STATE OF CFAR ADDRESS

Michael Saag, MD
(Division of Infectious Diseases)

Dr. Michael Saag, CFAR Director, met with Center members on February 2nd and gave an optimistic “State of CFAR Address.” This address, to CFAR members, not only highlighted the history of the CFAR, but revealed its current status, outlined plans for the coming year, as well as pointed to Dr. Saag’s and the CFAR Executive Committee’s top CFAR priorities. Dr. Saag presented CFAR members’ recent successes, the challenges facing the CFAR and the tools currently available as well as those in development to meet them successfully. He encouraged the CFAR membership to become active in the CFAR by participating in the Interdisciplinary Research Groups, utilizing the CFAR supported Core Facilities and providing feedback to the CFAR on how it can better serve the membership.

PARHAM IN AFRICA

Grosebeck Parham, MD
(Ob/Gyn)

Dr. Grosebeck Parham, a UAB Professor of Gynecologic Oncology, CFAR member, Cancer Center Senior Scientist and recipient of a 2004 CFAR Developmental Award has established a cervical cancer clinic at the University Teaching Hospital in Zambia, where one in four women have the virus that causes AIDS. As a result of the CFAR Developmental Award, Dr. Parham and his Zambian colleagues have been able to significantly build the country’s capacity for screening, early detection and treatment of cervical cancer in HIV-infected women, through the transfer of modern information, skills and biotechnology. The primary purpose of the project is to determine the most accurate, appropriate and cost-effective method for screening HIV-infected women for cervical cancer in a resource constrained setting, such as Zambia. Cervical cancer is the number one malignancy diagnosed in HIV-infected women in sub-Saharan Africa. Prior to the availability of anti-retroviral therapy, women died before they could develop cervical cancer. Now with increasing access to Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy (HAART), women in these areas of the world will live longer, increasing their chances for developing cervical cancer and other diseases related to immunosuppression. Of the 150 HIV-infected women who have been screened through the Zambian Cervical Cancer CFAR-funded project, 55% were found to have cytologic evidence of severe cervical cancer precursors. Prior to the establishment of the project, there was no program for cervical cancer screening in the nation, no modern equipment and no gynecologist or nurse with the necessary diagnostic and therapeutic skills to detect and treat cervical cancer precursors – in fact there is no cytologist and only one pathologist in the nation. “My Zambian colleagues and I are extremely grateful to CFAR for providing this opportunity to perform cervical cancer research and to establish a much needed clinical service for HIV-infected women in a very poor nation. Although the amount of the award was small, we have been able to accomplish a tremendous amount, primarily through dedication, commitment, partnership with industry, and the grace of God. In my 20 years of working in Africa I have found Africans to be very resourceful people. We will continue to partner with CFAR as we seek to expand both our investigative and clinical efforts in this very important area of women’s health,” says Dr. Parham.

CFAR DINNER LECTURES

www.uabcfar.uab.edu/lectures/dinner

Nathaniel Landau, PhD
(April 27, 2005)

Dr. Landau is an investigator with the The Salk Institute. His current research interests include understanding how the coreceptor mediates infection and how it affects the rate at which infected individuals progress to disease.

Dana Gabuzda, MD
(May 25, 2005)
Dr. Gabuzda is a researcher at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Her research interest includes identifying molecules that might play a role in preventing HIV from infecting healthy cells and spreading through the body.

Joe Sodroski, M.D., PhD
(June 8, 2005)

Dr. Sodroski is Director of the Center for AIDS Research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI), Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, and Children's Hospital. His research focuses on the mechanisms of transformation by human T cell leukemia viruses and the replication and pathogenesis of HIV.

Alan Perelson, PhD
(June 22, 2005)

Dr. Perelson is Senior Fellow at Los Alamos National Laboratory. His research interests include mathematical and theoretical biology, with an emphasis on problems in immunology, virology, and cell and molecular biology.

James Hoxie, MD
(June 28, 2005)

Dr. Hoxie is Professor of Medicine, Hematology-Oncology Division, at the University of Pennsylvania. His research areas of interest include studies of the interactions of the viral envelope glycoprotein with chemokine receptors and the cytoskeleton.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS FESTIVAL

On the weekend of April 16-17, NBC13 will host a Health and Wellness Festival at the Civic Center. Over 20,000 community members are expected to attend. It is hoped that everyone who completed the OraQuick Advance Training plus Pre/Post Test Counseling session on Saturday, March 19th will contribute a minimum of 3 hours of volunteer time at the 1917 Clinic/CFAR table which will offer information resources, such as safer sex kits and confidential HIV testing. For more info on the festival visit, http://www.nbc13.com/wellnessfestival/index.html.

NEW STN INTRODUCTORY VIDEO

The Support Team Network has a new video available entitled, "An Introduction to Support Teams: Working Together to Share the Care!"

The ten-minute video, which was produced by MetroPictureWorks, highlights the four basic principles of the team approach, and includes interviews with Support Team Leaders, Coaches, Friends, Pastors, and Support Team Network Staff Members. For more information, see www.SupportTeam.org.

SUPPORT TEAM DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Malcolm Marler, DMin
(Chaplain, Education Specialist)

April 5-6, 2005 - Winston-Salem, NC
April 16, 2005 - Chapel Hill, NC
April 22-24, 2005 - Elba, AL
May 16-17, 2005 - St. Louis, MO

Leadership Development Training teaches congregations and organizations how to develop Support Teams in their setting. For more details, please visit www.SupportTeam.org or call 205-975-9129.

NEW STN WEBSITE

The Support Team Network (STN) has a new website. The Web Team has been working hard on the new Web site. They add new material almost daily. There are a few areas on the site that are not updated yet but should be functional by the end of the first quarter of 2005. One of those areas is the Team Talk and Tools. The Tools section will have a discussion board that will help persons post questions and share experiences related to Support Teams. Please bookmark the new address so that you can easily find the Network on the web, www.SupportTeam.org.