The Georgetown-Howard Universities Center for Clinical & Translational Science
Mentored Career Development Core

Announces:

2018 KL2 Scholars

After our 8th highly competitive application cycle, the Georgetown-Howard Universities Center for Clinical and Translational Science (GHUCCTS) announces the appointment of **Chukwuemeka Ihemelandu** as our newest **KL2 Scholar**. This new awardee, his research projects, and training plans are emblematic of our program objectives in that they pair a highly-promising scholar-trainee with a mentor team that includes members from outside his own discipline, department, or institution to pursue research that depends on novel collaborations and methods to prepare the scholar for an impactful career in translational team science.

The GHUCCTS KL2 program is analogous both to the original National Institutes of Health (NIH) "roadmap" K12 Clinical and Translational Research Scholars (CTRS) program and to individual K-series awards, providing up to three years of protected time and research support, focused on developing early-career faculty investigators through a multidisciplinary-mentored research experience so that they can become independent, extramurally funded investigators, preferably in programs of multidisciplinary, collaborative team science.

Chukwuemeka Ihemelandu, MD, FACS, Surgical oncologist at MedStar Washington Hospital Center and Associate Professor of Surgery at Georgetown University will study "*Improving Detection of Microscopic Disease to Improve Survival of Patients with Gastrointestinal Cancers."* He seeks to establish a proof of concept for the utility of intra-operative optical fluorescence imaging with near-infrared (NIR) light using antibodies that specifically target colorectal cancer (CRC) cells. Dr. Ihemelandu is mentored by a multidisciplinary and multi-institutional team led by Christopher Albanese from the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and including Brent Harris, Olga Rodriguez, John Marshall and Yu Chen (U Maryland, Engineering).

Dr. Ihemelandu will join our two continuing KL2 Scholars and two senior scholars:

Alejandra Hurtado de Mendoza, **PhD**, Assistant Professor in Cancer Control and Prevention at Georgetown University, who is "*Testing a Culturally Adapted Telephone Genetic Counseling Intervention to Enhance Genetic Risk Assessment in Underserved Latinas at Risk of Hereditary Breast Cancer."* She is adapting an evidence-based Telephone Counseling intervention to reduce disparities by broadening the reach and accessibility to genetic counseling while enhancing the quality of the service for underserved at-risk Latinas. She is mentored by Drs. Kristi Graves and Marc Schwartz and by Dr. Heidi Hamilton from the Department of Linguistics at Georgetown University.

Matthew A. Edwardson, MD, Assistant Professor of Neurology, and Rehabilitation Medicine at Georgetown University is studying *"Plasma and exosomal markers of neural repair following stroke."* He seeks to identify neutrally-derived exosomal biomarkers that can signal the process of brain repair with a goal of identifying new targets for neurotherapeutics. Dr. Edwardson is mentored by Dr. Alexander Dromerick, of MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital and Georgetown University Medical Center, and by Dr. Amrita Cheema, from the Departments of Oncology and Biochemistry at Georgetown University.

Continuing as senior scholars in our program are:

Evgenia Gourgari, MD, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Georgetown University, whose research is focused on "*The impact of insulin resistance and its treatment on cardiovascular risk in youth with type 1 diabetes.*" With co-mentorship by Drs. Alan Remaley of NHLBI, Kristina Rother of NIDDK, and Joseph Verbalis of Georgetown University, she is assessing the relationship of insulin resistance, and its treatment with metformin, with novel molecular and functional CVD risk markers in youth with T1DM.

Anna Greenwald, PhD, Research Assistant Professor of Neurology at Georgetown University and at MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital studies the *"Impact of right-hemisphere (RH) stroke on functional performance and brain organization."* Her discipline-spanning research, with co-mentorship by Drs. Alexander Dromerick of MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital and Elissa Newport of the Center for Brain Plasticity and Recovery at Georgetown University, is defining the functional reorganization that occurs after RH stroke, developing and validating new assessment tools, improving the detection of specific deficits, and informing the development of targeted rehabilitation interventions.

Please join us in congratulating our new scholar.

Jason G. Umans, MD, PhD
Associate Professor and KL2 Program Director

Dexter L. Lee, PhD, FAHA
Associate Professor and Associate Program Director

Kathryn Sandberg, PhD
Professor and Associate Program Director