**Pelvic Floor Research Group Day 2015**

**Keynote Speaker**

**“The Science Behind Prolapse Mesh Complications: How Can We Do Better?”**

**Pamela A. Moalli, MD PhD**

Magee-Womens Hospital, University of Pittsburgh

Dr. Moalli is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh with secondary appointments in the Department of Bioengineering, and the McGowan Institute of Regenerative Medicine. Her laboratory is at the Magee-Womens Research Institute. After completion of her undergraduate training at Brown University, Dr. Moalli was accepted into the NIH sponsored Medical Scientist Training Program at Northwestern University. She had earned a PhD in molecular and cellular biology and a medical degree over a period of 8 years. She served her residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Magee-Womens Hospital of the University of Pittsburgh and then completed a fellowship in Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery at the same institution. During her fellowship, Dr. Moalli received mentorship under the direction of Andrea Larson, PhD to study connective tissue remodeling of the female pelvic floor. Dr. Moalli has been directly or indirectly funded by the NIH since entering medical school in 1986. She progressed from the Medical Scientist Training Program to the Women’s Reproductive Health and Career Development Program (K 12) to become independently funded in several R01 grants and a co-Investigator on three U01 awards. She has over 73 peer reviewed publications and 8 book chapters. Her publications are equally divided between her laboratory work and her participation in multicenter trials.

Dr. Moalli is director of one of the only laboratories in the United States that employs a basic science approach to study mechanisms that contribute to the development of pelvic organ prolapse and the development of graft materials for use in Urogynecologic procedures. Over the last decade, her major research focus has been on understanding the pathogenesis of synthetic mesh complications which cause significant morbidity in affected women and have been the target of litigation world-wide. In addition, her group is working on the development of graft materials that can be used to repair pelvic organ prolapse and urinary incontinence. Her other research interests include mechanisms of maternal birth injury and improving outcomes in women injured during childbirth. Over the past 12 years she has independently organized a multi-disciplinary team with expertise in connective tissue remodeling, soft tissue mechanics, smooth muscle physiology and material sciences. This has afforded her the advantage of addressing each research question using a comprehensive multi-disciplinary approach. Dr. Moalli’s work is unique in that she draws on data obtained from multiple systems to answer each research question. She uses human biopsies from a specific pelvic tissues obtained during surgery and then complements these analyses with tissues from nonhuman primates to study the entire structure and rodents to study the entire tissue complex in which the structure is a component.

Dr. Moalli is currently a Co-Investigator in the Urinary Incontinence Treatment Network (UITN) and the Pelvic Floor Disorders Network. As a member of these networks, she participates in multi-centered trials comparing outcomes in women undergoing surgeries to repair urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse. Dr. Moalli has been extensively involved in teaching college and medical students, graduate students, residents and clinical fellows. Her greatest teaching commitment is to the fellows in the Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery Program at the University of Pittsburgh. As Director of the program, she is responsible for ensuring that the fellows have the appropriate training as clinicians, surgeons and researchers to rise to the top of their field.

**About Magee-Womens Research Institute at the University of Pittsburgh**

 Magee-Womens Research Institute (MWRI) is a home for University of Pittsburgh medical research scientists who are engaged in health research that spans reproductive biology and development and diverse aspects of women’s health. Key physiological processes and diseases that span a woman’s entire life cycle are pursued – from the formation of germ cells and embryos through childhood and adolescence to reproductive life, pregnancy, menopause, and aging. MWRI researchers devoted to women’s health research and medical research use a variety of basic, translational, and clinical investigative tools that support our central mission to: advance knowledge in the field of reproductive biology and medicine, translate discoveries into improved health for women and their infants, and train the next generation of reproductive health research scholars.

**About the Female Pelvic Medicine & Reconstructive Surgery program and**

**Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC and the University of Pittsburgh**

The fellowship in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery at Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC and the University of Pittsburgh is designed as a three year curriculum for individuals who have completed residency training in obstetrics and gynecology or urology. The ideal candidate for this fellowship program will be an individual with a strong interest in pursuing a career in academic medicine to include excellence and leadership in education, research, and patient care.

Magee-Womens Hospital of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center is the tertiary referral center for obstetrics and gynecology in the tri-state area of western Pennsylvania, northern West Virginia, and eastern Ohio. The hospital contains 263 adult beds, 80 nursery beds, and 63 neonatal intensive care beds. Eighteen percent of the population of Allegheny County and the nine surrounding counties is over the age of 65, making it one of the oldest communities in the country. Thus, it is a major clinical resource for women with all types of pelvic floor disorders. The high quality and innovative approaches to women’s health care were acknowledged when Magee-Womens Hospital was designated as one of the six original “Centers of Excellence” by the Office of Women’s Health of the Department of Health and Human Services in 1996.

