



Nancy A. Nussmeier, MD



Antonio Culebras, MD



Jeremy Shefner, MD

Anesthesiology

Chair: Nancy A. Nussmeier, MD

- Many physicians from the Upstate Department of Anesthesiology presented at the 61st Annual Postgraduate Assembly in New York City in December 2007. Here are some highlights:

Richard A. Beers, MD, presented a paper entitled "Depth of consciousness monitors and total intravenous anesthesia: A perfect marriage?" during the Case Discussion Luncheons with the Experts. **Carlos J. Lopez III, MD**, presented a workshop on "The Nuts and Bolts of ICU Ventilators: Pressure Support, Pressure Control and PEEP; BiPAP & CPAP; and Strategies for Crisis Management: NIV: Knowing When and How to Use CPAP and BiPAP." Dr. Lopez also presented a Focus Session entitled "New Concepts in Mechanical Ventilation, Open Lung Strategies." **Nancy A. Nussmeier, MD**, presented "Caring for the Patient with Heart Failure." **Naga Pullakhandam, MD, HS '99**, presented a mini-workshop entitled "Neuromuscular Blocking Agents in the ICU." Dr. Pullakhandam's topic for the problem-based learning discussion was "Lung Protective Ventilation in the Operating Room." **Sebastian Thomas, MD**, presented a miniworkshop entitled "Nerve Blocks for the Management of Chronic Pain." He also presented a workshop entitled "Management of Chronic Pain – Evaluation and Treatment." **Bettina Smallman, MD**, presented a focus session "Regional Anesthesia in Children." **Zhong-Jin Yang, MD, HS '00**, presented an oral presentation entitled "HBO Alleviates Brain Injury and Improves Glucose Metabolism and Reduces Glutamate Release."

- **Debnath Chatterjee, MD, HS '03**, assistant professor at Upstate Department of Anesthesiology was appointed Section Chief of Pediatric Anesthesia on February 18 and was granted a Joint Appointment in Pediatrics on March 1.
- **Kinlap Mak, MD**, passed the American Boards of Anesthesiology on October 5, 2007. He was promoted to assistant professor in the Upstate Department of Anesthesiology.
- **Naga Pullakhandam, MD, HS '99**, accepted the position of quality officer for the Upstate Department of Anesthesiology in December 2007.

- **Susan Nostrame, MD, HS**, associate professor at Upstate Department of Anesthesiology participated in the Rural Medicine Program by presenting a paper entitled "Anesthesia and the Obese Patient" at Norwich Memorial Hospital in November of 2007.
- **Nancy A. Nussmeier, MD**, was invited as a visiting professor to SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Long Island College Hospital November 29 and 30, 2007, to present "Gender in Cardiac Surgery—Is what's good for the gander good for the goose?" Dr. Nussmeier was appointed to the Anesthetic and Life Support Drugs Advisory Committee, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration in November 2007 and appointed to the Board of Directors of the Society for Cardiovascular Anesthesia Foundation in 2007.
- **Donna-Ann Thomas, MD '99, HS '06**, assistant professor of anesthesiology at Upstate, presented at Grand Rounds for the Department of Urology at Upstate "Urological Pain" in November 2007. Dr. Thomas also presented to the Registered Nurse First Assistant Students at Upstate the "Effects Of Anesthesia And Post Op Pain Control" in January. Dr. Thomas was named Primary Investigator on a new study sponsored by Innocoll Technologies, Ltd., entitled: A Randomized, Controlled, Phase 3 Study of Gentamicin-Collagen Sponge (Collatamp® G) in General Surgical Subjects at Higher Risk for Surgical Wound Infection (Version 1.1, Date 10.01.07). The purpose of this research study is to find out whether the Gentamicin-Collagen (Collatamp® G) sponge is safe and effective in helping to prevent infections in a surgical incision and inside the abdomen/belly. The Collatamp® G sponge is a flat absorbable sponge that contains collagen (a natural substance from cow tendons) and gentamicin (an antibiotic). The Collatamp® G is an investigational drug. An investigational drug is a drug which has not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use outside a research study.
- **Xiuli Zhang, MD, HS '05**, assistant professor of anesthesiology at Upstate, had a recent publication: Aron J., Thongrod S., Zhang X., The Modified Nasal Trumpet: Should it be a Standard?" *The Internet Journal of Anesthesiology*. 2008; Volume 15, Number 2.

Medicine

Chair: David B. Duggan, MD '79

- **Jorge M. Davidenko, MD, HS**, joined Cortland Regional Medical Center. Dr. Davidenko specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of a wide variety of heart conditions, including hypertension, congestive heart failure, and coronary artery disease. He is an expert in the area of cardiac rhythm disorders and in the use of medical imaging to detect heart disease.

Neurology

Chair: Jeremy Shefner, MD, PhD

- **Antonio Culebras, MD**, professor of neurology at Upstate, helped lead a worldwide effort to create professional and public awareness of the importance of diagnosing and treating approximately 80 known sleep-related disorders as co-chair of the first World Sleep Day on March 14. According to Culebras, one third of adults suffer insomnia, many have sleep apnea, others suffer shift work circadian dysrhythmia, innumerable people complain of restless legs and an excessive number of people overuse sleeping pills. "Sleep is an essential and unavoidable biological function that is a privilege and should be an individual right for all. Sleep should be celebrated as a pleasurable physiological activity that is restorative, refreshing and energizing," said Dr. Culebras.
- **Jeremy Shefner, MD, PhD**, professor and chair of neurology at Upstate and director of the clinical neurophysiology laboratory at University Hospital, founded the SUNY Upstate Medical University ALS Clinic in 1996. In March, this ALS Clinic became the 32nd Certified Center of Excellence of The ALS Association. "The designation of the clinic as a center has enhanced the already excellent reputation of the facility, which is now regarded on the same level as other certified centers, and will attract people with ALS for clinical trials," says Dr. Shefner.

Ophthalmology

Chair: John A. Hoepner, MD

- SUNY Upstate's Department of Ophthalmology and the Office of Continuing Medical Education will sponsor the 59th Annual Post-Graduate Review Course for

Gahtan Named Lloyd S. Rogers Endowed Professor of Surgery

When Vivian Gahtan, MD, president-elect of the Association of Women Surgeons back in 2003, called Patricia Numann, MD '65, to ask for her involvement in a project, she never dreamed it would lead to a new job, but that's precisely what happened.

Paul Cunningham, MD, had recently become chair of the Upstate Department of Surgery and was looking to create a unit in Vascular Surgery.

"You should consider this," Numann told Gahtan, then associate professor of vascular surgery at Yale University and chief of Peripheral Vascular Surgery at the VA Connecticut Health Care System. "May I give him your name?"

She did, and in 2004 Dr. Gahtan became chief of Upstate's newly established Vascular Surgery Section and professor of surgery at Upstate, as well as chief of Vascular Surgery at the VA Medical Center.

Now, she succeeds Numann as the Lloyd S. Rogers Endowed Professor of Surgery.

"It's a wonderful honor and opportunity," says Gahtan, who is author or co-author of 60 articles in peer-reviewed journals and 23 book chapters or invited reviews. "Having an 'endowed professorship' title alone provides you with a different level of recognition and acknowledgement that your institution holds you in a particular regard."

The funding associated with the title provides support that allows her to redirect more procedures to her partners, freeing time for her research studying vascular smooth muscle cell migration and smooth muscle cell-extracellular matrix interactions. In January, she was awarded \$420,000 in VA Merit funding to support this research.

"We celebrate the recognition that this endowment marks," says Paul Cunningham, chair of the Department of Surgery. "Within a framework of ingenuity, motivation, and focused hard work, Dr. Gahtan has established a modern Division of Vascular and Endovascular surgery while successfully competing for major extramural funding. And the influence of her leadership has been distributed across two campuses—the Syracuse Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the University Hospital."

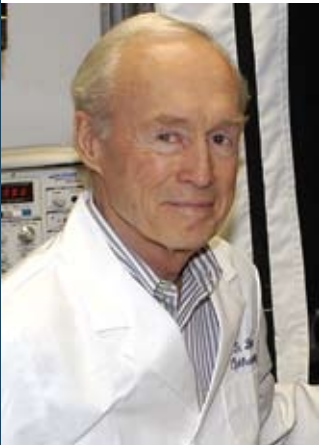
Gahtan was attracted to Upstate in part by the opportunity to have a leadership position, create a program, and recruit her partners. "I felt like I could make a difference," she says.

Clearly she has. During her tenure at Upstate, Gahtan has built a strong vascular surgery program with her partners that includes comprehensive vascular surgical care using open, endovascular, and hybrid procedures; the introduction of certain endovascular procedures at Upstate, which now comprise nearly 60 percent of the current case volume; the first carotid stent procedures under CMS guidelines and the first thoracic artery stent graft placement performed in the city of Syracuse; and the introduction of laser vein ablation at University Hospital.

"The goal was to create excellence in clinical care, education, and research," she says. "We've come a long way in every aspect and in the next three years I'll feel even more like we've arrived."



Vivian Gahtan, MD



Robert B. Barlow, PhD



Firouz Daneshgari, MD

Ophthalmology, November 21 and 22, 2008 at the Oncenter Convention Center. To see the information for last year's course, visit: <http://www.upstate.edu/eye/course/>. Details for this year's course will be available online in the fall.

- The Department also had nine posters and two papers at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology's 2008 Annual Meeting April 27 through May 1. In addition, **Robert Barlow, PhD**, was awarded the 2008 ARVO Distinguished Service Awards at the Annual Meeting. The Distinguished Service Award is presented to elected ARVO officers and editors-in-chief, upon completion of their terms, in appreciation for dedicated service to ARVO.

- 2008 saw the Department receive its eighth Research to Prevent Blindness Unrestricted grant in the amount of \$110,000.
- **Robert B. Barlow, PhD**, was awarded supplements to his NEI R01 grant in the amount of \$50,000 on June 28, 2007 and \$40,820 on February 18, 2008. Dr. Barlow received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities by SUNY Upstate Medical University at the Fall Faculty Convocation held on September 19, 2007.
- **Peter D. Calvert, PhD**, was granted a \$200,000 Career Development Award by Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) to support his eye research. The support is provided over a four-year period. In addition, the National Eye Institute has awarded Dr. Calvert a five-year R01 grant in the amount of \$1,766,250 to support his project entitled: "Mechanisms of signal-dependent photoreceptor protein localization and transport." The grant runs from September 2007 to August 2012. Dr. Calvert was also selected to be recognized as a Rising Star at a dinner honoring SUNY faculty members who extend the boundaries of human knowledge and drive economic development in New York. He received notification of his award from John J. O'Connor, President Research Foundation of SUNY on March 4, 2008. Dr. Calvert also received a Karl Kirchgessner Foundation Vision Research Grant in the amount of \$50,000 in January 2007.
- **Drew Everhart**, a postdoctoral fellow in the Center for Vision Research, has been awarded a F32 Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) from the NIH for his grant proposal, "Rescue of vision in metabolically stressed mice." His project attempts to rescue the age-related loss of vision seen in metabolically stressed mice. The individual fellowship award is valued at over \$150,000 and runs from March 2007 to March 2010.
- **Andrea S. Viczian, PhD**, was awarded a Hendrick's Fund for Medical Research grant in the amount of \$50,000 that started in November 2007. The title of her grant is "Generating mouse retinal stem/progenitor cells in vitro."

- **Michael E. Zuber, PhD**, received an R01 grant from the National Eye Institute. The title of the grant is "Genetic Regulatory Network Controlling Vertebrate Eye Formation." It is funded from September 2007 through November 2011 at \$175,000/year in direct costs for total of \$700,000. This is Dr. Zuber's second R01 grant. Dr. Zuber also received the President's Award for Excellence in Basic Research by a Young Investigator by SUNY Upstate Medical University at the Fall Faculty Convocation held on September 19, 2007.

Psychiatry

Chair: Mantosh J. Dewan, MD, HS '79

- **Joyce S. Garber, MD**, a former president of the Onondaga County Medical Society and a delegate to MSSNY's House of Delegates, received the Distinguished Service Award at the county society's annual dinner meeting in October 2007. The Distinguished Service Award is the society's highest award.

Urology

Chair: Firouz Daneshgari, MD

- **Firouz Daneshgari, MD**, was named chair of the department, effective April 1. Dr. Daneshgari was recruited from the Cleveland Clinic, where he served as professor of surgery and molecular medicine at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine, as director of the Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery Center, founder and director of the fellowship program, and one of the most productive translational research programs in the country. He holds \$10 million in federal and industry grants, most notably from the National Institutes of Health for support of his work in finding new treatments for female pelvic floor disorders as well as female incontinence caused by diabetes. Daneshgari's appointment sets in motion a three-pronged approach to building new clinical, educational and research programs in female pelvic disorders, urological cancer and pediatric urology in a collaborative effort among SUNY Upstate, Crouse Hospital and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC).