The annual research seminar of the Pennsylvania Lions Sight Conservation and Eye Research Foundation was held at Hershey Medical Center on October 3rd. This annual meeting is held either in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, or here in Hershey. This year there were presentations from six invited speakers, including; Dr Ravi Singh and Aaron Runkle, from the Penn State Hershey Eye Center. The other speakers were Dr Maria Hillenbrand, from the University of Pittsburgh; Dr Teresa Duda, from Salus University; Dr Joshua Dunaiief, from the Scheie Eye Institute; and Dr Amy Nau, from the University of Pittsburgh. The presentations covered a wide range of subjects including new approaches to develop artificial vision, and using cell culture models to study diabetic retinopathy. The meeting was a great success, with about 70 attendees, including many PA Lions Club members and other investigators from the College of Medicine. The PA Lions Club has raised money to support research “seed” grants for eye research for many years.

Pictured above are Vice District Governor, David McCluskey, Lion Kathryn McCluskey, Lion Barbara Ott and Director of Lions Club International DR, Harold Ott.

Pictured to the right, graduate student Aaron Runkle presents his talk on studying diabetic retinopathy using cell cultures.
Barnstable, Gardner named ARVO 2009 Fellows

The Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) recently named Colin Barnstable, D.Phil., professor and chairman of Neural and Behavioral Sciences, and Tom Gardner, M.D., M.S., professor of Ophthalmology and Cellular and Molecular Physiology, as members of this year’s inaugural class of distinguished Fellows. Barnstable and Gardner were recognized for their accomplishments, leadership and contributions to the Association.

ARVO, the largest eye and vision research organization in the world, includes approximately 12,500 eye and vision researchers from more than 73 countries. By accepting this honor, ARVO asks that Fellows continue to serve as role models and mentors for individuals pursuing careers in vision and ophthalmology research and to further ARVO’s vision “… to facilitate the advancement of vision research and the prevention and cure of disorders of the visual system worldwide.” This includes advancing basic and clinical knowledge and serving as the leading international forum for vision research and the primary advocate for vision science worldwide.

Barnstable received his doctorate from Wolfson College in Oxford. He is the co-editor-in-chief of the Journal of Ocular Biology, Diseases and Informatics. He has more than 170 peer-reviewed publications.

Gardner received his medical degree from Jefferson Medical College. He has more than 150 peer-reviewed publications and is project director of The JDRF Center for Mechanisms and Intervention of Diabetic Retinopathy at Penn State, an $8.9 million project funded by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Scott recognized

Ingrid U. Scott, MD, MPH Professor of Ophthalmology and Public Health Sciences, was recognized by the American Medical Association (AMA) for her extensive contributions with regards to mentoring medical students, residents, and other physicians. As part of the AMA Physician Mentor Recognition Program, Scott was recognized as a physician mentor who has made a significant difference in the professional lives of other physicians and who serves as an influential role model for other physicians. This AMA program is designed to recognize physicians who have contributed to the achievements of others in the medical profession.

Penn State Hershey Eye Center at Annual ARVO Meeting

The annual meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) was held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida from May 2nd-7th this year. ARVO describes its annual meeting as a major forum for vision researchers and practitioners to close the knowledge gap about eye diseases and treatment. Over 10,000 basic and clinical research scientists and eye specialists attend this conference every year. This year investigators associated with the Penn State Hershey Eye Center offered 27 separate poster and oral presentations.

Two of our residents took posters to the conference. Dr Brad Hochstetler presented a poster about adherence to recommendations of the age-related eye disease study in patients with age-related macular degeneration; while Dr Ravi Singh gave his poster on low dose periocular insulin treatment for retinal neurodegeneration in experimental diabetic retinopathy. Our PhD graduate students, Bill Robinson and Travis D’Cruz also presented posters about their research on basic mechanisms of retinal degeneration in diabetes. Dr Patrice Fort, Research Associate in Ophthalmology, gave a poster titled: Akt Isoforms Expression and Localization in the Retina: Role in Retinal Cells Sensitivity to Diabetes. Dr Hisanori Imai, also a post doctoral fellow in Dr Tom Gardner’s lab, presented his poster on IGF-2, a growth factor that may prevent cell death in retinal neuroglial cells. Several other presentations were given by Drs Ingrid Scott, Greg Jackson, and Joseph Sassani. Other posters and talks were given by investigators from labs in other departments at the Hershey Medical Center included Drs. Zagon, McLaughlin, Tombran-Tink, Zhang and Barnstable from the Department of Neural and Behavioral Science and Dr Abcouwer from the Department of Surgery.
Eye Center holds first Eye School
JIM STRONG, CRA, OCT-C

Saturday, November 7, 2009 was one of the chilliest mornings in Hershey this season, but freezing temperatures couldn’t ice the enthusiasm for the first “Eye School” to be held at Penn State Hershey’s University Conference Center.

As a strong advocate of community outreach and education, Dr David Quillen, Director of the Penn State Hershey Eye Center, took his cue from the successful Mini Medical School seminars when he developed a half day program that would engage not only Eye Center patients and their families, but also educators, students, and various healthcare professionals. He called on fellow PSHEC members to help create an agenda including fundamentals such as “How Does the Eye Work” and “An Ounce of Prevention” to the more focused “Common Causes of Vision Loss” and even the obscure “Stereo Imaging in Ophthalmology.” The Eye School Faculty was comprised of PSHEC providers James Wilmarth, OD,MS, Marianne Boltz, OD,FAAO, and David Quillen, MD, as well as ophthalmic imaging specialists Timothy Bennett, CRA, OCT-C, FOPS and Jim Strong, CRA, OCT-C.

For an inaugural event, registration was better than expected, with approximately 50 people attending. Several additional PSHEC members were on hand to help with the check-in process. MOAs Lisa Grubb and Karen Minick worked with Research Coordinator Laura Walter to be sure students were equipped with the back-to-school essentials while Sherri Malasics fielded questions and on-site registration. Margaret Clanaghan from the Continuing Education Department provided excellent support coordinating the event.

After a morning of lectures and learning, would anyone expect class to end without a pop quiz? Our students didn’t! They were geared up and ready to impress as the program concluded with a quick round of Eye School Jeopardy. Material was pulled from each of the day’s topics and the audience competed to close out each category successfully.

This light-hearted finale was the perfect wrap-up for a day that was characterized by an incredibly high level of audience participation. Every speaker was impressed by the degree to which attendees took in the material and interacted during the Q and A sessions. Comments from registrants were extremely favorable, so it’s very likely we will see an Eye School Class of 2010!

PSHEC 2010 Upcoming Educational Events

The Twelfth Annual Owen James Gardner Memorial Lecture, is scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2010, at 4:00 p.m. in the College of Medicine Lecture Room C. This lecture was established by Dr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Gardner in memory of their infant son, with the goal of recognizing and promoting collaborative research between clinical and basic science investigators.

Later in January is the 8th Annual Education Update for Ophthalmic Medical Personnel (OMP). This day-long event is scheduled to take place on January 30, 2010. Educational material will be tailored to benefit most OMP, including Ophthalmic Technicians and Assistants. Registration will begin at 7:00 AM at the Penn State Hershey University Conference Center, with courses starting promptly at 7:45 a.m. For CEC/CEU and registration information, contact Linda Smith at 717-531-8783.

The Second Annual Mid-Atlantic Imaging Update, another one-day program, includes topics such as digital imaging, autofluorescence imaging, and optical coherence tomography, and is intended for allied health professionals who perform imaging. One program goal is encouraging the exchange of information among local colleagues. To accomplish this, attendees are invited to present a short talk on a clinical “pearl”, technical “tip”, or practical “tactic” of their choice. This course is scheduled for March 27, 2010 in College of Medicine Lecture Room A and both JCAHPO and OPS credits will be applied for. Contact Jim Strong, for information: 717-531-003 x283348 or Jstrong1@hmc.psu.edu.
What’s New in our Residency Program
SHERRI MALASICS

Just a week after bidding farewell to our graduating residents, we welcomed three new residents to the program: Eissa Hanna, MD, George Papachristou, MD, and Jeffrey Sundstrom, MD, PhD. Eissa and Jeff completed their internships in General Internal Medicine at Penn State Hershey Medical Center. George completed a preliminary year in Internal Medicine at North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, NY.

Dr. Jordana Smith is collecting data about resident orientation and surgical skills training from residents throughout the country. At the same time, she’s working on further development of the surgical skills training offered by our program.

Dr. Ravi Singh received a $200 educational award for the most outstanding oral presentation of a research project at the inaugural Resident/Fellow Research Day in May. He presented: “Low Dose Periocular Insulin Treats Retinal Dysfunction in Early Diabetic Retinopathy”.

All of our Chief Residents have matched with their top picks for fellowship positions. Dr. Ahmad Aref will join the Bascom Palmer Glaucoma Fellowship Program in July 2010 while Dr. Brad Hochstetler and Dr. Wenxin Wei will begin Cornea Fellowships at Wilmer Eye Institute and University of California, Irvine respectively.

PSHEC Team Updates
CLIFF MYERS, COA

Lisa Peters and Cliff Myers, both Certified Ophthalmic Assistants with Penn State Hershey Eye Center, attended the 2009 Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel annual meeting in San Francisco. Both Techs earned credits toward their yearly certification needed to retain COA certification. Lisa and Cliff learned new skills including how to dissect a pig’s eye. It wasn’t all work though, they also had time to enjoy site seeing while in San Francisco.

In October 2007, Jen Fogleman, Administrative Assistant and Residency Program Coordinator for Penn State Hershey Eye Center, was called to active duty for the U.S. Army. Her tour was to have lasted one year; however, Jen was ordered to extend her tour and will remain on active duty until September 2010.

During a recent visit home, Jen made the time to visit her co-workers and get an overview of what she’s been missing while away. She continues to be stationed at Fort Devens, MA but may be sent to California or Puerto Rico as was the case in the past two years. Jen plans to retire from the Army by the end of 2010.

Penn State Hershey Eye Center Grand Rounds

Ophthalmology Grand Rounds are held on the third Thursday of each month at 8:00 AM in the rear waiting room of the Penn State Hershey Eye Center (Suite 800, University Physicians Center), except in November. Lectures begin at 8:00 AM, immediately following Resident Case Presentations scheduled from 7:00 - 8:00 AM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker and Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 21, 2009</td>
<td>Joseph W. Sassani, MD, MHA, PSHEC - TBA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 18, 2010</td>
<td>NO GRAND ROUNDS DUE TO CURRICULUM EVALUATION MEETING.</td>
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<td>March 18, 2010</td>
<td>Mohamad S. Jaafar, MD, FACS, FAAP, Children’s National Medical Center, George Washington University - “Strabismus in the General Ophthalmology Office”.</td>
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<td>April 15, 2010</td>
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Ophthalmology basic research labs relocated

ALISTAIR BARBER, PHD

The Ophthalmology Department basic research laboratory was originally established in 1993 by a generous donation from William and Alethea Ulrich, after William became a patient at the Hershey Ophthalmology clinic. This lab is located on the 4th floor of the Biomedical Research Building and was occupied for many years by Thomas Gardner, M.D., M.S., a physician-scientist in Ophthalmology; Alistair Barber, Ph.D., currently an Associate Professor in Ophthalmology; and David Antonetti, Ph.D., Associate Professor in the Department of Cellular and Molecular Physiology. Together, these three scientists formed the Penn State Retina Research Group. It is unusual to have three investigators share the same lab facility in this way, especially if they are from different departments. Over the years they have enjoyed increasing success by working together, combining ideas and expertise, to help understand the underlying disease mechanisms of diabetic retinopathy.

It became increasingly apparent that the lab space on the 4th floor was no longer adequate to accommodate the three investigators and their respective teams of technicians, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. There were times when over 20 people were sharing this space, working on many different projects. To alleviate the overcrowding problem, Drs. Gardner and Barber relocated their office spaces to the first floor of the College of Medicine but found it more difficult to keep track of lab activities on a daily basis.

After discussing the overcrowding issues at great length, a group of four unoccupied contiguous labs was identified on the 6th floor of the crescent. After some renovations the Penn State Retina Research Group relocated its lab space to this new area. Completed in April of this year, the move has enabled Drs. Gardner and Barber to rejoin their teams and enjoy the ability to collaborate closely with Dr. Antonetti, whose labs are now situated directly across the hallway from them.

ALISTAIR BARBER, PHD

Rebecca Chalson, also known to her co-workers as Becky, joined the Penn State Hershey Eye Center on March 29, 2009. She has lived in various places in Pennsylvania before settling in Hershey. As the oldest of 10 children she learned people skills from an early age. Prior to working at the Eye Center she was a Bakery Clerk, Fine Jewelry Sales, Bank Teller, Preschool Teacher, and Real-estate sales assistant. While working as a bank teller, she was robbed twice; which she now describes as a “learning experience”. She was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and grew up in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Indiana. Her interests include ballroom dancing, psychology, meeting new people, working out at a local gym, traveling, and going to the movies.
PSHEC Community Outreach

7th Annual Bethesda Mission Day
KIM POWELL, ABOC, NCLC

Penn State Hershey Eye Center employees and Penn State medical students returned to the Bethesda Mission in November for the annual vision screening event. The mission, located in Harrisburg, provides food, shelter, clothing, and counseling to people living on the streets. The outreach program provides eye care to those who have no other means of accessing eye care. This year’s event was coordinated by J. Snow, CO and Eddie Aminlari, MS IV. Thirty-eight men were screened and three were identified as having conditions that warranted follow-up in the clinic. Those with refractive errors received a free pair of eyeglasses. New City Optical Lab in Baltimore, MD generously donated all the ophthalmic lenses needed, while the PSHEC Optical Shop donated the frames and reading glasses for the thirty men in need.

Faculty and residents volunteering at this year’s outreach were: Ali Aminlari, MD, FACS, David Liang, MD, Ingrid Scott, MD, MPH, Thomas Gardner, MD, MS, Eissa Hanna, MD, Hanny Isawi, MD, Wenxin Wei, MD, and Jordana Smith, MD. Staff members who volunteered included: J. Snow, CO, Lisa Peters, COA, Kim Gray, COA, Cliff Myers, COA, Kim Powell, ABOC, and Mary Hershey, COMT.

The PSHEC “Nittany”
MARY FRAWLEY, COA

It’s hard to find a more storied and striking symbol than Penn State’s Nittany Lion. Beyond majesty, the lion embodies many traits most desirable in an individual: strength, pride, dignity, and courage. As members of the Penn State Hershey Eye Center, these are characteristics we choose to exemplify and promote as part of our daily work. Beyond these individual goals, TEAM Ophthalmology also strives to deliver Excellence in all we do, with a positive Attitude, so that we can Make a difference in the lives of our patients and peers. To recognize Team members who excel in their performance and dedication to our mission, a monthly honor was established. Mirroring the qualities of the Penn State “Lion”, the distinction was nicknamed “the Nittany”. Each month the previous recipient chooses the Team Member they feel most deserving of recognition.

Congratulations to our 2009 Nittany Lion Recipients

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<tr>
<td>Cliff Myers</td>
<td>Sherri Malasics</td>
<td>Tammy Scott</td>
<td>Mary Frawley</td>
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<tr>
<td>COA</td>
<td>Administrative Associate</td>
<td>COA</td>
<td>COA</td>
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<td>Ravi Singh, MD</td>
<td>Amy Lookenbill</td>
<td>Cindy Wolfe</td>
<td>Michael Wilkinson, MD</td>
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<td>2nd year resident</td>
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<td>MOA</td>
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<td>Ahmad Aref, MD</td>
<td>Lianne Miller</td>
<td>Roxy Moyer</td>
<td>Lisa Grubb</td>
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<td>4th year resident</td>
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<td>Surgery Schedule</td>
<td>MOA II</td>
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Mark your calendar on January 30, 2010 for the 8th Annual Educational Update for Ophthalmic Medical Personnel!

This program is designed to provide continuing education opportunities for Ophthalmic Medical Personnel (including: assistants, technicians, technologists and orthoptists).

Erik Scott Wingert Joins the Family!
CORRINA REEVES, COA

Ingrid U. Scott, MD, MPH and her husband, Stephen Wingert, welcomed Erik Scott Wingert on September 24, 2009 at 10:59 pm. He weighed 6 pounds 9.4 ounces and measured 19 inches long. Erik is surrounded by a lot of love not only from his parents, but also from his siblings, who are awed by him! He has a sister, Heidi Luise, and three brothers: Andreas, Stephen and Markus. Welcome, Erik!