OB-GYN Special Delivery  ❖ News for Alumni and Friends

Department to Hold First Annual UF OB-GYN Alumni Association Meeting This Spring

Our new OB-GYN Alumni Association is set to host its first ever Annual Meeting at the Gaylord Palms Resort in Orlando, Florida, on March 26-28, 2010. Join with current and former faculty, residents, and alumni for this inaugural OB-GYN reunion featuring lectures and discussion on current medical topics and exciting innovations in our field, as well as time for reminiscing and recreation with former colleagues, friends and family.

We will begin with a Welcome Reception/Dinner on Friday evening, followed on Saturday morning by CME educational sessions and workshops. Saturday afternoon is free for family activities. Saturday evening will offer a reception and dinner for all to enjoy. Sunday morning will conclude with final sessions and the Alumni Association Business Meeting.

Families will be free to enjoy all the entertainment that is available in an exciting city such as Orlando. For meeting registration and further information, please visit http://drgator.ufl.edu/alumni-affairs or e-mail hpeudi@ufl.edu.

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Special points of interest:
- Grand Opening of Shands South Tower for Cancer and Trauma
- New faculty joining the Department
- Expansion continues for clinics and research facilities
- Plans under discussion for new IVF Lab
- Resident applicant interviews now underway

Notes from the Chair

R. Stan Williams, MD

With AGH closing and the south tower opening, we will have another 600-800 deliveries on L&D, about half from Drs. Kreinest and Stewart and the others from FP and Dr. Buchanan’s private practice. We will have a total of 40 private beds on 35 and 6 East, and 12 LDRs on 34. 6 East will be a combination of healthy postpartum, gyn and gyn onc patients, except for those on chemo who will be on the 8th floor. The new tower is a gorgeous facility, and I know our patients will love it. We are also in the final stages of planning for a replacement to the Magnolia Parke office which will expand our off site practice from 10,000 sq ft to about 16,000 sq ft and allow closing of the Ayers practice site, merger of Drs. Kreinest and Stewart’s practice with ours, and expansion of faculty. With opening of the south tower ORs (12), gyn surgery will move out of L&D and into the main ORs in the north tower. We will expand our block time at FSC for outpatients.

We will be interviewing two urogyn candidates and have contracted with a search firm to help us with the MFM and Oncology searches. Dr. Moawad, fellowship-trained in minimally invasive surgery, will be joining us this summer. We are in discussions with a generalist soon to move here with her spouse who is part of the new Cancer Center Directors team. Dr. Byun has hit the ground running and is almost at full speed. We’ve recently completed renovations of the Wound Center research labs and will begin renovations on faculty and staff offices in mid Dec. Our new website just became active and soon we will rollout a patient website for infertility services. We will start seeing new infertility patients in Leesburg in Jan and have started a campaign to recruit patients from England and Europe for IVF.

OB-GYN Ranked Again in Nation’s Top 50 Depts

Our department has again been listed by this year’s US News and World Report as one of the top 50 departments of OB-GYN in the nation, with our ranking for this past year climbing up to 27th. This is now our highest ranking yet! Once again, this recognition is a direct reflection of the quality of care provided by our clinicians.

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The field of gynecologic surgery has undergone a significant transformation over the last 10-20 years. Abdominal hysterectomies, retropubic urethropexies, and open procedures for patients with adnexal masses are being replaced with laparoscopically assisted vaginal hysterectomies, laparoscopic supravcervical hysterectomies, total laparoscopic hysterectomies, robotic hysterectomies, mid-urethral slings, and operative laparoscopy. Benefits of minimally invasive procedures are significant and include decreased postoperative pain, shortened or no postoperative hospital stays, and an early return to routine activities.

The Gynecology Division continues to pride itself on performing and training residents in the technique of vaginal hysterectomy, the least invasive form of hysterectomy. Unfortunately, not all patients are candidates for vaginal hysterectomy. We are also able to offer our patients LAVH, LSH, TLH, and robotic hysterectomy based on each patient’s circumstances.

Michael Lukowski, who joined the division earlier this year and has significant robotic experience, Shireen Madani Sims, and Linda Morgan are leading our robotic efforts, while Drs. Madani Sims, Lukowski and Davis are teaching the residents to perform LAVHs, LSHs, and TLHs.

Dr. Sharon Byun joined the GYN division in September and has significant laparoscopic and robotic experience and will contribute to the GYN division’s minimally invasive surgery efforts.

Regarding Urogynecology, Patty McKey continues to perform urodynamic studies and to assist us greatly in the management of our patients with dysfunction of the pelvic floor. While physical therapy is an option for some patients with urinary incontinence, the majority with stress incontinence are treated with mid-urethral slings. We primarily place trans-obturator tapes and perform tension-free vaginal tapes for patients with poor urethral tone or for those patients considered to be at higher risk for failure. Dr. Davis recently attended a conference on single-incision slings and we will consider this option.

For patients with prolapse, sacrospinous ligament fixation and abdominal sacrocolpopexy continue to be the mainstays of our surgical approach. Given the concerns of potential complications associated with placement of synthetic mesh in the vagina, we approach the use of such mesh with caution in our patients with pelvic organ prolapse. We currently offer placement of a biologic mesh to patients who have failed a traditional colporrhaphy, patients without adequate native tissue, and patients considered to be at high risk for recurrent prolapse. We are considering use of synthetic meshes through single incisions in select patients.

For hysteroscopic procedures, we continue to perform endometrial ablation by circulating heated saline. Dr. David Iglesias, one of our chief residents, did his Resident Research Day project last year on our experience with this technique and found it to be safe and effective. We are also doing hysteroscopic tubal sterilizations in the clinic. Dr. Judy Simms-Condan has been instrumental in establishing this program.

We continue to teach residents the basic techniques of vaginal and abdominal surgery and are using lab instruction to teach laparoscopic skills with labs in the fall and spring. During the first lab the interns each receive a personal laparoscopic trainer kit with a webcam that attaches to their laptop to practice basic laparoscopic skills on their own time. This year we will begin using the inanimate laparoscopic training lab at the VA Hospital where residents can be exposed to more advanced surgical skills such as suturing. Finally, the 3rd- and 4th-year residents participate in a porcine lab in the spring where all of the laparoscopic concepts they have been exposed to in earlier labs can be applied.

The Gynecology Division continues to expand and evolve. Dr. Nash Moawad, in his final year of a minimally invasive surgery fellowship at Magee Women’s Hospital in Pittsburgh, will be joining us in July of 2010 and will become section head of minimally invasive surgery. We are also actively recruiting a Urogynecology section head who can lead our efforts in minimally invasive pelvic reconstructive surgery.

MFM Expands

For years we have been asking for private postpartum beds. Now it will be a reality! With the closure of AGH and opening of south tower, we will have 2 units for our postpartum and gyn beds. Multiple scenarios were examined to see if we could keep all of our patients in the north tower and also have private beds. The only scenario that works is the following: Our existing Mother-Baby unit has 18 rooms which will be used as private rooms for antepartum and postpartum patients. In addition, we will have the 6 East wing of the south tower for well postpartum and gyn beds with 23 rooms. Simulations have been done showing that our expected volume in both OB and Gyn can be accommodated 99% of the time without resorting to a semiprivate bed. We have a lot of details to work out, and a task force with multiple working groups has been formed who will be identifying all of the issues related to this move. We hope to be adding additional mid level providers to help us cover this volume and split service. We believe our patients will really enjoy the new tower and private rooms.
Fertility Preservation for Cancer Patients for Oncofertility

Reproductive medicine has begun to embrace a new field of oncofertility. Advances in cancer therapeutics have significantly decreased the mortality rate among young cancer patients, with nearly 75% now surviving their disease. Yet these powerful life saving therapies also threaten the fertility of these patients, even as they face the real possibility of life after cancer. Oncofertility involves the intersection of oncology, pediatrics, reproductive science and medicine, biomechanics, material science into a discipline called oncofertility. The goal of this effort is to apply science and clinical medicine to better treat the fertility threat posed by cancer treatment. The UF Reproductive Medicine group is part of the 5-year NIH funded Oncofertility Consortium, a National, Interdisciplinary Initiative designed to explore reproductive options for patients diagnosed with cancer or other serious diseases. It is an exciting collaboration between oncologists and reproductive endocrinologists to develop opportunities for training a new oncofertility scholar.

UF Reproductive Medicine’s successful IVF and Egg Donation Programs provide patients with a full range of the most cutting-edge assisted reproductive technologies available in a warm, friendly and compassionate environment. As members of an integrated academic medical center, UF’s reproductive medicine physicians acknowledge that beyond top-notch medical treatment, cancer patients and families need a personal understanding and individualized care to help them.

Dr. Orhan Bukulmez, Division Director and Medical Director of the IVF Program, has many years of experience with assisted reproductive techniques and has developed a short protocol designed for the individual, depending on the amount of time available in the overall cancer treatment plan. It is extremely important with limited time before starting treatment that protocols be developed to limit time delays between stimulation and cancer therapy, as well as treatment protocols to minimize the risk for ovarian hyperstimulation. Our program also has in place an IRB-approved protocol for oocyte freezing, which involves hormone injections to stimulate growth of eggs removed from the ovaries as an outpatient procedure, frozen immediately and stored. Egg freezing offers fertility preservation to women who do not have a partner and do not want to use donor sperm. Modified stimulation protocols are in place for women with hormone sensitive cancers to limit the increase in estrogen levels that result from hormone injections given to stimulate the growth of eggs. Treatment results in estrogen levels only slightly higher than in natural menstrual cycles, but still yields adequate numbers of eggs.

Dr. R. Stan Williams is Principle Investigator of the NIH-funded research grant whose main goals include how to optimally store and recover gonadal tissue, trying to promote primate derived immature follicle growth and oocyte maturation in a 3-dimensional environment, and to cryopreserve and grow human ovarian follicles. These are only a few of the multifaceted aspects of multi-center research efforts. The specific protocol at UF involves ovarian tissue freezing, an experimental treatment strategy involving outpatient surgery to remove an ovary that is frozen for future use. Current research is focused on developing methods to stimulate the growth and development of eggs in the laboratory.

Dr. Alice Rhoton-Vlasak is actively involved in an awareness campaign on the fertility preservation program for cancer patients. She has lectured throughout the region to both local community groups and medical and oncology groups to improve awareness for patients about the options that are available. Oncologists and hematologists are made aware of the option of sperm banking, which is offered routinely through our reproductive medicine clinic. Other options include embryo and egg banking, ovarian tissue banking, testicular tissue banking and ovarian suppression.

The Oncofertility Program includes a specialty trained fertility urologist, Dr. Sijo Parekattil, whose involvement in this program has allowed us to offer additional services including testicular sperm extraction or testicular tissue freezing.

Department Research Recognitions

After 20 years as a UF researcher, Gregory Schultz, Ph.D., has been named as Director of the COM Medical Sciences Research Program. He will oversee the college’s research track, control funding, and select honor students.

Nasser Chegini, Ph.D., is invited as a Plenary Speaker at the 14th Congress of GYN Endocrinology in Florence, Italy, next year on the topic of “Fibroids.”

- Dr. Priscilla Phillips won 1st and 4th place awards as first author on 2 abstracts at the annual combined Symposium on Advanced Wound Care and Wound Healing Society in Dallas. She also won 1st place abstract at the Biannual Meeting of National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel. Both are substantial recognitions for the Dept of OB-GYN and the Institute for Wound Research, chosen from over 250 other abstracts.
- Dr. Chegini was awarded a new NIH grant with funding of $250,000 for five years.
- Dr. Schultz received annual renewal of his NIH grant, also with additional funding of $250,000.

Welcome To Our New Residents

Jona Bandyopadhyay, born in Baton Rouge, LA, earned her BS in Biomedical Engineering from the Johns Hopkins Univ in 2004 and spent a postgraduate year conducting research on the molecular basis of epilepsy. In 2005 Jona began studies at Medical College of Georgia with interests in international health. In 2007 she did a rotation in the Tropical Med Dept of Univ Central Venezuela.

Lindsay Malloch, from Toronto, Canada, graduated as a national merit scholar from Brown University in 2004, then collaborated in Toronto on a research project on HPV-related cancer in HIV-positive men. As a student at the UF College of Medicine, she was a member of AMA and AMSA, served on medical mission trips to Yucatan & South Africa, and was chosen for the Chapman Honor Society.

Alejandro Rodriguez, MD, a native of Caracas, Venezuela, and now a resident of the US, completed medical school in 1998 at the Universidad Central de Venezuela in the top 5th of his class. As a resident in OB-GYN at the UCV Women’s Hospital, he graduated first in his class in 2003 and joined the faculty. He intends to become Board-certified in the U.S. and pursue subspecialty training.

Ashley Walsh of Clearwater, FL, received her BS in Exercise Science magna cum laude from FSU and was elected to the H. Glenn Honor Society. A student at UF College of Medicine, she has served as President of the local chapter AMWA, member of AMA, and as student rep to the LCME Site Visit Task Force. Ashley distinguished herself by her outstanding performance in the OB-GYN clerkship.
Dr. Sharon Byun joins the OB/GYN faculty after 5 years at the University of Pennsylvania where she was Assistant Professor of Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology in the General OB/GYN Division. She places high priority on resident education and received the CREOG Faculty Teaching Award for Excellence in Resident Education in 2009 at Penn. A Philadelphia native, she received her medical degree from Temple University and completed her residency in OB-GYN at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. She served as administrative chief resident and upon graduation, she received the Resident of the Year, Howard Lees Kent Memorial Prize for Outstanding Scholarship and Best Research Awards. Among her interests are Minimally Invasive Surgery including DaVinci Robotic Surgery and gynecologic care of breast cancer survivors including women with hereditary BRCA 1 and 2 gene mutations. She is also skilled in operative vaginal delivery with forceps and is interested in preserving resident training of this valuable skill.

Drs. Richard Kreinest and David Stewart, formerly in practice at the Ayers Building and AGH, as of November 1, 2009, are now operating at Shands UF and will continue to participate in all Department of OB-GYN activities as members of the Division of Gynecology. Dr. Kreinest earned his MD at the University of Cincinnati and completed his residency at Wright State University. Dr. Stewart earned his MD from the Univ Technologica de Santiago, then completed his residency at Texas Tech University. Both are Board certified and Fellows of the ACOG.

Tiffany Doering joins our department as Director of Development. Working closely with the COM Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, Tiffany serves as the Dept fund-raiser and contact person for donations to the MAKE A GIFT program. Her experience in organizing events, her contacts and her enthusiasm for Women’s Health make her a great asset to the department. For more information, please contact Tiffany at 352-273-9061 or tdoering@ufl.edu.

JOHNSON, JR. John W.C., 79, of Gainesville, FL, died June 18, 2009, of natural causes at his home in Auburn, Maine. He had an illustrious career as a physician, serving as Director of Maternal and Fetal Medicine at Johns Hopkins University from 1973 to 1981 and as the Harry Prystowsky Professor of OB/GYN, UF, from 1982 to 1999. Recognized as Outstanding Teacher at UF in the 1990s, he served as President of the South Atlantic Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in 2000. He published 82 scientific papers and numerous book chapters throughout much of his career. In his medical practice he served patients with high risk pregnancies for 43 years. He married Ann Bell in 1953 and raised four children over 54 years of marriage. Well known for his humor, gracious demeanor and family devotion, he will be greatly missed by all.

MAKE A GIFT. Please support education, research and patient-care programs in the UF College of Medicine Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology by making a gift and/or pledge of $_________ to:

- 003343 OB/GYN General Education & Research Fund
- 016065 OncoFertility Program Fund

You can also make a gift online at: [https://www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/FundDetail.asp?FundCode=003343](https://www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/FundDetail.asp?FundCode=003343) [https://www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/FundDetail.asp?FundCode=016065](https://www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/FundDetail.asp?FundCode=016065)

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