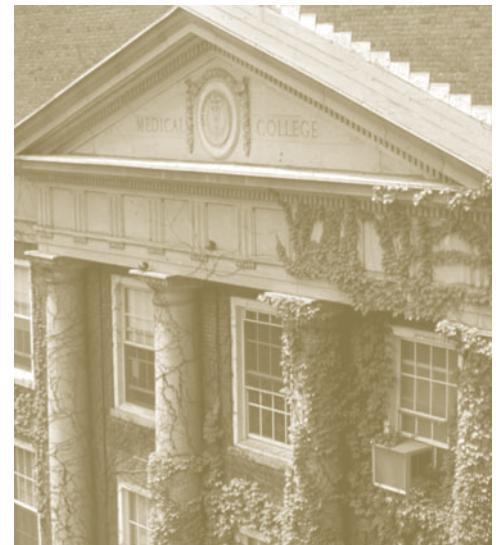


# UPSTATE TODAY & TOMORROW



## *Planned giving opportunities at Upstate Medical University Foundation*

Colleges of: Graduate Studies | Health Professions | Medicine | Nursing | **University Hospital**

1. 2009

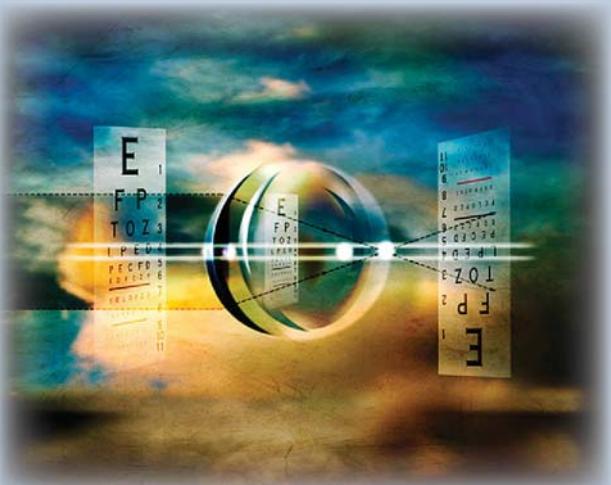
### **The Center for Vision Research at Upstate Medical University**

Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2007, the Center for Vision Research (CVR) has enjoyed remarkable success and growth, attracting gifted young scientists whose investigations into the visual system are showing great promise.

Peter Calvert, PhD, Andrea Viczian, PhD, and Michael Zuber, PhD, assistant professors of ophthalmology, have made major strides since recently joining the CVR. Dr. Calvert has constructed the world's most sensitive microscope for visualizing the motion of molecules in the light-sensitive cells in the eye. He hopes to understand how impaired molecular motion in photosensitive cells can cause blindness. Drs. Viczian and Zuber are using stem cell technology to restore vision in blind animals with the hope of treating human blindness.

CVR faculty are currently engaged in more than 20 projects studying major causes of human blindness such as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, retinitis pigmentosa and age-related macular degeneration. Projects range from detecting the impact of mutated "eye" genes on vision to growing new eyes in young animals and tracking the action of individual nerve cells in the eye.

(continued on back)



### **Lung cancer: #1 cancer killer in America, causing more cancer deaths than breast, prostate, and colon cancers ... combined.**

The Michael E. Connolly Endowment for Lung Cancer Research is supporting a study of stage IB (very early stage) non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), the most common lung cancer, for which surgery is the treatment of choice. While the role of angiogenesis (new vessel formation) is well established in the progression of cancers, the cellular and molecular mechanisms by which tumor cells spread to different organs are largely unknown.

"The cells in primary tumors may express certain proteins in higher proportion (some of them also

help tumor cells to make new blood vessels) which may signal tumor cells to proliferate and travel," said Chirag Shah, MD, assistant professor of medicine.

The investigative team will examine the expression of specific protein receptors on tissue blocks of resected stage IB primary tumors and uninvolving lymph nodes removed during the same surgery and correlate the level of expression of proteins with the clinical outcomes in terms of relapse rates and overall survival.

(continued on back)

### **IRA Charitable Rollovers – They're Back!**

Congress has reinstated IRA charitable rollovers. If you are 70 1/2 or older you can take any part or all of your required minimum distribution and donate to Upstate Medical University Foundation as a TAX FREE transfer. It is important that the check comes directly from the financial institution to Upstate Medical University Foundation. IRA owners cannot take an income tax deduction for this transfer but they will not have to realize it as taxable income.

Take advantage of this opportunity before December 31, 2009.

Please contact Ruth Wood, charitable giving planner at Upstate Medical University Foundation, 315-464-7853, for assistance in selecting the appropriate planned giving opportunities.

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## American Stroke Association Honors University Hospital Stroke Center

University Hospital has received the American Stroke Association's *Get With The Guidelines—Stroke Bronze Performance Achievement Award* recognizing its success and commitment in implementing a higher standard of stroke care.

Stroke patients receive treatment according to nationally accepted standards

and recommendations including aggressive use of medications like tPA, antithrombotics, anticoagulation therapy, DVT prophylaxis, cholesterol reducing drugs, and smoking cessation.

"With a stroke, time lost is brain lost and this achievement award addresses the important element of time," said Tarakad S. Ramachandran, MD, professor of neurology and stroke director at University Hospital.

More than 80 percent of strokes are ischemic, or caused by a clot that blocks blood flow to the brain. Without oxygen-rich blood, sections of the brain quickly die, and with them die critical skills, like walking and speech.

The goal of the GWTG-Stroke program is to improve the overall quality of care for stroke patients by improving acute stroke diagnosis and treatment coupled with educating patients how to manage their risk factors and reduce their risk of a second



stroke. This learning process begins while the patient is hospitalized and is reinforced with customized, easy-to-understand take home materials provided when patients are discharged.

In 2006, University Hospital became central New York's first hospital to receive Stroke Center designation from the New York state Department of Health. Its stroke team of physicians, pharmacists, technicians, nurses and administrators mobilize quickly to provide rapid medical diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients. Following a stroke, comprehensive, focused rehabilitation at University Hospital's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Center is key to maintaining or improving a patient's quality of life.

In the United States, stroke is the third-leading cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability; only heart disease and cancer cause more deaths annually. Every year about 700,000 Americans experience a stroke; about 160,000 of these people die.

The good news is that many fewer Americans now die of strokes than was the case 20 or 30 years ago. Improvement in the control of major risk factors — smoking, high blood pressure and high cholesterol — is likely responsible for the decline.



Dr. Chirag Shah examines a lung cancer tumor tissue sample.

## #1 Cancer Killer (continued from front)

"We hope to move a step forward in understanding the biology of early stage lung cancer and to be able to predict the chance of relapse in this population which remains high, about 25 to 30 percent. We may then be able to treat high-risk patients with available chemotherapies and targeted therapy in a more efficient way," said Dr. Shah.

Medical imaging and image-guided interventions also hold promise in the fight against lung cancer. Ernest Scalzetti, M.D., professor of radiology, investigates the relationship between radiation dose and image quality in both children and adults among other lines of investigation.

Dr. Scalzetti serves on the Imaging Committee of the Cancer and Leukemia Group B (CALGB), a national organization sponsored by the National Cancer Institute to organize clinical trials in cancer treatment. A multi-center study is underway evaluating standard lobectomy (removal of a lung lobe) versus sub-lobar resection (partial lung lobe removal) in patients with peripheral Stage 1 NSCLC.

"The study seeks to evaluate the best surgical approach to removing small lung cancers. Over the next few years, we will gain valuable insight into the relationship between imaging findings and patient outcomes as well as on the value of CT in following lung cancer patients after curative treatment," said Dr. Scalzetti.

The five-year survival rate for lung cancer remains at only 15 percent, relatively unchanged in over 30 years. Lung cancer research at Upstate Medical University is contributing to a better understanding of this deadly disease; bringing hope to patients and their families.

## The Center for Vision Research

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Recently, Robert Barlow, PhD, director, CVR, and his colleagues discovered that chronic low blood sugar levels can hasten age-related vision in mice. They also found that acute decreases in blood sugar can evoke episodic blurring or partial loss of vision in humans. These studies underscore the importance of maintaining normal blood sugar levels - a primary concern for diabetics who self-medicate with insulin.

Over the past 10 years, the CVR, through its vision researchers, have attracted more than \$17.5 million in research funds and has built a \$1.5 million endowment to support investigations paramount to finding cures for conditions that cause blindness.

## FUNDS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



### Fund 270

#### **Neurology Research and Education Fund**

To support research and education in neurological study.

### Fund 407

#### **Regional Rehabilitation Center Fund**

To support rehabilitation center research, education and patient care.

### Fund 61900

#### **Michael E. Connolly Endowment for Lung Cancer Research**

To support lung cancer research at Upstate Medical University.

### Fund 402

#### **Radiology Research Initiation Fund**

To facilitate radiation department research.

### Fund 448

#### **Thoracic Surgery Fund**

To support education and research in thoracic surgery.

### Fund 739

#### **Vision 2000 Endowment**

To support the Eye Care Center and the Center for Vision Research.

*For more information about these and other Foundation funds, contact Michele Estabrook today at 315-464-7846. Or visit [www.upstate.edu/foundation/searchfund.php](http://www.upstate.edu/foundation/searchfund.php)*