



**Spotlight**

**On July 10, 2009, RIH was awarded \$11M over five years from the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) to support the COBRE Center for Cancer Research Development (CCRD).**



*Douglas C. Hixson, PhD, Director, Med Oncology Research Lab*

Under the overall direction of Dr. Douglas Hixson, the mission of the CCRD has been and will continue to be the development of a strong basic cancer research enterprise centered around the overarching theme of GI Cancer. The focus on gastrointestinal cancer as an overarching theme was a choice based on 1) the rising incidence of liver cancer in the US; 2) the higher than average incidence of colorectal cancer in Rhode Island; and 3) the strength of faculty within Lifespan/Brown University in liver research and/or treatment of liver disease and GI cancer. This is best exemplified by the Lifespan Liver Research Center where over 40 faculty members under the direction of Dr. Jack Wands are involved in treatment of liver disease or basic research centered on growth regulation of hepatocytes and the molecular pathogenesis of HCV/HBV.

Over the past 6 years, CCRD has provided mentoring, state-of-the-art technology and funding to promising junior investigators, many of whom have transitioned into independent, self-supporting scientists. The grant renewal will continue to provide support for Proteomics and Molecular Pathology Cores, shared resources that provide investigators with access and technical support on advanced technologies ranging from mass spectrometry to laser capture microdissection. The CCRD Proteomics Core will also be the home to an imaging mass spectrometer, an exciting new technology obtained with a \$500,000 grant awarded from ARRA NIH Stimulus funds to Dr. Djuro Jovic, the Director of the Proteomics Core. An important goal of the CCRD during the next five years will be the development of a highly interactive research environment that will lead to multi investigator RO1 and PO1 grants. To this end, the five investigators receiving support from CCRD were chosen not only for their potential for success but also because of the opportunities for collaboration created by the overlapping aspects of their research. Dr. Y. Eugene Chin, the first CCRD full project investigator from the Department of Surgery, will examine the role of acetylation dependent STAT3 signaling

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## Chairman's Message

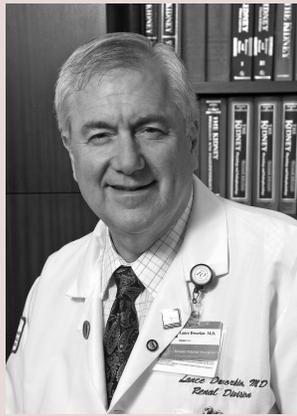
June 30, 2009 marked the end of a year during which I have served as Interim Chairman of the Department of Medicine. Accordingly, it seems appropriate to take note of some of the important accomplishments of the past year, and also to look forward to ongoing opportunities and challenges. This has been a year of unprecedented growth for the Department marked by recruitment of over 60 new faculty into virtually every division of internal medicine, several of whom are highlighted in this newsletter. These individuals come from diverse backgrounds and bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise that will undoubtedly enhance our clinical and academic programs. Also on the clinical front, we have largely weathered year-long the shortage of hospitalist physicians at both The Miriam and Rhode Island Hospitals that resulted in the creation of the faculty overflow service. The hospitalist programs now include over 40 physicians and face the challenge of transitioning from a clinical service line into a full-fledged academic division. Strategic planning is also underway to meet a possible H1N1 flu pandemic, which has the potential to markedly stress our health care delivery system.

Contractually, a new AS&T contract was negotiated with Rhode Island & The Miriam Hospitals providing the first increase in funding for these activities in 10 years. Major clinical service contracts were also successfully negotiated and renewed in oncology, endocrinology and diabetes and hospital medicine. A novel collaborative co-management agreement was executed with Rhode Island Hospital to direct a new outpatient dialysis unit. We have also reached agreement with Lifespan and eClinical Works to implement a new electronic health record in all of our outpatient office practices. Implementation of the new system will begin shortly. It will markedly transform and modernize our practices and help to enhance patient safety and quality.

Academically, the Department saw the creation of a new division of Obstetrical Medicine, the first in the nation, which is highlighted in this newsletter. Led by Dr. Karen Rosene-Montella, the OB medicine program at Women & Infants Hospital has been a center of excellence for many years and is clearly deserving of this new designation. Our residency programs in internal medicine, primary care, and med peds are thriving. We had an outstanding recruiting season; by all accounts the new class of residents is among the best ever to train in our department. Our fellowship programs also continue to be highly successful, attracting trainees from top institutions across the country and around the world. Less well known, this includes not only the clinical training programs, but also laboratory based fellowships as well. The Department now offers T32 funded, post-doctoral research fellowship training programs in Infectious Disease/Immunology, Gastroenterology, and Cardio-pulmonary medicine. Funded post-doctoral fellowship positions are also available in many other divisions, including kidney disease and hypertension, endocrinology, hematology/oncology, general internal medicine, and geriatrics/gerontology, establishing our department a center of excellence for research as well as clinical training.

In research, extramural funding continues to grow as the basic and clinical research programs in many divisions have experienced considerable success. Two COBRE grants will be awarded to the hematology/oncology division this year, one of which is described in this newsletter. These important grants will greatly enhance the depth and breadth of cancer research at Brown and at Lifespan. Investigators in the Cardiovascular Research Center (CVRC) were the recipients of new RO1 grants this year, as well as a new T32 training grant in collaboration with pulmonary medicine. Significant new grants were also received by investigators in gastroenterology, endocrinology, renal disease, and general internal medicine. Also new this year, the first two Chairman's Developmental Research Awards were awarded. This internally funded program will occur annually and provide support to two junior investigators for two years, one in clinical and one in bench research, with the goal of positioning them to successfully compete for extramural funding. Other new research initiatives under active discussion and planning include the development of a clinical trials center, further expansion of departmental laboratory research space in the CORO building, and the submission to NIH of an application for a Clinical Translational Science Award, a Brown initiative that also involves many investigators from the Department of Medicine.

Of course, these impressive accomplishments are the direct result of the expertise, dedication, and hard work of the faculty, trainees, and support staff of the department. Finally, it should be noted that the search for a new permanent Chair for the Department of Medicine is now actively underway. Until that person is recruited, I look forward to continuing to work with you to expand the depth, breadth and quality of our clinical, educational and research programs.



Lance Dworkin, MD

## Cancer Research

Continued from page 1

pathways in self-renewal and metastasis of cancer stem cells isolated from human and rat hepatocellular carcinoma cell lines. Dr. Devasis Chatterjee, a full project investigator who joined CCRD in year 5, will focus on raf kinase inhibitory protein (RKIP), a potential biomarker for susceptibility to chemotherapy and an inhibitor of STAT3 mediated metastasis of human colon cancer. Dr. Jennifer Sanders, a new full project investigator from Brown University, will investigate the mitogenic signaling phenotype of bipotent hepatic progenitors isolated from fetal and adult liver and how these pathways are influenced by the adult liver microenvironment. Dr. Rachel Altura, a pilot project investigator who recently joined the Department of Pediatrics will examine the role that acetylation plays in the localization, dimerization and activity of survivin as a regulator of cell division and an inhibitor of apoptosis. Dr. Steven Moss, a former full project investigator recently awarded his first RO1, will remain with CCRD as a pilot project investigator and continue to develop a new line of research centered on the role of gastrophilin-1 and 2 in gastric cancer, two novel genes shown in his first cycle of COBRE funding to be altered following *H. pylori* eradication.

Although basic research will always be the primary emphasis of CCRD, outreach activities aimed at increasing public awareness of the benefits derived from cancer research will remain a vital part of the CCRD mission. Working closely with Dr. Peter Quesenberry, the Chief of the Division of Hematology Oncology, the CCRD will place a high priority on fostering interactions between basic scientists and clinical oncologists through innovative multidisciplinary research initiatives. During the next 5 years, CCRD will continue to take a leadership role in promoting interactions with other RI COBREs and sustaining a dialogue between State and Federal legislators and policy makers in the academic, biotechnology and medical communities. Armed with a critical mass of independent investigators together with strong institutional commitment, CCRD will provide the basic research framework needed for transitioning into an NCI designated clinical cancer center.

The project described above is supported by Award Number P20RR017695 from the National Center for Research Resources.

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## Research Awards

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**Charles Carpenter, MD**, from the Division of Infectious Diseases has received supplemental ARRA funding (NIH stimulus funding) for the Center for AIDS Research grant. These funds are devoted to hiring 5 undergraduate students for summer employment to engage in research relating to the function and mission of the CFAR: to support clinical, basic and translational research designed to improve the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. Total supplemental funding is \$77,950.

**Gideon Koren, MD**, from the Cardiology Division, has received a five-year R01 from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at NIH for his grant titled ‘Sex Hormones and Cardiac Arrhythmia in Transgenic LQT2 Rabbits.’ This 5-year R01 averages approximately \$410,000 in direct costs per year. The overall goal of this grant is to investigate new mechanisms that underlie sudden cardiac death (SCD) through the application of innovative technology and the novel use of new genetic models of long QT syndrome 2 (LQT2). Because gender and the sympathetic nervous system plays a key role in SCD in LQT2, the influence of sex hormones and the autonomic factors on SCD will be studied in detail.

**Rami Kantor, MD**, from the Division of Infectious Diseases, has received a five-year R01 from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for the project ‘HIV-1 Drug Resistance in Different Subtypes.’ Averaging approximately \$160,000 in direct costs per year, the focus

of the proposal is to build the scientific infrastructure for surveillance and monitoring of HIV-1 drug resistance in three resource limited settings where specific non-B virus subtypes predominate (Thailand, India, and China). The ultimate goals of the grant are 1) validate low-cost resistance testing for HIV; 2) determine frequency and patterns of virological failure and drug resistance after 1-2 years of anti-retroviral therapy; and 3) conduct genotypic analysis and phenotype validation of subtype-specific mutations and patterns. This grant will be done in collaboration with Dr. David Katzenstein at Stanford University.

**Milu Kojic, MD**, from the Division of Infectious Diseases, has received funding via a subcontract from Massachusetts General Hospital for the project ‘Efficacy of CBT for Adherence and Depression in HIV Care settings.’ Averaging approximately \$34,000 in direct costs per year for 4 years, the work scope for the subcontract is to be a site for a two-arm, randomized controlled efficacy trial of cognitive-behavioral therapy for depression and HIV medication adherence in patients with HIV and depression. Patients will be enrolled into either a current intervention model for adherence to medications (initial session and 4 monthly adherence counseling sessions) or to the arm of the study where a cognitive behavioral therapy session for depression and adherence (CBT-AD). Outcomes will include adherence, depression and HIV viral load to determine if CBT-

AD is an effective treatment model as compared to current treatment models.

**Emily Lau**, from the CVRC laboratory in Cardiology Division, has received \$5000 in funding for a fellowship from the American Heart Association. The title of the project is ‘The Role of Repolarization in Ventricular Function Initiation and Maintenance in congestive Heart Failure.’ This project hopes to contribute valuable information that can be translated into new treatment options that may reduce morbidity and mortality due to sudden cardiac death (SCD) and other cardiac diseases by elucidating the mechanisms behind SCD and the link between cardiac pathologies. The details of the proposed work are to investigate the relationship of ventricular fibrillation (VF) to the inducibility and maintenance of VF in LMC rabbits and LQT1 rabbits with non-infarct cardiomyopathy.

**Josiah Rich, MD** from the Division of Infectious Diseases, has received funding for a 5-year R01 from the National Institute on Drug Abuse for the project ‘A Randomized Trial of Continued Methadone Maintenance vs. Detoxification in Jail.’ Averaging approximately \$80,000 per year in direct costs, the purpose of the grant is to compare the effectiveness of maintaining methadone treatment during short-term incarceration versus methadone detoxification on continuing treatment post-release, relapse, reducing HIV risk behaviors and reincarceration. The plan is to enroll 450 recently incarcerated

inmates enrolled in community methadone treatment at the time of incarceration. Follow-up interviews will be conducted after release to demonstrate that maintaining methadone treatment during short-term incarceration is effective which could influence correctional policy and lead to more collaborative working arrangements with the community substance abuse treatment providers.

**Dr. Rich** has also received funding via a subcontract averaging approximately \$27,000 in direct costs per year for 5-years on Dr. Roland Merchant’s R01 titled ‘Brief Intervention for Drug Misuse for the Emergency Department (BIDMED).’ Dr. Rich’s involvement will be to assist in the development of a randomized controlled clinical trial at RIH and TMH involving adult emergency department subcritical patients whose screening indicates illicit and/or prescription drug use. Patients will be randomized to a screening only or brief intervention arm with appropriate referral for treatment. The proposal hopes to show a brief intervention reduces drug misuse, changes behaviors associated with drug misuse, and reduce negative physical, psychosocial health and socioeconomic consequences. HIV and Hepatitis B/C screenings will also be conducted. Dr. Rich has also received funding via a subcontract from the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Association via U79 funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMSA) for the project titled ‘The Rhode Island Re-Entry

Partnership.' Averaging approximately \$64,000 in direct costs per year for 5-years, the Rhode Island Re-Entry Partnership will develop and assess an array of activities to assist in building a solid foundation for delivering and sustaining quality and accessible state of science substance abuse and HIV prevention services. Specifically, the program aims to prevent and reduce at the community level the onset of substance abuse and transmission of HIV/AIDS among at-risk populations.

Dr. Rich has also received funding from the HRSA Ryan White Capacity Building supplement. \$80,000 was awarded for the Ryan White program to address five specific goals: 1) Provide access to health care information to the clinicians for HIV-positive individuals transitioning between the incarcerated setting and the community. 2) Provide training for health services and discharge planning front line staff at correctional facilities and at the Immunology Center at TMH. 3) Create a manual for dissemination that outlines process and training to facilitate transfer of medical information for recently released HIV-positive ex-offenders. 4) Equip clinic examination rooms with computers for improved access to medical information systems. 5) Evaluate overall project effectiveness.

**Wen-Chih (Hank) Wu, MD**, from the Pulmonary Division at the Veterans Administration Hospital – Providence, has been awarded a Health Services Research and Development Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs entitled: "Variations in Quality of Care and Outcomes for Veterans with Heart Failure." The one-year grant is for \$100,000 in direct costs.

*In the Spring 2009 edition, an error was made in the 'Research Awards' section of the newsletter. Dr. Ulrike Mende was listed as having a PhD degree when, in fact, Dr. Mende has a MD degree.*

## Alpert Medical School Designates W&I Obstetric Medicine as an Academic Division

The Department is pleased to announce our new Academic Division of Obstetric Medicine, making Brown the first in the US with such a Division. This places our department at the forefront of this field just as evidence is emerging about the link between pregnancy outcomes and risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and renal disease.

Obstetric Medicine has been a Division in the Department of Medicine at Women and Infants Hospital for 16 years. During that time it has grown into a multidisciplinary division with an international reputation that is thriving in all aspects of academic medicine.

**Teaching:** The Division houses the only US Obstetric Medicine fellowship, currently under the direction of Dr. Lucia Larson. The group developed the National Obstetric Medicine Curriculum for internal medicine trainees and were part of the International Committee that developed the International Curriculum and core competencies for Obstetric Internists. GI fellows on the Women's Digestive Disorders track and soon, CL fellows from Psychiatry will train with Obstetric Medicine. The Division members run the national courses in Obstetric Medicine for the American College of Physicians, the Society of Maternal Fetal Medicine, the Society of Obstetric Anesthesiology and Perinatology, and have been the faculty for medical content in pregnancy at the American College of Chest Physicians, the American Society of Echocardiography and AGA.



### Research/Publications/National and International Reputation

The research activity and funding in Obstetric Medicine continue to grow. Karen Rosene-Montella is the US PI for the international TIPPS trial (Thrombosis in Pregnancy Prophylaxis), the PI with Drs Larson and Miller as coinvestigators of the Pivotal study of biomarkers for prediction of Preeclampsia and a Co-Investigator on the CDC grant for statewide screening and management of hypothyroidism in Pregnancy. Silvia Degli-Esposti was recognized by the CDC for the Perinatal Hepatitis Program. Ghada Bourjeily is funded for studies on sleep disordered breathing in pregnancy, efficacy of CT-PA as a diagnostic tool for PE in Pregnancy and has had four abstracts accepted this year. Margaret Miller's work is in studying risk factors and outcomes in pregnancy that predict future cardiovascular disease, in linking pregnancy to primary care and in interpregnancy care programs. Caron Zlotnick and Teri Pearlstein are the PI's of multiple NIMH funded studies looking at depression interventions in pregnancy and post partum. The presidents of both the North American and International Societies of Obstetric Medicine are in the Division.

Three books have come out of the Division this year: Medical Care of the Pregnant Patient, 2nd edition (Rosene-Montella), reviewed favorably in the NEJM, Pulmonary Problems in Pregnancy (Bourjeily and Rosene-Montella), and deSwiets Medical Disorders in Pregnancy (Powrie) is in press. The Editor in Chief (Rosene-Montella) of the new International Journal of Obstetric Medicine, the Medicine of Pregnancy is in the Division.

### Clinical Activities

Obstetric Medicine is responsible for outpatient practices that see 15,000 patients annually including specialty clinics for medical problems in pregnancy and perinatal behavioral health. The Specialty Care in Pregnancy Program (SCIPP) is a tumor board style review of medical OB cases, done jointly with the other subspecialty divisions in the department. The medical and behavioral health inpatient consultation services provide 5000 consults annually and are major teaching sites for the medicine, obstetric and psychiatry residencies. The Division serves as a major resource to all of the clinical services, both at WIH and RIH for any medical or psychiatric illness in pregnant patients, and for critical care in obstetrics.

## Academic Division Members

### Internal Medicine:

Karen Rosene-Montella, Professor of Medicine and Ob-Gyn

Raymond Powrie, Professor of Medicine and Ob-Gyn

Lucia Larson, Associate Professor of Medicine and Ob-Gyn

Margaret Miller, Assistant Professor of Medicine and Ob-Gyn

Meghan Hayes, Asst Professor of Medicine and OB-Gyn

Nika Mehta, Asst Professor of Medicine (Clinical)

Courtney Bilodeau, Asst Professor of Medicine (Clinical)

### Pulmonary/Critical Care

Ghada Bourjeily, Asst. Professor of Medicine

### Gastroenterology

Silvia Degli-Esposti, Associate Professor of Medicine (Clinical)

### Psychiatry and Human Behavior

Teri Pearlstein, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior

Caron Zlotnick, PhD, Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior

Margaret Howard, PhD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior (Clinical)

**Charles C.J. Carpenter, M.D.** a leader in AIDS research was honored with the Susan Colver Rosenberger Medal during Brown University's Commencement on Sunday, May 24. Dr. Carpenter was physician-in-chief at The Miriam Hospital from 1986 to 1998 and is the Director of the Lifespan/Tufts/Brown Center for AIDS Research and Professor of Medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

**Jesse L. Rosenberger** established the Rosenberger Medal in 1919 in memory of his wife, the daughter of Charles K. Colver, class of 1842. The award is not given every year, but rather when a "specially notable or beneficial achievement" warrants it. Dr. Carpenter adds the Rosenberger Medal, Brown's highest faculty honor, to his already long list of achievements and distinctions.

## NEW — Department of Medicine Developmental Research Grant Program

### Dr. Lance Dworkin, Interim Chairman & Physician-in-Chief, Department of Medicine

announced in December 2008, the initiation of a Developmental Research Grant Program to support junior faculty who desire to establish a research career. Developed in collaboration with a number of faculty, this is the first year the award has granted.

The process was highly competitive with a number of outstanding applications submitted and reviewed. The recipients of this year's inaugural Research Development Awards were presented to both Miran Kim, PhD of the Liver Research Center and Aurora Pop-Vicas, MD of Memorial Hospital of RI. The award consists of \$35,000 per year for two years with the second year of funding dependent upon submission and review of a progress report 1 month prior to the anniversary date.

Going forward, applications for the Developmental Research Grants will be due January 1st of any given year and an announcement of the awards will be made by March 1st of that year. This will allow sufficient time for junior faculty and Division Directors to plan clinical and academic time commitments for the academic year covered by the award.

## Faculty Commendations and Honors

### Curt Beckwith, MD and Timothy Flanigan, MD

from the Division of Infectious Diseases was both awarded the 2009 Partners in Public Health Improvement Award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for their contributions to the HIV Testing Implementation Guidance for Correctional Settings.

**Sharon Rounds, MD**, Professor of Medicine, was awarded a Scientific Achievement Award from the American Thoracic Society at the International Conference in San Diego in May, 2009.

**Amos Charles, MD**, Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, and Edward ("Ted") Sears, Medical Chief Resident, were inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society at Brown on April 14, 2009.

**Linda Nici, MD**, Clinical Professor of Medicine, was elected as the Rhode Island representative to the Council of Chapter Representatives of the American Thoracic Society.

**Tanya Ali, MD**, Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine, and Linda Nici, MD, Clinical Professor of Medicine, received Dean's Teaching Recognition Awards for 2008-09.

**Andrew Cohen, MD**, Professor of Medicine, and Susie Hu, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine were awarded Excellence in Teaching Awards for 2008-09.



*Fred J. Schiffman, MD  
Vice Chairman of Medicine*

**Dr Fred Schiffman** of the Hematology/Oncology Division was elected by the Medical School Class of 2009 to be the faculty speaker at their Commencement exercises on May 24, 2009. The title of his address was "Being There and Other Last Minute Advice." Dr Edward Wing, our former Chair of Medicine officiated at his first Medical School Commencement as Dean.

## Dr. Lucia Larson Named Division Director

**Division of Obstetric and Consultative Medicine in the Department of Medicine at Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island**



Lucia Larson, MD, of Sharon, MA, an obstetric medicine specialist and associate professor of medicine and obstetrics and gynecology at The

Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, has been named director of the Division of Obstetric and Consultative Medicine in the Department of Medicine at Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island.

A graduate of Colgate University in Hamilton, NY, Dr. Larson earned her medical degree at New York Medical College. She completed a residency in the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Chicago Hospitals and a fellowship in Obstetric and Consultative Medicine at Women & Infants/Alpert Medical School, the only such fellowship program in the country.

Dr. Larson has served as associate division director at Women & Infants since 2007, as the director of the Clerkship in Medical Consultation in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Alpert Medical School since 1998, and as the director of the Women & Infants/Alpert Medical School Fellowship in Obstetric and Consultative Medicine since 2005.

Dr. Larson's research interests include thrombophilias and recurrent pregnancy loss, education on medical problems in pregnancy, palpitations in pregnancy, preeclampsia and tolerance to paternal antigens. She is currently working with the Imperial College in London and Brown University in hosting a traveling research fellow who will undertake training in obstetric medicine and will conduct research studies looking at metabolic disease in pregnancy.

President of the North American Society of Obstetric Medicine, Dr. Larson is a member of the American College of Physicians, the Society of Obstetric Medicine, the International Society of Obstetric Medicine, the Society for General Internal Medicine, and the American Medical Women's Association.

## Women & Infants' Physician Receives Award From North American Society of Obstetric Medicine

Courtney Clark Bilodeau, MD, who recently joined the staff in the Division of Obstetric and Consultative Medicine at Women & Infants Hospital and Rhode Island, was recently presented with the 2009 Peter Garner Prize/Young Investigator Award at the annual meeting of the North American Society of Obstetric Medicine (NASOM). Her award-winning presentation was entitled, "Asthma Severity and Obesity in Pregnancy."

The presentation was based on a research project completed for Dr. Bilodeau's obstetric medicine fellowship. This retrospective evaluation of pregnant patients in the Obstetric Medicine Asthma Clinic found that the majority of patients seen were overweight or obese. Also identified was the fact that these pregnant women underestimated the severity of their asthma.

The goals of the North American Society of Obstetric Medicine are to promote and support research collaboration, communication, and teaching concerning the medical care of pregnant women. Although the society's core membership are general internists, this joint Canadian and U.S. society's members also include maternal-fetal medicine physicians, anesthesiologists, neonatologists, general obstetricians, family doctors, and other specialists interested in the management of medical complications in pregnancy.



*Dr. Bilodeau received a bachelor's degree cum laude in English from the University of Rochester in Rochester, NY, and her medical degree from the Chicago Medical School at Rosalind Franklin University in Chicago, IL. She completed a residency in internal medicine and a fellowship in obstetric medicine at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, during which time she also served as a teaching fellow in medicine.*

*Board certified in internal medicine, Dr. Bilodeau maintains membership in a number of professional associations and societies. She contributed several chapters to 5-Minute Consult Clinical Companion to Women's Health (2007).*

*Dr. Bilodeau was a finalist in the 2008 American College of Physicians Associate Poster Competition, where she presented "Hermansky-Pudlak Syndrome in Pregnancy." She also presented "Asthma Severity and Obesity in Pregnancy" at the 2009 North American Society of Obstetric Medicine Conference, for which she was awarded the Peter Garner Prize for Young Investigators.*

## Two Women & Infants Physicians Named Officers of North American Society Of Obstetric Medicine

Two obstetric medicine physicians at Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island were recently elected officers of the North American Society of Obstetric Medicine (NASOM).

Lucia Larson, MD, director of Women & Infants' Division of Obstetric and Consultative Medicine and associate professor of medicine and obstetrics and gynecology at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University was elected president. Margaret Miller, MD, director of Women & Infants' Division of Ambulatory Services in the Department of Medicine and an assistant professor of medicine and obstetrics and gynecology at the Alpert

Medical School, was elected secretary/treasurer.

The goals of the North American Society of Obstetric Medicine are to promote and support research collaboration, communication, and teaching concerning the medical care of pregnant women. Although the society's core membership are general internists, this joint Canadian and U.S. society's members also include maternal-fetal medicine physicians, anesthesiologists, neonatologists, general obstetricians, family doctors, and other specialists interested in the management of medical complications in pregnancy.

## Profiles



**Noel Javier, MD**, joined the Division of Geriatrics in July 2009 as Assistant Professor. He trained in Medicine in New York at a Mt. Sinai affiliated

hospital, and did fellowships in Geriatrics and in Palliative Medicine at University of Michigan. He will be doing clinical and educational work in geriatrics and palliative care as a clinician educator, and spend half-time with Home and Hospice Care of Rhode Island as an Associate Medical Director.



We are pleased to welcome **Dr. Hilary Whitlatch** to the Division of Endocrinology. She is a graduate of the University of Connecticut, where she received a BS in

Microbiology with Phi Beta Kappa honors. As an undergraduate, Dr. Whitlatch did extensive laboratory research and was recipient of the Outstanding Undergraduate Research in Molecular and Cell Biology Prize during her senior year. She obtained her MD degree from Tufts University School of Medicine, where she also won numerous academic honors, including induction into the Alpha Omega Alpha honor society. She completed medical residency training at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston and is Board Certified in Internal Medicine. After working for one year as a hospitalist in Boston, Dr. Whitlatch came to the fellowship training program in Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism fellowship at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital, which she completed in June 2009. In her new position with us, she will provide endocrine and diabetes specialty care in the Providence Veterans Affairs Medical Center as well as the Hallett Center. She will assume primary responsibility for the clinical and teaching programs of the Division of Endocrinology at the VA Hospital, participate in the outpatient and inpatient endocrine consult services at Rhode Island Hospital, and pursue her interests in clinical research.



**Angela Plette, MD** graduated from the Hematology Oncology Fellowship Program at Brown in June 2009. Prior to that, she was

a graduate of the Internal Medicine Residency Program at Brown. She received her medical degree from the University of Massachusetts. Dr. Plette has joined the University Medicine Foundation and is based primarily at the Miriam Hospital Division of Hematology Oncology. Dr Plette's area of focus will be thoracic and genitourinary malignancies. She has also taken on the role of assistant program director of the Hematology Oncology Fellowship Program.



**Dr. Brian McGillen** has accepted a position at Rhode Island Hospital, Division of General Internal Medicine where he will work as a clinician-educator with medical

students, interns and residents. Brian will also serve as a hospitalist for the Rhode Island Hospital IMIS Group. Dr. McGillen earned his medical degree at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 2004. He served as Chief Medical Resident at the Christiana Care Health System in Wilmington, Delaware in 2007-2008 following completion of his residency there. He has spent the last year as an academic hospitalist with Christiana Medical Group, and was the recipient of the Teacher of the Year award for both the CCHS IM Residency Program and Medical Student Programs.



**Jeff Mazer, MD** graduated from the Pulmonary Critical Care Medicine Program at Brown in June 2009, prior to that was a graduate of Internal Medicine also at Brown. He received

undergraduate degree at the Amherst College in Spanish and his Medical Degree from Tufts University Medical School. In his

free time, he enjoys spending time with his wife and two children, as well as cooking and running.

Dr. Mazer is a member of the University Medicine Foundation and is based primarily at The Miriam Hospital with Division of Critical Care, however he will be attending on the Pulmonary Consult Service at Rhode Island Hospital.



**Nnenna C. Okpara, MD**, of North Providence, has joined the staff in the Division of Women's Digestive Disorders at Women & Infants Hospital. She will begin seeing

patients in July at the Center for Women's Gastrointestinal Services, part of Women & Infants' Center for Women's Medicine.

Dr. Okpara received a bachelor's degree summa cum laude in biology from the University of Houston in Houston, TX, and her medical degree from the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. She completed a residency in internal medicine at New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center and a fellowship in gastroenterology at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

Board certified in gastroenterology and internal medicine, Dr. Okpara is a member of the American Gastroenterological Association and the American Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy.

Dr. Okpara's clinical interests include colorectal screening and measures to improve access and compliance in screening of minority women. Her research has been published in Gastrointestinal Endoscopy and has also been accepted for publication in World Journal of Gastroenterology.

# Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights Broadens Scope and Impact

## Samuel Dickman, Scott Allen, MD, and Josiah D. Rich, MD, MPH

Since its inception in 2005, The Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights, based at The Miriam Hospital, has become a nexus for research and advocacy aimed at improving the health of the burgeoning national incarcerated population. The Center was founded by Dr. Scott Allen, Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine and former Medical Director of the RI Department of Corrections, and Dr. Josiah “Jody” Rich, Attending Physician in the Division of Infectious Diseases at The Miriam and Professor of Medicine and Community Health. The Center works to promote evidence-based research and policy changes that decrease the disproportionate burden of physical and mental suffering on prisoners.

Roughly one in four people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States passes through a correctional institution each year. A major focus of the Center in Rhode Island has been providing HIV testing and treatment services within correctional systems and improving treatment continuity for HIV-positive persons leaving prison. Project Bridge, an innovative program that coordinates supportive medical and social services for recently released inmates with HIV, has reported achieving a remarkable 84% patient follow-up rate in the first year following release.

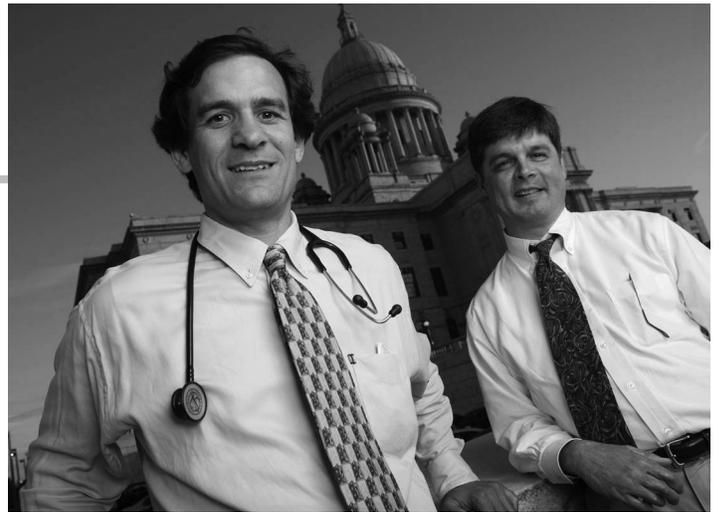
The Center’s evidence-based approach to drug addiction treatment comes at a potentially historic moment in national drug control policy. Gil Kerlikowske, President Obama’s pick to be the nation’s new drug czar, is a strong supporter of drug courts and other less punitive demand-reduction measures. Meanwhile, a US House of Representatives subcommittee recently lifted a ban on needle exchange programs that reduce the risks of HIV and Hepatitis C infection for injection drug users. Center members

Jody Rich, Michelle McKenzie, and others have successfully advocated for syringe decriminalization and needle exchange programs in Rhode Island for over a decade. A possible national shift towards similar harm-reduction approaches is encouraging.

Although much of the research and advocacy efforts that led to the foundation of the Center were related to HIV treatment and/or prevention in the US, many of the lessons learned are important for the entire incarcerated population. The Center has grown to include numerous Brown University faculty from diverse specialties and from many institutions, including Rhode Island Hospital, Butler Hospital, The Miriam Hospital, Memorial Hospital, the Providence VA Medical Center, Brown University, The Rhode Island Department of Corrections, and others.

Dr. Jennifer Clark, Associate Professor of Medicine and Attending Physician at Memorial Hospital, has been actively involved in providing care and doing research related to incarcerated women’s health issues for over a decade. Center members are also expanding their work abroad looking at, among other issues, multi-drug resistant tuberculosis among prisoners.

Alongside the Center’s significant local impact, the past year has also seen a flurry of efforts made toward expanding its impact nationwide. Part of this effort has been instituting CFAR-CHIC, the Centers for AIDS Research Collaboration on HIV in Corrections ([www.lifespan.org/cfar](http://www.lifespan.org/cfar).) This initiative allows AIDS researchers nationwide to collaborate on corrections-



*Co-founders of the Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights at the Miriam Hospital, Drs Josiah “Jody” Rich (left) and Scott Allen (right).*

related research projects and provides an opportunity for prison health advocates to share ideas and resources.

Another nationwide initiative is CJ DATS, the Criminal Justice Drug Abuse Treatment Studies ([cjdat.org](http://cjdat.org)), which was created by the National Institute on Drug Abuse to study current drug treatment practices and outcomes in the correctional system and to develop strategies for improving treatment services for drug-involved offenders. The Rhode Island arm of the study is led by Dr. Peter Friedmann, Professor of Medicine and Attending Physician at Rhode Island Hospital and The Providence VA Medical Center.

Because diseases that are highly prevalent in incarcerated populations – including addiction, mental illness, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV, and Hepatitis B and C – are both medical and social phenomena, promoting interdisciplinary research on prisoner health issues among non-clinical researchers has been a major goal of the Center. Recently the Center organized several faculty forums at Brown University to allow faculty members from various departments to share their research findings and discuss opportunities for collaboration.

**More information about The Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights can be found at [www.prisonerhealth.org](http://www.prisonerhealth.org).**

## Women & Infants Offers Unique Program For Pregnant Patients With Medical Problems

Clinically, pregnancy acts as a “stress test” that often unmasks maternal disease that may have long-term health implications for both mother and baby. Unfortunately, many physicians may not feel comfortable caring for critically ill pregnant patients. With that in mind, Women & Infants Hospital now offers a multidisciplinary, tumor-board style program specifically for pregnant patients with medical problems. SCIPP – or Specialty Care in Pregnancy Program – is a collaborative effort being coordinated by Women & Infants’ Center for Obstetric Medicine.

The only program of its kind in the U.S., SCIPP features a weekly conference that allows for on-site collaboration from a team that includes obstetricians, obstetric internists, maternal-fetal medicine specialists, obstetric anesthesiologists, labor/delivery/recovery nurses with critical care expertise, as well as medical specialists with an interest in caring for women in pregnancy.

“Pregnancy is a joyful time for many families, but it can also be stressful, especially for women with complicated or unusual medical problems,” explained Margaret Miller, MD, division director of the Center for Obstetric Medicine. “We believe that every baby deserves a healthy mother for the long term. And the team approach of the SCIPP program will provide the best possible care in a way that is most convenient for the mother and her baby.”

Each week, the SCIPP conference will focus on a different medical specialty with input from gastroenterologists, rheumatologists, cardiologists, pulmonologists, hematologists, endocrinologists, and radiologists.

In addition to the SCIPP conference, referring physicians and their patients may also choose to have this team of specialists provide one-time consult or clinical care throughout the pregnancy, including delivery and the postpartum period. Patients will be seen by both the obstetric medicine physician and the specialist at the same time. A coordinated plan of care is developed with the primary obstetrician and the SCIPP team, which also ensures a smooth transition back to the primary care provider and medical subspecialist after delivery.

**For further information about the Specialty Care in Pregnancy Program, please call (401) 453-7950 or visit [www.womenandinfants.org/womensmedicine](http://www.womenandinfants.org/womensmedicine)**

## Graduate Medical Education

### Internal Medicine Residency Programs at Rhode Island Hospital – The Miriam Hospital – VA Medical Center –

#### 8th Annual Beckwith Family Visiting Professorship Lecture and Awards for Outstanding Teaching

The Department of Medicine held its Eighth Annual Beckwith Family Awards ceremony on Tuesday, May 5, 2009. It followed the Beckwith Visiting Professorship Lecture where Robert M. Wachter, M.D., was the guest lecturer presenting “Consequences (Expected and Otherwise) of the Quality and IT Revolutions.” Dr. Wachter is Professor of Medicine, Associate Chairman and Chief of the Division of Hospital Medicine, Lynne and Marc Benioff Endowed Chair in Hospital Medicine at the Department of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco and Chief of the Medical Service at the UCSF Medical Center.

This is the 8th year that the Department of Medicine has given awards to recognize superb teaching by its faculty on behalf of the Beckwith Family Fund. The Beckwith Family Research and Education Fund was established at Brown Medical School through generous gifts to endowment from the Beckwith Family Foundation. It is used to support the education and research mission of the Department of Medicine, with an emphasis on the education and training of medical residents. The recipients are nominated and chosen by students, residents, physicians, program and course directors in the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University Department of Medicine. Each winner was presented with a plaque and a cash prize.



Left to right: Drs. Marc Laufgraben, Jody Rich, Peter Karczmar, Lance Dworkin, Angelina Carvalho, Doug Shemin and John O’Bell; missing from the photo is Dr. Elizabeth Toll.

#### The Eighth Annual Alpert Medical School Department of Medicine Beckwith Family Awards for Outstanding Teaching were awarded to the following faculty members:

Marc Laufgraben, MD, Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine

Josiah Rich, MD, Professor of Medicine & Community Health

Peter Karczmar, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine

Angelina Carvalho, MD, Professor of Medicine Emerita

Douglas Shemin, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine

John O’Bell, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine  
Elizabeth Toll, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics & Medicine

# 2009-2010 Rhode Island Hospital/The Miriam Hospital Internal Medicine

## Chief Medical Residents Appointed



**Bevin Kenney, MD** graduated from the College of William and Mary in 1997. She served as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Republic of Kiribati, a country of atolls in the Central Pacific,

as a health educator conducting nutrition and sanitation workshops and promoting vaccines. She returned to the U.S. in 2000 and worked as an editorial assistant at UpToDate until starting medical school.

She graduated from the University of Massachusetts School of Medicine in 2006. During medical school, Bevin had the opportunity to work at Healthcare For All, an organization promoting universal health care in Massachusetts. She traveled to Bolivia to work at a hospital day program for disabled children and to the Dominican Republic setting up health clinics for sugar cane workers and their families.

Outside the hospital, Bevin enjoys reading, yoga and traveling in New England and abroad. Her favorite place in Rhode Island is Sachuest Point.

Bevin is a graduate of the categorical medicine program. She plans to pursue a career in primary care and academic medicine.



**Kate Mavrich, MD**, grew up in Burgettstown, a small town in western Pennsylvania. She attended Washington and Jefferson College and earned her B.A. in Biology Summa Cum Laude in 2001.

Prior to entering medical school at the University of Pittsburgh, Kate worked as a personal trainer and fitness counselor. During medical school, she volunteered for AmeriCorps at a women's shelter for victims of intimate partner violence. She also worked at the county courthouse as a legal advocate for women filing protection from abuse motions. She was one of five students chosen to participate in the Area of Concentration (AOC) Certificate Program in Women's Health. Kate was also selected by her peers for induction into the prestigious Arnold P. Gold National Humanism Honor Society an honor afforded to only 15% of the class.

In her free time, Kate tries to balance her competing interests in baking and running.

Her favorite place in Rhode Island is Newport's Cliff Walk. She faithfully watches *Dancing with the Stars* and admits to listening to Christmas music year round.

Kate is a graduate of the General Internal Medicine program. She plans to pursue a career in primary care for women.



**Christopher McGowan, MD**, grew up in Glen Gardner, NJ. He received his undergraduate education from Pennsylvania State University where he was enrolled in the six-year accelerated

program in conjunction with Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia.

During his pre-clinical years at Jefferson, Chris was the recipient of the Helen and Gabriel Lavine Scholarship and was inducted into both the Hobard Amory Hare Honor Medical Society, as well as Association of Pathology Chairs National Pathology Honor Society. In medical school, he was active in the Jeff HOPE program providing care to Philadelphia's homeless community and he participated in research investigating MRI surveillance of hepatocellular carcinoma.

During his categorical Internal Medicine residency, Chris remained active in gastroenterology research, examining *Helicobacter pylori*, eosinophilic esophagitis, and Kayexalate-induced intestinal ischemia.

While in college, Chris spent his summers working as a landscaper and house painter.

During his time off, Chris enjoys weight training, cooking, dining out, and spending time with his wife, Grace. He can frequently be seen moonlighting in an attempt to offset his wife's shoe expenditures.

Following his chief residency, Chris will be entering a gastroenterology fellowship.



**Priscilla Merriam, MD** graduated from Yale University in 1998 with a BS in Biology. As an undergraduate, she was active in residential life and health promotion service for the elderly,

poor children and homeless women. Following college, she worked for four years at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in

Boston as part of a clinical research team for adult sarcoma patients. At Dana-Farber, she was actively involved in the design and conduct of early trials of oral targeted therapies, specifically imatinib, in sarcoma patients.

Priscilla attended medical school at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. At Jefferson, she was a coordinator and leader for a medical student group dedicated to health education for pregnant teenagers. She volunteered at homeless shelter clinics providing medical care and smoking cessation counseling. She joined Brown in 2006 as a categorical resident in Internal Medicine.

A native of Lexington, MA, she enjoys visiting her family in Maine and Boston but has adopted Rhode Island as her new home. She will begin a fellowship in hematology and oncology at Brown in July 2010.



**John L. Reagan, MD**, is a native of Upstate New York. John graduated cum laude with honors in biology from Hamilton College in May of 2000. While there he explored the role of apoptosis in exercised mouse skeletal muscle. Outside of the classroom he was two year letter winner and senior co-captain in football. Following graduation he spent two years working in a cellular immunobiology lab at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City examining the role of dendritic cells as tumor immunotherapy.

John attended SUNY Upstate medical school in Syracuse, NY, graduating in May of 2006. He received the Arnold P. Gold Award for Humanism in Medicine at Upstate. He then began his training in Internal Medicine as a categorical resident at Brown. This past May he was awarded Best Original Research Poster for his work on Heparin Induced Thrombocytopenia on Senior Resident Research Day. He will begin a fellowship in hematology/oncology in July of 2010.

Away from the hospital John enjoys hiking, golf, flag football, leisure reading, and spending time with his family. He and his wife Kate recently celebrated their daughter Ella's first birthday in late April.

# The RIH/TMH/VAMC Seventeenth Annual Internal Medicine Senior Resident Research Program held on Tuesday, May 19, 2009.

## Best Oral Research: Presentation

Kate Mavrich, M.D. and Stephanie Mayer, M.D. "Recognition of Osteoporosis in Patients Admitted with Fragility Hip Fracture" (also 2008 Melvin D.Hoffman M.D. award winners for best research proposal in Primary Care)

## Best Poster Presentation: Research

John Reagan, M.D. "Incidence and Cost of HIT at Rhode Island Hospital"

## Best Poster Presentation: Clinical Vignette

Vaani Jegapragasan, M.D. "Adult Onset Still's Disease with Macrophage Activation Syndrome."

## Best Poster Presentation: Medical Education

Atiazul Mansoor, MD "Findings of an ECG Didactic Course"

*Congratulations to all the residents on the best senior research program in 17 years!*

## Memorial Hospital of RI 2009 Match Results

Easa Al-Ghandour, MD	University of Jordan, Jordan
Abdullah Alquadan, MD	Jordan University of Science & Technology, Jordan
Waseem Barham, MD	University of Jordan, Jordan
Abdullah Chahin, MD	Jordan University of Science & Technology, Jordan
Ahmad Daraghme, MD	Al Quds University, Jerusalem
Salaheldin Elhamamsy, MD	University of Cairo, Egypt
Maria Valeria Fabre, MD	Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Perna Ganjoo, MD	Lady Hardinge Medical Collage, India
Radu Hagau, MD	University of Medicine & Pharmacy Iuliu Hatiegamu, Romania
Asha Shrestha, MD	Tribhuvan University, Nepal

*The Department of Medicine  
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*or contact Dan Bryant at*

*444-6893, e-mail to*

*dbryant@Lifespan.org.*

## Memorial Hospital of RI Honors Residents and Faculty at the 2009 Graduation and Awards Ceremony

- The Arthur Phillips Mentoring Award was presented to faculty member **Iulia Grillo, MD**
- The Gintaras Liaugaudas Award for Intern of the Year was presented to **Feras Karadsheh, MD**
- The Senior Resident of the Year Award was presented to **Ahmad Ismail, MD**
- **Dr. Marguerite Neill** received the Excellence in Teaching Award for Full Time Faculty
- **Dr. Kim Amin** received the Excellence in Teaching Award for Clinical Volunteer Faculty



## Umar Shakur, DO appointed 2009-2010 Chief Medical Resident at Memorial

**Umar Shakur, DO** graduated from the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine/Midwestern University in 2006 and completed his residency in internal medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) in Milwaukee.

Umar enjoys reading, and even occasionally writing, poetry, a habit he picked up as an English major at the University of Chicago. Having grown up in the Midwest, Umar enjoys exploring Rhode Island with his wife, Nida Chaudhary, a PGY-2 in internal medicine at RIH. He also enjoys playing basketball and long-distance running. Umar intends to pursue a career in cardiology.

## Department of Medicine Grand Rounds Tuesday Mornings at 8:00 AM

George Auditorium, Rhode Island Hospital  
Lecture Hall, The Miriam Hospital (teleconferenced from RIH)  
Room 653, VA Medical Center (teleconferenced from RIH)  
Library Video Room, Newport Hospital (teleconferenced from RIH)

**Handicapped assistance is available. Please contact the Rhode Island Hospital CME office at (401) 444-4260.**

**September 29, 2009:  
Dermatology Update**

***“Melanoma Update”***

Martin A. Weinstock, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the Rhode Island Pigmented Lesion Unit and Director of Photomedicine, Rhode Island Hospital, Professor of Dermatology and Community Health, The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University

**October 6, 2009:**

***Morbidity & Mortality Conference***

**Case 1: “An 86-year-old man presents with progressive shortness of breath”**

Presenter: To be announced  
Panelists: Michael Stanchina, M.D., Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine; Oncology to be announced

**Case 2: “A 79-year-old woman presents with nausea, vomiting, and headache”**

Presenter: Brian McGillen, M.D., General Internal Medicine  
Panelists: Leonard Mermel, D.O., Infectious Diseases; Kevin Dushay, M.D., Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine

**October 13, 2009:  
CANCELED**

**October 20, 2009:**

***“Update on Screening and Management of Early Prostate Cancer”***

Philip W. Kantoff, M.D., Chief Clinical Research Officer, Chief, Division of Solid Tumor Oncology, Director of the Lank Center for Genitourinary Oncology, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School

**October 27, 2009:**

***Endocrine Update***

***“Arguing A1c: Current Controversies in the Use of Hemoglobin A1c for Diabetes Care”***

Marc J. Laufgraben, M.D., MBA, FACE, FACP, Clinical Director, Division of Endocrinology and the Hallett Center, Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University

***“Individualizing Therapy in Type 2 Diabetes: Where Are We?”***

Robert J. Smith, M.D., Director, Division of Endocrinology and the Hallett Center, Professor of Medicine, The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University

**November 3, 2009:**

***The Kameny Lecture***

“Our Grandparents, Our Parents, Our Future Selves: Optimizing Function in Old Age”  
Thomas M. Gill, M.D., Director, Yale Center for Disability and Disabling Disorders, Humana Foundation Professor of Geriatric Medicine, Professor of Medicine, Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health, Yale University School of Medicine

**November 10, 2009:**

***“C Reactive Protein and Heart Disease”***

Paul M. Ridker, M.D., Director of Center for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention, Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School

**November 17, 2009:**

***Morbidity & Mortality Conference***

**November 24, 2009:**

***Nephrology Update***

Visit our website at  
[www.brownmedicine.org](http://www.brownmedicine.org)