the precursors for colorectal cancer, and can detect colorectal cancer at an early stage allowing it to be surgically cured. Unfortunately, in the United States, only about 30% of people who should be screened follow the recommended guidelines leading to an elevated number of patients diagnosed with the disease at a progressed stage. Invasive testing and lack of awareness are blamed for the low screening rates throughout the country.

Screening for colorectal cancer is rapidly evolving in an effort to increase the number of patients who are screened and decrease the fears and discomfort commonly associated with the screening process. Currently, one of the primary tools used for colorectal cancer screening is colonoscopy, which is an examination of the entire colon using a lighted tube inserted through the rectum. In addition, fecal occult blood testing, which checks for hidden blood in the stool, sigmoidoscopy, which is an examination of the rectum and lower part of the colon using a lighted instrument, and double-contrast barium enema are also used for screening. However, each of these methods is found to have its own set of strengths and weaknesses related to cost, risk, sensitivity, specificity, and availability.

Virtual colonoscopy is a new, rapidly evolving, non-invasive technique that uses high resolution CT scan and sophisticated computer software to generate two and three-dimensional views of the colon and rectum for evaluation by a specially trained radiologist. This new screening method offers many of the benefits of the conventional colonoscopy without the discomfort and inconvenience, and it does not require sedation. Moreover, it is a relatively quick screening method requiring only 15-20 minutes and people can resume their normal daily activities immediately thereafter. Yale-New Haven Hospital is one of only a small number of hospitals in the state of Connecticut currently offering virtual colonoscopies.

There are, however, several drawbacks to this test, including the need for a conventional colonoscopy in the event that polyps are visualized and require removal. Virtual colonoscopy is an emerging technology that requires further testing before it can be widely accepted as a standard screening method for colorectal cancer.

“Colorectal cancer continues to be a significant health problem in the United States, and screening for this disease remains the most effective strategy to save lives. People can also help lower their risk of developing colorectal cancer by exercising regularly, maintaining a healthy weight, and eating a diet that is low in fat and high in fiber content consisting of fruits, vegetables, bran, and whole grains. Finally, the odds of developing this disease can be reduced by avoiding alcohol and tobacco,” Dr. Chu said.

Among the many national posts he has held, Dr. Chu served a three-year term as Chairman of the National Institute of Health's Experimental Therapeutics I Study Section. He is the Founding Editor-in-Chief of Clinical Colorectal Cancer and is a current member of several editori- al boards of cancer journals focusing on basic science and clinical research. Dr. Chu is the author of the Physicians’ Cancer Chemotherapy Drug Manual, which provides a comprehensive review of all major cancer drugs and drug treatment regimens currently used in daily clinical practice by medical oncologists and health care professionals. The manual, now in its fourth edition, is recognized as a leading publication in the cancer field. Dr. Chu is also the Chairman of the International Colorectal Congress, an international meeting that brings together leaders in oncology from the United States, Europe, and Asia and focuses on the latest developments in the management and treatment of colorectal cancer.

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to the cure of Hodgkin’s disease. In addition, in collaboration with Dr. George Canellos, Dr. DeVita developed the combination chemotherapy CMF, which still remains a useful therapy for breast cancer.

Dr. DeVita earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the College of William and Mary in 1957. He was awarded his MD degree with distinction from the George Washington University School of Medicine in 1961.

Mr. and Mrs. Perella endowed the Chair with a gift of $2.5 million in December 2003 to strengthen Yale Cancer Center’s ability to develop translational research and new treatments to benefit cancer patients. Following Dr. DeVita’s tenure as the Amy and Joseph Perella Professor of Medicine, the chair will be renamed the Vincent T. DeVita Professor of Medicine and will support a physician with a strong clinical research background in the treatment of cancer at Yale Cancer Center.
RESEARCHERS AND CLINICIANS have long agreed that the earlier a cancer is detected, the better the prognosis is for the patient. Unfortunately, there is no current procedure or diagnostic test for the early detection of ovarian cancer, which is particularly difficult to detect in its early stages and typically only presents recognizable symptoms once the cancer has metastasized. The Section of Gynecologic Oncology at Yale is leading an effort to identify screening methods and new treatments for ovarian cancer with its new initiative, Discovery to Cure.

One in fifty-seven women in the United States will develop ovarian cancer in her lifetime, the fifth most common cancer in women. In 2004, it is estimated that about 25,580 new cases of ovarian cancer will be diagnosed and 16,090 women will die of the disease. Dr. Peter Schwartz, the John Slade Ely Professor of Obstetrics and Director of Gynecologic Oncology at Yale, has created a comprehensive women’s reproductive cancer treatment and early detection program in collaboration with Dr. Thomas Rutherford and Dr. Gil Mor, Associate Professors of Obstetrics and Gynecology. “By taking advantage of the extraordinary strong research facilities at Yale School of Medicine, the Discovery to Cure program has the potential to lead the advances in ovarian cancer research and treatment in the United States,” Dr. Schwartz explained.

Launched in 2003, the Discovery to Cure initiative will focus on exploring new methods for the prevention, early detection, and treatment of ovarian cancer. This past year has already brought significant advances in the treatment of ovarian cancer with the clinical use of the anti-cancer drug, phenoxodiol. “In the laboratory, we have identified phenoxodiol to be an extremely effective agent in causing ovarian cancer cells to undergo cell death. In addition, phenoxodiol acts as a chemosensitizer by enhancing the anti-tumor effect of conventional chemotherapeutic drugs,” Dr. Mor indicated. “Clinically, we are investigating possible toxicity and response at different dose levels in women with chemo-resistant ovarian cancer. In some of these women, disease regression or stabilization has been realized,” Dr. Rutherford explained. Yale is currently the only clinical site in the United States approved to use phenoxodiol for ovarian cancer patients in a clinical trial. “We are continuing to work with phenoxodiol while working to identify new agents to determine if they arrest the growth of ovarian cancer,” Dr. Schwartz said.

In addition to identifying novel treatments for ovarian cancer, researchers at Yale are also working to develop screening tools to enable ovarian cancer to be detected at its earliest stage. In 1990, Yale was the site of a pilot early detection program for ovarian cancer, which followed 400 high-risk women. Today, the Ovarian Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Study, a national study in which Yale is participating, will monitor 1,500 women at high risk for ovarian cancer to determine methods for early detection and prevention. In addition to examining the potential benefit of having elective surgery for removal of their ovarian and fallopian tubes, researchers will also monitor the pattern of a chemical called CA-125, a substance that has been shown to be an effective monitoring tool in ovarian cancer survivors, to determine its potential use as an early screening tool. Furthermore, Dr. Mor’s laboratory has developed a new blood test which discriminates healthy individuals from patients with ovarian cancer based on the expression of proteins found in the blood. This early screening test will be available to the patients of the Discovery to Cure program.

While continuing clinical trials to test the success of phenoxodiol against chemo-resistant ovarian cancer and participating in the national prevention and early detection study, the Discovery to Cure program will focus on developing disease markers that can predict a response to chemotherapy and therefore help determine the best method of treatment for women diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Using the extensive research resources of Discovery to Cure’s Tissue and Blood Bank, which contains over 400 tissue samples of the primary and metastatic ovarian cancers as well as tissue samples collected from normal ovaries, Yale researchers have access to malignant and preneoplastic tissues allowing extensive research on biomarkers for ovarian cancer to be performed. With the significant research tools available, the Discovery to Cure program aims to enable prediction of chemotherapy efficacy, a groundbreaking step in the search for an effective treatment for ovarian cancer.

The majority of women with ovarian cancer are diagnosed at a late stage after the cancer has metastasized. At this late stage, the currently available therapies have limited efficacy, while others have resistance to chemotherapy. Discovery to Cure seeks to achieve accurate detection of ovarian and other reproductive cancers at their earliest stages while offering women at increased risk for cancer high quality, compassionate clinical care.

For more information on Discovery to Cure’s research initiatives, please contact Renee Luongo at 203.737.5225.
Flow Cytometry Resource
Invaluable Asset to Researchers

Researchers at Yale Cancer Center often rely on the use of the Flow Cytometry Shared Resource in an effort to analyze cellular samples in their research. Capable of quickly analyzing many samples, the flow cytometer enables investigators to measure certain important cellular characteristics, such as the presence of tumor markers on the cell surface, using fluorescent stains, and other cellular attributes, such as size and morphology, using scattered light.

Directed by Rocco Carbone, MS, Technical Director, and Warren Shlomchik, MD, Medical Director, the shared resource facility of the Yale Cancer Center serves an average 72 laboratories from 28 departments each year, and is always open to accepting new experiments. Mr. Carbone uses a Becton-Dickinson FACS Vantage Flow Cytometer/Cell Sorter to analyze the samples. The instrument uses three lasers to combine cellular excitation electrostatic separation, making it capable of observing five fluorescent dyes simultaneously and isolating two cell populations.

One of the most substantial differences between the use of a flow cytometer for analysis and other biochemical techniques, which look at changes in entire populations of cells, is its ability to examine individual cells, so that effects occurring in only a small minority of the cell population can be readily measured. The cell sample is stained with light sensitive dyes, placed in a saline solution, and passed in a stream before a laser beam. The measurements are based on how the light-sensitive dye reacts to the light.

"With Rocco Carbone’s help and instruction, this technique has allowed us to show that cancers caused by human papillomavirus (HPV) undergo dramatic changes and cease proliferation once the viral genes in the cells are turned off. This result has suggested a variety of new approaches to treating these cancers," Daniel DiMaio, MD, PhD, explained. DiMaio is the Director of the Molecular Virology Research Program at Yale Cancer Center and a Professor and Vice Chairman in the Department of Genetics.

In addition to the measurement of cellular antigens, flow cytometry can be used to investigate the cell cycle and DNA content, cell deactivation and death, gene expression, cell viability, phagocytosis, intracellular pH, membrane potential, and the intracellular concentration of certain ions, such as calcium. New advances in the technology of flow cytometry enable the measurement of certain factors important in cellular regulation, such as interleukins and interferon.

For more information on the Flow Cytometry Shared Resource, please contact Rocco Carbone at 203.785.4255 or visit www.yalecancercenter.org/rs02g.htm.

Students Pay Tribute to Mothers in Annual Race to Benefit Yale Cancer Center

On Mother’s Day, students at Choate Rosemary Hall, a coed boarding/day preparatory school in Wallingford, CT, sponsored their fifth annual Terry Fox Run, raising over $5,000 to benefit Yale Cancer Center. Mack Bartels, a senior at the school, coordinated the 5K run/walk in conjunction with several community service clubs, area public and private high schools, local churches, and the staff of Choate Rosemary Hall.

This year’s race celebrated the advances in cancer research and treatment, particularly in the development of translational research and clinical trials available to patients. Dr. Edward Chu, Chief of Medical Oncology at Yale Cancer Center, greeted the runners and thanked them for their support and participation before sending them on the racecourse.

The Terry Fox Foundation sponsors runs throughout the world to raise funds for cancer research. In 1977, Terry Fox was diagnosed with bone cancer in his right knee. Although his leg was amputated, Terry pledged to run across Canada to raise money and awareness for cancer research in a journey he called The Marathon of Hope. Terry’s 1980 run raised $24.17 million, to date the foundation has raised $340 million worldwide. Terry died in June 1981, leaving a foundation working to “maintain the heroic efforts and integrity that Terry Fox embodied.”
La Cassa Magica

Raises Funds to Support Translational Research at Yale Cancer Center

Yale Cancer Center’s fifth annual gala, La Cassa Magica, was held on Saturday, April 24th at the Country Club of Fairfield. Raising over $340,000 to support the development of translational research at Yale Cancer Center, the evening celebrated the 35th anniversary of the Yale Cancer Center and honored Amy and Joseph Perella.

CNN television news anchor and Yale Cancer Center Board member Paula Zahn hosted the evening and thanked all of the guests for their commitment to the patients of Yale Cancer Center and the continued development of new opportunities in translational research. Kathryn Anderson Adams of Greenwich chaired the event. Carolyn and Duke Brodsky of Southport and Mr. and Mrs. Alexius Conroy of Fairfield served as co-chairs for the evening. Ms. Zahn also thanked the generous underwriters: Mr. and Mrs. R.S. Evans, Morgan Stanley, Amy and Joseph Perella, Pratt & Whitney-Otis Elevator Company, United Technologies Corporation, Purdue Pharma L.P., and Turner Construction Company.

Interim Dean Dennis D. Spencer, MD, the Harvey and Kate Cushing Professor of Neurosurgery, attending with his wife, Dr. Susan Spencer, Professor of Neurology, introduced Mr. and Mrs. Perella. In his comments honoring the Perellas, Dr. Spencer noted that Amy and Joseph Perella are known for their devotion to philanthropy, not only to Yale Cancer Center, but also to countless medical, educational, and cultural institutions and charities in New York City and throughout the nation. Mr. Perella, with his wife at his side, gave moving remarks explaining their motivation for establishing the Amy and Joseph Perella Professor of Medicine in honor of Dr. Vincent DeVita. He noted especially that they have been married for thirty years, and how much Dr. DeVita’s commitment as a physician had meant to them during his wife’s treatment for Hodgkin’s disease twelve years ago.

In support of La Cassa Magica and Yale Cancer Center, Mitchells-Richards of Greenwich graciously donated Hermès silk ribbon twilly scarves for the women. Sony Music Entertainment provided three CD gift sets for the men and Tiffany & Co. of Greenwich donated special gifts. Hermès Ideas, Inc., the New York City Opera (NYCO), and O’Neal’s also contributed to the evening.

New York City Opera stars Lori Phillips, soprano, and Michael Corvino, baritone, accompanied by Lynn Baker, Assistant Conductor of the Orchestra of NYCO, entertained guests with selections from Madame Butterfly and Carousel. Legendary jazz pianist and composer, Marian McPartland, who is one of the American Jazz Masters by the National Endowment for the Arts, in its 25th year on National Public Radio, played several selections for the guests. Among her many accomplishments, she is the recipient of the 2004 Grammy Trustees Award, the 1984 winner of the prestigious Peabody Award, and in 2000 was named one of the American Jazz Masters by the National Endowment for the Arts.

ON THURSDAY, MAY 27, 2004 Yale Cancer Center hosted a unique program for 200 cancer survivors and their families in celebration of National Cancer Survivors Day. Guests were greeted by gorgeous summer weather for the event, titled New Beginnings: Complementary Approaches to Living Well Today.

Hosted by Dr. Mel Goldstein, meteorologist on WTNH Channel 8 News and cancer survivor, participants chose one of the following workshops: Reiki for Self-Healing, a demonstration of Reiki energy therapy techniques to support health and well being, Optimizing Nutrition, which reviewed how optimal nutrient intake contributes to the recovery process and overall well-being, or Life After Cancer, which allowed guests to discuss symptom management and the expectations and experiences of survivors. Following the workshops, guests enjoyed a picnic luncheon on Harkness Terrace while listening to the inspirational story of fellow cancer survivor and Yale School of Medicine Associate Professor of Pharmacology, Dr. Elias Lolis and jazz music performed by musicians from the Neighborhood Music School.

Cancer Survivors Day is sponsored by Yale Cancer Center, Yale-New Haven Hospital, and Yale University School of Medicine. The Wal Mart Foundation was a benefactor for the day.
Increased Mammography Services

In an effort to increase access to mammography services for women, the Yale-New Haven Breast Center has expanded its hours and screening locations. For more information or to schedule an appointment for your yearly mammogram, please call 203.688.6800.

The Yale-New Haven Breast Center
800 Howard Avenue, New Haven
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday • 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Tuesday and Thursday • 8:00 a.m-6:00 p.m.

Long Wharf Facility, 150 Sargent Drive, New Haven
Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday • 7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Thursday and Friday • 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Saturday • 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Mammography Van, Locations Vary
Daily • 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Yale Cancer Center’s quarterly newsletter is written to inform the public and the Center’s friends, volunteers, donors, and staff on current items of interest at Yale Cancer Center. All inquiries should be addressed to Renee Gaudette, Public Affairs Manager, 100 Church Street South, Suite 211, New Haven, CT 06519-1714. Yale Cancer Center complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996.

Jack Mitchell • best-selling author of *Hug Your Customers: The Proven Way to Personalize Sales and Achieve Astounding Results*, recently presented at the Yale Department of Dermatology Guest Lecture Series. A Yale Cancer Center Advisory Board Member, Mr. Mitchell is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Mitchells/Richards, two leading clothing stores in Fairfield County. He has received national acclaim for the innovative approach he uses to train his employees to deliver attention to customers, the focus of his recent book. In his first lecture at a medical school, Mr. Mitchell described the approach that made his stores so famous for their user-friendliness and applied the principles to medical care delivery.

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