



Current

Research

Drs. Joseph Coselli and Scott LeMaire published “Open surgery for type I and II thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysms with the branched Coselli graft” and “Open surgical treatment of type IV thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysms” in “Aortic Surgery: How To Do It II.”

Drs. José Díez, James Ferguson and colleagues published “Strategies for Optimizing Outcomes in the NSTEMI-ACS Patient. The CATH (Cardiac Catheterization and Anti-thrombotic Therapy in the Hospital) Clinical Consensus Report” in the *Journal of Invasive Cardiology*. They also published “ACS from acute symptoms to long term management” in the *Cardiovascular Latin American Forum Newsletter*.

Dr. C. David Collard has received a grant of nearly \$22,000 to study the “Relationship of Clinical Cardiac and Non-cardiac Outcomes to Perioperative

Antithrombin Levels during Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery.” Drs. Collard and **Lawrence Blanchard** published “Non-antiarrhythmic agents for prevention of postoperative atrial fibrillation: Role of statins” in *Current Opinion in Anaesthesiology*. Dr. Collard and colleagues published “A phase II double-blind placebo-controlled ascending dose study of eritoran (e5564), a lipid antagonist, in patients undergoing cardiac surgery with cardiopulmonary bypass” in *Anesthesia and Analgesia*.

Dr. Bud Frazier has received a \$25,000 grant to conduct a clinical investigation of the DeBakey ventricular assist device for safety and effectiveness. Dr. Frazier and colleagues published “Histologic findings proving the existence of humoral rejection in a cardiac allograft” in *Cardiovascular Pathology*. Drs. Frazier, **Igor Gregoric** and colleagues published “Management of multiple left ventricular assist device failures in a patient” in the *Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation*.

Dr. Scott Flamm and colleagues published “Normal values for renal length and volume as measured by magnetic resonance imaging in the *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*.”

Drs. Scott LeMaire, Joseph Coselli and colleagues published “Open surgical repair of 2,286 thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysms in the *Annals of Thoracic Surgery*.” The doctors published “An entirely endovascular approach to the repair of an ascending aortic pseudoaneurysm” in the *Journal of Thoracic Cardiovascular Surgery*.

Dr. Tomhiko Ai has received a \$50,000 grant from the Roderick D. MacDonald Research Fund to study a protein in arrhythmia mechanisms associated with cardiomyopathy.

Dr. Jie Cheng has received a grant of \$185,800 to study the restoration of hibernating electrical activity in chronic ischemic heart by stem cell transplantation.

HIGHLIGHTS

THI receives NIH grant for adult stem cell research—page 2

Dr. James Willerson appointed to NHLBI Board of External Experts—page 4

New Leadership for THI Board of Trustees—page 4

THI celebrates 25 years of heart transplantation—page 5

Branislav Rado-vancevic has received a \$30,000 grant to evaluate customized cannulae for a ventricular assist system.

Dr. MacArthur Elayda has received a grant of \$48,650 from the Roderick D. MacDonald Research Fund to analyze data related to the practice of profound circulatory arrest and aortic surgery.

Dr. Mehdi Razavi has received a \$30,000 grant for a preclinical study to evaluate the effects of various methods to treat fibrillation using a non-contact mapping system.

Dr. Deborah Vela has received a grant of \$24,600 from the Roderick D. MacDonald Research Fund for a preclinical study of allogenic bone marrow stem cell transplantation for acute ischemia with a focus on healing and remodeling.

The Texas Heart Institute at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital is one of five centers selected by the **National Institutes of Health** to study stem cell treatments for patients with cardiovascular disease. The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute will provide a grant of \$33.7 million over the next five years to support the new national

consortium called the Cardiovascular Cell Therapy Research Network (CCTRN). The network represents the first U.S. federal funding for adult stem cell studies in which patients are treated with stem cells taken from their own bodies. **Dr. James Willerson** is the Principal Investigator of the CCTRN studies to be conducted here and **Dr. Emerson Perin** is the Co-Investigator.

The Stem Cell Center of THI at St. Luke's was first in the U.S. to receive FDA approval for an adult stem cell clinical trial to treat patients with advanced heart failure. That study recently enrolled its 30th and final patient. Monitoring and follow-up of patients continues and Stem Cell Center physicians hope to publish their results by the end of the year. Dr. Perin has received a grant of nearly \$1 million for a preclinical study evaluating the safety of catheter-based transcatheter injection of adult bone-marrow derived stem cells in a heart attack model. Dr. Perin received another grant of nearly \$1 million for a clinical trial using a unique stem cell population to treat patients with critical limb ischemia. He received a \$528,000 grant to conduct a clinical trial using bone marrow derived stem cells for patients with acute myocar-

dial infarction. He received a grant of more than \$105,000 for a pre-clinical study using mesenchymal precursor cells for tissue regeneration after recent myocardial infarction. Drs. Willerson, Perin and **Guilherme Silva** edited "An essential guide to cardiac stem cell therapy." Dr. Willerson wrote "Introduction and preface: perspectives in stem cell therapy," Drs. Perin and Silva wrote "What are stem cells and what do they do," and **Dr. Maximilian Buja** and colleagues wrote "The basics of pathologic assessment in experiment models of stem cell therapy" for the book.

Education

Dr. Bud Frazier presented "The Latest in LVADs and Long-term Use Including Bridge to Transplantation" and "Short-term Rotary Pumps for Acute Heart Failure" at the Society of Thoracic Surgeons annual meeting. He presented "Left Ventricular Assist Devices" at Holy Cross Hospital in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Dr. Frazier presented "Artificial Heart and Heart Assist" at the National Library of Medicine and the American Society for Artificial Internal Organs sponsored by the Michael E.

DeBakey Seminars in Medicine in New York City.

Dr. José Díez served on the faculty of the American College of Cardiology, i2 Summit 2006 and for the "PriMed Lipid Track: Management of Dyslipidemia, Insights on Achieving Cholesterol Treatment Goals" in both Miami and San Antonio. He presented "Clopidogrel Dosing" and "Direct Thrombin Inhibitors" for the V Symposium on Anticoagulation and Antiplatelet Therapies in the Catheterization Laboratory. Dr. Díez was co-chairman and faculty for the Latin American Forum: "ACS from acute care to long term treatment, Latin American issues" in Colombia. He co-chaired "Antithrombotic Therapy in UA/NSTEMI and Lecture: Anticoagulation and ACS – An overview of current clinical practice: Trends, Perceptions and Challenges" at the International Cardiology Forum in Greece. He presented "New Insights into the Evolving Care and Management of Acute Coronary Syndrome" for the South Austin Hospital Grand Rounds and "Antiplatelet Resistance" for the Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Houston. Dr. Díez presented "Meeting the needs of UA/NSTEMI Patient Management:

Bridging Recent UA/NSTEMI Randomized Trials to Practice” at the Oschner Clinic Foundation’s Cardiology Grand Rounds. He presented “What a Primary Care provider needs to know about ACS” at the Baylor College of Medicine - A Primary Care Provider’s Guide to Cardiology Update 2007.

Dr. C. David Collard presented “Genomic Influences on Perioperative Outcomes” and “Impact of Statins on Perioperative Outcomes” as a Visiting Professor at the Department of Anesthesia, Medical College of Wisconsin. He presented “Influence of Inflammatory Genotypes on Cardiac Surgical Outcomes” at the Mount Sinai 25th Annual Clinical Update in Anesthesiology.

Dr. Denton Cooley presented “Recollections of a Native Born Houston Surgeon” for the Harris County Medical Society Retired Physicians Organization. He moderated at panel on “Recent Innovations In Treatment of Heart Disease” with presentations by **Drs. Stephanie Coulter, Billy Cohn** and **Ross Reul** for the Friends of Nursing luncheon. Dr. Cooley presented “The Early Development of Cardiopulmonary Bypass: Personal Recollections” for the St. Jude Medical Surgical Residents Symposium

At the International Congress on Endovascular Interventions, 20th Congress,

Dr. Zvonimir Krajcer presented “Novel Technique of Aortic Banding of Endoluminal AAA Repair for Unsuitable Anatomy: Procedural and Long-term Outcomes”, a paper co-authored with **Dr. Igor Gregoric**.

Dr. Ward Casscells was the keynote speaker for a luncheon at the Texas Academy of Medicine’s National Health Forum, “The Future of Medicine.” He was guest speaker at a gala dinner honoring **Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison** at the same meeting. He presented “Military Medicine: My Experience in Iraq” for the Tejas Breakfast Club.

The Texas Heart Institute has established a cooperation agreement with **AstraZeneca Latin American, Inc.** that will showcase the THI Professional Staff to an audience of Latin American physicians. AstraZeneca Latin American will design a website providing medical education to physicians practicing in Latin America. THI will assist AstraZeneca by either developing or using its

existing CME enduring products for the AstraZeneca website. These enduring products can be presented in either English or Spanish.

The **Texas Heart Institute website**,

www.texasheart.org, was visited by more than two-and-a-half million visitors in 2006, showing a steady increase over the last 3 years. At the core of THI’s educational outreach to the community, the **Heart Information Center** (texasheart.org/HIC) grew to 153 topics in both English and Spanish and attracted almost 1.5 million visitors last year.

After launching a redesigned website in late 2005, THI added a comprehensive **Continuing Medical Education** subsite (cme.texasheart.org) and a specialized subsite for elementary school teachers, **Project Heart** (texasheart.org/ProjectHeart). The 24,000 visitors to the CME website came from all over the United States and the world to access more than 65 credit hours of coursework they could view online. More than 360 certificates were awarded to online “students.” “Project Heart—activities for the classroom” is a resource website designed for educators (e.g., teachers, parents,

school nurses) who want to include heart-smart lessons in their curriculum. In 2006, more than 16,000 visitors took advantage of the lesson plans, activity masters, and extensive graphic resources available on the site.

THI produced a CD-ROM containing the CME course “**Clinical Update: March 2007**” which was mailed in 45,000 copies of the **THI Journal**. “Students” will be able to view the eight presentations on the CD, then go online to complete their assessment and evaluation and get their CME credit.

Dr. Scott LeMaire presented “Aortic matrix metalloproteinase-12 levels are elevated in patients with chronic thoracic aortic dissection but not in patients with acute aortic dissection” at the 2nd Annual Academic Surgical Congress. He presented “Mechanisms of disease progression after thoracic aortic dissection” at Baylor College of Medicine’s Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery 2006 Molecular Surgeon Research Day. He presented “Aortic Dissections” at The Methodist Hospital Cath Conference.

Dr. Joseph Coselli presented talks and videos on “Open surgery for type I and II thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysms with the

branched Coselli graft” and “Open surgical treatment for type IV thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysms” at the San Raffaele University Hospital & Research Institute in Italy. He discussed “Endovascular stenting for traumatic aortic injury; an emerging new standard of care” at the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons. Dr. Coselli presented “Cannulation and Cerebral Protection for Aortic Surgery”, Cardiac Tract: Advanced Cardiac Techniques We Should Be Doing Now. STS/AATS Tech-Con 2007 as part of the same meeting.

THI will present the **Congestive Heart Failure Symposium** on April 18, the first day of the Concepts in Contemporary Cardiovascular Medicine Symposium. The three-day event will be held at the George R. Brown Convention Center. Participants may register online at www.cv-concepts.org.

Honors

Dr. James Willerson has accepted an invitation to serve on the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute’s newly formed Board of External Experts. This Board will provide guidance on the implemen-

tation of the NHLBI’s Strategic Plan, help prioritize new initiatives, and serve as an incubator for novel and cutting edge ideas.

President George W. Bush recently announced his intention to nominate **Dr. Ward Casscells**, associate director for cardiology research at the Texas Heart Institute at St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital, to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs.

Dr. Scott LeMaire received the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery Faculty Research Achievement Award from Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr. Joseph Coselli was invited to join the Ehlers-Danlos National Foundation Professional Advisory Network.

Dr. C. David Collard was promoted to Associate Examiner by the American Board of Anesthesiology.

Dr. Denton Cooley received the Legends of Medicine Award at the UTMB Sealy Society Dinner.

The Texas Heart Institute has announced the election of **Mrs. Jan Duncan, Mr.**

John Young and **Mr. Tilman Fertitta** to its Board of Trustees. The role of the Board of Trustees is to help establish an environment that allows scientists, physicians and educators to work at their highest capacity, and to build informed and steady support for THI’s programs. **Mr. Dan Duncan** has been appointed as an Honorary Trustee to the THI Board to weigh on a variety of important issues.

Dr. Raymond Stainback has been elected Treasurer, Board of Directors, for the Intersocietal Commission for the Accreditation of Echocardiography Laboratories (ICAEL). He has served on the ICAEL Board for two years as a representative of the American Society of Echocardiography. United Health (80 million insured) recently announced that ICAEL accreditation will be required for their providers. St. Luke’s was the first hospital echocardiogram lab in Texas to be accredited by ICAEL more than five years ago.

Philanthropy

Mr. Alfred Glassell, Jr., has donated shares of stock valued at more than \$70,000. He also recently provided a gift of more

than \$145,000 to THI for the Adult Stem Cell Endowment Fund.

The Hamill Foundation contributed \$300,000 to complete a \$500,000 pledge made last year. Funds are being directed to promote healthful lifestyles and for research.

The Textor Family Foundation has provided a \$50,000 contribution to support the research of **Dr. James Willerson**.

Mrs. Duane L. Wallace has donated \$25,000 to THI.

Surgical Associates of Texas, P.A., has given THI a donation of \$150,000.

St. Jude Medical Foundation has donated \$40,000 to complete a \$50,000 pledge to support research in **Dr. Jie Cheng’s** Field of Electrophysiology program.

Mr. and Mrs. Herschel M. Rich have provided a gift of \$50,000 to support the research of **Dr. James Willerson**.

The John S. Dunn Research Foundation has donated \$50,000, completing a three-year commitment to a \$150,000 grant for physiologic studies on a continuous

flow pump, a research project of **Dr. Bud Frazier**. In addition, the Board of Trustees of the John S. Dunn Research Foundation recently approved a \$1 million grant to advance and strengthen research under the direction of Dr. Frazier.

The Charles and Melissa Davis Foundation has provided a donation of \$20,000 to THI.

Spotlight

Dr. Wayne Franklin wrote the lead article in *Medical Journal – Houston* about the Texas Adult Congenital Heart Center, a new collaborative program of THI, Texas Children's Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine. He was also featured in a profile in *Houston Defender* newspaper.

Dr. James Ferguson was featured on theheart.org as part of a Continuing Medical Education program, "Management of the high-risk ACS patient: Making the move from clinical research to daily practice."

Drs. Denton Cooley, Bud Frazier, James Willerson, Roberta

Bogaev and Brano Radovanovic participated in a news conference regarding the 25th anniversary of the heart transplant program and the 20th anniversaries of 23 heart transplant patients at THI at St. Luke's. The Associated Press story was syndicated in more than 600 media outlets. The event was also covered by Channels 11, 13 and Fox 26 News, KUHf and KTRH radio stations, the Texas State News Radio Network and *TMC News*.

Dr. Frazier was interviewed by the Associated Press regarding the Cardiovascular Innovations Institute in Louisville. Dr. Frazier was interviewed and videotaped performing a heart device explantation for a PBS series, "The Mysterious Human Heart."

Dr. Patrick Hogan was also recently interviewed for the program which will feature several THI physicians when it airs in the fall. Dr. Cooley was interviewed by the Associated Press regarding the Liotta Artificial Heart on display at the Smithsonian. He was also interviewed by a Swiss documentary team regarding the world's first transplant. Dr. Willerson was featured in *Medical Journal – Houston* regarding his honor as the Outstanding Cardiologist 2006 at the Shanghai International Symposium of Cardiology. He was interviewed by the *South China*

Morning Post regarding his stem cell research. Dr. Willerson is in ongoing discussions with the *Houston Chronicle* regarding his stem cell research. Drs. Frazier, **Biswajit Kar** and **Pranav Loyalka** were featured in the *Houston Defender* newspaper regarding a patient whose life was saved with two heart assist devices.

Dr. Joseph Coselli was interviewed and videotaped performing an aneurysm surgery by a PBS crew for a show, "Healthy Body, Healthy Mind," that will air later this year.

Dr. Ward Casscells was featured in the *Houston Chronicle* and on Channel 13 regarding his presidential nomination for Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. He was featured on theheart.org regarding his tour of duty in Iraq.

Dr. Amy Woodruff was featured in a Channel 13 report about aspirin and women's heart health.

Dr. Emerson Perin was featured in an article on Yahoo! Finance regarding new steerable guidewires produced by Cordis. Dr. Perin was mentioned in a Channel 2 report on his groundbreaking clinical

trial in Spain, which uses stem cells taken from adipose (fat) tissue for treatment of cardiovascular disease. That study was also featured in *Medical Journal – Houston*. Dr. Perin was interviewed by Bloomberg News regarding his ongoing stem cell research here.

Other

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of **Mrs. Lee Jamail**. Mrs. Jamail and her husband, Joseph, have been loyal and generous supporters of the Texas Heart Institute for many years. She will be dearly missed.

Corrections: The last issue of Current incorrectly identified the incoming and outgoing Members-at-Large on THI's Medical Executive Committee. The three new members-at-large, who will serve during 2007 and 2008, are **Drs. Stephanie A. Coulter, Biswajit Kar** and **Paolo E. Angelini**. THI is grateful for the service of **Drs. Patrick J. Cook** and **Dr. Mark J. Schnee** for their dedicated and effective service as members-at-large for the past two years. We apologize for the errors.