



May 18, 1998

Volume 2, Number 9 • Indianapolis, Indiana

---

## **\$7.2 million cancer grant awarded**

---

A \$7.2 million National Cancer Institute program grant to support studies in how to increase chemotherapy dosage without damaging normal cells has been awarded to IUSM.

Drugs used to treat cancers are often considered miracle drugs when they cure the patient of cancer, but the downside of these drugs is the damaging side effect they inflict on the patient's blood cells and organs. The grant will support four projects in which the IU scientists and research physicians will determine how to increase the amount of repair protein produced by the cells' DNA.

The IU researchers will insert genes to alter the DNA code of the healthy cells so that they will make more of the protein. They hope this will correct damage done to cells and organs by the drugs used to treat cancers. In parallel studies, they will look at methods that reduce or inhibit DNA repair activity in tumor cells, a significant cause of tumor resistance to chemotherapy and radiation.

These efforts will be complemented by gene therapy research trials for patients with lymphomas and brain tumors. The experience of faculty at IUSM in DNA repair, stem cell formation, molecular biology, vector technology, pharmacology and lung biology secured the NCI grant.

This is the fourth program grant awarded to Wells Center investigators since 1991. A gene vector laboratory at IUSM, designated as one of three such laboratories funded by the NIH, manufactures the synthetic viruses used in gene therapy to transport altered genes.

The effort at IUSM is being led by David Williams, MD, professor of pediatrics and an investigator in the Wells Center for Pediatric Research and Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Project leaders for this grant are Kenneth Cornetta, MD, Edward Dropcho, MD, Xunxiang Du, MD, Leonard Erickson, PhD, Mark Kelley MD, William Martin, MD, and Robert Tepper, MD, PhD.

Other team members include Philip Breitfeld, MD, Larry Cripe, MD, James Croop, MD, Regina Jakacki, MD, and Emanuel Lazarides, PhD.

They represent the departments of pediatrics, medicine, neurology, medical and molecular genetics, and biochemistry and molecular biology, as well as the Walther Oncology Center.

The NCI program grant will allow IU researchers to continue laying the groundwork for cutting edge advancement in cancer therapy and will provide innovative approaches to childhood cancer treatment in years to come.

---

## BRIEFS

---

### New web site

A site has been added to the IUSM Department of Psychiatry web page to assist children with special needs, their families and friends. The new link, the Riley Children's Special Needs Electronic Library, can be accessed at <http://www.iupui.edu/~psych>

The web site contains educational references along with entertaining short stories including "The Conscience Celebration: A Story about Moral Flourishing."

---

### Sculptures displayed

Visitors to the lobby of the Medical Research and Library Building will see two new busts of IUSM deans.

Dedicated May 16 during the Alumni Weekend festivities were the busts of Walter J. Daly, MD, who served as dean from 1983 to 1995, and Charles P. Emerson, MD, who served in the role from 1911 to 1931.

Special guests at the dedication were the sculptors, Ben J. Wilson, MD, '44, who created the Daly sculpture, and Daniel Edwards, creator of the Emerson sculpture.

**Mention of the dedication of the Emerson bust was inadvertently omitted from a story in the May 4 issue of Scope.**

---

## **Graduates honored at 1998 Senior Banquet**

**Several faculty and students were honored Friday, May 8, during the 1998 Seniors Banquet. Due to the length of the list, it will be carried in two issues of Scope. Student award recipients will be listed in this issue and faculty award recipients will be listed in the June 1 issue.**

**Peter Jakacki was presented the Marcus Ravdin Medal for high academic honor. This award was instituted by its namesake and has been presented since 1917. Jakacki also received the J. Donald Hubbard Award from the Department of Pathology and the Department of Family Medicine Award.**

**The Mary Jean Yoder Award, sponsored by the Class of 1964, was presented to Eric Reichenbach and Dale Treash for their dedication to service to others.**

**Other student award recipients were: Academic Achievement Award- Honors Program in Academic Medicine - Dorinda Rouch and Todd Rozycki;**

**John Barnhill Award (anatomy) - Christopher Owens;**

**Department of Dermatology Award - Jennifer Lisowe;**

**John B. Hickam Award (internal medicine) - William Gill;**

**Alexander Treloar Ross Award (neurology) - Thomas Mayer, Jameson Way,**

**Edward Zdobylak;**

**Roy Rheinhardt Memorial Award (Ob/Gyn) - Kelly Kasper;**

**Floyd T. Romberger Jr, MD Teaching Award (Ob/Gyn) - Kimberly Crute;**

**Carleton D. Nordschow Award (pathology) - Lee Hoagland and Sarah Tieman;**

**Lyman T. Meiks Clinical Award (pediatrics) - Douglass Towriss;**

**Lyman T. Meiks Research Award (pediatrics) - Marc Rosenthal;**

**John Heubi Award in Ambulatory Pediatrics - Sharon Morgan;**

**John I. Nurnberger Award (psychiatry) - William Gill;**

**K.K. Chen Award (pharmacology) - Susan Frayer;**

**Department of Surgery Certificate of Honor - Scott Miller and Brian Snell;**

**American College of Surgeons Award - Christopher Owens;**

**Jay Thomas Award (Bloomington) - Andrew Deitsch and Heather Forsyth;**

**Arthur Richter Scholarship (child psychiatry) - Sarita Patel and Sujata Patel;**

**Dean's Award - Suzanne Powers;**

**Spring House Calls Award - Melissa Garry and Michelle Thompson.**

---

## **ABC morning guest**

**Diane Brashear, Ph.D., associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology and of psychiatry, was a guest on ABC's Good Morning America April 30.**

**Dr. Brashear discussed the new Viagra, the new drug for the treatment of impotence, and its potential impact on the dynamics of sexuality among couples.**

---

## **House calls report**

**IUSM students held the third annual Spring House Calls April 18 and 113 volunteers did yard work and home repairs at 21 homes and the Christamore House neighborhood center in the Haughville and Blackburn neighborhoods.**

**Of the volunteers, 100 were medical students, four were graduate students in philanthropy, and the remainder were spouses and friends of the students.**

**Co-chairs Jennifer Crawley and Kari Hendrickson, both MSII, said the project was the largest and most successful to date. The Medical Student Council donated \$1,000 and additional funds were raised by bake sales and other efforts. Donations of mulch and flowers were made by numerous individuals and businesses. In all, about \$4,000 was raised or donated to make Spring House Calls a success.**

**Following the morning of work, the students and their homeowner guests enjoyed lunch at the Christamore House, compliments of the dean's office. The faculty sponsor is Patricia Keener, MD.**

**Homeowners are selected based on their inability to do maintenance work because of health problems or lack of resources. Volunteers are organized into teams and assigned a house. Team captains meet with homeowners in advance to determine the maintenance needs.**

---

**<http://www.medicine.indiana.edu>**