



# Otolaryngology

## Department Ranked Ninth in NIH Funding

Recent data (FY 2006) released by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) shows that the WVU Department of Otolaryngology continues to rank ninth in the country among otolaryngology departments in amount of NIH funding. We were also ranked ninth in FY 2005 moving up from twelfth in FY 2004. The \$3.2 million in funding was received by the four research scientists in our Department led by George Spirou, PhD. Other Department researchers are Albert Berrebi, PhD, Peter Mathers, PhD, and Janet Cyr, PhD. The table to the right lists NIH research funding for otolaryngology in the United States.

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|---|---|
| 1. Johns Hopkins University, \$19,013,130             | 14. Baylor, \$1,730,458                                   |
| 2. Emory University, \$10,212,685                     | 15. Indiana Univ-Purdue Univ at Indianapolis, \$1,654,926 |
| 3. University of Michigan, \$8,863,320                | 16. University of Minnesota, \$1,279,851                  |
| 4. Oregon Health & Science University, \$7,599,653    | 17. Medical College of Wisconsin, \$1,225,690             |
| 5. Washington University, \$6,964,089                 | 18. University of Texas, \$1,076,822                      |
| 6. University of Pittsburgh, \$6,105,258              | 19. Stanford University, \$1,027,171                      |
| 7. University of Iowa, \$5,594,818                    | 20. New York University, \$893,337                        |
| 8. University of Washington, \$3,352,943              | 21. Wayne State University, \$821,920                     |
| <b>9. West Virginia University, \$3,287,233</b>       | 22. Columbia University, \$755,410                        |
| 10. Medical University of South Carolina, \$2,451,055 | 23. University of California San Francisco, \$715,439     |
| 11. Vanderbilt University, \$2,231,938                | 24. University of Arkansas, \$627,891                     |
| 12. University of North Carolina, \$2,098,299         | 25. Case Western, \$565,028                               |
| 13. University of Pennsylvania, \$1,914,059           |   |

FY 2006: Oct 1, 2005-Sept 30, 2006

## Hinerman Expands Otolaryngology Practice in Clarksburg

Ray Hinerman, DDS, MD, joined our faculty as a general otolaryngologist after completing his residency at WVU in 2005. He has been



Hinerman

busy working in our satellite clinics. Currently, he spends half his time in Clarksburg, where he shares an office with Dr. James Bryant, who has practiced for many years in Clarksburg. Dr.

Hinerman operates at United Hospital Center in Clarksburg providing local service to the people living in the Clarksburg area. Ray especially enjoys sinus surgery, which fits in well with Dr. Bryant, who is the past president of the American Academy of Otolaryngologic Allergy.

## Cyr is Selected to Design and Teach Prestigious National Course

The Biology of the Inner Ear laboratory/lecture course at the Marine Biology Laboratory at Woods Hole, Massachusetts, is a special course presented each year to introduce a select group of 15 students to the mysteries of the inner ear. Course directors Janet Cyr, Jeff Corwin and Jeff Holt, constructed an outstanding series of lectures, discussions, laboratories and demonstrations for the course that took place from August 19 to September 1, 2007.

Janet Cyr, PhD, joined the faculty of the Department of Otolaryngology in 2001 and was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure on July 1, 2007. Her field



Janet Cyr, PhD, second from left, presents a lecture at the Marine Biology Laboratory at Woods Hole, Mass.

of study involves the mechanism of transduction of signals on the tips of the hair cells of the cochlea. She is studying the tip-links that are involved in transferring mechanical stimuli into electrical stimuli.

# Tympanometry is Useful to Predict Success of Tympanic Membrane Repair in Children

Daniel Merenda, MD, who is currently a senior resident in the Otolaryngology Department, along with co-authors Kazunari Koike, PhD, Majid Shafiei, MD, and Hassan Ramadan, MD, MSc, recently published a clinically useful report entitled "Tympanometric Volume: A Predictor of Success of Tympanoplasty in Children." This report was presented at the Southern Section Meeting of the Triological Society in Naples, Florida, in January 2006, and published in *Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery* in February 2007.

Merenda and his colleagues studied 58 pediatric patients who underwent tympanoplasty between 1996 and 2004. Variables analyzed included perforation

size, presence of discharge from the ear, age, gender, middle ear findings, location of the perforation, and a variety of audiometric findings. The age of the patients ranged from 4 to 16 years with a mean age of 10.2 years. Follow-up ranged from 6 to 72 months with a mean of 14 months. Tympanometric volumes ranged from 0.7 to 6.0 cm<sup>3</sup>. The most common etiology for the perforation was a previous ventilation tube in 76% of the cases.

Success was defined as no evidence of tympanic membrane perforation via otoscopic examination and normal aeration of the middle ear. The overall success rate was 59%. For those children who had a successful outcome, the mean

tympanometric volume was 3.58 cm<sup>3</sup> compared to a mean of 2.3 cm<sup>3</sup> for the failures. The success rate was 89% for children with a tympanometric volume of 3 cm<sup>3</sup> or more compared with 34% for those with a volume of less than 3 cm<sup>3</sup>. When they looked at the 44 patients with an abnormal contralateral ear, only 19% of children who had a volume of less than 3 cm<sup>3</sup> had a successful result compared with an 87% rate of success for those who had a volume of 3 cm<sup>3</sup> or more. All other variables were statistically not significant. This study demonstrates that the tympanometric volume is a useful prognostic indicator when planning tympanoplasty in pediatric patients.

## Graduating Otolaryngology Residents Stay in West Virginia

Dr. Jenny Cross came to West Virginia after graduating from Meharry Medical School in Nashville, Tennessee. She and her husband Stephen enjoy West Virginia so much that they bought a farm outside Elkins and she started a practice at Davis Memorial Hospital. Elkins is located in the Appalachian Mountains two hours east of Morgantown. The only otolaryngologist in that area had left Elkins the previous year.

Dr. Jeremy Tiu responded to the tug of family ties and joined his

brother, Christopher Tiu, MD, and his father, Wilfredo Tiu, MD, in their otolaryngology practice in Wheeling.

Jenny and Jeremy are the first residency program graduates to open a private practice in the northern half of West Virginia since Dr. Joedy Daristotle settled in Fairmont in 1990. Dr. Daristotle has been a steady clinical faculty member who has served as a volunteer faculty member in our clinic every Thursday morning for the past 17 years.



From left: Dr. Jeremy Tiu, Dr. Stephen Wetmore, and Dr. Jenny Cross.

## Faculty



Mark Armeni, MD, FACS



Joedy Daristotle, MD



Charles Haislip, MD



Michael Hurst, MD, DDS



Hassan Ramadan, MD, FACS



Christopher Rassekh, MD

# WVU Neuroscientist Appointed as NIH Panel Chairperson

George Spirou, PhD, will serve as chairperson of the NIH Auditory System Study Section. Spirou is director of the WVU Center for Neuroscience and director of research in Otolaryngology. He holds NIH grants from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communicative Disorders and the National Center for Research Resources.

“We select members based on their achievement in their scientific discipline, which is evident by the quality of their research accomplishments, publication in scientific journals, and other honors,” said Toni Scarpa, MD, PhD, director for scientific



Spirou

review at NIH. Chairpersons are typically selected after being promoted from an ad hoc participant to a full committee member. They have often served two years of a four-year term before their promotion. The multidisciplinary committees normally consist of 20 permanent, and ten ad hoc members.

For more information on the WVU Center for Neurosciences, visit [www.hsc.wvu.edu/wvucn/](http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/wvucn/).

## Spirou Receives \$1.4M Grant for Auditory Research

West Virginia University neuroscientist George Spirou, PhD, has received a five-year, \$1.4 million grant from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders.

The grant will support research related to early development of the auditory system within the Sensory Neuroscience Research Center in the WVU Center for Neuroscience.

“The brain is a series of neural circuits that begin to establish connections at embryonic ages,” Spirou, director of the Center for Neuroscience, said. “We are funded to study early formation of synapses, the connection point between nerve cells, looking particularly at the auditory system. These synapses form before an animal can hear sound.”

“We also hope to find general

principles of synapse formation in early development,” he said. “This helps us better understand how genetic problems can result in developmental defects that affect brain function.” Developmental defects include blindness, deafness and autism.

This marks Spirou's second research project grant from the National Institutes of Health this year.

“There are increasing numbers of investigators within the Center for Neuroscience who study development of the nervous system,” Spirou said. “We not only want to understand the basic mechanisms of development but also how development defects occur so that one day physicians may recommend treatment options for patient care.”



Paul van der Sloot, MD



Stephen Wetmore, MD, FACS



Ronald Wilkinson, MD

## Otolaryngology Residency Program Expands

The Otolaryngology Residency Review Committee (RRC) of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education approved a permanent increase in the number of residents per year from two to three beginning in July 2007. This is the first increase in residents per year since the program began more than 40 years ago. The expansion will be implemented gradually by the process of selecting three PGY-1 residents each year until we reach 15 total residents in July 2011. We were allowed to increase our resident complement because we had demonstrated to the RRC that we had increased the volume of our surgical procedures. This occurred because we had increased our fulltime faculty from 3 to 9 over the preceding 15 years. Part of the educational benefit for the residents will be the lengthening of their research rotation from 4 to 6 months. In the mid 1990's the RRC had tried to decrease our program from 8 to 6 residents; this mandate was eventually overturned on appeal.

This increase comes on the heels of a change in the status of PGY-1 residents that was implemented nationally two years ago. At that time the PGY-1 residents were placed under the auspices of the Otolaryngology Department rather than under the purview of the General Surgery Department. In addition to rotating for 5 months on various surgical services including plastic surgery, the PGY-1 residents are required to rotate on Emergency Medicine, Neurosurgery, Anesthesia, and ICU, and are allowed to spend 3 months on Otolaryngology.

During the current year we will have one resident assigned to the Clarksburg VA Hospital and the other 10 to University Hospital.

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## GRADUATE NEWS

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### Wade Elected President of the Board of Medicine

John Wade, Jr., MD, who completed his Otolaryngology residency at WVU in 1977, currently presides as President of the West Virginia State Board of Medicine. Over the years, Dr. Wade has been very active throughout West Virginia, holding numerous positions at the Pleasant Valley Hospital in Point Pleasant, as well as at Jackson General Hospital in Ripley.

Dr. Wade is a member of the American Medical Association, a member of the American Board of Otolaryngology, and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Allergy. For the past eleven years, he has been an Oral Examiner for the American Academy of Otolaryngology Allergy Fellowship.

Dr. Wade maintains a successful practice in the Point Pleasant area where he lives with his wife Sarah, who is the treasurer for the West Virginia State Medical Association Alliance. His daughter Emily is a Doctor of Pharmacy, and his son Alex is currently a pulmonary fellow at WVU.

### Sanclément Joins Oklahoma Faculty

Jose Sanclément, MD, completed his residency at WVU in 2006, and then did a fellowship in Head and Neck Cancer at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Hospital. He was recently recruited to the University of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City by Dr. Jesus Medina, Chair of the Department of Otolaryngology. Jose had a great deal of interest in free flap reconstruction while at WVU and continued his experience

during his fellowship. Jose developed interest and expertise in biofilm research while pursuing his residency and initiated our Department's research interests in that field.

### Hurst Elected Vice-Chair of UHA Board

Dr. Mike Hurst, who has been a member of the Otolaryngology Department faculty since he completed his residency training at WVU in 1993, was elected to the Board of Directors of University Health Associates three years ago. This summer the Board members elected him as Vice-Chair and Secretary. The UHA Board oversees the faculty practice plan that provides the majority of the revenues that funds the School of Medicine. Mike is not a newcomer to administrative roles; several years ago he served as Chief of Staff of the WVU Hospitals.



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