



DIVISION OF GASTROENTEROLOGY

GI Digest

May-July 2008
Volume 3, Issue 2

GI Faculty/Fellows In the News at DDW



Grace Elta completed her term as President of ASGE. She was interviewed for Digestive Disease Week held in San Diego from May 19-23. ASGE has made great strides under her leadership, in expanding educational offerings and advanced procedural workshops to its members, furthering the ongoing improvement and functionality of the ASGE website, growing international membership and interacting with international organizations such as the European Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy. Looking back over the last year, Dr. Elta noted, "It has been really remarkable during my presidency, just to see the incredible development and talent of our physician volunteers in all areas of the specialty. It has been our greatest strength and I am really proud to be a part of that."



Bill Chey, section chair for the AGA Institute Clinical Practice Council commented on the implication of CT colonography as a screening modality for future GI practice. Accuracy is the top concern of emerging colorectal cancer screening modalities, and CT colonography is the most promising that's slated for commercial availability in the near future. A particularly promising utility is the ability to screen patients at higher risk for colonoscopy such as those on warfarin sodium. CT colonoscopy will reduce the number of screening colonoscopies, yet a substantial percentage of those patients will have either a reported or real polyp, that requires colonoscopy, said Chey.

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Michelle Anderson, Director of the ASGE Annual Postgraduate Course indicated that while there has never been a greater focus on practicing evidence-based medicine in gastrointestinal endoscopy, evidence is still thin in many areas, making existing expertise crucial. In the absence of data, physicians need to look to experts and their individual approaches to problems to inform their decisions. "Physicians need to be aware of what data is out there and how it relates and applies to their own populations. However, it is also important to know at what point that data ends and clinical experience steps in to guide our management."





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AGA INSTITUTE CLINICAL AND RESEARCH SYMPOSIUMS CHAIRED

- **BOB FONTANA, ANTIVIRAL AGENTS FOR CHRONIC HBV & HCV**
- **RICH KWON, 1)CLINICAL CHRONIC PANCREATITIS: DEVELOPMENTS IN DIAGNOSIS AND ETIOLOGY 2) ENDOSCOPY IN THE ELDERLY**
- **RICK SAAD, ENDOSCOPY IN THE ELDERLY**
- **ANNA LOK, CHANGING FACE OF HEPATITIS B AS A RESULT OF POPULATION MIGRATION**
- **BILL CHEY, 1)DISTINGUISHED ABSTRACT PLENARY RESEARCH FORUM FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE SESSION 2)LATE BREAKING ABSTRACT RESEARCH FORUM**

AGA INSTITUTE POSTGRADUATE COURSE - ORAL SESSIONS

Bill Chey

- Functional Dyspepsia: Evidence-Based Management
- IBS: New Insights into Pathogenesis and Therapies

Anna Lok

- Hepatitis B: Emerging Therapies in 2008

AASLD RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Hari Conjeevaram

- Viral Hepatitis

Jorge Marrero

- Hepatobiliary Neoplasia

FACULTY PARTICIPATION

- 12 of our faculty served as abstract reviewers.
- There were 95 abstracts submitted by 28 GI Faculty
- There were 12 abstracts by 7 Fellows at DDW.

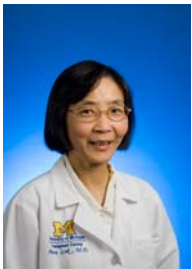
WAY TO GO!

Awards and Recognition

Peter Higgins was named leader of a UEGW/WCOG (United European Gastroenterology Week/ World Congress of Gastroenterology) working group to produce consensus guidelines on the use of biologics in IBD for presentation at the October 2009 UEGW/WCOG meeting in London.



An inauguration celebration for the appointment of **Anna Lok** to the position of Associate Chair for Clinical Research will be held on October 2 in the Ford Auditorium around 4 PM. Time to be confirmed at a later date.



Juanita Merchant received a NIH MERIT Award for the continuation of her research on the Transcriptional control of Gastrin. She also recently presented “The role of Sonic Hedgehog in Gastric Homeostasis and Cancer” for the NIH Director’s meeting in Bethesda, MD



April Grudell, second year fellow, was honored with the Young Investigator Award from the Functional Brain Gut Research Group



“You’re Super” Award Winners

☺ Shannon Byrnes	Joe Elmunzer
☺ Grace Elta	Peter Higgins
☺ Cyrus Piraka	Richard Saad
☺ Pratima Sharma	Kim Turgeon

Grants Awarded

- **Michelle Anderson**, University of Pittsburgh subcontract for EDRN pancreatic cancer reference set, [NIH](#)
- **Michelle Anderson**, a study to investigate the effect of 2 doses of CREON on maldigestion in patients with exocrine pancreatic insufficiency due to chronic pancreatitis, [Solvay](#).
- **Bill Chey**, therapeutics Averapamil in the treatment of IBS-D patients, including open-label study, [AGI](#)
- **Matt DiMagno**, R21, Pioglitazone therapy for endocrine and exocrine disease in alcoholic patients, [NIH](#)
- **Peter Higgins**, an observational prospective study to identify clinical, endoscopic and/or biological predictors that correlate with histopathologic findings on subjects with moderate to severe ulcerative colitis, [Otsuka](#)
- **Peter Higgins**, proof of concept study to assess the efficacy, safety and tolerability of two single IV infusions of AIN457 in patients with moderate to severe Crohn’s disease, [Novartis](#)
- **Dahlia Awais and Peter Higgins**, the perception of colon cancer risk in patients with ulcerative colitis, [P&G](#)
- **John Kao**, R03, the impact of *H. Pylori* infection on inflammatory bowel disease susceptibility, [NIH](#)
- **Anna Lok**, Brown University subcontract for Hepatitis B virus escape mutants, [NIH](#)
- **Sameer Saini**, time trends in colonoscopy quality in the US between 2000 and 2006, [ACG](#)
- **Phil Schoenfeld**, T32 training program in gastrointestinal epidemiology, [NIH](#)
- **Michael Volk**, a study of medication-making process in liver transplant selection committees, [Greenwall Foundation](#)
- **Ellen Zimmermann**, funding for GI Fellows educational support, [TAP](#), [Santaurus](#) and [Takeda](#)

Welcome! New GI Faculty



Joe Elmunzer, Clinical Lecturer

Clinical Interests: Diagnosis and treatment of pancreatic and biliary disorders; advanced diagnostic and therapeutic endoscopy

Research Interests: Developmental endoscopy including NOTES, risk stratification in upper GI bleeding, prevention of post endoscopic retrograde colangiopancreatography pancreatitis



Sameer Saini, Clinical Lecturer

Clinical Interests: Colorectal cancer

Research Interests: Endoscopy quality assessment and improvement



Pratima Sharma, Clinical Lecturer

Clinical Interests: Liver transplantation, treatment and diagnosis of viral hepatitis, hepatocellular carcinoma, end stage liver disease, and complications of portal hypertension

Research Interests: Liver transplantation outcomes pertaining to liver allocation, waiting list mortality, post-transplant survival and renal failure. Epidemiology, pathophysiology, and treatment of recurrent hepatitis C

Welcome! New GI Staff

Karen Mikich joined the GI Division in August as Administrative Assistant to Drs. Fred Askari, Hellan Kang and Anna Lok. She is filling the position opened with the departure of Cindy Zeitz



Patricia (Trish) Nowling joined the GI Division in June as Administrative Assistant to Drs. Aldrich, Conjeevaram Fontana, Hasler, Rizk, Saad, Scheiman Sharma and Wamsteker. She is filling the position opened with the departure of Rusty Andres



Jessica A. White has joined as Clinical Subjects Coordinator on Peter Higgins' clinical research team in MSRB I, replacing Meg Chaudhary who returned to India



Farewell Ezra!

Ezra Burstein completed his GI Fellowship at the University of Michigan and he has been with us since 2002. He is leaving in August for University of Texas Southwestern in Dallas. We wish him the very best in his future endeavors.



Welcome! New GI Fellows



Advanced Endoscopy Fellows

Amaar Ghazale from the Mayo Clinic



Craig Womeldorph from the U.S. Naval Hospital, Jacksonville, FL



Third-year GI fellow (transfer)

Soojong Hong from UCLA, former University of Michigan Resident



First-year GI Fellows

Constantinos (Costas) Anastassiades from the Mayo Clinic



Jennifer (Jen) Jorgensen from Madigan Army Medical Center, Med School at UM



Jason (Jay) Lewis from University of Virginia



Mina Oh from Cedars-Sinai, Los Angeles



Ryan Stidham from University of Pennsylvania.



Eugene Zolotarevsky from the University of Michigan



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Upcoming GI Events

The ACG Annual Scientific Meeting
and Postgraduate Course
Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center
October 3-8, 2008 - Orlando, Florida

At AACG 2008 you'll find:

- Numerous educational sessions that will provide you ways to enhance patient care and improve efficiency in your practice
- Networking events to connect with old colleagues and make new contacts
- Cutting-edge research presented by colleagues from the U.S. and abroad
- An exhibit hall showcasing the latest advances in technology and therapeutics

**AGA Institute Clinical Congress of
Gastroenterology and Hepatology**

Practical Solutions for the Practicing Gastroenterologist
Hotel Reservation/Early Bird Registration Deadline: Dec. 31
Reduced registration fee for trainees

Date/Location

January 23 - 25 2009 — Las Vegas, NV

Congress Directors

William D. Chey, MD, AGAF, FACG

University of Michigan Health Systems

Nicholas J. Shaheen, MD, MPH, AGAF

University of North Carolina School of Medicine

Course Description

The AGA Institute's Clinical Congress will present you with a two-day, in-depth review of the major clinical topics faced in the field today. Designed **by** GI clinicians **for** GI clinicians, the Congress will explore new developments in the detection, management and treatment of a variety of GI and liver disorders that will immediately impact your practice. More relaxed and informal than other large clinical meetings, the Congress will provide unparalleled access to the field's most respected experts who will update and expand your knowledge of GI's most challenging issues, such as CTC, acute pancreatitis, functional bowel diseases and more. You will also have extensive opportunities to interact with both the faculty and other like-minded clinical gastroenterologists.