



FROM THE DIRECTORS

Dear Brenden-Colson Center Researchers and Supporters,

The momentum created by the Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care continues to build. This year our program leaders and members have travelled the globe and walked the city to further our goals of translation of emerging knowledge and continual collaboration to chart a new course for pancreatic disease.

In June several members of the Brenden-Colson Center were invited to present at **Pancreas 2016** "Precision Medicine for Pancreatic Cancer," held in Glasgow, Scotland, in June. Erin Gilbert, MD, and Meghan Joly, PhD, were each asked to speak in "Hot Topics" sessions. Meghan's poster describing new insights on poor survival in pancreatic cancer was judged the best of those by postdoctoral fellows at this international symposium.



The over 30 members of TeamOHSU who spent the morning of Sept 24th walking in the **2016 PurpleStride** event raised over \$2000 in support of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (see pic below). Brenden-Colson Center Co-Director Dr. Brett Sheppard, along with OHSU oncologist Dr. Gina Vaccaro, was named Honorary Chair of the event.

Also on September 24th, the 2nd biannual **PancWest Conference** took place at the Moores Cancer Center (UC San Diego) in La Jolla, California. This west coast collaborative translational science conference, initiated by the Brenden-Colson Center in 2014, featured top pancreatic

disease scientists from Seattle to San Diego presenting and discussing their latest research findings, including BCC Co-Director Rosalie Sears, PhD, and recent BCC/CDCB joint recruit Mara Sherman, PhD. Brenden-Colson trainees were excited to hear and meet Keynote Speaker Sunil R. Hingorani, MD, PhD – developer of the KPC mouse strain that is now the standard used for pancreatic cancer modelling. Postdoc Meghan Joly reported that her work in the Sears lab was enthusiastically received and prompted several ideas for new collaborations with other West Coast researchers.

This month we were pleased to join the Dept. of Biomedical Engineering in hosting guest speaker **Seema Agarwal, PhD**, from Georgetown University, who told us about her work generating and biobanking normal-tumor paired conditionally reprogrammed cell lines derived directly from patient tissue, establishing cell lines for a number of cancer tumor types.

Finally, a reminder that **November is National Pancreatic Cancer Awareness month**. Please spread the word about the Brenden-Colson Center's initiatives and their potential for real progress in the early detection, treatment and cure of this lethal disease. You support the Brenden-Colson Center's mission – to be a regional patient-centric hub for innovative and important clinical and research programs for pancreatic diseases – through your dedication to fight this disease.

Sincerely,
Brenden-Colson Co-Directors
Rosalie Sears, PhD
Brett Sheppard, MD

If you have ideas about topics or information you would like to see in the newsletter please email us at brendencolsoninfo@ohsu.edu.

UPCOMING SEMINARS, EVENTS

Thu, October 20, 2016 7 – 8pm OHSU Auditorium

The Impact of Diabetes

Jessica Castle, MD, assistant professor of medicine, OHSU School of Medicine, sees patients at the Harold Schnitzer Diabetes Health Center and conducts research on the promise of artificial pancreas technology to improve the lives of people with diabetes. Learn about the latest advances in type 1 and type 2 diabetes research which could impact the approximately 278,000 adult Oregonians who have diabetes.

Thu, Nov 17, 2016 7 – 8pm Collaborative Life Sciences Bldg., Room 3A003

Pancreatic Cancer: America's #2 Cancer Killer

Brett C. Sheppard, MD, FACS, Professor & Vice-Chair of Surgery, OHSU School of Medicine
Recent data from the American Cancer Society projects that pancreatic cancer will be the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths by 2020. How can you reduce your risk of pancreatic cancer? What do you do if it strikes? Attend this event on World Pancreatic Cancer Day and join the effort to raise awareness and find new treatments.

Thu, December 15, 2016 3 – 4pm CHH 3, Conf Rm 1

BME Seminar: Multivariable Artificial Pancreas System

Ali Cinar, PhD; Professor, Dept. of Chemical and Biological Engineering and Dept. of Biomedical Engineering, Illinois Institute of Technology; Director, Engineering Center for Diabetes Research and Education (ECDRE)

Watch this space! for info about a clinical conference on new pancreatic disease research, clinical trials, and treatment options, coming soon from the Brenden-Colson Center.

CLINICAL UPDATES

We are proud to announce the establishment of a new community registry, **OHSUPancreas**, a private library of data collected from individuals with an interest in pancreatic diseases including pancreatic cancer and pancreatitis. With the help of this registry, we will be able to identify individuals who may be eligible to participate in new research studies, and harness the passion of the community to make advances in pancreatic disease research. We can also communicate with its members about pancreatic disease community education opportunities. The data collected will complement the tissue samples and data in the Oregon Pancreatic Tissue Registry (OPTR) that Dr. Sheppard established in 2007. Anyone with an interest in pancreatic disease is welcome to join the new registry – just visit ohsu.edu/ohsupancreas and fill out the online form. We will be producing printed materials soon that you can distribute to your patients and colleagues, but in the meantime, please start spreading the word – the website is up and running.

Pancreatic cancer patients at OHSU will be offered the opportunity to participate in the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's **Know Your Tumor** program. Know Your Tumor provides eligible pancreatic cancer patients and their oncologists with information about the biology of their tumor, obtained through molecular profiling and review at no charge to the patient. So far, around 40 percent of Know Your Tumor reports have highlighted information that may be helpful as patients and their oncologists make treatment decisions.

RESEARCH UPDATES

Beta cells found in the pancreas store and secrete insulin, helping normalize blood sugar levels in the body. Until now, only one type of beta cell was known to exist. But a study led by Markus Grompe, MD, director of the Oregon Stem Cell Center at OHSU and the Papé Family Pediatric Research Institute, **identified and isolated four separate subtypes of insulin-producing beta cells**. The paper, co-authored with Craig Dorell, PhD, was published in a recent issue of *Nature Communications* (2016 Jul 11) and sheds light on cell characteristics that may help uncover new treatment options for people with diabetes.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network has announced several [research funding](#) mechanisms with deadlines coming up soon:

Pathway to Leadership Grant (with AACR) - \$600,000 for 5 years (DEADLINE 11/15/16)

KRAS Fellowship (with NCI) - \$100,000 for 2 years (DEADLINE 10/27/16)

KRAS Travel Scholarship (with NCI) - funding depending on need

Translational Research Grant - \$300,000 for 2 years (DEADLINE 12/1/16)

***Please let us know if you apply for one of these grants.*

COLLABORATION UPDATES

The Brenden-Colson Center is supporting two important **joint faculty recruitments**. With the Computational Biology Program, we recruited [Emek Demir, PhD](#), from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York to join our SoM Molecular and Medical Genetics department as Assistant Professor. Dr. Demir is a computational biologist who is working to discover novel methods of incorporating pathway information to predict tumor response to drug interventions. With the Department of Cell, Developmental and Cancer Biology, we recruited [Mara Sherman, PhD](#), who comes to us from the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California, where she showed how vitamin D receptor-mediated stromal reprogramming suppresses pancreatitis and enhances pancreatic cancer therapy, leading to a pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma clinical trial at the University of Pennsylvania. She will be working on several pancreas research projects in her new lab.

[Rosalie Sears, PhD](#), was invited to present her work "Intratumor Lineage Heterogeneity Confers Therapy Resistance and Early Recurrence" at the **Summit on Collaborative Studies** in Pancreatic Cancer in Nebraska in May 2016, a symposium intended to both highlight awareness for the research effort in pancreatic cancer and to present a platform for discussing collaborative research projects.

[Brett Johnson, PhD](#), was also invited to speak on his Brenden-Colson work at the Summit.

CONGRATULATIONS

Brenden-Colson Center Pilot Grants for 2016-17 have been awarded to [Mara Sherman, PhD](#) (Cell, Developmental & Cancer Biology): "Identification of novel chromatin-interacting therapeutic targets in PDAC"; and [Philip Streeter, PhD](#) (Oregon Stem Cell Center): "Antibody-directed nanocarriers for targeted pancreatic cancer therapy".

Pancreas 2016 (Glasgow, June 2016) awarded **Best poster prize for a postdoctoral fellow** honor to [Meghan Joly, PhD](#) (Sears lab). Her poster was titled "MYC cooperates with oncogenic KRAS to drive intratumoral cell lineage plasticity in pancreatic ductal carcinoma associated with poor outcome and therapeutic resistance." Brenden-Colson Center and Dept. of Surgery faculty member [Erin Gilbert, MD](#), was invited to speak at the meeting on "Physiologic Pancreatic Cancer Imaging Using Dynamic Contrast-Enhanced Magnetic Resonance Imaging (DCE-MRI)." [Jason Link, PhD](#), was also invited to present on our Brenden-Colson Atlas project work via a poster entitled "Integration of molecular, phenotypic, and functional data in a clinically-relevant timeframe."

[Craig Dorrell, PhD](#), received an **OCTRI Catalyst Grant** of \$75,000 to support his work on the "Assessment of anti-cancer drugs against patient-specific pancreatic cancer organoid cultures." Dr. Dorrell's project involves testing "standard of care" pancreatic cancer drugs along with collections of new agents on organoid lines that he has generated from OHSU patient tumor explants. His goal is to develop high-throughput screening of cancer organoids to identify new and better treatments for pancreatic cancer.

Three young OHSU researchers successfully competed for **Brenden-Colson travel awards** to participate in the 2016 PancWest Conference and present their work in the poster session of the San Diego meeting:

[Nick Kendsersky](#): "Gene expression and drug sensitivity of low-passage, patient-derived PDAC (pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma) cell lines"

[Meghan Joly, PhD](#): "The role of MYC in lineage plasticity in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma"

[Brittany Allen-Petersen, PhD](#): "The role of PP2A B56a in pancreatic cancer initiation and progression"

To make a year-end donation to our program's mission, please use this link to visit the [OHSU Foundation](#) site. Thank you.