

VCU PM&R UPDATE

Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
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VCU PM&R Department Updates

CERSE Begins Clinical Trial & Observation Recruitment

VCU launched the **VCU Emergent Clinical Trial & Observation Recruitment (VECTOR)**, a highly integrated and coordinated team of research assistants administered through CERSE. Its mission is to facilitate clinical research in an ethical, regulatory-compliant, and fiscally sound manner. The VECTOR team screens pts admitted through VCU Emergency Dept to support more than 20 IRB-approved research studies, including clinical trials & observational studies from across the university.



Cifu & Merchant Awarded DoD TBI Grant

In October, a new 5-year research initiative, (funded by the Dept of Defense) called the **TBI Endpoints**

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For more information about the Dept .PM&R, faculty, publications, residents...visit our Website

[Http://www.pmr.vcu.edu](http://www.pmr.vcu.edu)

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Development (TED) Award, was announced. It is designed to overcome the trouble of demonstrating the effectiveness of TBI drugs & medical devices by forging a partnerships b/t VCU & outside facilities. Co-investigators **Drs David Cifu and Randall Merchant** (Dept PM&R) will collaborate with researchers from universities, the FDA, biotechnology imaging companies, and patient advocacy organizations. The goal is to improve clinical trials with the hope of successfully treating TBI.



Merchant Leads NIH Study "TRACK-TBI II"

CERSE Executive Director, **Dr Randall Merchant**, is helping lead a 5-year study entitled "**Transforming Research and Clinical Knowledge in Traumatic Brain Injury II**," (TRACK-TBI II). Funded by NIH, this \$18.8 million grant will collect data on 3,000 pts nationwide who have sustained a mild to severe TBI. VCU is one of 11 sites under the grant, and Dr. Merchant is responsible for the recruitment and implementation of the study at VCU. In addition, **Dr David Cifu** (Dept PM&R) serves on the TRACK-TBI II team.

The purpose of TRACK-TBI II is to better understand the biology of head trauma and if the appearance of biomarkers, such as new proteins in the blood, new gene expression, or new brain images, are correlated with the extent of injury. Findings from the study maybe be able to predict future TBI outcome.



TACKLING CONCUSSIONS:

Awareness, Better Diagnosis and Management are Key! "There have been

thousands of concussions in every war and in every football season, but little awareness. That's all changing," says David X. Cifu, M.D, chairman & prof, Dept PM&R. Dr. Cifu is the principal investigator of a \$62 million federal grant to oversee a national consortium of universities, hospitals and clinics studying active duty service members & veterans who suffer from TBI. He is working closely with the NFL, NHL, NCAA and high schools to develop better diagnosis & management of concussions.

"95 percent of all brain injuries are mild concussions – more than half of all people never see a doctor and probably don't tell their coach or parents," Cifu says. "But it can take 6 months or longer for the brain to return to its normal function. We need to test the brain's ability to perform multiple functions at once before we let an athlete get hit again, give a soldier a gun or let someone drive a car."

He hopes to release specific findings and guidelines in the near future and has already, helped develop a Concussion Coach "app" that supports self-management of symptoms for the US Department of Veterans Affairs. "Concussions are the oldest injury out there, dating back to when cavemen hit each other over the head with animal bones," he says. "But we are still improving how we diagnose, assess and manage them. We are making great strides to bring about better health for everyone."



CENC 1st Year Update

The Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium (CENC) is a federally funded research project addressing long-term effects of mild TBI in military service personnel. The project is jointly funded (\$62 million) by the **Dept of Defense (DoD) & Dept of Veterans Affairs (VA)**. **The CENC is led by Dr. David X. Cifu and is the largest grant ever awarded to VCU.**

Conference Updates

39th Annual VCU Brain Injury Rehabilitation Conference: “Practical Solutions to Real World Problems:” :

(April 15-17, 2015)

Williamsburg, VA

(Please visit the conference web site at

www.tbiconferences.org



The annual VCU PM&R **Pain Symposium** was held, **October 19-20, 2014**



2nd Annual Jeff Ericksen Musculoskeletal lectureship will be held on **March 6, 2015** at VCU. **Bradley Fullerton MD** (Austin Texas) is scheduled to be this year’s keynote speaker .

UPDATE US !!!

Please take a moment to tell us noteworthy news about you, your job, and/or your family, new practice opportunities, certifications, grants, presentations, papers, relocation, travel, etc. Send updates to Dr. Wm. McKinley, VCU PM&R, Box 980661, Richmond, VA 23298-0661 [FAX# \(804\) 828-5074](tel:(804)828-5074) wmckinley@mcvh-vcu.edu

PM&R FACULTY UPDATES

Steven West PhD, CERSE Associate Director has been appointed to the **Board of Directors** of the **Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC)**, the regulatory body overseeing the professional certification of rehabilitation counselors. The CRCC is the world’s largest rehabilitation counseling organization with over 17,000 current certificants and over 35,000 rehabilitation counselors certified in total since its creation in 1974.

Joseph Webster MD, Director of McGuire VAMC Amputee Center of Excellence is taking a leave of absence (January—February) to travel to **Western Africa** to help combat the worldwide Ebola crisis.

Paul Wehman PhD – was the recent recipient of the **“Outstanding Research award”** by the **Foundation for Life Care Planning Research** presented to individuals for research that: Meets the highest standards of design, methodology and analysis, contributes to the field LCP, and provides meaningful data that can be applied directly to LCP & case management practices. The 2014 award was presented at the International Symposium on LCP in Minneapolis.

Dave Drake, Director of Pain Management Services at McGuire VAMC- Recently co-authored a chapter on Integrative Med for the upcoming Braddom’s PM&R textbook. Edited by **David Cifu MD, VCU PM&R Chair**

CERSE to Host 5k: As part of its on-going fundraising effort, the “Help Us Help Others Campaign”, CERSE will host a 5k Fun Run/Walk/Wheel in June 2015. Designed to not only raise funds for the CERSE endowment, the project will also serve as a means to increase CERSE’s public profile and to raise awareness for CERSE research and service activities.

Recent VCU Dept PM&R Presentations:

West S, Cifu D. (10/2014). Relationships b/t blast-induced mild TBI, post-concussive symptomology, depression, PTSD & alcohol use in active duty military personnel. Paper: Australasian Military Medicine Asso, Sydney, Australia.

West S & Cifu D. (10/2014). Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium. Paper: AMMA, Sydney, Australia.

Cifu D, Carne W, West S. (10/2014). Utilization of computerized balance assessment to examine the physiologic effects b/t subjects w/ combat-associated mTBI and PTSD. Paper: AMMA. Sydney, Australia.

West S, Graham C, Cifu D, Walker W. (3/2014). Postconcussive syndrome does not alter the relationship between depression & alcohol use after mild TBI. Paper: 10th World Congress on Brain Injury, San Francisco, CA.

Derek Burnett to Deliver 2015 “Alumni Presentation”

VCU PM&R is proud to welcome **Derek Burnett, MD** for our **“17th annual PM&R Alumni Lectureship”** (June, 2015). Dr. Burnett is a 1997 graduate of VCU/MCV Department PM&R and currently a physician with Lakeside Medical Specialties in the Interventional Pain Management Clinic in Lake Havasu City, AZ. All VCU PM&R alumni are invited to join us.

Alumni In The News!!!

Jan Cockrell (87) - Retired & working part time as independent contractor w/ Randall Children's Hospital, Portland, Ore
Bles Vasquez (87) – Service Chief at Bay Pines VAMC, St Petersburg, Fla
Bill McKinley (89) – Entry into “Gerry Bertier Foundation” Hall of Fame. Dtr (Kaitlin)-SLP & Son (Sean)-MS Immunology
Bruce Stelmack (92) – Working for Kaiser, breathing fresh mtn Oregon air & “Wishing old friends from Va, a fruitful year”.
Deb Stewart (95) – Jacksonville Fla, working with Florida Blue. Dtr, Caitlyn living in Madrid, teaching English
Susan Groah (96) - Received a “Pt-Centered Outcomes Research Inst” Grant : “Impact of Probiotics on UTI in SCI”
Michelle Miller (96) – Busy at OSU Peds PM&R, recruiting more docs, playing tennis & staying healthy!
Ben Wall (97) - Recently took a “pilgrimage” to Graceland for a Bd of directors (national board that certifies OTs) mtg
Gin-Ming Hsu (98) Denver, “Spine, Pain & Rehab Center of Colorado”
Aaron Twigg (98) - 11th yr w/ Maryland Spine & Sports Med, Stays busy w/ 3 kids, 2 horses, 3 dogs
Jeff Johns (99) – Moved to Nashville (“Music City”) & Vanderbilt's new Dept PM&R, Twins in 7th grade & youngest dtr 4th
Dave Ripley (00) - Received Board Certification for BI Medicine & recently presented at AAPM&R
Dave Drake (01) - Still at VCU & McGuire VAMC, Dave & Deb welcomed new Daughter, Iliana (joining sister Dayne)
Matt Leyton (01) - Private practice pain management “Comprehensive Spine & Pain”
Larisa Bruma (01) - White Plains NY, private practice pain mgt. Dtr, Stephanie, pre-med (Michigan) & Son, Anthony, HS sn
Joy (White) Hamilton (02) - Med Dir: Concentra Care (Conn). Son (Martin) Jr - Drexel & dtr (Jacquelyne) soph - Hawaii
Chris Godbout (03) - Relocated to Seattle (Northwest Institute for Pain & Spine), “enjoying watching Buckeye Football”
Katia Santos (06) - Solo practice, Fla (consulting, outpatient & neuro rehab). Ken & 2 girls (Abby 9 & Kaitlyn 6) are well
Shane McNamee (06) - Moved to Cleveland, still with VAMC working on building electronic health record system
Andrew Hou (06) - Tri-Valley Ortho (San Fran) & Spine Care. Into running & judo, their 4 kids & being close to parents
Katrina Leshner (06) – Med Director at Kings Daughters Children's Hospital, Norfolk, VA
Chris Merrell (07) – “Low County Ortho & Spine”, Charleston, SC. Wife, Kelly got her NP & joined practice.
Jenny Andrus (08) - Ortho & Spine Center, Newport News. Congrats on new dtr, Cynthia, joining Sam (8) & Ben (5)
John Snyder (09) - Working for “Colonial Orthopaedics”, Chester VA
Brian Steinmetz (10) – Back w Orthopedic & Spine Specialists, York, PA
Costa Soteropoulos (11) - Medical Director of “National Spine & Pain Centers”, Fredericksburg VA
Amit Sinha (11) – Peds Rehab at UPMC. Wife, Priyanka, is working & in school part-time for her MBA.
Marcus Smith (11) - Riverside Rehab, Newport News. Married 2013 (Nyibe) & had a son (Mayer) in June.
Nick Jasper (11) - Greenville SC: “Orthopedic Specialties” & hangs out w/ **Tony DiNicola (10)**
Rebecca Armendariz (12) - Cancer Rehab & Palliative Care at Banner MD Anderson Center, Gilbert, AZ.
Audra Eason (12) – Doing well in Birmingham w/ a great pain group. Boys are wild & doing great.
Jeff Tubbs (12) – Accepting an SCI position at Richmond VAMC. Recent marriage to Elizabeth (“E”)

VCU PM&R & ALUMNI GET PUBLISHED!

(Recent publications by VCU PM&R & alumni)

- ⇒ **Gorgey A, Castillo C, Gater D.** Effects of SCI on Body Composition & Metabolic Profile. *JSCM* (37) 6, 693-702: 2014
- ⇒ Thomas F, **Goetz L**, et al. Optimizing medical care to facilitate employment after SCI. *JRRD*, 51(6) 2014.
- ⇒ **Tucker J, Ericksen J, Goetz L.** Should Clinical Studies Involving "Regenerative Injection Therapy," Strive to Incorporate Outcome? *Osteoarthritis Cartilage* 22(6):715-7.2014
- ⇒ Sinnott P, **Goetz L** et al. Cost effectiveness analysis of SCI Vocational Program, *Arch PMR* 95(7):1254-61. 2014
- ⇒ Chong J, **Goetz L, Gater D.** Antibiotics for endoscopic urology procedures in SCI. *J Spinal Cord Med* 2014 Jan 21.
- ⇒ **Cifu D, West S, Walker W.** Effect of hyperbaric O2on postconcussion. *Jrl Head Trauma Rehab*, 29, 11-20. 2014
- ⇒ **Cifu D, Walker W, West S.** Hyperbaric oxygen for blast-related postconcussion syndrome: 3-month outcomes. *Annals of Neurology*, 75, 277-286. 2014
- ⇒ **Ripley D, et al.** Atomoxetine for attention deficits following TBI. *Brain Inj.* 28(12):1514-22. 2014
- ⇒ **Ripley D**, et al. Comment on the decision to provide testosterone supplementation to patients w/ TBI. *PM R.* 6(8):761; 2014
- ⇒ **Pai A, Darko I, Robbins W.** Moderate & Severe TBI. In: *PM&R Patient-Centered Care. Demos Medical.* 165-176. 2015
- ⇒ **Webster JB, Cifu DX.** Amputation System of Care: 5 Years of Outcomes." *JRRD*, 51 (4), 7-16, 2014

RESIDENTS' CORNER

VCU RESIDENTS visible at AAPM&R

Congratulations to Residents who represented VCU PM&R at the 2014 **American Academy PM&R** in San Diego, CA for "Poster Presentations" (**Drs. Udayan Kulkarni, Chris Bednarek, Wiaam Ahmed and Will Robbins**) . Great job!

VCU PM&R SIG Update

The VCU School of Med **PM&R Student Interest Group** (SIG) has been very active with a mission of increasing awareness and opportunities related to PM&R for VCU medical students. Annual events include enhanced clinical opportunities, presentations, brochures, and fundraising. Current officers are **Michelle Gibson and Jennifer Chui** (Co-Presidents), **Abrahm Behnam** (VP), **Andrea Manevar** (Treasurer), **Ellie Balakhanlou and Tyler Anderson** (Clinical Liaisons). Thanks all!

Sports Med Coordinators

Drs. Greg Condie and Jimmy Newman head up PM&R **sports medicine opportunities** at VCU . Residents cover numerous sporting events including, high school football, CAA men's soccer championship (in Richmond), men's & women's soccer, volleyball & field hockey.

Residents Summarize Research

Drs. Angel Chang and Heather Martin (Regional Editors) head up a group of VCU PM&R resident contributors to **Rehab in Review**, a monthly newsletter summarizing important research in specialties related to PM&R (neurosurg, rheumatology, pain, etc). Each month VCU submits 5 articles to Rehab in Review for possible publication.

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