DEAR COLLEAGUES,

We are pleased to share with you the latest edition of The Operative Word, brought to you by the University of Chicago Medicine Phemister Society. It is our hope that, through this electronic communication, our department will keep alumni apprised of the latest developments in the Department of Surgery.

On the following pages, you will find exciting departmental and institutional news, the latest accomplishments from our faculty and an introduction to our newest surgeons, including our new Chief of the Section of Transplantation John Fung, MD, PhD.

We are particularly excited to share the creation of the Microbiome Center, a partnership between the University of Chicago, the Marine Biological Laboratory and the U.S. Department of Energy’s Argonne National Laboratory. Led by microbiologist Dr. Jack Gilbert, this center will work to advance our collective understanding of the microbiota in and around us.

We are also excited to give you details of the University of Chicago Medicine’s recent expansion, including the October merger with suburban Ingalls Health System and the groundbreaking of the UCM emergency department, which will include a Level 1 trauma center.

If you would like to learn more about our department’s clinical, academic or educational efforts, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us. On behalf of Jeffrey B. Matthews, MD, Dallas B. Phemister Professor of Surgery and chairman of the Department of Surgery, we look forward to communicating and engaging with our alumni around the globe.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER SKELLY, MD
Associate Professor of Surgery
Chief, Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy

MARK FERGUSON, MD
Professor of Surgery
Section of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery

EDWIN KAPLAN, MD
Professor of Surgery
Section of General Surgery
The University of Chicago, the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) and the U.S. Department of Energy’s Argonne National Laboratory announced a new partnership called the Microbiome Center, which will combine the three institutions’ efforts to understand the identity and function of microbes across environments.

These microbial communities—bacteria, viruses and fungi—affect every ecosystem on earth, including human bodies, oceans, homes and the surrounding land.

The new center dovetails with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy’s National Microbiome Initiative, launched May 13, with the goal of bringing together public and private entities to advance the understanding of microbiome behavior and enable protection and restoration of healthy microbiome function.

“In the past few years we’ve seen a change in understanding the roles bacteria play in our world,” said Jack Gilbert, PhD, who now serves as the center’s faculty director. Dr. Gilbert, a professor of surgery, has research affiliations at both Argonne and MBL.

“This is a unique opportunity to take that knowledge and help drive the next generation of microbiome research forward.”

The Microbiome Center aims to support the research community across the three institutions, building on a long tradition of research excellence and collaboration. It will also enable rapid translation to private and clinical sectors, and train a new generation of scientists to take on fundamental questions about the microbiome, Gilbert said.

“The University of Chicago, MBL and Argonne already have conducted some of the most influential research aimed at understanding and characterizing microorganisms,” said Argonne director Peter B. Littlewood. “We want to capitalize on this history and expertise in order to advance our capabilities and explore problems that are critical for modern society.”

Marine Biological Laboratory president and director Huntington Willard said, “This collaboration will let us run faster, jump higher, think bigger and tackle the most important questions facing the field, particularly as they impact life in our oceans.”

In the past decade, new techniques—many pioneered at the participating institutions—have allowed researchers to peek at the hidden communities of microbes that populate our world by the trillions.

These studies revealed that microorganisms have complex relationships that affect plants, people and buildings, and are major players in moving carbon and other elements through massive global cycles. Microorganisms also live on and in animals and humans, where they both cause and prevent disease—and also regulate some of our most essential functions.

“A greater understanding of microbial communities could affect everything from medicine to agriculture to marine systems and urban development,” Gilbert said.

Microbiome research pulls from many disciplines, including microbiology, immunology, genomics, ecology and evolution, surgery, computation and bioengineering; each institution brings its own expertise to the mix. Argonne has deep knowledge of environmental microbiology and
sequencing techniques. The Marine Biological Laboratory has extensively studied microbial populations living in oceans, in coastal waterways and in organisms ranging from marine animals to humans. The University of Chicago is a leader in ecological research, and the University of Chicago Medicine has increased its focus on human microbiology and its relation to human health.

Eugene Chang, MD, a professor of biomedical sciences at UChicago who sits on the steering committee for the new center, highlighted the importance of collaboration to facilitate his research into the role of the microbiome in human health problems, such as obesity and metabolism.

“It really wouldn’t have been possible to answer any of these questions from a single laboratory,” he said. “You could see how each of us looks at the same question, and each takes a different approach. You really need this multidisciplinary expertise to make discoveries about fundamental principles.”
Four months after receiving state regulatory approval, the University of Chicago Medicine held a groundbreaking ceremony for the South Side’s newest emergency department, which will also offer level 1 adult trauma care.

The event marked the first major step in implementing the UChicago Medicine Get CARE plan, which will dramatically increase access to emergency, trauma and specialty care, and includes a dedicated cancer hospital. The new ED is scheduled to open in January 2018.

The expanded emergency department is projected to treat an additional 25,000 patient visits a year by 2021. More than 2,000 adult trauma patients are expected in the first full year of trauma center designation.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and Fifth Ward Alderman Leslie Hairston joined a crowd of about 200 community leaders, South Side residents, government officials, and hospital and university representatives and employees for the celebration.

Representing the University of Chicago were president Robert Zimmer, executive vice president Kenneth Polonsky and medical center president Sharon O’Keefe.

Additional regulatory approvals must be sought before trauma care services can begin. UChicago Medicine has begun proceedings with regional trauma directors and the Illinois Department of Public Health.

“We recognize the needs in our community are urgent,” Polonsky said.
The University of Chicago Medicine and Ingalls Health System have joined forces in an alliance that combines a top community hospital in Chicago’s Southland with one of the country’s leading academic medical institutions.

Harvey-based Ingalls is now part of the UChicago Medicine brand, which comprises the University of Chicago Medical Center, Biological Sciences Division and Pritzker School of Medicine. The University of Chicago Medical Center (UCMC) becomes Ingalls’ corporate parent, and Ingalls will remain under the direction of president and chief executive Kurt E. Johnson.

The merged health systems will improve access across the spectrum of care, be it for a routine, preventive checkup or a complex, life-sustaining treatment such as organ transplantation. “In the near future, our patients will be able to tap a wider array of services from a larger pool of physicians in various locations,” Johnson said.

Both organizations will retain their names and operating licensure, and Ingalls will maintain a local board of directors and have representation on the UCMC Board. No money was exchanged under the terms of the merger. The transaction joins assets to create a hospital system that is stronger combined than each institution is individually. That system includes Ingalls’ five outpatient centers, as well as UChicago Medicine’s main medical campus in Hyde Park, planned ambulatory facilities in Orland Park and the South Loop, and an expansive network of physicians.

“UChicago Medicine has vast expertise in highly complex care, research studies and clinical trials, and Ingalls has expertise in quality care in the community hospital setting,” said Kenneth S. Polonsky, MD, executive vice president of medical affairs and dean of the Biological Sciences Division at the University of Chicago. “Once fully integrated, this union will provide an array of services and choices for patients that encompass convenient, community-based health care and world-class academic medicine.”

WE ARE HAPPY TO INTRODUCE THE FOLLOWING NEW FACULTY MEMBERS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY.

WELCOMING NEW FACULTY

TOP SURGEON JOINS UCHICAGO MEDICINE TO HEAD NEW TRANSPLANTATION INSTITUTE

After a national search, transplant surgeon, researcher and educator John Fung, MD, PhD, FACS, was selected as chief of the Section of Transplantation and director of the new University of Chicago Medicine Transplantation Institute.

Dr. Fung, a highly respected surgeon with more than 30 years of experience in kidney, liver, pancreas, islet and intestinal transplantation, assumed the role in mid-September. He previously served as director of the Cleveland Clinic Health System Center for Transplantation, overseeing transplant services in Ohio, Florida, Indiana and West Virginia.

“The University of Chicago has a long history as a pioneer in organ transplantation, from some of the very first experiments in the 1900s to the first living donor liver transplant in the world in 1989,” said Jeffrey Matthews, MD, the Dallas B. Phemister Professor and chair of the Department of Surgery. “Dr. Fung brings a wealth of experience that will carry on this tradition by adopting innovative approaches and technologies to care for patients in every stage of the transplant process.”

Dr. Fung plans to revitalize the transplantation program in his new role at UChicago Medicine, building on its long history of research and advancements.

As inaugural director of the Transplantation Institute, he will work with faculty from multiple academic departments to grow UChicago Medicine’s programs in solid organ transplantation. He plans to establish an intestinal transplant program at UChicago Medicine, working closely with specialists in the Digestive Diseases Center. He also wants to expand the use of new technology such as normothermic perfusion that can rejuvenate donor organs by circulating warm, oxygenated solution through them prior to transplantation, improving viability and greatly increasing the number of available donor organs.

John Fung, MD, PhD
Professor of Surgery
Chief, Section of Transplantation
Director, University of Chicago Medicine Transplantation Institute
WELCOMING NEW FACULTY

WE ARE HAPPY TO INTRODUCE THE FOLLOWING NEW FACULTY MEMBERS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY.

Talia Baker, MD
Associate Professor of Surgery
Section of Transplantation
Clinical Interests: liver cancer, living donor liver transplantation, solid organ transplant, liver resection, hepatobiliary malignancies

Jean Bao, MD
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Section of General Surgery
Clinical Interests: breast cancer, benign breast disease, surgical oncology, general surgery

Semirra Bayan, MD
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Section of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery
Clinical Interests: early glottis cancer, vocal cord dysplasia, vocal cord paralyses, voice disorders, performing and professional voice, laryngeal papilloma, laryngeal stenosis, spasmodic dysphonia

Chelsea Dorsey, PhD
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Section of Vascular Surgery & Endovascular Therapy
Clinical Interests: full spectrum of vascular diseases, carotid artery disease, aortic disease, peripheral artery disease

Peleg Horowitz, MD
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Section of Neurosurgery
Clinical Interests: brain tumors, skull-base tumors, gliomas, glioblastomas, brain metastases

Radhika Smith, MD
Clinical Associate
Section of Colon & Rectal Surgery
Clinical Interests: rectal cancer, colon cancer, complex anorectal disorders, Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, diverticulitis, pelvic floor disorders

Kiran Turaga, MD
Associate Professor of Surgery
Section of General Surgery
Vice Chief, Section of General Surgery and Surgical Oncology
Director, Surgical GI Cancer Program
Director, Regional Therapeutics Program
Clinical Interests: Regional chemoperfusion/HIPEC, colon cancer, appendix cancer, peritoneal disease, metastatic malignancies
NEWS & NOTES

PROMOTIONS

Gary An, MD, has been promoted to professor of surgery, as of July 1, 2016.

Adam Bodzin, MD, has been promoted to assistant professor of surgery, as of Oct. 1, 2016.

Lisa Cannon, MD, has been promoted to assistant professor of surgery, as of Aug. 1, 2016.

Grace Mak, MD, has been promoted to associate professor of surgery, as of July 1, 2016.

Takeyoshi Ota, MD, PhD, has been promoted to associate professor of surgery, as of Sept. 1, 2016.

Kevin Roggin, MD, has been promoted to professor of surgery, as of July 1, 2016.

Robert Shenkar, PhD, has been promoted to research associate (associate professor), as of July 1, 2016.

Bakhtiar Yamini, MD, has been promoted to professor of surgery, as of July 1, 2016.

KUDOS

Husam Balkhy, MD, presented at the American Association for Thoracic Surgery 2016 annual meeting on his research, “Multi-Center Assessment of Grafts in Coronaries: Long-Term Evaluation of the C-Port Anastomotic Device (The MAGIC Study).”

Chief of the Section of Colon and Rectal Surgery Neil Hyman, MD, spoke at the Wound Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society annual conference and also presented on “The Patient with IBD and C. Difficile” at the annual conference in Digestive Diseases.

Peter Angelos, MD, PhD, has been officially installed as the 2016-2017 president of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons. His swearing-in took place at the AAES 37th annual meeting in Baltimore, MD.

The Section of Neurosurgery’s inaugural Spencer Block Lecture took place June 24th, as part of the Heinrich Kluver Memorial Lectureship Endowment. The course’s theme was “The Future of Brain/Machine Interfaces,” and David Frim, MD, PhD, section chief, served as the event co-director.

At the Congress and Advanced Course in Otology & Skull Base Surgery this spring, Michael Gluth, MD, served as the director of the otology fellows. The three-day course included 24 otology/neurotology fellows from 10 countries and 12 distinguished faculty members.

Grace Mak, MD, was one of 13 University of Chicago Medicine faculty highlighted this year for the Distinguished Faculty Awards. She was named as a junior award winner for Distinguished Clinician.

David Chang, MD, is the future president-elect of the World Society of Reconstructive Microsurgery; he will begin his tenure in June 2017.


Dr. Matthews was also elected chair of the Review Committee for Surgery (RRC) of the ACGME.

Yolanda Becker, MD, was elected vice president/president-elect of the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network/United Network for Organ Sharing board of directors. Her one-year VP term began July 1, 2016, and she will become president of the organization in July 2017.

Arieh Shalhav, MD, chief of the Section of Urology, led a team of runners known as the Urinary Track Team to complete the Madison Half-Marathon in May. This event marks the 10th year the section’s physicians, trainees and staff have run to raise money for urologic research.

At the 31st Annual Congress of the European Association of Urology in Munich this past March, Mohan S. Gundeti, MD, was honored with the EAU Hans Marberger Award for his pioneering robotic augmentation cystoplasty research, which was awarded a “best paper” designation at the meeting.

Ross Milner, MD, was invited to serve as an editorial board member for EJVES Short Reports, a new journal dedicated to publishing short reports, operative videos and technical notes for the European Society for Vascular Surgery.

Dr. Milner has also been invited to serve as the regional director of the Aortic Trauma Foundation.

Donald Vander Griend, PhD, had an R21 funded by the National Cancer Institute for $400,000 over three years. Dr. Vander Griend will serve as the co-PI on this multidisciplinary research to study prostate cancer mechanisms.
**RECENT LECTURES**

**Inaugural Ernest Mhoon Lecture:**
Skills Assessment and other Considerations in Contemporary Surgical Education  
*Thursday, Oct. 20, 2016*

**Dr. Howard Francis**  
Vice Director, Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery  
Director, Johns Hopkins Listening Center  
Professor of OHNS, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

**John & Joyce Benfield Lecture in Thoracic Surgery:**  
Ex Vivo Repair of Donor Organs: Personalized Medicine for the Organ  
*Thursday, Sept. 29, 2016*

**Dr. Shaf Keshavjee**  
Professor, Division of Thoracic Surgery  
Surgeon-in-Chief, United Health Network  
University of Toronto

**13th Annual Skinner Memorial Lecture:**  
Combat Casualty Care: Hard Lessons Learned  
*Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2016*

**Dr. Charles L. Rice**  
Professor of Surgery  
President Emeritus, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

**Inaugural Spencer Block Lecture:**  
The Future of Brain/Machine Interfaces  
*Friday, June 24, 2016*

**Event Directors:**  
David Frim, MD, PhD, The Ralph Cannon Professor of Surgery, Neurology and Pediatrics; Chief, Section of Neurosurgery  
Leo Towle, PhD, Professor of Neurology, Surgery and Psychiatry; Technical Director, Intraoperative Monitoring Service; Director, Clinical Evoked Potential Laboratory  
The University of Chicago Medicine

**Second Annual Edwin Kaplan Lecture:**  
Challenging the Status Quo: Molecular Markers, Thyroid Nodules and Thyroid Cancer  
*Tuesday, June 14, 2016*

**Dr. Martha A. Zeiger**  
Professor of Surgery, Oncology, Cellular and Molecular Medicine  
Associate Vice Chair of Faculty Development  
Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs  
The Johns Hopkins Hospital

**49th Annual Dallas B. Phemister Memorial Lecture:**  
The Science of Big Data and the Promise of Personalized Medicine  
*Wednesday, April 27, 2016*

**Dr. Mary Hawn**  
Professor, Chair of the Department of Surgery  
Stanford University

**43rd Annual Alfred A. Strauss Memorial Lecture:**  
Measuring and Improving Performance in Surgical Training  
*Wednesday, March 23, 2016*

**Dr. Gary Dunnington**  
Chairman, Department of Surgery  
Indiana University School of Medicine

**20th Annual George E. Block Lecture:**  
Prognostic & Predictive Factors in Breast Cancer  
*Tuesday, May 17, 2016*

**Dr. Kelly K. Hunt**  
Professor, Chairman Ad Interim  
Department of Breast Surgical Oncology, Division of Surgery  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center