eSequence

ACGT National grants for cell and gene therapy cancer research
ALLIANCE FOR CANCER GENE THERAPY

January 30, 2013

A New Year - New Possibilities for Cancer Treatment

Holiday cheers and special thanks to the many, many supporters who included the Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy in their holiday giving this year - your support makes it possible to fund innovative research into many forms of cancer and move the most promising research towards clinical trial and ultimately to medical practice. This revolutionary science is making strides every day and we are proud to be a major funder of the research. Thank you for your support and confidence.

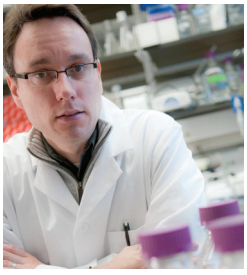
Detection + Prevention Saves Lives



The U.S. death rate from cancer has fallen 20% since the peak in 1991, according to the American Cancer Society, with notable progress for lung, colon, breast and prostate cancers. Early detection, and improved lifestyles, such as reduced smoking, are considered the primary reasons for more people beating these cancers or living longer with them. Overall, death rates declined by 24% for men, 16% for women. However, new skin, liver and thyroid cancers are on the rise, and the incidence of pancreatic cancer, among the most deadly, continues to increase as well. The report also indicates that African-Americans have higher rates of new cancers and deaths, and these have declined at slower rates. **Read the report.**

2012 Young Investigator Grant Announced

Alexander Stegh, PhD



The Board of Directors has approved a discovery grant to **Alexander Stegh, PhD,** Assistant Professor, Neurology, at Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine. The award, pending final contract, will fund a research study into a new treatment potential for brain cancer. Brain cancers rank 4th in cancer deaths in the US, second only to leukemia in children. Glioblastoma [GBM] is particularly resistant to treatment and this study aims to better understand its metabolic vulnerabilities in order to establish more effective methods of attacking and destroying these cancer cells. ACGT Young Investigator grants fund 3 - 5 year studies by tenure-track professors exploring cell and gene therapies for cancer.

First International Young Investigator Award Announced

Douglas Mahoney, PhD

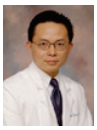


The Board of Directors also approved the first international grant awarded to **Douglas Mahoney, PhD,** Assistant Professor, Microbiology, Immunology and Infectious Disease, at the University of Calgary, Canada. Dr. Mahoney's study will explore oncolytic virus therapy, which, unlike conventional drugs, orchestrates tumor cell death in multiple ways simultaneously. Virus-based treatment is considered among the most promising gene therapy techniques. During the funding period, pending final contract, Mahoney's team aims to engineer next generation viruses and combinations of viruses to break through barriers to treatment. Although the initial research was conducted on breast cancer, the technique can be deployed against many forms of cancer.

Progress Report



Khalid Shah, PhD, Harvard Medical School, recipient of the 2007 Swim Across America Young Investigator Award, reported to the journal of the American Society of Cell and Gene Therapy that his team's study on tumor-targeted treatment for brain cancer has confirmed primary glioblastoma multiforme stem cell lines that respond to oncolytic virus therapy. The study sheds new light on the mechanism by which select functions overcome therapeutic resistance, and provides a virus-based platform for a broad spectrum of different cancers. The ACGT 3-year grant funded this potentially breakthrough research.



Dr. Yiping Yang, PhD, Duke University, 2005 grant recipient continues to make progress in his research on immunotherapy, confirming in a recent report in Blood Journal the relationship between tumor-specific signals and regulator T-cells, in his quest to develop a rational vaccine strategy for lymphoma and leukemia.



Dr. Michel Sadelain, PhD, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, 2004 grant recipient and SAC member, reported this month in Nature Biotechnology that his strategy to render T-cells specific to a tumor has resulted in a 'tumor-sensing' strategy that may help broaden the applicability and avoid some of the side effects of targeted T-cell therapies.

At the ASGCT Annual Meeting

May 16, 2013



At the annual meeting of the American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy, an ACGT-sponsored symposium on cell and gene cancer therapies will be held the evening of May 16th, featuring ACGT Scientific Advisory Council members Dr. Carl June, University of Pennsylvania, Joseph Glorioso, PhD, University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Stephen Russell, PhD, Mayo Clinic and Dr. Lieping Chen, PhD, Yale Cancer Center. The panel discussion on targeted therapies will be chaired by ACGT Scientific Advisory Council Members Savio L. C. Woo, PhD, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, and Xandra Breakefield, PhD, Harvard Medical School, who served this year as President of the organization. ASGCT is the national organization of physicians, scientists and organizations engaged in cell and gene therapies and research. **Read more about the meeting...**

Save the Date

Swim Across America set for June 22, 2013



The 7th annual Swim Across America for ACGT is set for June 22nd and promises to be another fabulous event. Last year, hundreds of swimmers and boaters were cheered on by a small army of volunteers and supporters and raised over $400,000 to support cell and gene therapy research. Swims are also held in backyard pools and swim clubs - a great way to support a cancer survivor or honor a loved one and have a great day with friends and family.

Learn more about sponsorship and participation in the Greenwich/Stamford Swim at www.swimacrossamerica.org

"We are still the only organization that concentrates exclusively on cell and gene therapy, and all the money we take in goes directly to research."

- ACGT Co-Founder/Board President, Barbara Netter

KEEP THE MOMENTUM!

Give generously to the Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy, the one public charity in the nation dedicated to cell and gene therapy research for cancer. Your support makes it possible to discover new treatment options and move them to medical practice sooner rather than later. *Thank you!*

Donate now!

24/7 CELL AND GENE THERAPY NEWS - More than 100 institutions throughout the country and thousands of scientists have active cell and gene-based therapy research studies and trials - learn more about the science of molecular medicine and the progress of potentially breakthrough research at ACGT, and follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @acgtfoundation.

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