

Bringing together care
and research in service
to families in need

DR. ANJALI SHARMA AWARDED ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION PHYSICIAN FACULTY SCHOLARS PROGRAM GRANT

Anjali Sharma, MD, MS, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, (and Medical Director, Adult Inpatient HIV Services and Buprenorphine Clinic, STAR Health Center) was awarded a Robert Wood Johnson (RWJ) Foundation Physician Faculty Scholars Program grant of \$300,000. This very prestigious grant provides protected time over a 3 year period, as well as an RWJ supported mentoring process for junior faculty members. In a note to Dr. Sharma, Dr. Ian Taylor, Dean of the College of Medicine, said: "I want to congratulate you on this wonderful achievement. An RWJ Physician Scholars Grant is very prestigious. You bring great credit to yourself, your mentors and the School."

The proposed research, entitled "Factors Associated with Bone Loss among Women

and Men with and At-Risk for HIV," will expand research on HIV and bone mineral density (BMD), which has not addressed the role of drug use, and will investigate whether opioid substitution therapy is doing harm. Understanding the ability of bone turnover markers to predict ongoing bone loss may improve risk stratification for fracture in this high risk population. The project will study bone metabolism and its relation to opioid use and HIV using two well-established cohorts designed specifically



to evaluate metabolic complications of HIV among drug using women and men, as part of which participants underwent serial bone densitometry and data collection on demographics, sexual and drug-using behaviors and medical history. Assays will be performed to measure biochemical markers of bone turnover. The project's specific aims are to: 1) prospectively examine change in BMD and the effects of opioid use and HIV infection; and 2) determine the relationship between markers of bone turnover and BMD and the effects of opioid use and HIV infection. Dr. Sharma's mentors include Dr. Ellie Schoenbaum at Albert Einstein College of Medicine as well as Drs. Jack DeHovitz and Howard Minkoff at SUNY Downstate.

HCV PROJECT UPDATES

The SWAN Project (Edlin, PI) was presented at several recent conferences including an event at the meetings of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Commission on Narcotic Drugs on March 11-12, 2009 in Vienna, Austria, and the NYS Department of Health's 2009 Statewide Hepatitis C Conference in NYC, on March 24, 2009. Emily Winkelstein, supervisor of the project, was invited to present at these high-profile events. She has also been invited to speak about the

project at the 11th International Hepatitis C Conference in Manchester, England, on November 16-18, 2009 (more info at <http://www.hepc09.org.uk>).

In April 2009, the SWAN Project moved to a new, larger field space on Manhattan's Lower East Side. The new site has increased office and exam space and will accommodate additional research interviewers as well as space for possible supplementary services such as acupuncture and support groups.

As part of Dr. Edlin's study entitled "Treatment of Hepatitis C in Underserved Populations," Michael Carden, MS, Project Director, presented on "Treating HCV in Persons Actively Using Drugs: The Pivotal Role of Case Management in Engagement and Retention" at the December 4, 2008 HIV/ID research seminar at Downstate. Mr. Carden will present on this study at the Minnesota Viral Hepatitis Conference on July 23-24, 2009 in Minneapolis.

GRANT AWARDS

Rebecca Schwartz, PhD received funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse for her study entitled, "Psychosocial Mediators of the

Relationship between Gender Based Violence, Substance Abuse, and Sexual Risk" (annual direct costs: \$63,892). The major aims of this one-year study are to better understand the associations between experiencing gender-

based violence and HIV risk-behavior among HIV+ and at risk women and to use this data as a first step toward developing an intervention targeting risk behavior among victims of violence.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Young Women of Color HIV AIDS Coalition Health Summit



The Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition (YWCHAC) sponsored its 3rd annual young women's health summit, titled "Own Your Power: Saving Our Selves (SOS)." This free summit was held on Saturday, March 21, 2009 from 11 am-5 pm at St. Francis College in downtown Brooklyn, and was attended by nearly 300 young women ages 13-24. The event included workshops on health, careers, education and financial literacy, and a youth panel on health decision making. Over 40 youth-serving agencies provided information at tables. The HEAT Program provided rapid HIV testing to 81 young women and HEAT's community partner, Project STAY, provided STD screening to 37 young women.

NYC Against HIV: Education and Fashion Show for Youth

SUNY Downstate Medical Center's 4th annual Dine & Learn Healthy Youth Symposium, entitled "NYC against HIV: Education and Fashion Show," took place on May 8, 2009, from 4:00-9:00pm at Midwood High School at Brooklyn College. More than 50 organizations provided health information and other support services for youth in the areas of education, career development, health and fitness, nutrition, finance, mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, managed care, and youth empowerment

The fashion show used symbolism to raise HIV/AIDS awareness. In addition to Nineteen74.com, a fashion industry networking site in Great Britain, and Midwood High School, SUNY Downstate's partners for this event included Designers against AIDS and Sesame Flyers International, Inc. Physicians from SUNY Downstate and other experts offered talks on diabetes, obesity, STDs, HIV/AIDS, and violence

prevention. There were free health screenings for STDs, and the HEAT Program conducted rapid HIV testing for over 90 youth. The Teens Helping Each Other (THEO) Outreach Initiative also participated in the health fair and distributed HIV prevention literature/safer sex baggies to the teens at the conference.

South Africa Twinning Partnership Continues

On May 11-14, 2009, two SUNY Downstate faculty members went to the Province of the Free State in South Africa to provide research training, as part of our Twinning Project with the University of the Free State. Anjali Sharma, MD, MS, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, and Camille Ragin, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology, Graduate Program in Public Health, met with the faculty of the Centre for Health Systems Research & Development (CHSR&D) to assist them in their various HIV related research projects. Drs. Sharma and Ragin provided guidance on scientific literature preparation on a number of current CHSR&D research projects, such as the increase of HIV testing in TB patients, and HIV knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs among primary school students. The goal of this partnership is for SUNY DMC faculty to provide mentorship and training to CHSR&D researchers to enhance their HIV-related research projects.

Highlights of the Annual FCCP Patient Satisfaction Survey

The Family-Centered Care Program (FCCP), funded by the NYS Department of Health AIDS Institute through both Ryan White Part A and NYS funding, provides comprehensive care and supportive services to HIV+ men and women with dependent children. The FCCP's goal is to provide a comprehensive array of services in the setting of family-centered case management. Results from the FCCP's 2009 patient satisfaction survey indicate that:

- Nearly all patients (97%) felt that treatment for HIV disease was clearly explained to them;
- 95% of patients rated appointment times as convenient;
- 95% also felt that the care received from their HIV medical provider was "excellent" or "very good." Case management and assistance from prenatal providers and staff received high ratings as well;
- 93% felt that program staff treated them like an "individual with unique needs and concerns;"
- 76% of patients rated program services as "excellent" or "very good."

JOB OPENING

Administrative Director, Adult HIV Services

SUNY Downstate Medical Center seeks an Administrative Director who will be responsible for the overall direction and development of its comprehensive HIV care services. The ideal candidate will be an experienced administrator with strong operational abilities and have a customer service driven and quality-oriented approach. The successful candidate for this job will show a history of being a winning problem solver and having a strong ability to obtain buy-in from a highly qualified and motivated staff. Closely linked with our NIH funded research activities, the successful applicant will have an opportunity to truly improve quality of care of patients locally and nationally.

QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor's degree in health care administration, public administration, public health or related field required. Master's degree preferred. Minimum of five years ambulatory care management experience. Demonstrated administrative skills, grant funding management, information systems development, and program planning. Experience working with multiple funding streams.

RESPONSIBILITIES: Supervise multidisciplinary staff and ensure regulatory agency compliance. Ensure compliance with all grant requirements, and monitor performance to ensure specific grant objectives are met. Oversee interdisciplinary quality improvement program. Provide programmatic guidance in the preparation of intramural and extramural budgets. Address and resolve consumer concerns. Maximize ambulatory care reimbursement opportunities. Participate in program development and grant writing. Provide leadership and ongoing support to community advisory group. Serve as the primary liaison between the adult HIV program and other hospital departments.

Please submit resume and cover letter with salary requirements, noting Line # 53594, to: The Employment Office, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Box 1194, 450 Clarkson Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11203

Please send a copy of these materials by email to:

Jack A. DeHovitz, MD, MPH, Director, Adult HIV Services, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, at jack.dehovitz@downstate.edu

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER
HIV Seminar June 11 LH1B	Preventing Perinatal HIV Transmission	Rodney Wright, MD Assistant Professor, Director of HIV Programs, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Women's Health, Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, New York
ID Seminar June 18 LH1B	Treatment of Acute HCV Infection	Brandon Aden, MD Empire Clinical Research Fellow, Weill Cornell Medical College, New York, NY
HIV Seminar * June 25 LH1B	Treating the HIV in the ARV Experienced Patient	W. David Hardy, MD Associate Professor of Medicine in Residence, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA Director, Division of Infectious Disease and AIDS Program, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center Los Angeles, California

ALL LECTURES TAKE PLACE FROM 12-1 PM, THURSDAYS, SUNY DOWNSTATE MEDICAL CENTER LECTURE HALL 1B, 395 LENOX ROAD, BROOKLYN, NY

NOTE: There are no HIV/ID seminars in July or August. Please join us in September, when seminars resume.

The STAR Health Center (SHC) was the recipient of the Award for Excellence in Quality Performance from the NYS HIV Quality of Care Program for its impressive Pap and colposcopy quality improvement projects. The colposcopy

project was recognized as “a fine example of thinking outside of the box and tailoring a quality activity to meet the specific needs” of SHC’s patient population. Also noted was SHC’s plan to involve a consumer in the development of

educational material underscoring the importance of receiving an annual Pap smear and follow-up. The award was presented to SHC at the NYS HIV Quality Advisory Committee meeting on June 11, 2009.

FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATES

Jeffrey Birnbaum, MD, MPH, Director of the Health and Education Alternatives for Teens (HEAT) Program, presented a poster on “Young Motherhood and Social Functioning among a National Cohort of HIV-Infected Female Adolescents in the LEGACY Study,” at the annual meeting of the Pediatric Academic Society in Baltimore on May 2, 2009.

Jack A. DeHovitz, MD, MPH, Director of the STAR Program, served as a reviewer for the Fogarty International Center (NIH) funded “Millennium Promise Awards - Non-Communicable Chronic Diseases Research Training Review” on March 25, 2009. This program is designed to build capacity for research in chronic, non-communicable diseases in low and middle income (developing) countries.

Joan Hittelman, PhD, executive director of the Infant and Child Learning Center, was recognized by the Caring Hospice Service of New York for her dedicated service to children. Nominated by Mary Ann Randazzo, language assistance coordinator, Dr. Hittelman was one of 12 professionals selected from a pool of 1,200 nominees to receive the award on Physician’s Appreciation Day. Ms. Randazzo’s letter of recommendation read in part: “She is caring, compassionate and goes beyond the call of duty. She is a doctor that takes the extra step and truly wants the children to get the services they

deserve. Dr. Hittelman will go to great lengths to make sure the parents understand the procedures and guide them through the red tape between healthcare and any outside agencies. It truly is a pleasure to work with her. Dr. Hittelman respects her staff, colleagues and especially her patients.”

Jayashree Ravishankar, MD, MPH, STAR Program Medical Director, has been accepted into the 2009 UCLA/Johnson & Johnson Health Care Executive Program to be held June 21-July 3, 2009 at UCLA. This distinguished management development program is designed for executives of community-based health care organizations and is funded by a grant from the Health Services and Resources Administration. In addition, Dr. Ravishankar was inducted into the Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health.

Rebecca Schwartz, PhD, assistant professor in the department of community health sciences in the graduate program in public health, received a “New Researchers in HIV Prevention” award and full scholarship to the 2009 National HIV Prevention Conference, to be held in Atlanta in August. Her abstract, entitled “The impact of chronic depression on cardiovascular risk among HIV positive and at-risk women,” is based on data from the Women’s Interagency HIV Study (WIHS). Other SUNY Downstate authors on this work include Drs. Jason Lazar and Ather Mansoor.

Ather Mansoor, MD, a fellow of the NYS Department of Health funded Empire Clinical Research Investigators Program (ECRIP), has

been accepted into the cardiovascular disease fellowship program at SUNY Downstate, beginning July 2009. This is a 3 year training program and Dr. Jason Lazar is the fellowship director. Dr. Mansoor will continue his involvement with cardiovascular research in the Women’s Interagency HIV Study (WIHS) and STAR Program during his fellowship.

Katherine Marx, NP, MPH, received the Roy Milner Seidman, MD Award for Academic Excellence in the Master of Public Health program at SUNY Downstate. In addition, Ms. Marx was inducted into the Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health as a student member.

Cassandra Raphael, MPH, joined the Women’s Interagency HIV Study (WIHS) and the STAR Health Center as a Clinical Research Associate in April 2009. Ms. Raphael earned a Bachelor of Arts in both Chemistry and Political Science from Sacred Heart University in 2006, and a Master of Public Health from SUNY Downstate’s Graduate Program in Public Health in August 2008. Since January 2008, she has been conducting pediatric obesity research in Downstate’s Department of Pediatrics under the guidance of Drs. Eugene Dinkevich and Michael Joseph.

Joni Watson, Program Assistant for Teens Helping Each Other (THEO), attended the March meeting of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) meeting in New Orleans, whose focus was women and HIV.

PHONE LINK

All of the programs listed below are part of SUNY Downstate's HIV Center for Women and Children. For more information about the services each program provides, please call the numbers listed or the HIV Center for Women and Children at:

(718) 270-2301 or 4736
OR visit our website at:
www.hivcenter.org

PATIENT CARE AND SERVICES FOR ADULTS

Out-Patient Care
STAR Health Center (SHC):
(718) 270-3745

Mental Health Services:
(718) 270-3745

Family-Centered Care Program
(FCCP) (718) 270-2357 or 3745

FOR ADOLESCENTS

Family, Adolescent &
Children's Experience at SUNY
(FACES):
(718) 270-3826

Health & Education
Alternatives For Teens (HEAT)
Program:
(718) 467-4446

FOR CHILDREN

Infant and Child Learning
Center (ICLC):
(718) 270-2598

Family Care Center (at KCHC):
(718) 245-2562

COMMUNITY AND MEDICAL EDUCATION

Prevention Services for
Adolescent and Young Adults –
SUNY Adolescent Education
Program (AEP):
(718) 270-3203

Educating People at Risk
(EPAR):
(718) 270-3897

HIV Clinical Education
Initiative:
(718) 270-4752

RESEARCH

Adult Clinical Trials:
(718) 270-4487

PUBLICATIONS

Tsui J, Vittinghoff E, Anastos K, **Augenbraun M**, Young M, Nowicki M, Cohen MH, Peters MG, Golub ET, Szczech L. Hepatitis C Seropositivity and Kidney Function Decline Among Women With HIV: Data From the Women's Interagency HIV Study. *Am J Kidney Dis.* 2009 Apr 24.

Kochar S, Sheard T, Sharma R, Hui A, Tolentino E, Allen G, Landman D, Bratu S, **Augenbraun M**, Quale J. Success of an infection control program to reduce the spread of carbapenem-resistant *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol.* 2009 May;30(5):447-52.

Augenbraun MH. New variant Chlamydia: limitations of diagnostic tests and importance of epidemiologic surveillance. *Curr Infect Dis Rep.* 2009 Mar;11(2):95-7. No abstract available.

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a Feasible Alternative to Physician-assisted Cervical Swabs for Sexually Transmitted Infection Screening in the Emergency Department. *Acad Emerg Med.* 2009 Feb 7.

Mansoor A, Golub ET, **DeHovitz J**, Anastos K, Kaplan RC, **Lazar JM.** *AIDS Res Hum Retroviruses.* 2009 Apr 27. The Association of HIV Infection with Left Ventricular Mass/Hypertrophy.

Tien PC, Schneider MF, Cole SR, Levine AM, Cohen M, **DeHovitz J**, Young M, Justman JE. Antiretroviral therapy exposure and insulin resistance in the Women's Interagency HIV study. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr.* 2008 Dec 1;49(4):369-76.

The risk of emergency room treatment due to overdose in injection drug users. *Backmund M, Schuetz C, Meyer K, Edlin BR, Reimer J. J Addict Dis.* 2009;28(1):68-73.

Minkoff H, Lyerly AD. "Doctor, What Would You Do?" *Obstet Gynecol.* 2009 May;113(5):1137-1139.

Merenstein DJ, Schneider MF, Cox C, **Schwartz R**, Weber K, Robinson E, Gandhi M, Richardson J, Plankey MW (2009). Association of child care burden and household composition with adherence to Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy in the Women's Interagency HIV Study. *AIDS Patient Care and STDs*, 23(4), 289-296.

Cook RL, Zhu F, Belnap BH, Weber K, Cook JA, Vlahov D, **Wilson TE**, Hessel NA, Plankey M, Howard AA, Cole SR, Sharp GB, Richardson JL, Cohen MH. Longitudinal trends in hazardous alcohol consumption among women with human immunodeficiency virus infection, 1995-2006. *Am J Epidemiol.* 2009 Apr 15;169(8):1025-32.

Thrun M, Cook PF, Bradley-Springer LA, Gardner L, Marks G, Wright J, **Wilson TE**, Quinlivan EB, O'Daniels C, Raffanti S, Thompson M, Golin C. Improved prevention counseling by HIV care providers in a multisite, clinic-based intervention: Positive STEPs. *AIDS Educ Prev.* 2009 Feb;21(1):55-66.

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HIVlink

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