From the Director...

“As you can see from the list that follows, members of the faculty have been particularly successful in expanding the Division of Surgical Research’s grant support since the previous newsletter was published. My congratulations! I am also delighted we were able to continue our series of “Advances in Inflammation Research” symposia. Particular sources of pride are the achievements of our junior investigators who presented at local, national, and international meetings. It should be clear to all that the accomplishments of our faculty stem directly from the efforts of all of our research assistants and associates, students, fellows, and administrative personnel. To them my heartfelt thanks.”

Jorge E. Albina, MD

Grant Awards

The Division of Surgical Research’s “Trauma and Inflammation Research Training” grant received an additional 5 years of funding from the NIGMS to support 2 residents per year in their research endeavors in the lab. Total costs awarded - $590,087.

Congratulations to Dr. Doug Hixson for receiving an additional 5 years and $11 million in funding for the COBRE Center for Cancer Research Development. One of the investigators funded through this award is Dr. Eugene Chin for “COBRE Project 3 - Acetylation Dependent STAT3 Signalsome in Liver Cancer”.

Dr. Eugene Chin was also awarded a 2-year ARRA stimulus grant from the NIGMS in the amount of $589,576. The award was for his R01 entitled “Acetylation-Dependent IFN Signal Transduction”.

Dr. Jonathan Reichner was awarded an ARRA stimulus grant from the NIGMS in the amount of $247,080. The award was for a 2-year supplement to support his current R01 grant, “Effect of Neutrophil Priming on Chemotaxis and Signaling”.

Dr. Jonathan Reichner was awarded a 2-year subcontract from an ARRA award made to Dr. Art Salomon at Brown University. Total costs awarded - $74,315.

Dr. Carl Saab was awarded a 2-year subcontract from an ARRA award made to Dr. Eli Al-Chaer at the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences. His grant is entitled, “Microglia in Chronic Visceral Pain”. Total costs - $104,890.
On September 24 & 25, 2009 the Division of Surgical Research and the Department of Surgery hosted its 7th Annual “Advances In Inflammation Research” Symposium.

Thursday afternoon, the program opened with a warm welcome and acknowledgements by Symposium Chairman, Dr. Jorge Albina. He then introduced the first of three junior faculty speakers who presented their latest research findings.

Rajan Thakkar, MD is a surgical resident currently in his second year of research on the Armand D. Versaci Research Scholar Fellowship, under the mentorship of Dr. Alfred Ayala.

Dr. Thakkar's presentation was entitled, “Local tissue expression of the cell death ligand, FasL, plays a central role in the development of acute lung injury”.

Zhenglong Yuan, MD is a Research Associate working with Dr. Maureen Chung for the past 5 years. The emphasis of his research is the mechanism of breast cancer development, including the regulation of estrogen receptor function by histone deacetylase Sirt1.

Dr. Yuan’s presentation was entitled, “Sirt1 is an estrogen receptor corepressor”.

Xian O'Brien has been a graduate student in Dr. Jonathan Reichner’s lab for the past 5 years, focusing on the identification of mechanisms used by human neutrophils as part of the innate immune response to infection.

Xian’s presentation was entitled, “Neutrophil activation and the role of integrin response”.
Symposium Highlights (continued)

Dr. Edward Wing, Dean of Medicine and Biological Sciences at Brown University, spoke briefly and introduced the keynote speaker, Dr. Richard Mitchell.

Trauma Training Grant resident Zachary Gregg, MD and Versaci Fellowship residents Rajan Thakkar, MD and Dipan Patel, MD.

Graduate students Katie Heflin, Xian O’Brien with Liz Lavigne, PhD.

Welcome & introductions from Dr. Albina

Drs. Luisa DiPietro and Alfred Ayala

Registration

Drs. Jorge Albina, Luisa DiPietro & Jonathan Reichner
Drs. Neil Silverman and Michael Yaffee

The Friday afternoon presentation at 70 Ship Street began with Dr. Bruce Ransom
**Academic Highlights**

**Recent Papers, Posters, Abstracts & Publications**

**Dr. Ayala's lab:**

**Dr. Muratore's lab:**

**Dr. Chin's lab:**

**Dr. Albina's lab:**

**Dr. Reichner's lab:**
Honors, Awards & Appointments

At Lifespan’s 17th Annual Research Celebration on October, 22, 2009, two of the five finalists for the New Investigator Award, Basic Science Category were from the Division of Surgical Research, Rajan Thakkar, MD and Brian LeBlanc, PhD. Additional posters from the Division were also submitted by N. Shubin, N. Carter, C.S. Chung, N. Hutchins, S. McNeal, S. Monaghan, C. Newsome and S. Patel.

Rajan Thakkar, MD  
Brian LeBlanc, PhD

Versaci Resident, Dr. Dipan Patel was winner of the regional competition at the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma 2010 Resident Trauma Papers Competition, held in Boston November 9, 2009, for his abstract entitled, “Neutrophil Mechanosensing Regulates Effector Functions”.

All residents from Level 1 trauma centers in the New England area were invited to submit an abstract describing original research in trauma, critical care or injury prevention in two categories; Basic Laboratory or Clinical Investigation. Dr. Patel’s abstract initially won the Basic Science category in Rhode Island Hospital’s own local resident competition. Regional winners receive paid airfare and accommodations to present at the national competition at the Annual Meeting of the Committee on Trauma in Las Vegas March 10, 2010. First-place papers from both the Basic Science and Clinical Science categories will be eligible for publication in the Journal of the American College of Surgeons.

Noelle Hutchins, a graduate student in Dr. Ayala’s lab, received the Charles A. Janeway Memorial Award at the 35th Annual New England Immunology Conference at Woods Hole, MA, October 24-25, 2009.

Dr. Jorge Albina was appointed Director at Large for the Wound Healing Society.

Carl Saab, PhD was invited to serve as a reviewer on NIH’s Special Emphasis Panel for RC1 Challenge Awards and the Wellcome Trust Fund (UK), and also as a judge on American Idol.

Alfred Ayala, PhD, was invited to serve as an advisor on a developing P50 application and gave a presentation at the North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System/Feinstein Institute for Medical Research on September 14-15, 2009 in Manhasset, NY.

Joanne Lomas-Neira, PhD received a Gordon Conference Scholarship to defray the cost of attending the 2009 Angiogenesis Gordon Research Conference at Salve Regina University in Newport, RI in August 2009.
Research News

Research Travel, Conferences & Presentations

Several members of Dr. Reichner and Dr. Ayala’s lab attended the American Society for Investigative Pathology conference held in New Orleans, LA, April 18-22, 2009 and also the Tri-Society Annual Conference on Cellular and Cytokine Interactions in Health and Disease, Joint International Meeting, Lisbon, Portugal, October 17-21, 2009. A poster presentation was featured by Joanne Lomas-Neira, PhD.

Dr. Ayala’s lab also attended the Shock Society’s 32nd Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX, June 6-9, 2009 and the 35th Annual New England Immunology Conference, Woods Hole, MA, October 24 & 25, 2009. Posters were featured by N. Hutchins, S. McNeal and N. Shubin.

Trauma Training Grant resident Dr. Samille Brancato spent the entire month of November at the Tenwek Hospital in Bomet, Kenya, one of the largest mission hospitals in Africa. Lifespan hospitals and other regional institutions and supporters have developed an important relationship with Tenwek Hospital.

The current superintendent of the hospital is Dr. Russell White, a general and cardiothoracic surgeon trained through the RIH Brown University Surgical program. The Department of Surgery at RIH sends residents to Tenwek to support the hospital and staff there in a variety of ways. More information on Tenwek Hospital can be found at www.Tenwek.com.

Seminar & Conference Schedules

The Division of Surgical Research hosts monthly Seminar Series lectures covering topics on inflammation and injury in critical illness.

The Seminar Series schedule and the Department of Surgery’s Monthly Conference and Clinic Calendar, at: can be found at:

http://bms.brown.edu/surgery/research/03Research_Seminars.htm
Upcoming Events & Conferences

American Surgical Association
130th Annual Meeting
April 8-10, 2010
The Fairmont - Chicago, Illinois

Experimental Biology 2010
April 24 – 28, 2010
Anaheim Convention Center
Anaheim, California

IMMUNOLOGY 2010™ BALTIMORE
97th Annual Meeting
May 7-11, 2010 | Baltimore Convention Center

Shock Society’s
33rd Conference on Shock 2010
June 12-15, 2010, Portland, Oregon

FASEB SUMMER RESEARCH CONFERENCES
“Quality Life Through Research”
June—August 2010
**Funding Opportunities**

The **American Heart Association** (Founders Affiliate) is offering the following funding opportunities: Pre– and Postdoctoral Fellowship, Scientist Developmental Grant, Grant-in-Aid and Clinical Research Program. The application deadline is February 2, 2010. Additional information can be found at [www.Americanheart.org](http://www.Americanheart.org).

Creative and Novel Ideas in HIV Research (CNIHR) is offering a new program to bring innovative approaches to the field of HIV research. They are offering funding for 1-2 years with support up to $150,000 per year to early career investigators with NO prior experience in HIV research. Concept proposals are due December 22, 2009 and full proposals are due April 22, 2010. Visit [www.cnihr.org](http://www.cnihr.org) for more information.

The **American Cancer Society** is offering Postdoctoral Fellowships to support the training of researchers who have received a doctoral degree to provide initial funding leading to an independent career in cancer research (including basic and clinical research). Awards are up to 3 years for a salary stipend. Application deadline is April 1, 2010. [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

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**Resident Research Opportunities**

The Division of Surgical Research has 2 grant opportunities for residents interested in research.

1. **Trauma and Inflammation Research Training Grant.** Awarded by the NIH in 2004, this grant is a superb vehicle for residents to establish the basis of a successful academic career through the acquisition of solid training in basic research. The grant provides 2 years of salary support for residents and is currently in its 5th year. The Training Grant recently received additional 5 years of support from the NIH through June 2014.

2. **Armand D. Versaci Research Scholar Fellowship.** Established in 1999, this award provides two years of salary support for residents or fellows to train under the direct supervision of a qualified mentor. The objective of the program is to foster the development of physician-scientists who will go on to academic careers in surgery.

Visit the Division’s website for additional information about the Training Grant and Versaci Scholarship and to view brief biographies of current and past trainees on these projects. [http://bms.brown.edu/surgery/research/index.html](http://bms.brown.edu/surgery/research/index.html)