

NEUROSURGERY NEWS

2010—A Brief Review

CLINICAL FACULTY

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Primary & Metastatic Brain Tumors, Enhanced Accessibility & Safety of Brain Tumor Surgery

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Assistant Professor
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Holiday Letter to Our Colleagues and Friends



Raymond Sawaya

Happy New Year! Here's a rundown on the past year's events in the Department of Neurosurgery.

We began 2010 with the **14th annual Milam E. Leavens Lecture**, honoring Dr. Leavens, the first chief of the M.D. Anderson Neurosurgery Service. Titled "Practical brachial plexus anatomy for the surgeon," the talk was presented on January 14th to the Houston Neurological Society by David G. Kline, MD, Emeritus Chair and Boyd Prof. of Neurosurgery at the Louisiana State University Health Science Center, New Orleans, LA.

The **15th annual Milam E. Leavens Lecture**, titled "Brain tumor treatment: A 40-year personal odyssey of hope, failure and more hope...science, surgery, and sensitivity," will be presented on January 14, 2011 by Mark L. Rosenblum, MD, Chairman, Dept. of Neurosurgery, Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, MI.

Dr. Ashwin Viswanathan joined our faculty this year as clinical assistant professor, holding a dual appointment at M.D. Anderson and Baylor College of Medicine. He completed residency at Baylor College of Medicine and a fellowship in stereotactic and functional neurosurgery at Oregon Health and Science University. His clinical interests include cancer pain management, trigeminal neuralgia, epilepsy, and neuro-oncology.

Dr. Syed Azeem was a participant in the AOSpine North America meeting on Advanced Concepts in the Management of Spinal Disorders, in Chicago, IL.

Dr. Oliver Bögler became vice president for Global Academic Programs at M.D. Anderson on July 1. He will work with the vice president for Global Clinical Programs and the vice president for Global Business Development to advance M.D. Anderson's mission, and he will provide the primary oversight, direction, strategic planning, and management of the

development and delivery of academic relationships and programs at locations external to M.D. Anderson. He will retain his laboratory and his faculty position in our department. In addition, he reviewed grants at several NIH/NCI study sections this year.

Dr. Daniel Cahill received \$100,000 from the James S. McDonnell Foundation to study "Molecular predictors of the mechanism of chemotherapy failure in malignant gliomas" from 2010-2011.

Dr. Franco DeMonte became a member of the editorial board of *Skull Base: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. He served as invited faculty for the Rhoton Skull Base Surgery Instructional Program in Ft. Worth, TX, in March and for the Johns Hopkins 4th Annual Skull Base course in December. He was interviewed in the November M.D. Anderson *Oncolog* article titled "Endoscopic surgery for skull base tumors." And he received \$20,000 from the von Plonski Fund for Acoustic Neuroma Research.

Dr. Amy Heimberger became a member of the Special Emphasis Review Panel for the NIH Brain Disorders and Clinical Neuroscience Study Section, served as a panelist on "Translation of basic research" by invitation of NIH Director, Dr. Francis Collins, and she became a regular member of the NIH study section on Clinical Neuroimmunology and Brain Tumors (CNBT) for a 6-year term (2010-2016). She was interviewed in the February M.D. Anderson *OncoLog* article titled "Researchers find glioblastoma's resistance to treatment rooted in immunosuppression." She obtained \$263,000 from the NIH/NCI as 4th year funding of her RO1 to study "Modulation of microglia and T-cell interactions in malignant glioma." She was also a collaborator on "Development of STAT-3 blockade agents for immunotherapy in patients with cancer," an NIH SBIR II grant award of \$750,000. And she was a co-PI on the study, "Targeting malignant gliomas with a novel inhibitor of the STAT3 pathway," funded by the NIH/NCI at \$188,000/year from 09/01/2010-08/31/2013.

Dr. Suyun Huang attended the annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research as a member of the Cancer Research Editorial Review Board in Washington, DC. She was a grant reviewer at the NIH Tumor Progression and Metastasis (TPM) Study Section in May. She received \$378,000 (over 2 years) from the NIH/NCI to study "Novel molecular mechanism of glioma pathogenesis," and she was a co-PI with Amy Heimberger on the NIH/NCI study listed above ("Targeting malignant gliomas with a novel inhibitor of the STAT3 pathway").

continued on page 2

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Dr. Frederick Lang became a member of the senior editorial board of the *American Journal of Translational Research* and a member of the editorial board of the newly launched journal, *Oncology Letters*. He received the 2010 Michael S. Voynick Lecture Award from Yale Medical School, New Haven, CT. He was course director for Brain Tumor Update Part I: Gliomas and Part II: Non-Glial Tumors at the CNS Annual Meeting in October. And he gave the presidential address at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuro-Oncology.

Dr. Nicholas Levine presented the talk "Minimally invasive cranial neurosurgery at M.D. Anderson" at the 4th Annual MINTOS Education & Laboratory Session at M.D. Anderson in July.

Dr. Ian McCutcheon was visiting professor at the Dept of Neurosurgery at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Miami, FL, in March. He conducted the practical clinic on practical and technical aspects of transsphenoidal surgery titled "Endocrine evaluation before pituitary surgery" at the AANS Annual Meeting, and he received an award for teaching excellence from the Baylor College of Medicine Dept. of Neurosurgery. He was also co-PI on the project "Development of treatments for NF2: preclinical studies of curcumin and dasatinib," for which Denise Terrill Charity Classics awarded \$70,000 for 2010-2011.

Dr. Sujit Prabhu was selected as chair of the CME committee by the International Brain Mapping and Intraoperative Surgical Planning Society (IBMISPS), and he became a member of the IBMISPS Board of Directors. He also received an award for teaching excellence from the Baylor College of Medicine Dept. of Neurosurgery.

Dr. Ganesh Rao was chosen as guest editor for a special issue of *Neurosurgery Clinics of North America* on "Management of brain metastasis." In May, he received the Young Investigator Award from the American Brain Tumor Association for the talk "Bcl-2 Promotes Malignant Progression in Glioma," and the award was presented at the CNS Annual Meeting in October, at which he was also selected as scientific program chairman for the CNS Annual Meeting in 2011.

Dr. Laurence Rhines was promoted to the rank of professor of neurosurgery with tenure by unanimous decision of the M.D. Anderson Promotion and Tenure Committee. He also served on the faculty of the Continuing Medical Education Advisory Board of AO North America.

Dr. Raymond Sawaya cohosted the Mid-Winter Meeting of Brain SPORE Programs at M.D. Anderson in January. He also served on the search committee to select the President of Baylor College of Medicine. He presided as president at the American Radium Society's Annual Meeting in May, and he oversaw completion of our department's External Advisory Board Review in September.

Moreover, he received \$531,000 as an NIH National Advisory Neurological Disorders and Stroke Council (NIH/NINDS) grant via Baylor College of Medicine to fund the joint training program with M.D. Anderson, "NINDS Research Education Programs for Residents and Fellows in Neurology, Neurosurgery, Neuropathology, and Neuroradiology."

Dr. Dima Suki received the M.D. Anderson Multi-Year Award for 2010 through 2013. She was invited as guest editor for a special issue of the *International Journal of Surgical Oncology*, and she was reappointed to the M.D. Anderson Institutional Review Board 4 Committee.

Dr. Jeffrey Weinberg became a Fellow in the American College of Surgeons, effective October 2010. He served as a panelist for the session on "SRS management of brain tumors and metastases, spinal tumors and functional disorders" at the American Radium Society's Annual Meeting in May and also served as moderator for "Cases and coffee with the masters" at the CNS Annual Meeting in October.

Residents for 2010 included Gareth Adams, MD (10/09-2/10), Ryan Kitagawa, MD (11/09-2/10), Joshua Chern MD (2/10-6/10), William Humphries, MD (3/10-6/10), Daniel Fahim, MD (7/10-10/10), and Benjamin Fox, MD (11/10-2/11)--all from Baylor Coll. of Medicine.

New Clinical Fellows this year were Jason Beiko, MD (Univ. of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada; 7/10-6/11), Mustafa Hatiboglu, MD (Okmeydani Training & Research Hospital, Istanbul, Turkey; 7/10-6/11), Ian Lee, MD (Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, MI; 7/10-6/11), and Danny Liang, MD (Univ. of Maryland Medical Center, Baltimore, MD; 7/10-6/11). Finishing their fellowships in 2010 were Magdalena Banasiak, MD (Univ. of S. Florida, Tampa, FL; 7/09-6/10), Tim Siu, MD (Univ. of New South Wales, N. S. Wales, Australia; 7/09-6/10), Andrew Tsung, MD (Univ. of Illinois, Peoria, IL; 7/09-6/10), and Adam Wu, MD (Univ. of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; 7/09-6/10).

Visiting Scientists this year included: Dawei Li, PhD, Qi Li, PhD, and Ai-Hua Gong, PhD from the People's Republic of China. There were 14 **Postdoctoral Fellows** in our department in 2010.

We thank our friends **Kyle C. and Eleine Brooks, Paul Oreffice, Bill Dore, Polys Hajioannou, the Rose family, and the Sorensen family**. Their support has helped enormously to advance brain tumor research in our department.

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