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EYE SIGHTINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

DR. ROBERT AVERY was awarded the American Academy of Ophthalmology’s Senior Achievement Award for his “commitment to advancing the profession and positively impacting patients’ eye health.”

DR. ROBERT AVERY was also an invited guest speaker at University of Vienna’s Retina Meeting and at a meeting in Zurich, where he spoke about his pioneering research with DRCR network’s protocol S study used to treat proliferative diabetic retinopathy. Dr. Avery was the first physician to use anti-VEGF agents in the treatment of this disease more than 10 years ago. He also spoke at the Hawaii Eye Meeting discussing micropulse laser and lectured at ARVO and the Aspen Retinal Detachment Meeting. Last, he attended a meeting of previous chief residents of the Wilmer Institute at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

DR. ALESSANDRO CASTELLARIN attended the Aspen Retinal Detachment Society Meeting and presented research related to macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy in Los Angeles. This summer, he will lecture on macular degeneration, vascular occlusions and retinal detachments in Italy and will attend the American Society of Retina Specialists Meeting in San Francisco.



DR. DILSHER DHOOT served on an expert panel at the Vitreous Buckle Society Meeting in Miami and presented talks at the North Coast Retina Meeting in Cleveland, ARVO in Seattle and smaller conferences in New Jersey and Virginia.

DR. DANTE PIERAMICI presented at the Vail Vitrectomy Meeting on rational post-operative restrictions following retinal detachment repair. He also presented research on the pathophysiology of geographic atrophy and potential therapies to local retina specialists in Palo Alto and Phoenix.

DR. NATHAN STEINLE has given educational lectures at the American Uveitis Society Meeting in Utah, the University of Kentucky, the Cleveland Clinic, and in Seattle. His presentation at ARVO was given a prestigious Hot Topic distinction and won an international award for Best of ARVO. He also attended retina meetings in Miami and Chicago.

CALIFORNIA RETINA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

525 E. Micheltorena Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

REGENERATIVE THERAPIES AT CRC OFFER HOPE TO REDUCE BLINDNESS

Regenerative medicine aims to deliver specific cells or cell products to diseased tissue with the hopes of restoring function of that tissue. One such therapy getting a lot of press today is *Stem Cell Therapy*. The use of stem cells has long been touted as a potential therapy for the treatment or prevention of many eye diseases. What was for decades possible only in science fiction novels is now on the threshold of real-world applications. California Retina Consultants is proud to be participating in pioneering two regenerative cell therapy studies – both for the treatment of advanced AMD.

One, a geographic atrophy study, is sponsored by Regenerative Patch Technologies in collaboration with the

University of Southern California and UCSB. This trial is already recruiting patients in Los Angeles and CRC will participate as a follow-up site within the next few months. The trial uses differentiated human embryonic stem cells, which will be seeded on a membrane and implanted in the retina to reduce the progression of geographic atrophy. The hope is that this treatment will improve the structure and function of the retina.

The second study, sponsored by Janssen, will use more differentiated human umbilical cord cells to treat geographic atrophy secondary to dry AMD. These cells will be injected sub-retinally with the hope that they will survive and help sustain the retinal pigment epi-

thelial layer, photoreceptors, and other cells in the neurosensory retina. With this approach, the implanted cells will function in more supportive roles as opposed to direct cellular replacement.

CRC is excited to be able to offer this progressive research to our patients in California. Trial space is limited, so please contact the CRC study department to inquire about enrollment and eligibility at (805) 963-1648 (ask for Gina, Sarah, or Gabe).



InsideRetina

ANNUAL EDUCATION MEETING WELCOMES THREE WORLD CLASS RETINA SPECIALISTS

VOLUME 2, 2016



For the first time in its 15-year history, the Annual Education Meeting hosted by the California Retina Research Foundation welcomes three prominent guest speakers, who will share their views on the latest advancements in the treatment of retinal diseases.

Dr. Dean Elliot, associate director of the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary (Harvard University Medical School), will speak specifically about new options for patients with retinal detachments. Dr. Andrew Moshfeghi, associate professor of ophthalmology at the University of Southern California will speak on the impact of cataract surgery on patients with macular diseases. His brother, Dr. Darius Moshfeghi, professor of ophthalmology at Stanford University will discuss Zika, microcephaly and ophthalmic repercussions of the disease. The meeting will also hold a mini-symposium on diabetes, providing updates on two interesting trials sponsored by the DRCR- NEI network, a surgical/case presentation panel, and other lectures, including the cutting edge research on stem cell therapies for retinal diseases.

The California Retina Research Foundation (CRRF) has hosted this meeting for the past 14 years, educating local ophthalmologists, optometrists and associated health care professionals about forward-looking therapies for retinal diseases. CRRF is proud to work in partnership with the National Institute for Health (NIH), Johns Hopkins University, USC, and various pharmaceutical companies in providing patients on the

Drs. See, Nasir, Couvillion, Avery, Castellarin, Pieramici, Dhoot and Steinle surround Dr. Steven Yeh, last year’s invited speaker from the Emory Eye Center, who spoke about the Ebola virus in the eye.



Drs. Darius Moshfeghi, Andrew Moshfeghi and Dean Elliot bring their knowledge and expertise from their respective institutions: Stanford Medical Center, USC Roski Eye Institute and Harvard Eye Institute, when they address the ophthalmic community in Santa Barbara.

Central Coast and Valley access to national and international clinical trials as well as early phase evaluations of promising treatments.

The meeting takes place on Saturday, September 24th at the Fess Parker Doubletree Resort in Santa Barbara and is open to eye care professionals. For more information or to register, visit www.californiaretinaresearch.org. Registration will open on July 1, 2016. Please feel free to contact Gabriel Gordon, director of the research foundation, at 805-884-5185 or gabe@californiaretinaresearch.org with any questions about this meeting.

RESEARCH STAFF WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES

The research department in Santa Barbara would like to welcome Tim Do and Kevin Card. Tim graduated from UCSB in June with a bachelor's degree in biopsychology, and a minor in applied psychology. In his spare time, Tim enjoys swimming, hiking and playing the piano. He hopes to absorb as much as he can at CRRF and apply to medical school in the future. Kevin Card is a senior biochemistry major at UCSB, also planning for a future in medicine. His interest in the field was sparked after undergoing a traumatic ophthalmic experience. He began his time at CRC as an intern, and is looking forward to being an official staff member in the research department. Beyond school and work, Kevin plays the sitar in UCSB's Indian Music Ensemble. He also enjoys spending time outside camping and paddle boarding.



Tim Do recently joined the research staff at the California Retina Research Foundation where he looks forward to learning all he can before applying to medical school.



UCSB senior Kevin Card is delighted to get promoted from interning to joining the California Retina Research Foundation staff.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



ERICA MORASSE left CRC in April of 2016 to spend time traveling in Southeast Asia before starting graduate school for psychology.

MICHELLE HANNA left CRC in May of 2015 to enroll in a Master's program in Nursing at UC San Francisco. She has had the opportunity to do clinical rotations at Stanford and is enjoying all of the good food and culture that the city has to offer. While studying for her RN license test she is also planning her wedding as she recently got engaged!



LISHA WAN left CRC in June of 2014 to start a Doctor of Optometry program at Southern California College of Optometry. Over the last two years she has worked with colleagues to run vision screenings at local schools. Lisha starts seeing patients in primary care this summer and is also recently engaged.

We are grateful for all past research employees and wish them the best in their future endeavors.



DOCTORS AND RESEARCH STAFF SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE AT ONE OF THE LARGEST, NATIONAL EYE RESEARCH MEETINGS

Researchers at CRC hit the Pacific Northwest this past May to attend the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) annual conference in Seattle, Washington. ARVO was founded by 73 ophthalmologists in 1928, and has since grown to become the largest and most respected eye and vision research organization in the world. Drs. Avery, Pieramici, Steinle and Dhoot joined over 10,000 other attendees at the Seattle convention center along with research staff members Sarah Fishbein, Jack Giust, Larissa Halsell, Gina Hong and Dr. Gabriel Gordon.



Dr. Nathan Steinle delivered a lecture on vitreomacular traction syndrome (VMT), speaking about current treatments for VMT, such as ocriplasmin, fluid-gas exchange using C3F8 or SF6 gases, and surgical intervention. Dr. Steinle also educated a nearly packed room on a novel method for grading the severity of the traction he calls the 'California quake.'

Dr. Nathan Steinle lecturing at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) annual conference in Seattle

Dr. Dante Pieramici lectured on treatment strategies for diabetic macular edema (DME) and geographic atrophy associated with dry age-related macular degeneration. For the discussion on DME, Dr. Pieramici was part of a three-person panel that delved into the currently published research for treatments and practical clinical applications. The highlight however, was Dr. Pieramici's talk about the science behind lomalizumab, the drug being investigated in two phase III clinical trials, Chroma and Spectri. Lomalizumab is under development as a potential therapy for geographic atrophy associated with AMD. Lomalizumab was a hot topic at this year's convention, as there are currently no FDA-approved treatments for this blinding disorder and doctors are hopeful that this effective drug will gain approval.

Dr. Avery helped put together a seminar on the treatment of diabetic macular edema, neovascular (wet) macular degeneration, and retinal vein occlusion. He was one of five experts rendering their opinion on how to manage patients



CRC study coordinators Sarah Fishbein, Jack Giust, Larissa Halsell, and Gina Hong pose in front of the poster Sarah presented this year.

with these retinal diseases during this 90-minute special session. And CRC was excited to have Gina Hong and Sarah Fishbein present a research poster. The topic was a comparison of research findings versus real world findings. They found that the vision outcome for patients treated for DME does equate to the recent findings in DRCR's pivotal Protocol T trial. The research staff attended myriad lectures and presentations addressing treatments, new perspectives on disease causality, and insights into forthcoming research for a number of diseases and disorders of the retina. This professional development directly benefits patients as the CRC staff stays current on the latest treatment options.

Forthcoming trials that were discussed include the Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research Network's (DRCR.net) Protocol W, a new trial aimed at stopping high-risk diabetic retinopathy patients from developing the more severe form of the disease known as proliferative diabetic retinopathy or PDR. Drs. Pieramici and Dhoot, along with Dr. Gabriel Gordon and Jack Giust attended the investigator's meeting for the Chroma and Spectri trials. Currently CRC has roughly 25 patients enrolled between these two trials for dry AMD.

New details emerged during the investigator's meeting about an extension study that will take place once a subject has completed the Chroma or Spectri trials. All currently enrolled patients will be eligible to enroll in this new Omaspect trial, a trial in which everyone will receive the experimental drug lomalizumab. Additional trials for the drug are also planned if the results of these pivotal trials prove positive. This should enable more patients to be eligible for therapy, years before FDA approval.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORT GROUPS OFFER GUIDANCE, ADVICE AND SOLACE

The California Retina Research Foundation continues to offer two ongoing support groups to those who face the daily fears and challenges from visual impairment. Over the past few months, the group members have established a strong bond by sharing their personal struggles and learning from others how to cope with and manage their lifestyle changes.

The Bakersfield discussion group meets the 3rd Thursday of every other month. The next meeting will take place on Thursday July 21st from 5:00-6:00pm in the Bakersfield office. Mrs. Etta Robin, a licensed marriage and family therapist, voluntarily leads this support group. Etta shares that, "the meetings continue to provide ongoing genuine support and as we become better acquainted, I believe that the participants become increasingly comfortable sharing their assorted challenges with one another."

The Santa Barbara discussion group is held every other month and is led by the research team as well as Pam Beckman-Lyon, a licensed marriage and family therapist and a certified diabetes counselor. The next meeting takes place on Friday July 22nd from 10:00-11:00am in the 3rd floor conference room. At this meeting we will discuss how to establish and maintain a positive and proactive doctor-patient relationship. We will include tips on how to prepare for your doctor visits, dealing with wait times, and how to effectively communicate your concerns and needs to your health care providers.

When asked how these groups have been going, one member states, "My mother's vision and hearing are both severely impaired. With the struggles that accompany such loss, it has been helpful to come to this new educational support group not only to hear what the facilitators have prepared, but to also glean what the participants themselves bring to the discussions. Through these seminars my mother and I continue to expand our growing resources as we join others in coping with the hardships of vision loss."

We hope to eventually expand our discussion groups to local nursing homes and retirement communities so that we can bring together others in our community who live with the anxiety and frustration from vision loss but are unable to find transportation to our offices.

If you have questions regarding the Bakersfield support group, please contact Etta Robin at (661) 319-6604 or earob62@pacbell.net. For questions regarding the Santa Barbara support group, please contact Gina Hong or Sarah Fishbein at (805) 963-1648 or ginah@californiaretina.com and sarahf@californiaretina.com. The doors at California Retina Consultants are always open to those seeking support or wanting to learn how to manage their visual impairments. And not only do we encourage existing patients to attend, but welcome all who are interested!

EDUCATION & SUPPORT MEETING

FRIDAY, JULY.22.2016

Discussion led by: Pam Beckman-Lyon [A Certified Diabetes Counselor & Marriage and Family Therapist living with Diabetes & Visual Impairment]

Join us as we learn how to establish and maintain a positive and proactive relationship with your health care providers! Get support, questions answered, & connect with others who share similar concerns & experiences with the doctors they see for their visual complications from Macular Degeneration to Diabetic Retinopathy.



Join us on the 3rd floor Conference Room @

525 E. Micheltorena Santa Barbara

Time:

10:30AM-11:30AM

Refreshments will be provided

Family and friends welcome!



HAVE QUESTIONS? ASK FOR GINA OR SARAH: (805) 963-1648

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