Endowment fund created to support medical student honors program

The Department of Surgery and the Office of Medical Center Development have created an endowment to support Surgery’s medical student honors program. When completely funded, the $250,000 endowment will consist of 10 separate funds of $25,000 each. Each named fund will support one student in the honors program. The endowment will provide a perpetual source of support for the program, which is currently supported by dwindling discretionary funds.

Established in 2001, the honors program identifies the best fourth-year medical students interested in surgical careers and provides them with pre-residency advanced training, in order to support their interest in surgery and prepare them for competitive surgical residency programs.

In support of the program, E. Christopher Ellison, the Robert M. Zollinger professor and chairman of surgery and associate vice president for health sciences and vice dean of clinical affairs in the College of Medicine and Public Health, has committed to establishing the first fund with a pledge to be fulfilled within the next few years.

“This endowment will guarantee continuing support for the honors program, which provides academic enrichment in surgery for the most promising medical students,” Ellison says. “This type of support will be invaluable in helping the best students as they pursue surgical careers, and in advancing the profession of surgery for future generations of medical students.”

Students in the eight-month course master basic surgical procedures, participate in journal club discussions and animal surgery labs, and complete an honors paper. Only 10 students who have received honors or letters in surgery are accepted into the course.

In recent years, fewer medical students in the United States have been choosing careers in general surgery, due to concerns about quality of life in the profession, compared to other surgical subspecialties. In response, medical schools are encouraging interest in the field as much as possible.

Gift options

To support the medical student honors program, consider these gift fulfillment options:

- An outright gift of cash.
- A pledge for a certain amount, to be fulfilled through annual payments over three to five years.
- Investment in a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust, which will provide you with tax benefits and income for your lifetime, while providing support for the program.
- A bequest designated in your estate documents.

For information, call Jennifer Daly, director of development at the Office of OSU Medical Center Development and Alumni Affairs, at (614) 293-2911.
The Ohio State University Medical Center has become the first institution in Ohio to be named a primary provider of destination therapy for patients with end-stage heart failure.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have designated University Medical Center as a site for the surgical implantation of the Thoratec HeartMate XVE Left Ventricular Assist System (LVAS) as a permanent treatment for patients ineligible for heart transplantation. Use of the LVAS as a permanent treatment is called “destination therapy.”

The CMS designation means that Medicare will reimburse for the implantation procedure. “This new designation is extremely important and welcome news for patients with severe heart failure who are not transplant candidates,” says Dr. Benjamin Sun, associate professor of surgery in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and director of cardiac transplantation and mechanical support.

“To date, mechanical support, including ventricular assist devices and artificial hearts, has been used primarily to support patients waiting for a heart transplant,” Sun says. “However, many patients have severe heart failure but don’t qualify for a heart transplant. In those cases, permanent mechanical heart support like that provided by an LVAD [left ventricular assist device] can extend a patient’s life and improve their quality of life.”

Clinical trial data have shown increases in survival time and improved quality of life for patients who received the implant, compared to patients who received drug therapy.

Previously, the LVAS was approved for use only as a temporary support for patients waiting for a heart transplant. Patients considered ineligible for heart transplantation due to age or other health problems had to rely on traditional medical therapy.

But in April 2003, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the LVAS for destination therapy, and in Oct. last year, the CMS announced that it would expand coverage to include use of the device for this purpose.

The LVAS was approved as a bridge to cardiac transplantation in 1994. The FDA approval and the CMS designation mean that many more patients who suffer from end-stage heart failure but who are ineligible for transplantation can now be treated, Sun says.

Unlike an artificial heart, the LVAS allows the patient’s heart to remain in place. The device is implanted alongside the heart, just below the diaphragm, in the abdomen. The LVAS pumps blood from the left ventricle, the heart’s main pumping chamber, to the aorta, the arterial trunk that carries oxygenated blood from the heart to the entire body. External batteries power the device.

The cost of medical care associated with implantation of heart pumps can average about $200,000, according to the American Heart Association.

Heart failure affects nearly 5 million Americans and is the leading cause of hospitalization in the Medicare population, according to the CMS.
Fifteen faculty members in the Department of Surgery, about 15 percent of the department’s faculty, have been included on this year’s Best Doctors in America list.

The prestigious list is considered one of the more credible guides for health-care consumers selecting a physician. Best Doctors in America, an independent physician referral service that selects doctors through peer review, asks physicians who they would go to for treatment in their specialty. Only physicians who earn the consensus support of their peers are included on the list.

About 200 physicians on the Best Doctors in America list are from Central Ohio, and of these, nearly 150, or about 75 percent, are faculty members at Ohio State.

Only 30,000 physicians in the United States, about 4 percent of all U.S. doctors, are listed as outstanding physicians by Best Doctors.

Dr. Fred Sanfilippo, senior vice president for health sciences at Ohio State, dean of the College of Medicine and Public Health, and CEO of University Medical Center, says Ohio State’s representation on the list reflects the national recognition OSU physicians receive for the patient care they provide. “It’s an honor for Ohio State to have so many faculty members included on the list, and it’s a special privilege for them to have the confidence of their peers from across the country,” he says.

Department of Surgery faculty members included on the list are:

- Dr. Mark W. Arnold, professor of clinical surgery in the Division of General Surgery.
- Dr. Robert R. Bahnson, the Dave Longaberger professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Urology.
- Dr. Donna A. Caniano, the H. William Clatworthy Jr. professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Pediatric Surgery.
- Dr. J. Terrance Davis, professor of clinical surgery in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery.
- Dr. E. Christopher Ellison, the Robert M. Zollinger professor and chairman of surgery.
- Dr. William B. Farrar, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology.
- Dr. Ronald M. Ferguson, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Transplantation.
- Dr. Mitchell L. Henry, professor of surgery and chief of clinical transplantation.
- Dr. Gerard S. Kakos, the Robert M. Zollinger professor and chairman of surgery.
- Dr. William B. Farrar, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology.
- Dr. Ronald M. Ferguson, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Transplantation.
- Dr. Mitchell L. Henry, professor of surgery and chief of clinical transplantation.
- Dr. E. Christopher Ellison, the Robert M. Zollinger professor and chairman of surgery.
- Dr. William B. Farrar, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology.
- Dr. Ronald M. Ferguson, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Transplantation.
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- Dr. William B. Farrar, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology.
- Dr. Ronald M. Ferguson, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Transplantation.
- Dr. Mitchell L. Henry, professor of surgery and chief of clinical transplantation.
Surgical investigators using imaging device to monitor changes in cells

Advanced technology augments University’s strength in rapidly-growing research discipline

Surgical researchers at Ohio State have assembled a new imaging device that makes them among the first to digitally videograph, at the microscopic level, real-time human cellular responses to changes in oxygen ambience.

“We are monitoring these cells in their natural form,” says Chandan K. Sen, Ph.D., assistant professor of surgery and director of the Laboratory of Molecular Medicine at the Davis Heart and Lung Research Institute.

The advanced equipment not only reduces from days to minutes the time needed to observe cell changes, but also enables scientists to zoom in on one cell at a time, creating a video image impossible to obtain with a conventional microscope.

“A unique feature of our setup is that cells grow in a gas-tight environment, where oxygen tension can be programmed to change through the use of software,” Sen says.

This technique allows the real-time study of hypoxia-reoxygenation — the reintroduction of oxygen in a low-oxygen environment — using a wide variety of cell types.

The device, parts of which were imported from Germany, has immediate applications in Ohio State’s search for better treatments for ischemic heart disease and wound healing.

The new technology adds to the University’s strength in biological imaging, a fast-growing research discipline fostered by the recent establishment of the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering within the National Institutes of Health.

Sen says scientists have been studying heart cells to learn how to precondition tissue for the reintroduction of oxygen that results when blocked coronary vessels are opened by surgery or medication.

After a heart attack, tissue becomes accustomed to functioning with a reduced oxygen supply. When surgery or medication eliminates the blockage, some cells are damaged by the resulting rush of oxygenated blood.

“You think that by introducing oxygen, you’re helping the tissue, but you’re really not,” Sen says. “With this imaging device, we can create that scenario under the microscope, calculate the cells’ reaction, and watch their behavior when they are injured by the oxygen, as well as how they repair the damage.”

When oxygen is introduced into this environment, some cells die and others are irritated but can recover, he says.

“The site acts like a wound, and ‘neighborhood’ cells do the tissue remodeling and fill in the damaged area. We are seeing now that cells act as if they know exactly how to merge when they are repairing an injury. We are trying to determine the cues that dictate that behavior.”

Transplantation research will also benefit from the new technology. In heart transplantation, the donor organ goes without oxygen until it is transplanted into the recipient’s body.

Charles G. Orosz, Ph.D., professor of surgery in the Division of Transplantation and director of the transplant sciences program, will use the imaging device to develop methods of strengthening the heart’s defenses before transplantation.

The device is also expected to aid research on the transplantation of cells to treat diabetes.
PLASTIC SURGERY

Craniofacial surgeon joins faculty

Dr. Matthew W. Rosenberg, a plastic surgeon with a specialty interest in craniofacial surgery, has been appointed clinical associate professor of surgery in the Division of Plastic Surgery.

Rosenberg was previously clinical assistant professor of surgery at the University of Kansas School of Medicine, in Wichita, and the University of Nevada School of Medicine, in Las Vegas.

He is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a member of the American Society of Maxillofacial Surgeons, the American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association, the American Society for Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons, and the American Association for Hand Surgery.

Born in Chicago, Rosenberg is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Chicago, and received his medical degree at the University of Illinois College of Medicine. He served his general surgery residency at Illinois Masonic Hospital, in Chicago, and his plastic surgery residency at Nassau County Medical Center, in Garden City, N.Y. He completed a craniofacial surgery fellowship at Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, in Milwaukee.

Rosenberg was in clinical practice from 1992 to 2001.

PLASTIC SURGERY

Buchele named division chief

Ruberg continues as senior vice chairman

Dr. Brentley A. Buchele, associate professor of clinical surgery, has been appointed chief of the Division of Plastic Surgery.

As division chief, Buchele is responsible for a division that provides comprehensive care for all plastic surgery problems, including general reconstructive plastic surgery, surgery for trauma and burns, surgery of congenital anomalies, hand surgery, and aesthetic surgery. The division manages cases at University Medical Center and at Columbus Children’s Hospital.

Dr. Robert L. Ruberg, who had served as division chief since 1985, asked to step down from the position, but continues to serve as professor of surgery, senior vice chairman of surgery, and chairman of the department’s promotion and tenure committee.

Buchele, a member of the Department of Surgery faculty since 1987 and the recipient of many distinctions and honors, has served as a member-at-large of the Department of Surgery board, and currently is a member of The Ohio State University Department of Surgery LLC board of managers.

He is program director of the plastic surgery residency in the Department of Surgery, and is a member of the Graduate Medical Education Committee at University Medical Center.

At University Hospitals, he serves as chairman of the credentials committee and as a member of the hospital board professional affairs subcommittee.

Buchele is a member of numerous national and regional organizations, including the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons, the Association of Academic Chairmen of Plastic Surgery, the American Cleft Palate Association, and the Plastic Surgery Educational Foundation.

He received his undergraduate and medical degrees at the University of Kentucky, in Lexington. He completed his general surgery residency at the University of Iowa, in Iowa City, and his plastic surgery residency at the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, in Springfield.

During Ruberg’s tenure as division chief, the division experienced growth in clinical activity and the number of regular faculty, expansion of the plastic surgery residency program, and the introduction of new surgical techniques and procedures.

Ruberg has served on the Department of Surgery faculty for nearly 30 years.

Gordillo GM. Macrophage-derived oxidants promote hemangioma growth. Davis/Bremer Medical Research Grant, March 1, 2004 – March 1, 2006, $25,000.


Dr. Robert R. Bahnson, the Dave Longaberger professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Urology, has been appointed to a second three-year term, for 2004–2007, on the Residency Review Committee for urology of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

Bahnson has also been elected vice chairman of the ACS Advisory Council’s Program Committee, and will serve in that capacity on the ACS Clinical Congress Program Committee.

Dr. William E. Carson III, associate professor of surgery in the Division of Surgical Oncology, has been named a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Clinical Oncology.

Dr. Elmahdi A. Elkhammas, associate professor of clinical surgery and chief of liver transplantation in the Division of Transplantation, has been appointed to the board of the Ohio Solid Organ Transplantation Consortium and to membership on the Ethics Committee of the United Network for Organ Sharing.

Five Department of Surgery faculty members participated in the Second Annual Controversies in Surgery Symposium, which was held Nov. 21, 2003, at the University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor. They were:

• Dr. E. Christopher Ellison, the Robert M. Zollinger professor and chairman of surgery and associate vice president for health sciences and vice dean of clinical affairs in the College of Medicine and Public Health.

• Dr. William B. Farrar, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology.

• Dr. Mitchell L. Henry, professor of surgery and chief of clinical transplantation in the Division of Transplantation.

• Dr. W. Scott Melvin, associate professor of surgery, chief of the Division of General Surgery, and director of the Center for Minimally Invasive Surgery.

• Dr. William L. Smead, the Luther M. Keith professor of surgery and chief of the Division of General Vascular Surgery.

First held at Ohio State in 2002, the symposium was inspired by the football rivalry between Ohio State and the University of Michigan.

Dr. Jonathan I. Groner, associate professor of clinical surgery in the Division of Pediatric Surgery, has been appointed to the Ohio Emergency Medical Services Board, on behalf of the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Surgeons.
**IN THE NEWS**

**Dr. Mitchell L. Henry**, professor of surgery and chief of clinical transplantation in the Division of Transplantation, has been appointed chairman of the Living Donor Kidney Exchange Program Committee of the Ohio Solid Organ Transplantation Consortium.

**Chandan K. Sen, Ph.D.**, associate professor of surgery and vice chairman for research in the Department of Surgery, has been appointed to the editorial board of Physiological Genomics, a journal of the American Physiological Society.

**IN BRIEF**

**Dr. Ronald M. Ferguson**, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Transplantation, and **Jeffrey Sneddon**, director of clinical computing in the division, were quoted on Jan. 30, 2004, in Business First, in a story on patient-management software they developed.

**Dr. Jonathan I. Groner**, associate professor of clinical surgery in the Division of Pediatric Surgery, was quoted on Jan. 15, 2004, in the Toledo Blade, in a story on the expansion of Ohio’s “good Samaritan” law.

**Dr. Robert E. Michler**, the Karl P. Klassen professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, was featured on Jan. 21, 2004, on KIRO-TV, in Seattle, in a story about minimally invasive repair of aortic aneurysms.

Michler was mentioned on Nov. 25, 2003, in the Bucyrus Telegraph-Forum, in a story announcing the addition of Dr. Michler and other faculty in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery to the attending staff at The Ohio State University Heart Center at Bucyrus.

Michler was quoted in the Nov. 2003 issue of Columbus C.E.O. Magazine, in a story about cardiac facilities in Central Ohio.

**Dr. Stephen P. Povoski**, associate professor of surgery in the Division of Surgical Oncology, was quoted on Nov. 25, 2003, in the Chillicothe Gazette, in a story about high breast cancer rates among Appalachian women.

On Dec. 17, 2003, Povoski was one of the subjects of a WBNS-TV/10 story about a breast cancer patient who presented Povoski and another doctor with award-winning quilts to recognize them for their roles in her treatment and recovery.

**Dr. Patrick Ross Jr.**, associate professor of clinical surgery in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, was interviewed on Nov. 21, 2003, in a WBNS-TV/10 story about the designation of The Ohio State University Medical Center as one of 18 sites providing Medicare-covered lung volume reduction surgery.

**Dr. Chittoor B. Sai-Sudhakar**, clinical assistant professor of surgery in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, was quoted on Nov. 14, 2003, in the Bucyrus Telegraph-Forum, in a story about a men’s health event at Bucyrus Community Hospital.

**Dr. Richard E. Schlanger**, clinical assistant professor of surgery in the Division of General Surgery and director of wound healing at University Hospitals East, was quoted on Dec. 10, 2003, in the Modesto (Calif.) Bee, in a story about adhesion disorder.

**Dr. John H. Winston III**, assistant professor of surgery in the Division of General Surgery, was quoted on Dec. 4, 2003, in the Columbus Dispatch, in a story about virtual colonoscopy, a noninvasive method used to examine the colon for cancer.
INSIDE:

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2 Medical Center first in state to be named as destination therapy site

3 Department of Surgery faculty included on Best Doctors list

5 Buchele named division chief

*The OSU Medical Center Burn Unit recently received $9,000 in proceeds from the 14th Annual OSU Burn Center Golf Outing, which is sponsored by the Central Ohio Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers, in partnership with the Burn Unit. Above, Dr. Gayle M. Gordillo (center), assistant professor of surgery in the Division of Plastic Surgery, and Kamilla (Kam) K. Sigafoos (right), executive director of The Ohio State University Hospitals and secretary of the University Hospitals Board, accept a check presented by Bob Dawson, of Capital Fire Protection Co. The golf outing also raised $3,000 for Columbus Firefighters Local 67. Photo by Jeff Bates.*