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### Faculty News

## Increasing Research Funding

By [Cam E. Enarson, M.D., M.B.A.](#),  
 Dean, Creighton School of Medicine  
 Vice President for Health Sciences

“How will we increase the capacity for research?” This question was posed by Father John P. Schlegel, S.J., president of Creighton University, in his convocation presentation. The issue of identifying resources to fund research in the biomedical and life sciences is essential if we are to continue to grow our national presence and enhance our students’ learning experience here at Creighton.



The School of Medicine is aggressively seeking extramural research funding and has had a great deal of success. Faculty recruitment and program development over the past five years has resulted in a growth of research grants and contracts from \$17 million to \$24 million.

A relatively new member of the Dean’s Office, Barbara McLaughlin, Ph.D., associate dean for Research, has already helped garner significant media coverage for Creighton’s research programs. She is actively helping faculty to pursue new avenues of funding in new and established areas of discovery.

Roberta Sonnino, M.D., who also joined Creighton last year as associate dean for academic faculty affairs, has

worked with Dr. McLaughlin to implement several programs to aid faculty in submitting successful grant proposals. The areas most likely to receive funding, as well as the most likely sources of that funding have been identified.

The Community-Oriented Primary Care Public Health Research Endowment that Creighton received last year from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is helping train, mentor and tutor students to get involved in public health research, and increasing the number of medical students interested in conducting health disparity research.

One of our greatest strengths as a School of Medicine is the unique learning environment we offer our undergraduate and graduate students. Our researchers are teachers, who provide invaluable research opportunities to our students and inspire them to explore the world. And our students, in turn, inspire us to seek new and better ways to improve the quality of health in our community and beyond.

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## Research

### Creighton Research Today

By [Barbara J. McLaughlin, Ph.D.](#)

*Associate Dean of Research*

The current post-genomic era is an exciting time for biomedical research. The opportunities to grow and reshape the research environment at Creighton University have never been better. New modern laboratories for our biomedical researchers have been completed and space for core facilities in morphology, genomics, and proteomics are being completed in the area between Criss I and II. The architectural design of our 'laboratories without walls' accommodates several faculty/student groupings that can interact with other research groups to encourage



research teamwork across disciplines. In addition, our efforts to enhance the research environment in the School of Medicine were given a boost by news that our animal facilities have been given provisional approval by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care.

Several grant review panels were here last month to review such research programs and core facilities funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). The NIH funded Center for Molecular Biology of Neurosensory Systems, jointly funded between Creighton, the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) and BoysTown National Research Hospital by an NIH Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) grant, and the Nebraska Center for Cell Biology at Creighton, funded by NSF EPSCoR, were reviewed favorably by the external advisory committee and the NSF EPSCoR director, Karen Sandberg. During this same week, Creighton faculty and students gave presentations at the Nebraska Research Expo. The Expo was designed to promote interaction between academic and business enterprises and to showcase research ideas that have potential for economic impact. The week ended with a successful site visit review of our Cancer and Smoking Disease Research Program, funded by LB 595.

Team science fosters collaboration and sharing of technologies and is a focal point in the NIH Roadmap that guides the research funding environment. Creighton is fortunate to have several research programs, funded by the NIH COBRE and NSF EPSCoR (mentioned above), that provide support for core technologies and mentoring young investigators on projects that share a common research theme.

### **Genetic Link Possible Cause of Multiple Myeloma**

In February's *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, Henry T. Lynch, M. D., (*right*) hereditary cancer expert, professor of medicine and chairman of preventive medicine at Creighton University Medical Center, calls



for further study of a positive genetic link for multiple myeloma and related disorders.



Dr. Lynch was recently installed as the first holder of the Charles F. and Mary C. Heider Chair in Cancer Research at Creighton. [See story.](#)

Multiple myeloma is a rare form of cancer exhibited by excessive production of plasma cells in bone marrow. Plasma cells may mass together to form tumors. Multiple myeloma can also be described as multiple tumors.

Dr. Lynch and researchers at eight sites in France, Canada, and the U.S., including colleagues at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, studied 39 families with multiple cases of multiple myeloma and found a possible genetic correlation. In addition, in families with multiple myeloma over several generations, the onset of disease occurred at younger ages in successive generations.

Dr. Lynch recommends further study of familial multiple myeloma. "I propose an international consortium to study familial multiple myeloma, which may provide insights into the causes, control and ultimately the prevention of multiple myeloma and related diseases," said Dr. Lynch.

Research was supported by revenue from Nebraska cigarette taxes awarded to Creighton University and the University of Nebraska Medical Center by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

### **High Colorectal Cancer Risks and Jewish People**

In a recent special edition of *Familial Cancer*, a quarterly journal of cancer genetics, results of research found Ashkenazi Jews may have one of the highest lifetime risks for colorectal cancer of any ethnic group in the world. Henry T. Lynch, M.D., editor of the Journal, professor and chairman of Preventative



Medicine and Public Health, and director of the Hereditary Cancer Institute at Creighton University Medical Center, calls for more intensive colorectal cancer screening guidelines as a result of these findings.

The lifetime risk of colorectal cancer in the general population of the United States is approximately 5 to 6 percent. However, among Ashkenazi Jews, the rate is estimated to be as high as 9 to 15 percent. Approximately 5 to 10 percent of cases of colorectal cancer is hereditary.

Furthermore, marked clinical examples found Jewish people also have a higher risk of cancer of the ovary, pancreas, stomach and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Results of the research also found overall cancer incidence is not higher in Ashkenazi Jewish people when compared to North American, non-Hispanic white people.

#### **Treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

Creighton University Medical Center's Psychiatry Research Clinic is conducting an investigational medication study for the treatment of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The medication is currently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. Creighton investigators are studying whether it may also be effective for PTSD.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder  
is one of the most common medical  
psychiatric conditions ... affecting approximately 14  
percent  
of all Americans

The disorder occurs from being exposed to severe stress or trauma. If not properly treated, the disorder can develop into a chronic condition.

Individuals diagnosed with PTSD are more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs, which only impairs the psychological condition. Symptoms of the disorder include nightmares, poor sleep, anxiety, depression and aloofness.

The aid of medication in helping to treat the disorder can

help with the symptoms of anxiety and depression, as well as improve sleep. The new medications are not habit-forming and typically do not obstruct an individual's mental and physical capacities.

### **Creighton Tests Cervical Cancer Vaccine**

As part of a national study, Creighton University Medical Center is testing an experimental vaccine that could prevent cervical cancer. Creighton aims to increase awareness of human papillomaviruses (HPV), which are common sexually transmitted viruses causing cervical cancer. According to Archana Chatterjee, M.D., associate professor of Pediatrics, Medical Microbiology and Immunology, HPV is a common infection that should be considered a potential source of infection in all sexually active individuals. These viruses are extremely common and difficult to avoid.

Nearly every case of cervical cancer  
is caused by HPV

The other is a three-year study for young men ages 16 to 23. Men, who are typically not harmed by the virus but are carriers, are advised to receive the vaccination so they do not infect women or other men. Studies have proven that HPV also causes anal cancer.

Creighton is also in the follow-up phase for this type of investigational vaccine, which was given to children and adolescents ages 9 to 15. Children as young as 9 to 10 years old are prime candidates for the vaccine, before they become sexually active and contract the virus.

More than 50 percent of sexually active individuals will become infected with HPV during their lifetime. Approximately 200 different strains of HPV have been recognized, but only four different types primarily cause the disease. The vaccine will immunize against these four strains: HPV-16 and 18, the main causes of cervical cancer, and HPV-6 and 11, the cause of about 90 percent of genital warts in both men and women.

Thanks to routine pap screening in developed parts of the world, the incidence of cervical cancer has decreased dramatically, however it remains one of the leading factors of death among women living in

developing countries and disadvantaged sectors of the United States. The incidence of anal cancer in men has risen dramatically in the past 25 to 30 years.

Over two years of testing by drug firms, the vaccine continues to effectively prevent the disease. Although the vaccine is not yet available, Merck is expected to apply for approval late next year.

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## In the News



*Dr. Henry Lynch delivers his address at the Heider Chair inaugural on Nov. 10.*

### **Lynch Is First Chair in Cancer Research**

Henry T. Lynch, M.D., hereditary cancer expert, professor of Medicine and chairman of Preventive Medicine at Creighton University School of Medicine, is the first chairholder of the Charles F. and Mary C. Heider Endowed Chair in Cancer Research.

This endowment, which creates the seventh chair in the School of Medicine and the 24th endowed chair for Creighton University, will help further medical education and cancer research.

This is the second endowed chair established through the generosity of the Heiders. The first, the Charles and Mary Heider Endowed Jesuit Faculty Chair, was inaugurated in 1994 and supports the work of renowned photojournalist the Rev. Donald A. Doll, S.J. The Heiders' philanthropic leadership has helped raise millions of dollars for projects benefiting Nebraska educational, youth, civic and health care organizations.

## **Creighton Receives \$50 Million Gift**

In December of 2004, an anonymous graduate of Creighton University pledged \$50 million in recognition of Creighton's emerging national leadership among faith-based universities.

Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., president of Creighton University said, "Obviously, the University community is deeply grateful for the generosity and loyalty of our alumnus, and the confidence in Creighton's future which this gift represents."

*Anonymous donation is the  
largest single, individual gift  
in the University's history*

"Creighton is committed to being a national leader among faith-based universities," he added. "In the Jesuit tradition, we are values-centered and student-focused, rooted in service and dedicated to preparing women and men for responsible leadership, professional distinction and outstanding citizenship."

William A. Fitzgerald, chairman of the Creighton University Board of Directors and chairman and chief executive officer of Commercial Federal Bank, praised Father Schlegel for leadership that inspired the largest gift in the University's history. Within the last year, there were only a handful of U.S. institutions of higher learning that received gifts greater than \$50 million from living individuals.

Bruce C. Rohde, vice chairman of the Creighton Board and chairman and chief executive officer of ConAgra Foods, Inc., a Fortune 500 company, said the gift is a defining moment in Creighton's history. "This gift is unprecedented for Creighton and certainly places it on the national philanthropic map," he said.



*May graduates Zulma Barrios and Ann Allie see a patient at the Magis Medical Clinic.*

### **Med Students Match, Receive Honor**

National Match Day was March 17, 2005. Once again, Creighton University School of Medicine students did quite well in the residency match process. Ninety-five percent of the students matched into their specialty of choice. Check out the list of residency matches [here](#).

For several graduates, Match Day was the culmination of a career at Creighton that reflects a passion for charity. One group of dedicated students from the School of Medicine saw a need and went about filling that need. On their own, the medical students researched, sought and received a grant enabling them to establish the **Magis Medical Clinic** at the Siena-Francis House. Through the clinic, which opened last September, students are able to reach out to homeless men women and children to provide acute care, follow-up care and referrals to existing community services. It is the only free medical clinic in Omaha open on Saturdays.

Earlier this year, the President's Martin Luther King Jr. Legacy Award at Creighton University was bestowed upon the founding students of the Magis Medical Clinic, which was established by these eight dedicated students: Ann Allie, Zulma Barrios, Rick Patch, Ajay Balaram, Angie Adams, Katie Banker, Mary Rogers and Dave Rust.

### **More Women Graduate**

The *Omaha World-Herald* noted a first for Creighton's School of Medicine. For the first time, more women (54) than men (51) graduated with a medical degree. Nationally, enrollment of women in medical schools has surpassed men for two years, but women's graduation rates are still below 50 percent.

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## Briefly Noted

### **Dean Presented with Honorary Degree**

Cam E. Enarson, M.D., M.B.A., vice president for Health Sciences and dean of the School of Medicine at Creighton University, has received an honorary doctor of science degree from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn. Enarson, a 1978 summa cum laude graduate of Concordia College, delivered the commencement address at the ceremony.

Enarson also has been elected to a four-year term as member-at-large for the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), a not-for-profit organization that provides high-quality examinations for the health professions.

### **Dean Visits Columbus**

In March, Cam E. Enarson, M.D., M.B.A., visited with School of Medicine alumni and their guests in Columbus, Neb., to provide an update on the educational, research and clinical service activities under way at Creighton. He discussed Creighton's commitment to providing the best medical education and training combined with cutting-edge health and scientific research. The visit is part of Dr. Enarson's plan to reach out to physicians statewide to discuss how Creighton University Medical Center, as an academic medical center, is working to enhance the health of Nebraskans.

### **Wilson to Lead Fulbright Research Exchange**

Daniel R. Wilson, M.D., Ph.D., and colleagues at Creighton University have been awarded an Egypt-U.S. Research Exchange grant for 2005-2006 from the Fulbright Commission to study "Psychotherapy and Pharmacotherapy of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Congruences and Differences in Egypt and America."





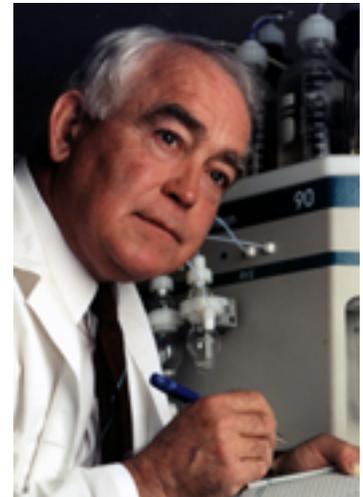
Wilson is professor and chairman of Psychiatry and professor of Anthropology at Creighton. He has unique training in anthropology, medicine and psychiatry at Yale, Iowa, Harvard and Cambridge Universities.

The award will launch a program of joint research with colleagues at Creighton and Behman Hospital and the University of Cairo to improve the understanding of the sociopolitical roots and pharmacological treatment of the psychological effects of ethnic violence. As principal investigator, Wilson will be a visiting professor at Behman Hospital this September in exchange with Mariam Wardakan of Cairo. Other colleagues include Aly Salaheldin, Patricia Sullivan, Ph.D., and Fred Petty, M.D., of Omaha.

Wilson was also named **chairman of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) Psychotherapy Committee** at the WPA Congress held in November in Florence, Italy. As chairman, Dr. Wilson will lead WPA efforts to promote best practices in psychotherapy clinical care, education and research working with constituent national associations and medical schools worldwide.

### **Murphy Among Top Irish-American Life Scientists**

Richard F. "Barry" Murphy, Ph.D., was selected as one of the Top 15 Irish-American Life Scientists of the Year by Enterprise Ireland, BioLink USA-Ireland and Irish America Magazine. Murphy is chair of the Biomedical Sciences Department at Creighton University and holder of the Peekie Nash Carpenter Endowed Chair in Medicine.



This is the inaugural year of the Irish America Top 15 Life Science Awards, which recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to the Life Sciences. The awards will be presented at the June 16 - 17 International Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Conference in Boston.

Other honorees include Bert O'Malley, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas; Tommy Thompson, former secretary of Health and Human Services; Lester Crawford, Ph.D., commissioner of the Food and Drug Association; and James Lenehan, former worldwide chairman of Johnson & Johnson. All the honorees are featured in the June/July issue of Irish America Magazine.

Enterprise Ireland is the government organization charged with assisting the development of Irish enterprise. BioLink USA-Ireland is an educational networking organization responsible for connecting and fostering relationships between life scientists in the U.S. and Ireland.

### **Sonnino Elected President of SELAM**

Last month, Roberta E. Sonnino, M.D., associate dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs, was elected president of SELAM International (Society for Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine) at the annual conference in Philadelphia. In this capacity, she will guide the organizations' activities that include continuing education, development, and assisting Academic Health Centers in establishing regional leadership programs. SELAM is partnering with the AAMC and the deans of all U.S. medical schools to develop coordinated plans for the advancement of women in academic medicine, as well as strategic plans for affiliated leadership programs in the next decade.



### **Agrawal Named to Two National Positions**

Devendra K. Agrawal, Ph.D has accepted an invitation by the Center for Scientific Review (CSR) to become a member of the Lung Cellular, Molecular and Immunobiology Study



Section. The CSR, a division of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), organizes the peer review groups that evaluate the majority of grant applications submitted to the NIH.



Agrawal was also elected elected for a four-year term to the 2005 Editorial Board of the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology. He was nominated and elected on the basis of his knowledge and expertise, high quality reviews, timely return of comments, and willingness to review for the publication.

### **Schaefer Featured on Local Legends Website**

Joann Schaefer, M.D., associate professor at Creighton University, and family physician is featured on the Local Legends web site. Last year, Schaefer was recognized by the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) as a Local Legend from Nebraska, which is bestowed upon women physicians who have demonstrated commitment, originality, innovation or creativity in her field of medicine.



In addition to her duties at Creighton University, Dr. Schaefer also serves as deputy chief medical officer for the Nebraska Health and Human Services System. She coordinates the state's bioterrorism preparedness planning and readiness assessment, and chairs the Child Death Review Team.

The Local Legends program is a partnership between the AMWA and the National Library of Medicine (NLM), which asks U.S. Senators and Members of Congress to nominate outstanding women from their states. Local Legends is a companion project to an exhibition created by the NLM entitled "Changing the Face of Medicine: Celebrating America's Women Physicians."

### **Svolos Elected to International Association**

Thomas Svolos, M.D., adjunct associate professor of psychiatry in the School of Medicine, was elected as a psychoanalyst and member of the New Lacanian School and the World Association of Psychoanalysis (WAP). He is only the 11th U.S. psychoanalyst elected by WAP and the first member trained entirely in the United States.



Dr. Svolos serves as vice-chairman for education in the Department of Psychiatry, and director of the Division of Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis. He is also associate training director of the combined Creighton University Medical Center - University of Nebraska Medical Center Psychiatry Residency Training program. Dr. Svolos has published widely in the area of psychoanalysis and related fields, and is co-author of the forthcoming book, *Masks of Personality*. His work has also been translated into French and Portuguese.

The WAP is the largest and oldest professional organization for the promotion of Lacanian Psychoanalysis, which traces its lineage to the French School of Psychoanalysis founded in 1964 by the French psychiatrist, Jacques Lacan. There are currently more than 1,000 members of the WAP in Europe, North and South America, and Australia who work for progress in psychoanalysis and its role in today's world.

### **Fitzgibbons Elected Fellow to Royal College**

Robert J. Fitzgibbons, Jr., M.D., professor of surgery at Creighton University Medical Center, has been elected as an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. Dr. Fitzgibbons holds the Dr. Harry E. Stuckenhoff Endowed Chair in Surgery. He was among four other distinguished surgeons



from around the world to receive the award earlier this month at the annual Glasgow surgical forum in Glasgow, Scotland. Dr. Fitzgibbons received the award for his pioneering work in minimally invasive surgery and abdominal wall hernia surgery.

Dr. Fitzgibbons received his M.D. from Creighton University School of Medicine and is currently the Harry E. Stuckenhoff endowed professor of surgery. In the late 1980's, he was instrumental in developing specific techniques for laparoscopic inguinal herniorrhaphy (LIH) in the average general surgeon's practice. His work has led to two important trials dealing with hernia repair.

Dr. Fitzgibbons is a member of the Committee on Emerging Technology for the American College of Surgeons and chairs its subcommittee on assessment. He has made more than 300 national and international presentations regarding minimally invasive surgery and surgical oncology. He is the author of more than 250 scholarly publications.

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow was founded in 1599 by Peter Lowe under the auspices of King George VI.

### **Rich Named Chair of APM, COD Fellow**

Eugene C. Rich, M.D., chair of the Department of Medicine at Creighton University and holder of the Tenet Healthcare Endowed Chair in Healthcare Efficacy, was selected to be chair of the Association of Professors of Medicine (APM), the national organization of departments of internal medicine at U.S. medical schools and numerous affiliated teaching hospitals.



Rich was also selected from a strong field of candidates to be an American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) Council of Deans (COD) Fellow for the 2005-2006 fellowship year. The Fellowship is designed for senior faculty members, department chairs and assistant and associate deans who are interested in being

considered for deanships in the future.

### **Ramaswamy Receives Young Investigator Award**

Sriram Ramaswamy, M.D., has been awarded a Young Investigator Award by the Scientific Council of the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD).

Ramaswamy's award comes with \$30,000 to support research examining the metabolic aspects of mental

illness. Ramaswamy is the chief resident in the Department of Psychiatry. Upon his graduation in June 2005, he will be joining the academic faculty in the Department of Psychiatry along with a staff appointment at the Omaha VA Medical Center.



Studies in individuals with schizophrenia have demonstrated osteoporosis and a decrease in bone mineral density. Antipsychotic medications have been linked to the loss of bone mineral density, but the exact cause is unclear. Dr. Ramaswamy and his co-investigators, Robert P. Heaney, M.D., holder of the John A. Creighton University Professor Chair and Frederick Petty M.D., Ph.D., vice chairman for research in the Department of Psychiatry, are conducting research that may provide a causative link between the medications and bone loss.

### **Medical Student Receives Bosch Fellowship**

Justin Josephsen of Omaha, a second-year Creighton medical student, has been awarded the Robert Bosch Foundation Fellowship for 2005-2006. A joint German-American committee selected Josephsen from a competitive field of applicants for the Bosch Fellowship, an intensive nine-month work and study program in Europe.



The Bosch Fellowship is designed for professionals between the ages of 23 and 34 who hold a Master's

degree in the fields of public policy/affairs, political science, business administration, economics, journalism/mass communications or a Juris Doctorate. In addition to working toward his medical degree, Josephsen holds a Master's degree in international affairs with a focus on international health policy.

Josephsen joins a group of 20 American leaders who will complete two executive-level internships in Germany in the public and private sectors and participate in three seminars focusing on contemporary German and European issues. Internships vary according to the individual fellow's professional field and goals, with placements including such key German institutions as the Federal Government, Federal Parliament, and headquarters of private corporations, and major German media and cultural institutions. Fellows receive up to seven months of intensive German language training prior to the program. Through an all-expenses paid program of professional experience, travel, lectures, and seminars taking place all over Europe, Bosch Fellows develop an in-depth understanding of issues facing the European Union and Germany today.

The Robert Bosch Foundation (Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH), established in 1964, is one of the major German foundations associated with a private company. It represents the philanthropic and social endeavors of founder Robert Bosch and fulfills his legacy by taking on challenges of modern-day society, developing forward-looking concepts, and putting them into practice. CDS International, a Manhattan-based international training and exchange organization represents the Robert Bosch Foundation Fellowship Program in the United States.

### **One Good Turn ...**

In January, Kenneth S. Thomson, Ph.D., professor of Medical Microbiology and Immunology at Creighton University, presented a lecture for the Rocky Mountain Dental Study Club. Following the lecture, a grant for \$2,500, funded by former work-study students Kim Hamik, R.Ph., and Woon Ho Yi, D.D.S., was presented to the Med-Micro department in care of Thomson and Ellen Smith-Moland, to thank them for the experience they received under their tutelage. Thomson subsequently returned his lecturer's honorarium of \$300 as a donation to the national Foundation of Dentistry for

the Handicapped, a coalition of dentists and community members that provide free dental services to more than 28,000 elderly, disabled and medically compromised people of all ages.

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## Faculty News

### New Faculty

- Robert Allen, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Pathology
- Khalid Bashir, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine
- Nicholas Battafarano, M.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry
- Michael Belshan, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Medical Microbiology
- Thomas Dworak, M.D., Assistant Professor of Radiology
- Monique Kusler, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine
- Helene Logginidou, M.D., Instructor of Anesthesiology
- Cam Nguyen, M.D., Associate Professor of Radiology
- Peter Thomas, Ph.D., Professor of Surgery

### Resignations

- Bhakta Dey, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Surgery

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