New Dean Appointed at University of Toledo College of Medicine

Christopher Cooper, MD, was named as the new dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences at the University of Toledo (UT). He assumed the post on August 18. He succeeds Ron McGinnis, MD, who had served as interim dean since February.

Dr. Cooper earned his MD at the University of Cincinnati and completed an internship, residency in Internal Medicine and fellowship in Cardiology at Brigham and Women's Hospital. He subsequently joined the Medical College of Ohio, which became a part of the University of Toledo in a 2006 merger, in 1994. During his tenure, he has served in key leadership posts, including chair of the Department of Medicine, chief of the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine, and director of the UT Heart and Vascular Center.

Dr. Cooper’s research has focused on hypertension. He led the Cardiovascular Outcomes in Renal Atherosclerotic Lesions (CORAL) trial, a nearly 10-year study funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, a part of the National Institutes of Health. The study concluded that there is no preventative clinical benefit from renal stenting versus medical therapy alone in patients with renal artery stenosis. The findings were reported in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Dr. Cooper has served on the Board of Governors of the National American College of Cardiology since 2012 and is president of the Ohio Chapter. He is a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the American Heart Association and the American College of Physicians.

Chair of Integrated Medical Science Department Named at FAU College of Medicine

Joseph Ouslander, MD, has been appointed as chair of the integrated medical science department (IMSD) in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine at Florida Atlantic University (FAU). He served as interim chair of IMSD prior to accepting the position on a permanent basis in September. Dr. Ouslander is also senior associate dean of geriatric programs and a professor of Clinical Biomedical Science at FAU.

Dr. Ouslander earned his MD from Case Western Reserve University (CWRU). He completed residency in internal medicine at CWRU and fellowship in geriatric medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles. His research has focused on urinary incontinence and overactive bladder, quality of care, and falls and insomnia in geriatric patients.

Dr. Ouslander led development of the Interventions to Reduce Acute Care Transfers (INTERACT) program. INTERACT is a quality improvement program aimed at reducing unnecessary hospitalizations referred from skilled nursing facilities. The program provides a number of tools and guidelines for assessing, tracking and communicating changes in a resident’s condition. The program was initially designed in a project funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and is currently supported by a grant from the Commonwealth Fund. Dr. Ouslander received the 2012 Nascher/Manning Award from the American Geriatrics Society, of which he is a past president, in recognition of his distinguished career in clinical geriatrics.

Joanna Drowos, DO, MBA, MPH, was named as associate chair of the IMSD. She is an assistant professor of clinical biomedical science and previously served as director of the community and preventive medicine clerkship at FAU. Her work has focused on preventive medicine and public health. She is a former medical director for the Riviera Beach Health Center and director of medical education for the preventive medicine residency program with the Palm Beach County Health Department. She earned her MPH and DO degrees at Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. She also holds an MBA in Healthcare Administration from FAU.
Director Named at Columbia University’s Institute for Genomic Medicine

David Goldstein, PhD, has been named as director of the Institute for Genomic Medicine and will serve as professor of genetics and development in the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University. His appointment is effective January 1, 2015. He joins Columbia from Duke University, where he has served since 2005. At Duke, he was director of the Center for Human Genome Variation and the Richard and Pat Johnson Distinguished University Professor. He also held appointments in the departments of molecular genetics & microbiology and biology.

The Institute at Columbia is a partnership with New York-Presbyterian. In his new role, Dr. Goldstein is charged with integrating genetics and genomics into the research, patient care, and curriculum at Columbia University Medical Center and New York-Presbyterian. He will lead development of programs aimed at preparing students for careers in the field of genomic and personalized medicine. He will also hold faculty appointments at the New York Genome Center and in neurology at Columbia’s College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Dr. Goldstein earned his PhD in Biological Sciences from Stanford University in 1994. He served as Wolfson Professor of Genetics at University College in London from 1994 to 2005 and was appointed Honorary Professor of its Institute of Neurology in April 2007. His research has focused on genetic modifiers of common diseases, such as hepatitis C, epilepsy, and schizophrenia.

Dr. Goldstein is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He serves on the Advisory Council at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, a part of the National Institutes of Health. In 2013, he was chair of the Gordon Research Conference in Human Genetics.

Director of Cardiovascular Institute Named at NYP/CUMC

Michael Borger, MD, PhD, joined New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center (NYP/CUMC) as director of aortic surgery. Prior to joining NYP/CUMC on August 1, he was assistant director of the Department of Surgery at the Leipzig Heart Center and a professor of surgery at the University of Leipzig, in Leipzig, Germany. In his new post, Dr. Borger also serves on the faculty of the Department of Surgery at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons and as director of the department’s Cardiovascular Institute.

Dr. Borger, a native of Canada, earned his MD at the University of Alberta and PhD at the University of Toronto. He completed fellowships at the University of Toronto, Toronto General Hospital, and the University of Leipzig Heart Center. He specializes in complex aortic surgery using both traditional and minimally invasive procedures.
Chief of Urology Named at NYP/CUMC

James McKiernan, MD, has been named chair of the Department of Urology of the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and urologist-in-chief at New-York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC). He has served as interim chair and chief since September 2013. As department chair, he will be nominated to become the John K. Lattimer Professor of Urology.

Dr. McKiernan earned his MD from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. He completed training in urology and general surgery at New-York-Presbyterian Hospital and a fellowship in urologic surgical oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. He is an expert in organ preservation and reconstructive surgery in the management of kidney and bladder cancer.

Dr. McKiernan serves as principal investigator of the National Institutes of Health-funded clinical trials program of experimental therapeutics in bladder cancer at CUMC. He has served as Vice Chairman for the Tumor - Node - Metastasis (TNM) staging task force of the American Joint Committee on Cancer, and he is a member of the American Board of Urology and Society of Urologic Oncology Examination Committees.

Director of New Division of Population Genetics Named at the Arizona Health Sciences Center

Rick Kittles, PhD, was named director of the Division of Population Genetics at the University of Arizona (UA). The Division is part of the new Center for Applied Genetics at the Arizona Health Sciences Center. Dr. Kittles will also serve as professor in the Department of Surgery in the Division of Urology at the UA College of Medicine – Tucson. He will hold a joint appointment in the Division of Health Promotion Sciences at the UA Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health. Additionally, he is a member of the University of Arizona Cancer Center and the center’s Cancer Prevention and Control Program.

Prior to joining the UA, Dr. Kittles served as director of the Institute of Human Genetics at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). He was also an associate professor in the Department of Medicine and Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics in the UIC School of Public Health and associate director of the Office of Health Equity at the University of Illinois Cancer Center. He is a recognized leader on cancer health disparities and the role of genes and environment in disease and is a co-founder of the company, African Ancestry, Inc.

Dr. Kittles earned his PhD in biological sciences from George Washington University in 1998. He was subsequently a Human Genome Research Associate/Postdoctoral Fellow at the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI), a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Howard University College of Medicine. He has received funding from the NIH, the Department of Defense, and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation for his research on prostate, breast and colon cancer, vitamin D, and acute chest syndrome. In March 2012, Dr. Kittles delivered the keynote address at the United Nations General Assembly’s “International Day of Remembrance of Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.” He has received numerous honors and awards for his work, including the 2012 Black History Maker Award from the UIC Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Blacks. Dr. Kittles received a Bachelor of Science in biological sciences from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in 1989. He was awarded the RIT’s Distinguished Alumni Award in April and served as the 2014 commencement speaker for the College of Science.

Dr. Kittles is a member of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR).
and serves on its Minorities in Cancer Research Council. He previously served as co-chair of the AACR’s conferences on the Science of Cancer Health Disparities in Racial/Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved. He is also a member of the American Society of Human Genetics, the American Public Health Association, and the RIT President’s Roundtable. He is a member of the Board of Scientific Counselors of the NHGRI and previously served on the National Cancer Institute U54 Program Steering Committee for the Meharry Medical College/Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center Partnership.

Inaugural Chair of Department of Emergency Medicine Named at UT Southwestern

Deborah B. Diercks, MD, MSc, has been named as the founding Chair of the newly created Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (UT Southwestern). In this role, she will oversee the emergency departments of both the new William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital and the new Parkland Memorial Hospital. Dr. Diercks also will hold the Audre and Bernard Rapoport Distinguished Chair in Clinical Care and Research at UT Southwestern.

Dr. Diercks served on the faculty at the University of California, Davis for 16 years prior to joining UT Southwestern. She was most recently Professor of Emergency Medicine, Vice Chair for Research, and Director of Regulatory Knowledge and Support for the institutional Clinical and Translational Science Awards Center. Her clinical and research interests include early evaluation and diagnosis of acute coronary syndromes.

Dr. Diercks earned her MD from Tufts University School of Medicine in 1994 and completed residency training at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center. She also holds a master’s degree from the Harvard School of Public Health. She has held a variety of leadership posts within the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine and was the recipient of the Society’s 2014 Advancement of Women in Academic Emergency Medicine Award. Dr. Diercks is a Senior Associate Editor of the Annals of Emergency Medicine.

Chief of Maternal-Fetal Medicine Named at UC Davis

David B. Schrimmer, MD, has been named as professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and chief of the Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine at the University of California (UC) Davis School of Medicine. Dr. Schrimmer joins UC Davis from UC San Diego (UCSD), where he was the founding director of both the UCSD Fetal Surgery Program and of the UCSD Multiples Program. He is a leading expert in treating women carrying multiple pregnancies as well as treating fetuses with complex anomalies, such as twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, congenital diaphragmatic hernia and gastrochisis.

Dr. Schrimmer is a founding member of the University of California Fetal Therapy Consortium. The Consortium is a statewide collaboration of the fetal treatment programs at University of California campuses with medical centers at Davis, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Irvine and San Diego. He is a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Society of Maternal-Fetal Medicine and the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO). He has received numerous honors and awards for his work, including the 2014 Medical Student Education Award, given by the APGO.

Dr. Schrimmer earned his MD at the University of Southern California (USC) in 1983. He completed residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology and fellowships in Maternal-Fetal Medicine at the Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center, Women’s Hospital.
New Chair of Department of Pathology Named at U-M

Charles A. Parkos, MD, PhD, has been appointed as the chair of the Department of Pathology and the Carl Vernon Weller Professor of Pathology at the University of Michigan (U-M) Medical School. His appointment was effective in September. Prior to joining the U-M, he was a professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Emory University in Atlanta. He was also the director of the Medical Scientist Training Program and the clinical fellowship program in gastrointestinal pathology, and was a member of the President’s Advisory Committee.

Dr. Parkos earned his MD and PhD through the Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation and University of California, San Diego. He completed a postdoctoral research fellowship at Scripps, followed by residency training in pathology and fellowship training in gastrointestinal pathology at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. He became an assistant professor in the Department of Pathology at Harvard Medical School in 1992, where he remained until joining Emory University as an associate professor of pathology in 1997.

Dr. Parkos’ research has focused on the pathobiology of leukocyte interactions with mucosal epithelia, and he will continue the work of his laboratory at the U-M. He has received numerous honors and awards for his work, including the Scientific Achievement in Inflammatory Bowel Disease Basic Research Award from the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation of America. He is the recipient of the 2015 Rous-Whipple Award, to be awarded by the American Society for Investigative Pathology (ASIP). Dr. Parkos is a past president of ASIP.

Director of Lurie Cancer Center Named

Leonidas Platanias, MD, PhD, has been named as the director of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. He had been serving as interim director since January. Dr. Platanias has been at Northwestern since 2002, when he became the Jesse, Sara, Andrew, Abigail, Benjamin and Elizabeth Lurie Professor of Oncology at Feinberg School of Medicine. Prior joining Northwestern, he was chief of the Division of Hematology/Oncology at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Dr. Platanias earned his MD and PhD from the University of Patras Medical School in Greece. He completed a research fellowship at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He subsequently completed residency in Internal Medicine at the State University of New York, Downstate Medical Center and a fellowship in Hematology-Oncology at the University of Chicago Hospitals. His research, focused on signaling pathways in cancer cells, is supported by multiple R01 grants from the NIH’s National Cancer Institute (NCI). He is also funded by a Merit Review grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Platanias is the principal investigator of the NCI T32 training grant in signal transduction and cancer and of the American Cancer Society Institutional Review Grant.

Dr. Platanias has received numerous honors and awards for his work, including the 2013 Seymour & Vivian Milstein Award for Excellence in Interferon and Cytokine Research. He served as president of the International Society for Interferon and Cytokine Research from 2010–2011 and is currently on the board of directors of the International Cytokine Society. He has served as a member or chair in several review committees at the NIH.
UAB Recruits Prominent Cancer Researchers

Prominent cancer researchers, Ravi Bhatia, MD, and Smita Bhatia, MD, MPH, have been recruited to the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). The pair will join UAB from City of Hope in Duarte, California in January 2015.

Dr. Ravi Bhatia has been appointed director of the UAB Division of Hematology and Oncology and as the deputy director of the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center. He will serve as a professor in the Department of Medicine. His research is focused on the role of stem cells relative to blood cell cancer progression in leukemia. His work has demonstrated that residual stem cells can lead to the recurrence of chronic myelogenous leukemia when successful treatment with Gleevec is discontinued.

This discovery led to clinical trials to determine the efficacy of targeting and removing leukemia stem cells in patients achieving remission. While at City of Hope, he served as director of the Division of Hematopoietic Stem Cell and Leukemia Research and co-director of the Hematological Malignancies Program in the Comprehensive Cancer Center. He is an elected member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation.

Dr. Smita Bhatia will hold new positions as director of the Institute for Cancer Outcomes and Survivorship in the UAB School of Medicine, vice chair for outcomes in the Department of Pediatrics, and associate director for cancer outcomes research at the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center. She will serve as a professor in the UAB Department of Pediatrics. Additionally, she will join the Children’s of Alabama medical staff and serve as the co-director of the Center for Outcomes and Effectiveness Research and Education.

Her work with cancer survivors has identified common chronic health issues and led to new treatment protocols. She discovered an increased risk of radiation-related breast cancer among adolescent girls exposed to chest radiation for the treatment of Hodgkin’s lymphoma. This observation led to a decrease in radiation doses used to treat this patient group and has initiated trials to develop risk-reduction strategies for girls treated with chest radiation. Her work has also demonstrated the importance of continued oral chemotherapy to prevent relapse in children with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. She currently leads a national trial aimed at boosting treatment adherence.

In 2006, Dr. Bhatia established the Department of Population Sciences at City of Hope. She has received numerous honors and awards for her work, including the Frank H. Oski Lectureship Award from the American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. She is an elected member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation and member of the board of directors of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. Dr. Bhatia serves as the associate chair for the Children’s Oncology Group.

The Bhatias met while in medical school at the All India Institute for Medical Science in New Delhi, India and have been married for nearly 30 years. After their medical training in India, they both completed fellowships and additional training at the University of Minnesota.