NEW RESEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIR: DR. JAMES K. KIRKLIN

Dr. James Kirklin is Professor and Director of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and holds the John W. Kirklin Chair of Cardiovascular Surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). He graduated from Ohio State University in 1969, where he excelled as a springboard and tower diver, twice receiving All-American Honors. Dr. Kirklin received his MD from Harvard Medical School in 1973 as a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society. After completing general and cardiothoracic surgery residencies at Massachusetts General Hospital in 1979, he pursued additional training at Boston Children's Hospital and UAB. Dr. Kirklin was appointed Assistant Professor of Surgery at UAB in 1981, Director of Cardiac Transplantation in 1986, Professor of Surgery in 1987, and in 2006 was named Director of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery. Consistently cited in “Best Doctors in America”, Dr. Kirklin’s current clinical interests focus on surgery for pediatric and adult congenital heart disease, heart transplantation, and mechanical circulatory support.

Dr. Kirklin and his colleagues at UAB established the Cardiac Transplant Research Database in 1990, which generated the first multi-institutional collaborative research in heart transplantation, producing numerous seminal publications over a 20-year span. In 1993, Kirklin and his UAB research group initiated the Pediatric Heart Transplant Study Group, which continues to lead the field in multi-institutional studies.

THE 2015 KIRKLIN-ASHBURN FELLOW: DR. JAMES M. MEZA

The Data Center is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. James Meza as the 7th Kirklin-Ashburn Fellow, to start in July 2015. Dr. Meza is currently a resident in general surgery at Duke University Hospital and a research fellow at the Duke Clinical Research Institute. He grew up in the suburbs of Detroit, Michigan, as the son of a pediatric anesthesiologist and neonatal ICU nurse. He attended Princeton University and majored in Molecular Biology. Jim then enrolled at the University of Michigan Medical School, where he developed an interest in cardiothoracic surgery, especially in congenital cardiac surgery. He then matched at Duke, where his interest in congenital cardiac surgery continued, under the mentorship of Dr. Robert Jaquiss. He is currently in the first year of his research fellowship at Duke, with primary interests in cardiogenic shock and short-term mechanical circulatory support for adults and children. Dr. Meza’s interests outside of surgery include spending time with his brother, college football, Latin American literature, and food of many varieties.

Actively Enrolling Cohorts

AAOCA – patients ≤ 30 years of age, diagnosed from Jan. 21, 2009
Tricuspid Atresia Type 1 – patients < 3 months of age, diagnosed after Jan. 1, 1999
LVOTO – neonate patient < 30 days of age with critical LVOTO
uAVSD – patients with complete AVSD, age ≤ 1 year of age, surgery after Jan. 1, 2012

*Please check website for further details
ONGOING RESEARCH STUDIES

- Time-related analysis of repeated measures:
  - Ventricular & AV Valve function in LVOTO
  - Abstracts submitted to AATS & ACC
  - Future project comparing Ventricular & AV Valve function TA and critical LVOTO
- ECHO review studies underway:
  - uAVSD ECHO
  - LVOTO
- AAOCA: Is BMI affected by exercise restriction?
- Technical Assessment Project
- Genomics & critical LVOTO: Grant application

Please contact us to become a part of a working group!

GET TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER!

The CHSS Data Center Fall Work Weekend will be held in Toronto on November 21st to 23rd, 2014. We will circulate an agenda as soon as it is formalized. Make your reservations now at the Eaton Chelsea, which is within walking distance to the hospital and we will give you an institutional room rate IF you inform them that you are meeting at SickKids Hospital. The meeting will begin at 7:30 am Friday at the Data Center. For those members and researchers unable to attend we plan to have a webinar and conference calls open during sessions of interest.

3RD ANNUAL COORDINATOR MEETING

The third annual coordinator meeting was a great success! We were privileged to host a substantial group of coordinators from all across the US and Canada and had the opportunity to discuss a number of topics. Dr.’s Dave Overman and Edward Hickey were generous enough to present on AVSD and AAOCA anatomy and physiology, respectively, while Mrs. Jennifer Marshall, CCRC (Children’s Mercy Hospital, MO) gave two very informative talks on Best Practices for Conducting Research as well as Consent, Assent and Re-Consenting patients. Mrs. Marshall’s talk stirred up some very important discussion amongst the coordinators and was a great source of knowledge. We also touched upon the ongoing issue of obtaining annual follow-up. Numerous suggestions were made as to how we can better engage our patients in our studies. These suggestions were intriguing and are ideas we will take into serious consideration.

FOLLOW UP REPORTS – CAN YOU FIND WALDO?

Prior to this years’ CHSS Annual Meeting, each institution received a Follow-up Report that summarized enrollment and follow-up data over the past year. Our intent with this report was to show institutional participation with regards to follow-up in all CHSS studies in order to create awareness of the ongoing difficulty in maintaining follow-up on patients. The Data Center team has worked hard to try and implement new strategies that would encourage participation. However, despite our efforts, our numbers continue to be quite low and we are now turning to you for new ideas.

Your data coordinators play an important role in assisting us with annual follow-up. Creating a patient-focused newsletter for families to stay connected, or mentioning a patient’s surgeon during a follow-up call, were some examples your coordinators made. We are asking member surgeons to work closely with their data coordinators in order to develop strategies that would encourage patients to actively participate on a yearly basis. By working together, we are confident that we can boost our numbers and make these studies a success!