Cardiac Surgery Welcomes New Faculty

The Division of Cardiac Surgery is pleased to announce the recruitment of Bryan Whitson, MD, PhD, who will be joining the Division of Cardiac Surgery as a cardiothoracic surgeon and assistant professor of surgery. Dr. Whitson completed his undergraduate studies at Purdue University in the School of Engineering and his medical training at Indiana University in the Research Program in Academic Medicine. He completed his surgical training in general and cardiothoracic surgery at the University of Minnesota, where he also received his Doctor of Philosophy. During his undergraduate medical and surgical training, Dr. Whitson has distinguished himself as a highly productive physician scientist, a gifted teacher and outstanding clinician.

Dr. Whitson joins us with an interest in heart and lung transplantation, mechanical assist devices including ECMO and adult cardiothoracic surgery. He will assume a prominent role in the reactivation of our lung transplant program and cardiopulmonary research programs.

Welcome to OSU
Dr. Whitson!

From The Director

It gives me pleasure once again to recognize the completion of cardiothoracic residency training for Dana Booth, MD and Karen Nelson, DO who will be completing their training in 2012. This accomplishment is particularly important in the current era of surgical education as fewer and fewer residents choose to become cardiac and thoracic surgeons. Dana and Karen have demonstrated the resolve, commitment and perseverance to accomplish what fewer than 100 physicians do each year. Both will be joining cardiothoracic practice opportunities where they will be performing cardiac and thoracic surgery in the future. We congratulate them on their success and wish them the best in their futures.

These accomplishments also bring into sharper focus our commitment to continue to train the best and the brightest cardiothoracic surgical residents. I believe that our faculty commitment to the educational process, as well as our growth in innovative clinical programs including adult cardiac and thoracic surgery, transcatheter percutaneous aortic valves, mechanical assist devices and cardiopulmonary transplantation all speak to the comprehensive strengths of this residency training program. The administration and stewardship of the training programs requires additional resolve as we face not only growing clinical responsibilities but also time management challenges with 80-hour duty limitations, the need to have strong didactic and clinical education programs, and the requirement to educate resident physicians about the nuances of practice management and professionalism.

We are optimistic, however that if we continue to provide a comprehensive training program where thoracic, cardiac and congenital teams all provide a balanced training and educational environment during the two year training cycle, our residents will continue to not only fulfill the requirements of The American Board of Thoracic Surgery, but also excel and grow to be safe, competent, and compassionate cardiothoracic surgeons in the future. We look forward to developing plans to also provide training for physicians coming out of medical school - the integrated six-year cardiothoracic training program. We appreciate the commitment of our allied health professionals - nurses, nurse practitioners, perfusionists, physician assistants, registered nurse first assistants all of whom contribute to the education of these young surgeons to become the best and the brightest entering the field of cardiovascular medicine and thoracic surgery. It is a collaborative effort and we appreciate the commitment to the surgical education of our residents.

Congratulations Dana and Karen on a job well done! Thank you for your commitment, time, and energy in taking care of the patients at The Ross Heart Hospital, James Cancer Hospital at Wexner Medical Center at The Ohio State University.

Robert S. D. Higgins
Summer Scholars Program Ignites Tremendous Interest in CT Surgery

As summer approaches we are delighted to share that once again the Divisions of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery are hosting the Summer Scholars Program. This 8 week opportunity engages first year medical students in the practice of cardiothoracic surgery, opening their eyes to a fascinating discipline early in their careers. Seventeen candidates applied for the opportunity; regrettfully the divisions couldn’t accept everyone and was forced to limit this year’s Summer Scholars class to four. All candidates were tremendously qualified creating a very difficult decision for the faculty. Joining us this summer are Chigo Ekeke, Kathleen Kassouf, Kevin Ricci and Paul Tobias. In addition to these four outstanding individuals, Richard Tang also stood out as an excellent candidate and will be joining the Division of Cardiac Surgery this summer participating in a research endeavor along with Ben Rothstein. We are delighted to have these 6 bright students with our divisions this summer and are eager to share the fascinating discipline of CT surgery.

In addition to the tremendous excitement of the Summer Scholars Program, we are also excited to share that a Cardiothoracic Surgery Interest Group has come to fruition. Spearheaded by last year’s scholars, Ryan Campagna and Lorraine Fowler, more than thirty medical students are engaged in cardiothoracic surgery activities, lectures by our faculty and wet labs sponsored by our clinical partners. The interest in cardiothoracic surgery has grown tremendously over the past year and The Ohio State University’s Wexner Medical Center has undoubtedly established itself as a focal point or cardiothoracic surgery interest by engaging young medical students who will develop into the best and the brightest physicians and surgeons of tomorrow.

CT Surgery Celebrates Our Graduates of 2012

The Divisions of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery will host a banquet this June honoring two fellows who will graduate during this year. Graduating during 2012 are:

• Dana Booth
Dana joined us the summer of 2010 and he has grown significantly and is maturing into a highly proficient and talented surgeon. He takes his role as a CT surgeon with tremendous pride and maintains lofty expectations of himself. Dana is also collegial, as well as very well respected by both colleagues and clinical support staff. He is conscientious, diligent and hard working. Dana’s commitment to clinical care and our patients will be missed. He also persevered in spite of being away from his family during his training. We wish him the very best in as he embarks on his CT Surgery career in New Mexico.

• Karen Nelson
Karen integrated into our training program the fall of 2010 and has developed into a tremendously committed and proficient surgeon. She is among the hardest working residents in the program. Karen holds herself to the highest of standards in patient care and clinical practice and she is always accountable and tremendously hard-working member of our team. We wish Karen the best as she begins her practice this fall where she will be a fine ambassador of the training she received here at OSU.

Noteworthy News

◆ “Healthy Body, Healthy Mind” on ITV, a leading producer of health and wellness documentary-style programs, recently featured Dr. Patrick Ross and his work in photodynamic therapy in treating lung and esophageal cancers. Visit itvisus.com to see the story!

◆ 2011 graduates Jason Rousseau, DO and Sergio Carrillo, MD both passed the ABTS qualifying exam. Each will partake in oral exams this summer for ABTS Board Certification. Congratulations Jason and Sergio!

◆ Save The Date! Please join us for our annual Heart Failure at the Shoe on October 5, 2012. We’d love to have you join us!

◆ The Division of Thoracic Surgery hosted the Photodynamic Medicine Symposium May 11 & 12 with over 50 practitioners and scholars from around the world in attendance. Congrats to our Thoracic Surgery Faculty!

◆ The American Board of Thoracic Surgery has named Dr. Robert S.D. Higgins to its Board of Directors through 2017! Congrats, Dr. Higgins!!

◆ After more than 10 years in Columbus, Erin McAvoy, Division Administrator for the Division of Thoracic Surgery, has decided it is time to return home to Boston this June. The Divisions of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery wish her nothing but the best and for continued success during her transition and thereafter. Best of luck, Erin. You will always per a part of our OSU family.

Academic Achievements

◆ Congratulations to Dr. Ross, Dr. Kassis, Dr. Daniel et. al. for having their article, Fusion Positron Emission/Computed Tomography Underestimates the Presence of Hilar Nodal Metastases in Patients with Resected Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer published in the May 2012 ‘Annuals of Thoracic Surgery’ as well as their case report- Giant Asymptomatic Primary Esophageal Schwannoma included in the April 2012 ‘Annuals of Thoracic Surgery.’

◆ Congrats to Dr. Firstenberg, Dr. Nelson, et al for the publishing of their case report- Extra-Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation for Complete Multi-Organ System Trauma in Case Reports in Surgery, March 2012, as well as for their commentary entitled Amniotic Fluid Embolism: A Catastrophic Problem in Need of a Prepared Team with a Plan printed in ‘Anesthesia: Essays and Researches’, April 2012. Congratulations for both of these honors Dr. Firstenberg and Dr. Nelson!

◆ Congrats to CT Surgery affiliated residents who participated in the 17th Annual Surgery Research Conference on May 25, 2012:
  - Tyler Spata, MD: Novel Large-Animal Model to Study Acute Myocardial Infarction Using Platelet-Induced Thrombus.
  - Yazhini Ravi, MD: Pharmacological Modulation of PTEN Ameliorates the Progression of Pulmonary Hypertension in Heart Failure.