Parham and Hunter Ray would look into the gathering and transformed the evening into an occasion to remember. The Friday night gala reception was aggrandized by the presence of the momentous World Heavyweight Champion, George Foreman. His awe-inspiring address along with a free flowing friendly interactions enthralled the gathering and transformed the evening into an occasion to remember. Kudos to Drs. Azizzadeh and Safi whose tireless efforts made the event a huge hit!

This March witnessed the successful event of Houston Aortic Symposium – the fifth in the series that amassed a record attendance of 338 registrants. The symposium was marked by flawless organization of high caliber educational sessions presented by the national and international who’s-who in the realm of vascular and cardiothoracic surgery, radiology and medicine.

This year’s two-and-a-half-day joint venture of Drs. Safi and David D. McPherson commemorated the clinical prowess and accomplishments of Dr. Frank Veith in the field of vascular surgery. Dr. Veith gave an invigorating talk on the “Misinterpretation of PRCT in Leading Journals”, transcending the audience to a philosophical vantage that provokes reanalysis of clinical trials/studies in an unbiased light. In addition, several trials, original research, and abstracts from basic science, clinical, bioinformatics and imaging studies from far-and-wide were discussed and presented.

Dr. Safi captivated the crowd’s attention through his wit and intellect while sharing his vast experience in thoracoabdominal aneurysm (TAAA) repair and the lively debate and panel discussion that ensued. Some of the recent works of our department were presented by Dr. Charlton-Ouw (Infected aortic graft management), Dr. Azizzadeh (Management of traumatic aortic injury), Dr. Miller (Renal artery protection in TAAA repair), and Samuel Leake (Malperfusion syndromes in type A aortic dissection).

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Summer Research Program Kicks off!

New faces in the department.

Recently, three first year UT medical students started their summer research projects with the department. Furthermore, two non-UT medical students are expected later during month. As last year, we are expecting another international med student this year coming all the way from China. He will begin his project during July alongside Dr. Charlton-Ouw as his mentor.

Of the current students, Kyle Mitchell is working on Open vs Endovascular repair of iliac artery injuries following blunt abdominal trauma under the mentorship of Dr. Charlton-Ouw.

Working under the guidance and preceptor-ship of Dr. Azizzadeh, two 1st-year med students Christopher Parham and Hunter Ray would look into Endovascular Repair of Traumatic Peripheral Arterial Injuries and Long Term Complications of TEVAR After Repair of Traumatic Aortic Injury, respectively.
**PRICE is right!**

The department’s first ever randomized controlled trial - PRICE is right on its track, all set to begin enrollment in the immediate future. Last month, the trial was registered with the national clinical trials registry after it was successfully approved by the UT Institutional Review Board. The investigators hope to begin enrolling their first hemodialysis access patients into the trial during the July/August period marking the beginning of prospective research in our department. Other prospective trials are progressing farther down the pipeline and hope to see them spawn into action later during the year.

In further updates at the hemodialysis access research front, a retrospective review paper was published in the April 2012 issue of eminent Journal of Vascular Surgery. The original research paper entitled, “Endovascular treatment of hemodialysis access pseudoaneurysms,” co-authored by Dr. Amir Shah - vascular fellow and Dr. Azizzadeh was presented at the annual Society of Vascular Surgery meeting, 2011. It reiterates the role of endovascular therapy as an effective alternate treatment option for patients with dialysis access who are anatomically suitable candidates.

**Stats at AATS**

The American Association for Thoracic Surgery held its 2012 Annual Aortic Symposium in New York this April. Several of our department’s recent research endeavors found their way into various program sessions of this esteemed event in commendable numbers. These include 8 on demand presentations submitted as e-abstracts under aortic arch, aortic root, ascending, descending & thoracoabdominal aortic sections among others. In addition 2 plenary and one editor's choice on-demand presentations were accepted. These works encompass the toils of our faculty with/without collaboration with other departments like pathology, genetics, anesthesiology, etc.

Furthermore Dr. Safi and Dr. Estrera were invited as guest speakers at the symposium. Dr. Safi spoke on TAAA replacement providing valuable insights from his experience on the risk factors, complications, mortality and morbidity, and predictors of outcomes in the management of thoracic as well as infrarenal abdominal aneurysms. He laid emphasis on the importance of operative adjuncts and neuromonitoring during the open repair. Dr. Estrera enlightened the audience on the management of “Aortic Trauma” and rehashed out group’s surgical experience in the area.

**Coming-up next...**

* The first aortic surgery textbook to be published in English and Chinese - “Aortic Disease - Clinical Diagnosis and Management” being co-edited by Drs. Estrera and Zhou with several of our faculty members as the contributing authors.
* Dr. Estrera to speak at the Michael E. DeBakey International Surgical Society 19th Congress JOINT SESSION WITH THE Denton A. Cooley Cardiovascular Surgical Society 18th Symposium. 21 - 24 JUNE 2012 AUSTIN, TX.
* A record of 6 presentations and acceptances at the prominent upcoming national conference - SVS Vascular Annual Meeting
* And more....

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**Ongoing/Pipeline Projects**

* Phospholipids, metabolic syndrome and response Inquiry
* SAPPHIRE Trial for CAS
* Carotid Endarterectomy and Stenting Retrospective Chart Review
* Lower Extremity Revascularization Study
* PRICE: Propaten® Randomized Investigation on Cost-benefit and Efficacy
* ROSARI: (Randomized Outcomes Study on Antibiotic beads during Revascularization or Inflamed aortic grafts)
* PAIN: Postoperative Analgesia Investigation
* SAFE: Strategy for Active Follow-up Evaluation
* IVC Filter Study
* Fenestrated Endograft
* Cook Zenith Type B Dissection
* Plasma DNA study
* Technical Skills assessment in Cardiothoracic Surgery
* Iliac Artery Conduit for TAVR