New Beginnings!

Welcome to the inaugural CSP newsletter!

The Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery announces the formulation of its new research forum - the Clinical Science Program. This endeavor spawned from a mere thought to a program that encompasses our departments extensive research activities under a single umbrella. This forum ensures uniform compliance with standardized research guidelines and regulatory bodies. A unified, web-accessible, HIPAA-compliant database will help in smoothly governing the participation of our faculty across multiple campuses in our ongoing clinical studies and outcomes research. In addition, it will provide a more organized platform to the aspiring students, residents and fellows wishing to perform research with us. Our ultimate goal is to foster a stimulating environment to galvanize discoveries into causes and treatments of cardiac, thoracic and vascular diseases. CSP shall provide a firmer ground and a professional etiquette to our continuous departmental efforts over the years, in cultivating and promoting a scientific perception through research and mentorship. This quarterly publication shall bring to you the latest on the research front along with other departmental and CSP updates.

From our Directors!

Words of Welcome!

It is with great pleasure that we introduce the first installment of the CSP Chronicle. The Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery at UT Medical School was originally founded by Dr. Hazim J. Safi in September of 1999 and at a time the clinical faculty numbered three. It was fairly easy to communicate information to the group and thus communication about educational, research, and clinical affairs often required a single phone call. How times have changed! Currently, the Department has grown to a faculty of 13, covering 9 campuses with an expected addition of 7 more by the end of the 2012. In addition, the increasing number of facilities staffed by our group led us to create a HIPAA-compliant, web-based database. This database facilitates research across all our affiliated sites. The new CSP will facilitate researcher training, regulatory compliance, grants and philanthropy. With this expansion, an organized conduit for dissemination of the clinical research opportunities and accomplishments in the Department has become a necessity. The CSP Chronicle will act as this conduit serving our department in the endeavor.

First Annual Research Forum Kicks Off

This 3rd day of February, 2012 was observed as the first CSP research forum day. Nine student and resident researchers presented their results. The project topics ranged from traumatic abdominal aortic injuries to arteriovenous access. A panel of judges critiqued the participants’ performances although they had a difficult time to anoint a sole winner. After much deliberation, Dr. Ali Azizzadeh announced the winner as Saurabh Patel - a second year medical student at UT-Houston, whose research project was on the incidence and effects of acute renal failure in Type B dissection. Efforts of all speakers were highly commendable!

- ALE & KCO

Upcoming Events

- American College of Surgeons - deadline for abstract - March 1,
- International Society for Vascular Surgery Congress - March 9-12
- Society for Clinical Vascular Surgery (SCVS) - March 14-17
- Houston Aortic Symposium - March 22-24
- Association of Program Directors in Vascular Surgery (APDVS) - March 30-31, 2012
- SVS Vascular Research Initiatives Conference - April 17
- Arteriosclerosis Thrombosis Vascular Biology Scientific Sessions - April 18-20
- American Surgical Association (ASA) - April 26-28
- American Association of Thoracic Surgeons - April 28-May 2
- International Society for Minimally Invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery (ISMICS) - May 30-June 2
Recapitulating 2011

On the Thoracic Front

Farzaneh Banki, MD is one of our thoracic surgeons who performs lung and esophageal surgeries at Memorial Hermann Southeast. As always, Dr. Banki has been working hard to improve patient care and management through research. Among Dr. Banki’s recent publications are several book chapters, including one on Paraesophageal Hiatal Hernia in the Current Surgical Therapy 10th edition, and two in press: Diagnostic and Staging Procedures in Thoracic Surgery for the American College of Surgeons, and another titled Surgery for Achalasia and Other Motility Disorders for the book - Mastery of Cardiothoracic Surgery. In addition, her portfolio was further embellished with high impact journal publications, like Open day-to-day discrepancy in Bravo pH monitoring is related to the degree of deterioration of the lower esophageal sphincter and severity of reflux disease in Surgical Endoscopy; Dynamic changes in age, stage distribution, and survival of patients with esophageal adenocarcinoma over three decades in the United States in Annals of Surgical Oncology, among many others. Thank you, Dr. Banki, for your efforts and personal contributions. We are looking forward to more of your accomplishments in the forthcoming year!

Vascular Avant-Garde!

The vascular surgical research section broadened its horizons under the stewardship of Dr. Azizzadeh, Associate Professor and Director of Vascular Surgery Fellowship, and Dr. Charlton-Ouw, Assistant Professor and Co-director CSP. Most of their works in the past year found their way to lauded scientific societies both regional and national. In this effect, works like A cost and outcome analysis of endovascular vs. open repair of blunt traumatic aortic injuries - presented at Southern Association for Vascular Surgery, Naples and Management of Blunt Traumatic Aortic Injury - presented at Iranian American Medical Association, Houston; fall to the credit of Dr. Azizzadeh. Earlier this year, Spontaneous expulsion of a dacron patch after carotid endarterectomy was presented at Southern Association for Vascular, Scottsdale in January and Outcomes of surgical paraclavicular thoracic outlet decompression will be presented at Society for Clinical Vascular Surgery in Las Vegas this March. In the same vein, among Dr. Charlton-Ouw’s notable works of past year were presented at prestigious national and international conferences including Society for Vascular Surgery, Chicago and Multidisciplinary European Endovascular Therapy (MEET), Rome by Dr. Safi. Earlier this year, he presented Lower extremity malperfusion in acute type a dissection and Outcomes of arteriovenous fistulae compared with heparin-bonded and conventional grafts for hemodialysis access at Annual Meeting of the South Texas Chapter of the American College of Surgeons in February. More of his research projects are going to be presented later during the year at Society for Clinical Vascular Surgery, Las Vegas this March; Blunt infrarenal aortic trauma and review of Coarctation of aorta at Society of Vascular Surgery Annual Meeting, Washington D.C this June, to name a few. Further more, their works found home in many esteemed journals, for instance Journal of Vascular Surgery, Journal of Vascular Access, Journal of Vascular Ultrasound, etc.
The Cardiac Vanguard!

The distinguished names in the world of cardiac surgery, Hazim J. Safi, M.D., professor and chair of the Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery and Anthony L. Estrera, M.D., professor and chief of cardiac surgery at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center, were once again in limelight last November when they became the first in Houston to implant the FDA approved transcatheter aortic valve Retroflex3, as part of the UTHealth/HVI Heart Valve Team. Dr. Estrera is a co-investigator of the much famed PARTNER II (Placement of AoRTic TraNscatheterER Valves) Trial.

During the year 2011, Dr. Safi travelled far and wide and delivered lectures at many prestigious meeting including 7th European Symposium of Vascular Biomaterials in France, Controversies & Updates in Vascular Surgery Congress in France, 8th Annual Meeting of Israeli Society of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery in Tel-Aviv, 9th International Symposium on Endovascular Therapeutics in Athens, Aortic Surgery and Intervention Workshop in Riyadh, European Society for Vascular Surgery in Athens, Multidisciplinary European Endovascular Therapy in Rome. In addition, he presented lectures at various national and regional conferences like Society for Clinical Vascular Surgery, Total Endovascular Series: Aorta II symposium at Houston, Charles Rob MD visiting professor lecture, 4th Houston Aortic Symposium, American Association for Thoracic Surgery, 10th Annual Pittsburgh Vascular Symposium, VEITH Symposium New York, 36th Annual Northwester Vascular Symposium.


CTVS Puts the “Prospective” Glasses On!

The department’s first ever randomized, prospective study! - PRICE (Propaten Randomized Investigation on Cost-benefit and Efficacy) A recent publication by Dr. Charlton-Ouw on the groups’ experience with hemodialysis access, Outcomes of arteriovenous fistulae compared with heparin-bonded and conventional grafts for hemodialysis access, incited a growing interest in looking into the outcomes from the prospective vantage and birthed the idea of PRICE. We have submitted the proposal and hope to begin in the not-so-distant future. But we did not stop here! Another randomized prospective trial that is getting ready and being dressed up is ROSARI (Randomized Outcomes Study on Antibiotic beads during Revascularization for Infected aortic grafts). Our recent analysis of infected aortic grafts, Autogenous Vein Reconstruction May Not Protect Against Re-infection of Infrarenal Aortic Grafts, and a meta-analysis later prompted the idea for ROSARI to evaluate the efficacy of the popular antibiotic beads in reducing the incidence of graft re-infections. At present we are about to conduct bench-tests for various antibiotic combinations suited for our patient population.

MORE TO COME! Still in the incipient stages are few more prospective ideas that are brewing in our CSP minds and will be up and running in the near future. However, a few other projects waiting in the wake include designing a protocol for an active clinical follow-up and a protocol for prospective analysis of clinical outcomes and quality of life in aortic disease patients. Some clinical research and retrospective studies proposed for this year include outcome analysis of patients with acute lower limb ischemia, malperfusion syndromes and acute type A and B dissections, Effects of Renal Insufficiency in Extent IVTAAA, outcomes analysis of infrarenal revascularization, etc.

A string of antibiotic beads

“ You can analyze the past, but you need to design the future. “

Anthony L Estrera, MD

Hazim J Safi, MD
Summer Catch!

Last year for the summer research program we had as many as 7 medical students - 5 UT Med School, 1 from England and another from China, and an undergrad from Indianapolis. In addition, Naveed Nosrati - 4th year UT medical student who had done his summer research project with us not too long ago and earned a NIH summer research grant, had his paper published in the Journal of Vascular Access. We had quite a successful experience last summer and are looking forward to yet another great summer this year.

Last week, UT Medical school hosted a MSI Research Forum providing an opportunity for all interested medical students to find the appropriate department/project for their summer research.

The Clinical Science Program got its first formal platform to be introduced to the public at large. I must say, we had an excellent turnout for the MS1 research fair. Numerous aspirant students flocked towards our stand and shared their interest. Many of them registered for a formal interview with the attendings, who would decide on the final names eventually.

Well! With respect to the level of interest expressed, our CSP got a warm reception and performed beautifully at its introductory ball!

For further information and publishing in CSP chronicle please contact:

Editors:
Harleen K Sandhu
Phone: 713-486-5114
Email: Harleen.K.Sandhu@uth.tmc.edu

Fernando Kubrusly
Phone: 713-486-5114
Email: fkubrusly@hotmail.com

Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery
6400 Fannin Street, Suite 2850
Houston, TX 77030

Coming Up!!

THE HOUSTON AORTIC SYMPOSIUM
The Fifth in the Series
March 22-24, 2012
The Westin Oaks Hotel, Houston, Texas

This newsletter is product of Clinical Science Program of the Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular surgery at University of Texas Medical school at Houston. You are receiving this as you are a part of the department or the program, if you received it in error or to not receive future issues, please contact Ms Carol Mateo: Carol.Mateo@uth.tmc.edu