New leaders take reins in CT and Minimally Invasive Surgery

Cardiothoracic Surgery

Ralph Damiano Jr., MD

Marc Moon, MD

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The new appointment was one of several to take effect May 1 in the cardiothoracic surgery division. With his appointment, Dr. Damiano became the Evarts Ambrose Graham Professor of Surgery. He succeeded G. Alexander Patterson, MD, who had served as chief of cardiothoracic surgery since 2005.

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Minimally Invasive Surgery

L. Michael Brunt, MD

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News

CT leadership, from page 1

Dr. Patterson, who becomes the Joseph C. Bancroft Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery, has stepped down as division chief to devote more time to editing The Annals of Thoracic Surgery, the journal of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons. He is editor-elect of the journal and will become editor-in-chief early next year.

Marc Moon, MD, succeeded Dr. Damiano as chief of the Section of Cardiac Surgery and the John M. Shoenberg Professor of Surgery.

“It is a great honor to be chosen as the new chief of cardiothoracic surgery, and a real privilege to lead such a talented group of academic cardiothoracic surgeons,” Dr. Damiano said. “Under Dr. Patterson’s leadership, the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery has become one of the top academic groups in the world. I look forward to maintaining his legacy of excellence and continuing to grow and improve our efforts to provide world-class patient care while maintaining a strong commitment to research and teaching that hold the promise for future advances.”

Dr. Damiano has been a pioneer in the field of minimally invasive cardiac surgery and the use of robotic surgery to repair heart problems. He also has been a leader in developing a technique that allows surgeons to perform coronary bypass grafting without having to stop the heart and divert blood through a cardiopulmonary bypass machine.

He is the editor of the journal Innovations: Technology and Techniques in Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery. He also is the past president of the International Society for Minimally Invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery, the Society of Clinical Surgery and the Cardiac Surgery Biology Club. He twice has served on NIH study sections.

Dr. Patterson, an authority on lung transplantation, will continue to see patients. He also specializes in thoracic surgery, lung volume-reduction surgery for emphysema, and surgeries for lung cancer and esophageal cancer.

He is a past president of the American Association for Thoracic Surgery and the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation and recently was honored by the Society of Thoracic Surgeons with the 2014 Earl Bakken Scientific Achievement Award for his scientific contributions to cardiothoracic surgery.

MIS leadership, from page 1

Over a 25-year career at the School of Medicine, Brunt has focused on laparoscopic foregut, solid organ and biliary surgery, especially repair of complex hiatal and incisional hernias and cholecystectomy. He treats a high volume of sports hernias, or athletic pubalgia, which occurs when there is chronic exertional lower abdominal or inguinal pain that affects an athlete's ability to perform at a high level.

Dr. Brunt also serves as program director of the Washington University Minimally Invasive Surgery Clinical Fellowship and initiated the Capstone skills training course for fourth-year medical students entering a surgical specialty.

Dr. Brunt is currently president of the Society of American Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES). At Washington University School of Medicine, he received the Distinguished Clinician Award in 2009, the Samuel A. Goldstein Leadership for Medical Student Education in 2002, and has received the Clinical Teacher of the Year Award seven times. In 2013, he received the Philip J. Wolfson Outstanding Teacher Award from the Association for Surgical Education.

Save the Date

Celebrate a Century of Leadership...

Mary Culver Department of Surgery

FRED MURPHY ushered in a new era when he performed the first operation at Barnes Hospital in 1914. We will mark this centennial with a celebration dinner.

Friday, December 5
Four Seasons Hotel
999 North Second Street
St. Louis, MO 63102
Ballroom on 6th floor
6 p.m. cocktails/7 p.m. dinner
Valet parking provided
Cocktail attire
Invitation to follow
Paul Wise named General Surgery Residency program director

Colorectal surgeon Paul Wise, MD, has been named program director of the General Surgery Residency at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. He succeeds Michael Awad, MD, PhD, who will be serving as associate dean for medical student education at the medical school.

Dr. Wise came to Washington University in 2012 after serving on the faculty of Vanderbilt University for eight years. He graduated from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and completed a general surgery residency at Vanderbilt University and a colorectal surgery fellowship at Washington University.

Dr. Wise has been associate program director of the Washington University Colorectal Surgery Fellowship for the past two years and has served on the General Surgery Residency’s Clinical Competency Committee, which is re-examining the resident evaluation process, and the Surgical Residency Committee, which reviews issues of concern to residents and faculty. Dr. Wise will maintain a clinical practice, in part to facilitate the residents’ clinical education.

Dr. Awad will continue in his role as director of the Washington University Institute for Surgical Education, which provides general surgery residents, other surgical trainees, medical students, nursing students, nurses and nurse practitioners an array of simulated training experiences. He will also serve as an associate program director for the residency, overseeing the surgical skills lab.

Department to celebrate centennial with book, December dinner

Fred Murphy, the first chairman of the Department of Surgery, ushered in a new era when he performed the first operation at Barnes Hospital in 1914. One hundred years later, the department is celebrating its heritage by commissioning award-winning author Candace O’Connor to write a history book, which will be available at a dinner on Friday, Dec. 5, at the Four Seasons Hotel in St. Louis.

The book will begin with the early St. Louis surgeons affiliated with the St. Louis Medical College and Missouri Medical College, which joined with Washington University in the late 1800s. It will include the considerable challenges and accomplishments of each department chairman; controversies such as private vs. full-time faculty; clinical and research groundbreakers; and the opinions of nurses, administrative assistants and surgeons in a roundtable format.

Three professorships awarded to faculty

Three faculty received endowed professorships or chairs in June 2014:

Arnold Bullock, MD, (center) is pictured with Larry Shapiro, MD, executive vice chancellor for medical affairs and dean of the School of Medicine, (left) and Chancellor Mark Wrighton.

Arnold Bullock, MD, was named the Alan A. and Edith L. Wolff Distinguished Professor of Urology. Dr. Bullock specializes in urologic oncology, male voiding dysfunction and erectile dysfunction. He is recognized for teaching excellence and for community outreach efforts. The professorship was established through the philanthropic legacy of the late Alan A. and Edith L. Wolff, who provided for 12 endowed and 6 distinguished endowed professorships.

From left, Children’s Hospital President Joan Magruder; Kim Eghtesady; Pirooz Eghtesady; Kathy Button Bell, Emerson’s vice president and chief marketing officer; and Surgery Chairman Timothy Eberlein.

Pirooz Eghtesady, MD, PhD, chief of the Section of Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery, was installed as the Emerson Chair in Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery. Dr. Eghtesady specializes in surgical management of complex congenital heart disease, cardiac and lung transplantation, and mechanical assist devices. He studies the pathogenesis of congenital heart defects. Emerson, which created the chair, was one of the largest donors of the building fund that helped construct the present-day SLCH.

David Linehan, MD, former chief of the Section of Hepatobiliary-Pancreatic and GI Surgery, was named the Neidorff Family and Robert C. Packman Professor. Dr. Linehan is leaving to become Department of Surgery chair at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and the Seymour Schwartz Professor and surgeon-in-chief at Strong Memorial Hospital. Robert Packman, MD, (LA ’53 and MD ’56) a former Barnes Hospital resident and Washington University faculty member, is a senior vice president at Centene Corporation. Michael Neidorff is chairman and CEO of Centene. Noemi Neidorff is active on numerous St. Louis boards.
News

Graham Colditz honored by ASCO-ACS for cancer prevention efforts

Dr. Graham Colditz, MD, DrPH, Niess-Gain Professor in the School of Medicine and chief of the Division of Public Health Sciences, received the 2014 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)-American Cancer Society Award June 1 at the ASCO’s annual meeting in Chicago. As part of the honor, Dr. Colditz gave a lecture about cancer prevention and control.

Dr. Colditz is an internationally recognized leader in cancer prevention. As an epidemiologist and public health expert, he has a longstanding interest in preventing cancer and chronic diseases, particularly among women. He also is interested in strategies to speed basic research discoveries into prevention efforts that help to reduce disease rates. His past research has focused on the health effects of smoking, weight and weight gain, physical activity and diet. He also developed Your Disease Risk, an online tool that assesses a person’s risk of major diseases such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke and offers personalized advice for prevention.

In 2011, Colditz received the American Cancer Society’s highest award, the Medal of Honor, for his dedication to research that focuses on the prevention of chronic diseases and cancer.

AACR honors Dr. Colditz

Dr. Colditz will also be honored Sept. 29 with the American Association for Cancer Research’s 2014 Award for Outstanding Achievement in Cancer Prevention Research. He will receive the award at the organization’s 13th annual International Conference on Frontiers in Cancer Prevention Research in New Orleans, where he will present a lecture focused on the challenges and opportunities in breast cancer prevention.

“It is an honor to receive this recognition for cancer prevention research that would not be possible without a team of outstanding collaborators and strong institutional support from Siteman,” Dr. Colditz said. “The global burden of breast cancer – it accounts for one in four cancers diagnosed among women worldwide – and the emerging evidence linked to childhood and adolescent lifestyle means we must shift our focus to earlier in life to stand a chance of significantly reducing the burden of breast cancer now and for future generations.”

Steven Strasberg receives Distinguished Service Award

Steven Strasberg, MD, the Pruett Family Professor of Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, received the 2014 Distinguished Service Award from the Americas Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association in February at the association’s annual meeting in Miami.

Dr. Strasberg, a surgeon for more than 40 years, specializes in liver and pancreas, biliary, and gallbladder surgery, particularly regarding cancer of these organs.

The Distinguished Service Award was established in 2001 to recognize physicians who are leaders in the hepatopancreato-biliary field, who are dedicated to forwarding research and have had a long-term impact on the association.

“Dr. Strasberg continues to inspire and motivate his colleagues through his interest in new technologies and his focus on safety and education and the broad and substantial impact he has had on the HPB field,” said Division of General Surgery Chief William Chapman, MD, who is also president of the Americas Hepato-Pancreatobiliary Association.

Surendra Shenoy co-chairs dialysis vascular access project

Surendra Shenoy, MD, PhD, is co-chair of “Clinical trial endpoints for dialysis vascular access,” a project supported by the Kidney Health Initiative of the American Society of Nephrology. This project is tasked with clarifying appropriate trial endpoints for all future vascular access research. By clarifying the appropriate trial endpoints, the group plans to inform clinical, regulatory and coverage decisions, in those circumstances where clinical data are required to support the decisions. Dialysis vascular access is considered both the lifeline and Achilles’ heel for hemodialysis patients, who receive the treatment for end-stage renal disease and nationally suffer from a high rate of vascular access failure. The group’s ultimate goal is to enhance the development of safe and effective therapies for patients.

Jeffrey Lowell elected to American Surgical Association

Jeffrey Lowell, MD, was elected as a member of the American Surgical Association, the nation’s oldest and most prestigious surgical organization. Its members include the nation’s most prominent surgeons from the country’s leading academic medical institutions, many of whom are chairs of departments of surgery, as well as leading surgeons from around the world.
Transplant surgeons report on stand-alone organ retrieval facility

Liver transplant surgeon M.B. Majella Doyle, MD, was the first author of the cover article in the March 2014 issue of the American Journal of Transplantation, which reported that moving organ donors from hospitals to a regional stand-alone facility with a designated operating room for retrieving organs is more efficient and lowers costs considerably. Results were compiled over 10 years at the nation’s first stand-alone organ retrieval facility, built by Mid-America Transplant Services in St. Louis. William Chapman, MD, the Eugene M. Bricker Chair of Surgery and chief of the Section of Transplant Surgery, was senior author of the article.

BJH, Children’s Hospital, WU Physicians on U.S. News Honor Rolls

Barnes-Jewish Hospital, St. Louis Children’s Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine received top ranking in the 2014 U.S. News & World Report annual list of “Best Hospitals” and “Best Children’s Hospitals.

For the 22nd straight year, Barnes-Jewish earned honors as part of the newsmagazine’s “Honor Roll” — ranked #17 out of nearly 5,000 nationwide for their expertise in treating the most challenging patients across a range of medical specialties. Barnes-Jewish and Washington University also again rank #1 in both Missouri and the St. Louis metro area.

The hospital and medical school were ranked in the top 25 of the following specialties supported by the Department’s surgeons: pulmonology (9), nephrology (11), urology (11), cardiology and heart surgery (15), diabetes and endocrinology (15) and cancer (21).

In each of the 10 specialties surveyed, St. Louis Children’s Hospital-Washington University was again among the best in the nation, according to U.S. News & World Report’s “Best Children’s Hospital” list. The following ranked specialties were supported by Department of Surgery faculty: cancer, cardiology/heart surgery, gastroenterology and GI surgery, nephrology, pulmonary and urology.

Gene therapy method targets tumor blood vessels

Washington University urologic researcher Jeffrey Arbeit, MD, and David Curiel, MD, PhD, Department of Radiation Oncology, have developed a gene delivery method long sought in the field of gene therapy for cancer: a deactivated virus carrying a gene of interest that can be injected into the bloodstream and make its way to the right cells.

In early studies, the scientists have shown that they can target tumor blood vessels in mice without affecting healthy tissues. The viral vector turns on its gene payload only in the abnormal blood vessels that help fuel and nurture tumor growth. But unlike most therapies aimed at tumor vasculature, the goal is not to destroy the cancer’s blood supply.

“We don’t want to kill tumor vessels,” said Arabet, professor of urologic surgery and senior author of the study. “We want to hijack them and turn them into factories for producing molecules that alter the tumor microenvironment so that it no longer nurtures the tumor.”

In theory, this approach could be applied to diseases other than cancer in which the blood vessels are abnormal, including Alzheimer’s disease, multiple sclerosis or heart failure.

The findings were reported in December 2013 in PLOS ONE.

Peggy Frisella receives Distinguished Service Award for Research

Peggy Frisella, RN, BSN, received the 2014 Distinguished Service Award for Research at Washington University School of Medicine for her contributions to the Washington University Institute for Minimally Invasive Surgery (WUIMIS) at a ceremony on April 24. Frisella, who began her career at the medical school in 1987, has served WUIMIS since 2000, initially as clinical lab manager and currently as manager of research operations. She organizes and runs postgraduate educational courses, supports research fellows and a biomaterials lab, and is co-founder of Surgical Outreach for the Americas, a nonprofit organization that provides surgical care in underserved countries.
Promotions

Su-Hsin Chang, PhD, has been promoted to assistant professor in the Division of Public Health Sciences. With a background in economics and econometrics, Dr. Chang focuses her research on the health and economic consequences of obesity and the effects of surgical treatment of obesity. She has a K01 grant with goals of identifying the optimal surgical procedure for obese populations and assessing the current NIH guidelines on the eligibility of bariatric surgery.

Dr. Chang joined the faculty in 2012 after serving as a postdoctoral research associate at Washington University School of Medicine. She earned a doctoral degree at Johns Hopkins University.

William Hawkins, MD, has been promoted to professor in the Section of Hepatobiliary-Pancreatic and GI Surgery. Dr. Hawkins specializes in surgery for complex cancer of the liver, pancreas and stomach. In research, his lab is investigating a novel treatment for pancreas cancer using sigma-2 receptors, which are over-expressed in proliferating cancer cells. He recently received a Bear Cub grant related to the work.

Dr. Hawkins received a medical degree at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and completed a general surgery residency at Harvard University and a surgical oncology fellowship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. He joined the faculty in 2004.

Akinobu Itoh, MD, PhD, is now an assistant professor in the Section of Cardiac Surgery. Dr. Itoh joined the faculty in 2013 and specializes in heart transplant and mechanical circulatory support. He earned medical and doctoral degrees at Tohoku University School of Medicine in Sendai, Japan. He completed general surgery and cardiovascular surgery residencies at NTT Medical Center Tokyo in Tokyo, Japan, and National Cardiovascular Center in Osaka, Japan, and clinical fellowships in cardiovascular surgery at St. Michael’s Hospital and in heart failure/transplant at Toronto General Hospital, both in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Daniel Kreisel, MD, PhD, was promoted to professor in the Section of Thoracic Surgery. Dr. Kreisel, who joined the faculty in 2006, specializes in general thoracic surgery with a particular interest in lung transplantation. He is a member of the Thoracic Immunobiology Laboratory, and his research focuses on transplantation immunology. He receives NIH funding.

Dr. Kreisel received a medical degree from Mount Sinai School of Medicine and completed a general surgery residency at the University of Pennsylvania. During the time of his residency, he also earned a doctoral degree in immunology from the University of Pennsylvania. He went on to complete a fellowship in cardiothoracic surgery at Washington University and served as a visiting fellow at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York.

Hersh Maniar, MD, received a promotion to associate professor in the Section of Cardiac Surgery. He joined the faculty in 2009 after serving as a cardiac surgeon in the Christiana Care Health System, based in Newark, Del. At Washington University, his clinical interests include coronary artery bypass graft, cardiac surgery, valvular heart disease and arrhythmia surgery. He is currently the lead surgical investigator for several clinical trials that utilize transcatheter technology for the treatment of valvular heart disease.

Dr. Maniar received a medical degree from the University of Illinois School of Medicine in Chicago. He completed a general surgery residency at the New York Presbyterian Hospital, Cornell-Weill Medical Center in New York and fellowship training in cardiothoracic surgery at Washington University.

Appointments

Keki Balsara, MD, joined the Section of Cardiac Surgery as an assistant professor on July 1 after completing a residency in cardiothoracic surgery at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. He also completed a general surgery residency, a fellowship in surgical critical care, and a post-doctoral research fellowship at Duke University. Dr. Balsara earned his medical degree at the University of Pennsylvania. His clinical interests include adult cardiac surgery, thoracic organ transplantation, advanced therapies for heart failure, and surgical critical care.

Sara Buckman, MD, PharmD, completed a surgical critical care fellowship at Washington University and joined the Section of Acute and Critical Care Surgery as an assistant professor of surgery on Aug. 1. She earned medical and doctor of pharmacy degrees and completed a general surgery residency at the University of Wisconsin. Dr. Buckman specializes in surgical critical care. Her research interests include surgical infectious diseases and nutrition.

Anja Fuchs, PhD, joined the Section of Acute and Critical Care Surgery as an assistant professor who will study innate immune mechanisms following trauma and infection. Dr. Fuchs formerly worked in the lab of Marco Colonna, MD, professor of pathology and immunology, Washington University, as a research instructor. She earned a PhD in immunology at the University of Manchester, Manchester, UK.

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...Faculty Appointments

Sean Glasgow, MD, started as an assistant professor in the Section of Colon and Rectal Surgery on April 1, 2014. Dr. Glasgow, who is also serving in the U.S. Air Force Center for Sustainment of Trauma and Readiness Skills (C-STARs), earned his medical degree at Duke University. He completed a general surgery residency at Washington University School of Medicine and a colon and rectal surgery fellowship at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Glasgow treats the full range of benign and malignant colorectal disease.

Obeid Ilahi, MD, was named an associate professor in the Section of Acute and Critical Care Surgery. He joined the faculty on Sept. 1. Dr. Ilahi previously worked as a general and critical care surgeon at BayFront Medical Center in St. Petersburg, Fla., and was an assistant professor of surgery at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, University of Maryland, in Baltimore, and at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, N.Y.

Erin Linnenbringer, PhD, joined the Division of Public Health Sciences as an instructor of surgery on Sept. 1. Dr. Linnenbringer’s appointment follows her completion of a doctoral degree in health behavior and health education at the University of Michigan School of Public Health. She is a board-certified genetic counselor, and her research focuses on how genes may interact with external social and physical environments to produce or exacerbate disparate health outcomes across racial/ethnic groups.

Spencer Melby, MD, was appointed as an assistant professor in the Section of Cardiac Surgery, beginning on June 30. Dr. Melby most recently was an assistant professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

He completed a general surgery residency and cardiothoracic surgery fellowship at Washington University and a medical degree at the University of Utah School of Medicine. His clinical interests include adult cardiac surgery, including surgery for coronary and valvular disease, atrial fibrillation, and minimally invasive cardiac surgery. His research focus is on arrhythmias and inflammation in cardiac disease.

Yikyung Park, ScD, joined the Division of Public Health Sciences as an associate professor of surgery on June 1. Dr. Park formerly worked as a staff scientist in the Nutritional Epidemiology Branch, Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics, National Cancer Institute, Rockville, Md. She earned a doctor of science degree in nutritional epidemiology at Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Park’s work focuses on the role of diet, obesity, physical activity, and other lifestyle factors in cancer development and progression/survival. She also conducts research on measurement errors in dietary assessment methods and their impact on estimation of diet and cancer relation in epidemiologic studies.

Nanette Reed, MD, became an assistant professor of surgery in the Section of Vascular Surgery on Aug. 18 after completing a fellowship in vascular surgery at the Mayo Clinic, in Rochester, Minn. She also completed a general surgery residency at the Mayo Clinic and earned a medical degree at Baylor College of Medicine. Her clinical interests are cerebrovascular, peripheral vascular and aneurysmal disease. She performs both open and endovascular procedures. Her research focus will be clinical vascular surgical outcomes.

Anja Fuchs, PhD, joined the Division of Urologic Surgery on Aug. 1. Dr. Fuchs, who just completed a pediatric urology fellowship at Stanford University, will specialize in pediatric urology and adult transitional care. He completed general and urologic surgery residencies at the University Hospitals—Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio, and earned a medical degree at the University of Missouri in Columbia. In research, his areas of interest are the development of urinary biomarkers for upper urinary tract obstruction and quality-of-life issues in adult transitional care.

Mohamed Zayed, MD, PhD, joined the Section of Vascular Surgery on August 1 after completing a vascular surgery residency at Stanford University Medical Center. He earned a doctorate in pharmacology and a medical degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Zayed will specialize in abdominal aneurysmal disease, peripheral vascular disease, carotid occlusive disease and dialysis vascular access. His research will focus on the molecular mechanisms that regulate peripheral atherosclerotic plaque deposition and progression of arterial occlusive disease.

Gino Vricella, MD, was appointed assistant professor of surgery in the Division of Urologic Surgery on Aug. 1. Dr. Vricella, who just completed a pediatric urology fellowship at Washington University School of Medicine, will specialize in pediatric urology and adult transitional care. He completed general and urologic surgery residencies at the University Hospitals—Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio, and earned a medical degree at the University of Missouri in Columbia. In research, his areas of interest are the development of urinary biomarkers for upper urinary tract obstruction and quality-of-life issues in adult transitional care.

Isaiah Turnbull, MD, PhD, joined the Section of Acute and Critical Care Surgery as an assistant professor of surgery on July 1 after completing a surgical residency and critical care fellowship at Washington University. He previously earned medical and doctoral degrees at Washington University School of Medicine. His clinical practice will be broadly based in acute care surgery, trauma surgery and surgical critical care. His academic focus is the immunological response to trauma and critical illness, in collaboration with Robert Winfield, MD and Anja Fuchs, PhD.
Rooted deeply in history, CT Division rises to today’s challenges

The roots of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery can be traced back to Evarts Graham, MD, the second chairman of the Department of Surgery. As a leader in the field of surgery, Dr. Graham made many contributions; among them, he was the original chairman of the American Board of Surgery and a leader in the movement to accredit hospitals. A general surgeon with a special interest in thoracic surgery, he also performed the first successful surgical removal of a lung and established a chest service at Barnes Hospital.

Strong leadership has been a hallmark throughout the division’s history, as the specialties of heart surgery and pediatric heart and lung surgery developed, and eventually the current sections were formed: thoracic surgery, cardiac surgery and pediatric cardiothoracic surgery.

The division and cardiac surgery section recently saw a leadership transition, with Ralph Damiano Jr., MD, succeeding G. Alexander Patterson, MD, as division chief and Marc Moon, MD, appointed to succeed Dr. Damiano as cardiac surgery section chief. Dr. Patterson, who served as chief from 2005 to 2014, stepped down to devote more time to editing The Annals of Thoracic Surgery, the journal of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons. He is editor-elect of the journal and will become editor-in-chief early next year.

Thoracic Surgery
In 1933, Dr. Graham performed the first surgical removal of a lung in Dr. James Gilmore, a 49-year-old obstetrician from Pittsburgh. The surgery is notable not only as a medical milestone, but for the long life it afforded Dr. Gilmore – he outlived Dr. Graham, who died of lung cancer in 1957. Years later, Thomas Burford, MD, who took over the thoracic surgery service in 1951, devised protocols for hemothorax, or blood in the chest, that were used in World War II and are still used in trauma centers. Thoracic surgeons at Barnes-Jewish Hospital established one of the first programs for lung transplantation surgery in 1988, and performed the first lung volume reduction surgery in the world to palliate emphysema patients in 1993.

Today, Washington University thoracic surgeons, in partnership with other specialists at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, offer comprehensive treatment and advanced education for patients with lung disease. The hospital and its Washington University partners were ranked 9th in pulmonology by U.S. News & World Report in the magazine’s 2014 Best Hospitals issue.

By the time the lung transplant program celebrated its 25th anniversary last year, team members had performed more than 1,280 transplants, achieving strong survival rates despite taking on some of the most challenging cases. Thoracic surgeons, in the past several years, have also worked closely with radiation oncologists in the treatment of patients with lung cancer, particularly those with stage I non-small cell lung cancer, to determine the best treatment options.

“We’ve become increasingly aware of the gray zone in patients who could be treated with either surgery or radiation therapy,” says Bryan Meyers, MD, MPH, chief of the Section of Thoracic Surgery and the Patrick and Joy Williamson Professor of Surgery. “What we have come to understand is that there is not always a right objective answer for many patients, so the right answer might be what works best for them in a personal and subjective sense. We need to know as much about their hopes and fears as we do about their lung function and medical comorbidities. ”

In research, the NIH-funded Thoracic Immunobiology Lab has made key discoveries in the causes of lung transplant rejection, which occurs more frequently for lungs than for other organ transplants. Faculty members have also been leaders in outcomes-based research, working to find the best treatments for patients, and in patient education surrounding lung cancer surgery.
Innovation and the introduction of new technology and techniques have played an essential role in the development of heart surgery and in the efforts of Washington University heart surgeons to advance the field.

In the late 1950s, surgeon Thomas Ferguson, MD, helped bring the heart-lung machine to St. Louis, and he and colleagues performed the first open-heart surgeries at St. Louis Children’s Hospital and Barnes Hospital. While heart surgery was first performed in children, the development of coronary artery bypass surgery in the 1960s enabled Ferguson, Clarence Weldon, MD, and successors to treat a high volume of adult patients with coronary artery disease in the ensuing decades.

Washington University became a leading center in arrhythmia treatment with the arrival of surgeon James Cox, MD, and researchers John Boineau, MD, and Richard Schuessler, MD, in the early 1980s. With laboratory research providing the foundation, Dr. Cox developed the Cox Maze procedure for atrial fibrillation, a common irregular heart rhythm that can cause stroke and debilitating symptoms. The procedure – first performed in 1987 – used precisely placed incisions in the heart muscle to create a “maze” to redirect errant electrical impulses.

Under Dr. Damiano, the section continued its leadership in maze surgery as he and researchers replaced the “cut and sew” approach with radiofrequency tissue ablation, leading to widespread acceptance of the surgery. The section also became a leading center for minimally invasive heart surgery; established a Center for Diseases of the Thoracic Aorta, led by Dr. Moon, in 2001; became a leading center in the treatment of heart failure with heart assist devices that bridge patients to transplant or serve as permanent support; and recognized the need for diagnosing and treating women’s heart problems with specialized approaches.

Washington University cardiac surgeons and researchers are funded by NIH grants in areas ranging from intraoperative myocardial protection to myocardial mechanics. The section is also a leader in clinical trials; the most prominent in recent years have tested the use of transcatheter aortic valve replacement in high-risk and other patients.

Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery

The first open-heart surgeries were performed in children with congenital heart defects after John Gibbon Jr., MD, introduced the use of the heart-lung pump in the early 1950s. In 1958, Washington University surgeon Thomas Ferguson, MD, and colleagues performed the first open-heart procedure at St. Louis Children’s Hospital in an 18-month-old girl.

Jeff Stottler, 40, an instrument electrician from Chatham, Ill., thought aging was responsible when he experienced sharp pains in his chest and at times woke up gasping for air. But after 6 months, he decided to consult his doctor, who detected a heart murmur. Additional tests by a cardiologist led to a diagnosis – moderate to severe regurgitation in the mitral valve.

Damiano also performs mitral valve surgery using a minimally invasive approach, through a right lateral minithoracotomy, or 2½ inch incision in the right side of the chest. Damiano repaired the valve on March 10, 2014, and Stottler was home four days later; walking around the block two weeks later; and back to work at a central Illinois power plant on April 16.

Damiano, who performed the first robotic surgery in the United States or Canada in 1998, is a pioneer in the field of minimally invasive cardiac surgery and has been using these techniques in his practice since 2002.

Stottler credits support from his wife Stacey and the medical team for his quick recovery. “I had a lot of faith in Dr. Damiano,” he says.
Pediatric Cardiothoracic, from previous page

The pediatric cardiothoracic surgery service began under Charles Weldon, MD, who served as chief from 1968-1983. Weldon and his successors have gone on to establish leading programs in the treatment of congenital conditions, including heart and lung transplant centers that are among the most active in the country.

“There has been a long tradition of distinguished surgeons who trained or practiced here,” says Pirooz Eghtesady, MD, PhD, Emerson Chair and chief of the Section of Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery. “In recent years, we have had a number of firsts at St. Louis Children’s Hospital that have enabled us to build on our successful track record.”

One of the section’s other surgeons, Peter Manning, MD, is an internationally recognized expert in tracheal reconstruction who recently established a program at St. Louis Children’s Hospital to treat patients with this condition. His other interests include cardiac surgery in infants and methods to minimize the need for blood-product transfusion during open-heart surgery in children. Other section accomplishments include:

- The first three Potts Shunt palliations performed in pediatric patients in North America for pulmonary hypertension and associated severe right heart failure.
- New technique for mechanical circulatory support of newborns with single ventricle physiology
- Selected as Vanguard Center for the Pumps for Kids, Infants, and Neonates (PumpKIN) NIH Clinical Trial to explore the potential benefit of therapy offered by a novel pediatric circulatory support device for infants
- Future improvements also may come from a concerted effort to identify factors that lead to the best outcomes. With the Washington University Department of Computer Science and Engineering, within the School of Engineering and Applied Science, a new funded research program explores applications of machine learning algorithms to large data sets from children who have undergone heart surgery.

“Already we have found that among millions of different care decisions made following performance of a rather common neonatal procedure — the systemic to pulmonary artery shunting procedure — early initiation of aspirin is most critical,” says Eghtesday. “Also, early initiation of diuretics, previously not appreciated in any study, is vital in ensuring the best outcomes.”

Education

The Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery also has a rich history in education, as it opened the second training program in the country devoted to thoracic surgery in 1929. The program currently trains cardiothoracic surgery fellows in all aspects of the specialty: adult cardiac surgery, general thoracic surgery and pediatric cardiothoracic surgery.

In 2006, one combined general and thoracic surgical training “fast-track” position was approved at Washington University by the Residency Review Committees for General and Thoracic Surgery. This pilot program started as one of only a handful of such programs in the country. The curriculum consists of four years of general surgery and three years of cardiothoracic surgery.

“Over the last 25 years, approximately 70 percent of our alumni have gone into academic practice, making their own contributions to the field,” said Dr. Moon, program director for the fellowship.

Pancreas cancer researchers invited to submit SPORE grant application

The National Cancer Institute has invited a team of Washington University pancreatic cancer researchers to submit a Specialized Programs of Research Excellence (SPORE) grant. Many of the researchers — who are led in the SPORE grant by William Hawkins, MD, professor, Hepatobiliary-Pancreatic and GI Surgery — had previously worked together on a study exploring the mechanisms of treatment resistance in pancreatic cancer, funded by the Cancer Frontier Fund*.

The long-term goal of the SPORE grant would be to improve survival of patients diagnosed with pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma, which is often diagnosed at a late stage and has a five-year survival of only 6 percent.

As proposed, the SPORE grant has five projects:

1. Led by David Linehan, MD, former HPB-GI Surgery chief and current chair of the Department of Surgery at the University of Rochester School of Medicine, and David DeNardo, PhD, assistant professor, Oncology Division, Department of Medicine, the project is devoted to further developing mechanisms to promote anti-tumor immunity.

2. With Dr. Hawkins and Craig Lockhart, MD, associate professor, Oncology Division, Department of Medicine, as leaders, this project will take a drug that restores the ability of cancer cells to take their natural pathway and die. The drug was developed in Dr. Hawkins’ laboratory. (see next page)

*The Cancer Frontier Fund was established through The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital to accelerate the pace of innovation in cancer research, diagnosis and treatment.
3. Andrea Wang-Gillam, MD, PhD, assistant professor, Medicine, and Channing Der, PhD, pharmacologist, University of North Carolina, will combine an ERK inhibitor with another drug that inhibits a compensatory pathway which allows cancers to overcome ERK inhibition.

4. William Gillanders, professor, Endocrine and Oncologic Surgery, and Robert Schreiber, PhD, Alumni Professor, Pathology and Immunology, will work on the development of a personalized pancreas cancer vaccine, similar to the personalized breast cancer vaccine Dr. Gillanders is collaborating on with the Genome Institute at Washington University.

5. Ryan Fields, assistant professor, HPB-GI Surgery, and Sam Achillefu, PhD, professor, Radiology, will work on imaging with a fluorescent marker that could detect pancreas cancer earlier in high-risk patients.

In addition, the SPORE would have a developmental research program to work on new ideas for research, a career development program to promote new generations of researchers, a biostatistics core and a tissue core as a resource for collection, processing and storage of biospecimens.

**NOTABLES**

**Rebecca Aft, MD, PhD**

Endocrine and Oncologic Surgery, has received an NIH R01 grant to continue her study of disseminated tumor cells (DTCs) detected in the bone marrow of breast cancer patients, with her co-principal investigator Mark Watson, MD, PhD.

Her lab has shown that women with HER 2 positive tumors and HER 2 positive DTCs in their bone marrow who receive the drug Herceptin® (trastuzumab) have a better survival rate, but those women with HER 2 negative tumors and HER 2 positive DTCs in the bone marrow have a very poor survival rate. Based on this finding, her team has opened a new clinical trial that will look in the bone marrow of women with HER 2 negative breast cancers who have HER 2 positive DTCs and randomize the women to either receive Herceptin® or standard chemotherapy.

In addition, Dr. Aft and Cynthia Ma, MD, PhD, are co-PIs of a clinical trial evaluating the use of a hedgehog inhibitor in breast cancer patients with DTCs in the bone marrow, and Dr. Aft is collaborating with Lihong Wang, PhD, in biomedical engineering, to develop imaging technology for detecting cancer cells at the margins of surgical specimens.

**Cassandra Arroyo-Johnson, PhD**

Public Health Sciences, will serve as chair of the Healthy Eating and Active Living Partnership (HEAL Partnership), part of the City of St. Louis Health Department’s obesity plan.

The plan, called “St. Louis: The City Where Healthy Living Matters,” aims for a 5 percent reduction in the city’s obesity rate by 2018. As HEAL Partnership chair, Dr. Arroyo-Johnson will foster ongoing collaboration among groups working to reduce obesity, coordinating resources, implementing new strategies and evaluating success. The goal is to improve the choices St. Louis residents have in places to exercise and play; places for healthy food and drinks; healthy messages and social support; health care and worksite wellness; and healthy schools.

**William Hawkins, MD**

HPB-GI Surgery, received a grant from the Elsa E. Pardee Foundation to study a potential novel treatment for hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) using immunomodulation. The research involves blocking CD47 signaling to activate the tumor surveillance activity of macrophages in mouse models of HCC.

**Yiing Lin, MD, PhD**

Transplant Surgery, received a grant from the Elsa E. Pardee Foundation to study a potential novel treatment for hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) using immunomodulation. The research involves blocking CD47 signaling to activate the tumor surveillance activity of macrophages in mouse models of HCC.

**Rebecca Lobb, ScD**

and colleagues from the Division of Public Health Sciences are leading the Strategies to Improve Colonoscopy (STIC) study, funded by the National Cancer Institute. It will examine the comparative effectiveness of split-dose bowel preparation versus split-dose bowel preparation aided by low-literacy bowel preparation education materials and teach-back on quality of colonoscopy.
Jennifer Lawton, MD, was co-author of a historical perspective on heart surgeon James Cox, MD, in the *Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery*. While at Washington University, Dr. Cox, the Emeritus Evarts A. Graham Professor of Surgery, pioneered the Cox-Maze procedure, which remains the reference standard for the surgical treatment of atrial fibrillation. He was also the 81st president of The American Association for Thoracic Surgery and later served as chair of the Department of Thoracic and Cardiothoracic Surgery at Georgetown University. Thomas D’Amico, MD, of Duke University co-wrote the article.

Jeffrey Lowell, MD, has spent most of 2014 serving as a navy reserve officer and the only surgeon at a U.S. Navy base in the Republic of Djibouti, located in the Horn of Africa on the eastern side of the continent. Dr. Lowell’s deployment follows service as a trauma surgeon at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany in 2011 and public service in emergency preparedness for the St. Louis region and in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In 2013, he received the Distinguished Community Service Award from Washington University School of Medicine.

Third-year general surgery resident Ruben Nava, MD, won the Top Gun competition measuring laparoscopic skills at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons. Washington University surgery residents have been finalists in the competition for four straight years, and have won it three out of the four years.

Luis Sanchez, MD, the Gregorio A. Sicard Distinguished Professor of Vascular Surgery and chief of the Section of Vascular Surgery, was appointed to the editorial board of *Vascular Specialist* and the Society for Vascular Surgery Fenestrated Endovascular Repair Writing Group.

Stacy Smugala, an adult nurse practitioner in the Section of Colon and Rectal Surgery at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, received a 2014 Excellence in Nursing Award from *St. Louis Magazine*. Stacy – selected as winner of the Medical-Surgical category – was one of 18 awardees honored during a reception at the Chase Park Plaza on April 23. The magazine received more than 200 nominations of nurses who make a difference in their communities. Colorectal clinical nurse coordinator Bonnie Johnston, RN, was among 66 finalists for the award.

Joshua Sommovilla, MD, a general surgery resident working in the Intestinal Adaptation Lab in the Division of Pediatric Surgery, won the Resident Research Award from the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract during its annual digestive disease meeting in May.

Chandu Vemuri, MD, Vascular Surgery, was awarded the Midwest Vascular Surgical Society Research Travel Scholarship to continue to develop his translational research interests.

L. Michael Brunt, MD, presents scrub tech Eve Payne with the Friend of the Surgery Resident Award, given annually by the Washington University general surgery residents to recognize exceptional interest and dedication to helping educate surgery residents.

Brad Warner, MD, the Jessie L. Ternberg, MD PhD Distinguished Professor of Pediatric Surgery and chief of the Division of Pediatric Surgery, received a March of Dimes grant for research on “The intestinal microbiome in short gut syndrome.”

Paul Wise, MD, Colorectal Surgery, is principal investigator of a grant from the Colon Cancer Alliance to provide colon cancer screening and genetic testing to uninsured and underinsured persons in the St. Louis area. Faculty and staff helped raise money for the alliance by fielding a team in the St. Louis Undy 5000.
Medical Schools of Incoming Residents:

General Surgery Residency
Jesse Davidson, MD — University of Tennessee
Gayan De Silva, MD — Case Western Reserve University
Linda Jin, MD — Washington University School of Medicine
Bradley Krasnick, MD — Wayne State University
Jared McAllister, MD — Washington University School of Medicine
Michael Onwugbufor, MD — Howard University
Kristen Seiler, MD — University of North Carolina

Plastic Surgery Residency — Integrated Program
David Grant, MD — Northwestern University
Elspeth Hill, MD — University of Manchester, UK

Urology Residency
Niraj Badhiwala, MD — Baylor College of Medicine
Amar Rawal, MD — The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
David Song, MD — Saint Louis University School of Medicine

Vascular Surgery Residency
Thomas Desmarais, MD — Geisel School of Medicine, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

Where incoming fellows came from:

Breast Disease
Barbara Dull, MD — General Surgery Residency, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

Cardiothoracic Surgery
Puja Kachroo, MD — General Surgery Residency, University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey, Newark, NJ
Chirag Patel, MD — General Surgery Residency, St. Joseph’s Hospital and Medical Center, Phoenix, AZ
Thomas Percival, MD — General Surgery Residency, San Antonio Military Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, TX

Colorectal Surgery
Ellen Bailey, MD — General Surgery Residency, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN
Swetha Ramakrishnan, MD — General Surgery Residency, Emory University, Atlanta, GA
Michelle Cowan, MD — General Surgery Residency, University of Chicago

HPB Surgery
Nicholas Spinelli, MD — stationed at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, United States Navy; he performed his general surgery residency at Lahey Clinic Medical Center, Burlington MA

Minimally Invasive Surgery
Thomas Wade, MD — General Surgery Residency, Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI

Pediatric Surgery
Derek Wakeman, MD — General Surgery Residency, Washington University School of Medicine

Plastic Surgery
Plastic hand fellow: Grant Kleiber, MD — University of Chicago
Plastic hand fellow: Janelle Wagner, MD — University of North Carolina
Breast fellow: Utku Dolen, MD — Ankara Hospital, Ankara, Turkey

Surgical Critical Care
Chukwuma Apakama, MD — General Surgery Residency, Harlem Hospital Center, New York, NY
Eleanor (Ele) Drew, MD — General Surgery Residency, University of Chicago Medical Center, Chicago, IL
Matt Miller, DO — General Surgery Residency, Palisades Medical Center, North Bergen, New Jersey
Patricia Pentiak, MD — General Surgery Residency, William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, MI

Transplant Surgery
Jacqueline Garonzik-Wang, MD — General Surgery Residency, Johns Hopkins University

Urologic Surgery
Pediatric Fellowship: Joel Koenig, MD — completed Urology residency at Southern Illinois University, Springfield, IL
Reconstructive Urology Fellowship: Stephen Marshall, MD — completed urology residency at State University of New York, Downstate College of Medicine, Brooklyn NY
Minimally Invasive/Robotic Surgery Fellowship: Aaron Potretzke, MD — completed urology residency at University of Wisconsin, Madison WI

Vascular Surgery
Jamie Benaroch-Gampel, MD — Residency, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston
Joseph Karam, MD — Residency, Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, MI
Where graduating residents have gone:

**General Surgery:**
- **Juan Jose Blondet, MD** — MIS Fellowship, UC, Irvine
- **Vipul Khetarpaul, MD** — Vascular Surgery Fellowship, Washington University School of Medicine
- **Amber Traugott, MD** — Colorectal Surgery Fellowship, University of Louisville
- **Derek Wakeman, MD** — Pediatric Surgery Fellowship, St. Louis Children’s Hospital

**Plastic Surgery Residency**
- **Simone Glaus, MD** — Microsurgery Fellowship, Stanford University, Stanford, CA

**Urology Residency**
- **Mohammed Haseebuddin, MD** — oncology fellowship at Fox Chase
- **Michael Johnson, MD** — oncology fellowship, Johns Hopkins University
- **Kaveh Kousari, MD** — private practice, Bethlehem, PA

**Fellows:**

**Breast Disease**
- **Thanh Barbie, MD** — Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Dana Farber, Harvard Medical Center, Boston, MA

**Cardiothoracic Surgery**
- **Mara Antonoff, MD** — MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX
- **Lisa Brown, MD** — Swedish Medical Center, Seattle, WA
- **David Hoganson, MD** — Boston Children’s Hospital, Boston, MA, Congenital Cardiac Surgery Fellowship
- **Jeremy Leidenfrost, MD** — St. Luke’s Hospital, Chesterfield, MO

**Colorectal Surgery**
- **Joshua Tyler, MD** — Keesler Air Force Base Hospital, Biloxi, MS
- **Samantha Quade, MD** — Trauma/Critical Care Fellowship, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
- **Isabelle Raiche, MD** — The Ottawa Hospital, Ottawa, ON, Canada

**HPB Surgery**
- **Major Kenneth Lee, MD** — Penn Medicine, Perelman School of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA

**Minimally Invasive Surgery**
- **Jason Keune, MD** — Saint Louis University Hospital, SLU Medical Center, St. Louis, MO

**Pediatric Surgery**
- **Tamar Mirensky, MD** — Mount Sinai Hospital, New York City.

**Plastic Surgery Fellows**
- Graduating plastic hand fellow: **Ben Phillips, MD** — Assistant professor, Virginia Commonwealth University
- Graduating plastic hand fellow: **James Saunders, MD** — returning to Vancouver, B.C.; possible fellowship later in the year in Australia

**Surgical Critical Care**
- **Ashley Bennett, MD** — University of Kansas Department of Surgery
- **Sara Buckman, MD, PharmD** — Assistant Professor, Section of Acute and Critical Care Surgery, Washington University School of Medicine
- **Jason Rhee, MD** — Mercy Hospital ICU, St. Louis
- **Isaiah Turnbull, MD, PhD** — Assistant Professor, Section of Acute and Critical Care Surgery, Washington University School of Medicine

**Transplant Surgery**
- **Kendra Conzen, MD** — completing second year of fellowship at the University of Colorado, Denver.

**Urology Fellows**
- **Jairam Eswara, MD** — Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Boston MA
- **Jonathan Mobley, MD** — private practice, Fairfax, VA
- **Goutham Vemana, MD** — private practice, Houston, TX
- **Gino Vricella, MD** — Assistant professor, Division of Urology (Pediatrics), Washington University School of Medicine

**Vascular Surgery**
- **Enjae Jung, MD** — Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon
- **Matthew Koopmann, MD** — Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Where graduates of MPHS program have gone:

**Stephen Broderick, MD** — Cardiothoracic Surgery, St. Luke’s Hospital, Chesterfield, MO

**Jonathan Davis, MD** — Clinical Fellow, Internal Medicine, Cardiovascular Division, Washington University School of Medicine

**Michael Lane, MD** — Assistant Professor, Internal Medicine, Infectious Disease, Washington University School of Medicine

**Dominic Sanford, MD** — Resident, General Surgery (PGY3), Washington University School of Medicine