Thank you for participating in the 2015 PurpleStride walk! Sponsored by the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, this walk serves to unite patients, family members, clinicians, and researchers as we wage hope in the battle against pancreatic cancer. If you missed the 2015 event, watch for future newsletters for information for this year’s walk.

From the Directors

Dear Brenden-Colson Center Researchers and Supporters:

Welcome to our first Brenden-Colson Center newsletter! We will use this quarterly newsletter to update you on research and activities at the Brenden-Colson Center. Anyone touched by pancreatic disease does not need to be reminded of the dramatic impact and suffering that these diseases can cause. Our goal at the Brenden-Colson Center is to accelerate research and clinical programs that will improve patient lives. In this newsletter, we highlight two of our major programs that serve as the foundation of our work to understand, prevent, detect, and treat pancreatic diseases: the Oregon Pancreatic Tissue Registry and the Atlas Project, both of which support our Pancreas Translational Tumor Board, a patient centric meeting to evaluate clinical and research data with the goal to establish clinically actionable information to guide patient care.

In addition, we are excited to announce our recent partnership with Immunovia to support our efforts in early detection of pancreatic cancer, one of our primary missions at the Brenden-Colson Center. Despite decades of research, pancreatic cancer survival rates remain amongst the lowest of all cancer types. While pancreatic cancer is relatively uncommon (the 12th most common type of cancer), it is the 2nd deadliest malignancy. Survival rates have not changed in over 30 years since the War on Cancer was enacted. When pancreatic cancer is detected in its earliest stages (IA), survival rates can be improved significantly - to up to a 45% 5-year survival - with current treatment options alone. To help accelerate research in early detection, we have established a new partnership for blood-based early detection of pancreatic cancer. You can read more about our partnership with Immunovia below. This new partnership is an important addition to our already existing High Risk Pancreatic Cancer screening clinic and DCE-MRI registered trial for early detection of pancreatic cancer.

We are also pleased to announce that we have launched a Brenden-Colson Center website where you can find information on our key projects and focus areas as well as see who is involved in research on pancreatic diseases at OHSU. Please visit our website at www.ohsu.edu/brendencolson.

Sincerely,

Brett Sheppard, M.D.
Rosalie Sears, Ph.D.
Brenden-Colson Co-Directors

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

Friday, March 11
The Precision Promise Project: A new approach to clinical trials in pancreatic cancer
Diane Simeone, M.D., Lazar J. Greenfield Professor of Surgery and Molecular & Integrative Physiology; Chief, Division of Gastrointestinal Surgery, University of Michigan
8:30 a.m., Networking and coffee
9:00 a.m., Seminar, CHH 3181 1B
Add to calendar
Research Update: What is the Atlas Project?

Critical to vanquishing pancreatic disease is a thorough understanding of its unique molecular, cellular, and structural characteristics unique to pancreatic disease progression and response to therapy. Leveraging the cutting edge resources at OHSU, we are creating an Atlas of pancreatic disease at a cellular and molecular level in order to understand mechanisms of therapeutic response and resistance. By interrogating tumor tissue from Oregon Pancreatic Tissue Registry participants longitudinally, throughout their clinical care, with multiple research platforms, we will create a knowledge repository of clinical, translational, and basic science research that can drive new innovations in patient care and treatments.

Our ultimate goal is to use the data generated on a per-patient basis to help clinicians find the best care for each individual. As a first step, we have created a bi-weekly Pancreas Translational Tumor Board meeting where clinicians and basic scientists come together to discuss a patient’s clinical history along with the cellular and molecular aspects of their pancreatic tumor. At these meetings, researchers and clinicians evaluate the molecular data for utility in personalized care. While still a research exercise, we are moving towards a system where this process will be done in real time for patients who need precision medicine to cure their disease.

You can find out more about the Atlas Project on our website.

Clinical Update: What is OPTR?

The Oregon Pancreatic Tissue Registry (OPTR) is a central component of Brenden-Colson Center research. Started by Dr. Sheppard in 2007, OPTR is an extensive, private library of pancreatic disease data collected from individuals and families across the country. Participants contribute health histories, and may provide blood and tissue samples for the registry that can be utilized for ongoing pancreatic disease research. Researchers may also use the registry information to identify individuals who may benefit from screening measures to detect precancerous changes at an earlier, and potentially more treatable, stage. To date, we have more than 700 participants enrolled in OPTR with over 350 tumor and blood specimens banked for ongoing and future research.

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You can find out more about the Atlas Project on our website.

Collaboration Updates

OHSU and the Brenden-Colson Center recently announced a new partnership with Immunovia. This partnership could help us change the face of pancreatic cancer by detecting cancer earlier, when it is most treatable. Immunovia is a company based in Sweden that developed an antibody array platform able to measure serum proteins in a single multiplex assay. The initial partnership project will involve their test for early pancreatic cancer called IMray™ PanCan-d, that analyzes a patient’s immune system through blood markers for early signs of disease. The collaboration will also enable researchers to explore biomarkers for a number of other cancer types.

Following extensive testing in Europe and Asia, Immunovia has partnered with the Brenden-Colson Center and the Knight Diagnostic Laboratory to test the assay in the first U.S. based cohort; a retrospective sample set collected as part of the Oregon Pancreatic Tissue Registry. Following completion of the retrospective study, Immunovia, the OHSU Brenden-Colson Center, and other leading pancreas cancer centers around the United States and United Kingdom, will conduct a prospective study of the assay in a population at high-risk for pancreatic cancer due to heredity or other risk factors.

Read the press release about this partnership here.
Congratulations!

New Grants

Lisa Coussens: Stand Up 2 Cancer award: Transforming Pancreatic Cancer from Death Sentence to Treatable Disease

Joe Gray: NIH LINCS: Extrinsic perturbations of cell physiology and associated regulatory networks

Joe Gray, Danielle Jorgens: Murdock Foundation capital equipment grant: The FEI Teneo Volume Scope and the RMC Advanced Substrate Holder for the OCSSB Multiscale Microscopy Core (MMC)

Joe Gray, John Muschler: Murdock Foundation capital equipment grant: Zeiss Lightsheet Z.1 for the Advanced Light Microscopy Core

Rosie Sears: NIH R01: The Role of post-translational activation of Muc in pancreatic cancer

Rosie Sears and Stephen Lloyd: OCTRIL Pilot Award: DNA Glycosylases: Novel Targets for Small Molecule-induced Synthetic Lethality

New papers


2015 Brenden-Colson Center pilot awards

Eric Barklis: Analysis of K-Ras signaling in pancreatic cancer cells

Summer Gibbs, Sara Courneidge, Danielle Jorgens: Structure and Role of Invadopodia in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma (PDAC)

Alexander Guimaraes: Noninvasive MRI assessment of tumor microvasculature changes and tumor associated macrophages, following immune modulation in pancreatic cancer models using magnetic nanoparticles

Melissa Wong: Macrophage-tumor cell fusion as a mechanism for propagating heterogeneity in pancreatic cancer

Philip Stork: Identifying new drug targets to block KRas/Raf in pancreatic cancer

Xiaolin Nan and Laura Heiser: Systems Biology of Ras Dimerization and Oncogenesis

John Muschler: Expanding the pancreatic cancer Atlas to include the 3D molecular interrogation of intact human pancreatic cancers