

# PSG NEWSLETTER



Parkinson Study Group, 265 Crittenden Blvd, Rochester, NY 14642-0694, [www.parkinson-study-group.org](http://www.parkinson-study-group.org)

## PSG ANNUAL MEETING

The PSG Annual Meeting was held on May 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> at the Four Seasons in Irving, Texas. On Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual PSG Symposium was held. We were happy to host over 200 PSG members and special guests from the Parkinson's Disease Foundation (PDF), The Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF), PDF's Clinical Research Learning Institute (CRLI) and NIH/NINDS.

This year the PSG Executive Committee launched a new initiative to explore international collaborations to leverage resources and enhance responsiveness to programs that seek intercontinental trial cohorts. We were honored to have **Dr. Wolfgang Oertel** representing the German Parkinson Study Group, **Dr. Bill Chan and Jennifer Zheng** representing the Chinese Parkinson Study Group, **Dr. Filip Bergquist** representing the Swedish Parkinson Research Network (SWEPAR-net) and PSG member **Kapil Sethi, MD**, representing the Parkinson Research Alliance of India (PRAI).

At the PSG Membership meeting, Karen Marder gave an informative presentation on the state of the PSG indicating that the membership has grown to 250 investigators and 207 coordinators with 119 credentialed sites in the U. S., Canada and Puerto Rico. She pointed out the new credentialed investigators many of whom were in attendance with their coordinators. Current projects and grants, symposia, training initiatives, and collaborations were outlined with the strategic challenges facing the PSG and the new initiatives planned for the future.

Karen Rabinowitz presented the election results and announced **Hubert Fernandez** as the new investigator member to the PSG Executive Committee.



Hubert Fernandez

Dr. Fernandez is a Professor of Neurology and directs the multi-disciplinary Movement Disorders Center at Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio. He organizes and conducts single- and multi-center trials in Parkinson's disease and also has an interest in non-motor aspects of PD.

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The PSG Nominating Committee members, Fred Wooten, Chair, Melissa Gerstenhaber, Steven Frucht, Wayne Martin, S. Elizabeth Zaubler, and William Ondo were recognized for their hard work in making this year's election process a success. We appreciate all the PSG members who took the time to submit their vote.



Karl Kiebertz

In May, Dr. Kiebertz resigned as Chair of the PSG Executive Committee. At the annual meeting, Dr. Kiebertz was honored for his leadership and dedication to the PSG. Karen Marder assumed the Chair for the remainder of her term to 2012. Dr. Kiebertz looks forward to continuing to contribute to the PSG wherever needed.



Carlie Tanner

Dr. Tanner was named interim Co-Chair of the PSG Executive Committee, which was approved by the PSG membership by electronic vote as of May 26, 2011. Subsequently, Dr. Tanner has stepped down from chairing the PSG Scientific Review Committee.



Fred Wooten

Dr. Wooten rotated off the PSG Executive Committee after 3 years of service. Dr. Wooten was honored for his service and many contributions to the PSG. Dr. Wooten will also remain very active and continue to contribute wherever needed.

PSG members enjoyed research presentations by Jim Boyd and Un Kang. Dr. Boyd presented his research on "**Nicotine Treatment of Impulsivity in Parkinson's Disease**". Dr. Kang presented his research on "**The role of motor learning in dopaminergic therapy of Parkinson's Disease**". Both efforts are funded by a grant from the Parkinson's Disease Foundation.

## PSG ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

The Fourth Clifford W. Shults Symposium was hosted by the PSG Classic Motor Working Group under the leadership of Dr. Robert Hauser and Dr. Tony Lang. The audience enjoyed the theme “**Movement Disorders: Beyond the classic model of the basal ganglia**”. The audience also learned from a variety of platform presentations and 21 poster presentations on Parkinson’s disease and other movement disorders.

Speaking on our theme topic were Drs. Lex Kravitz, Susan Fox, Elena Moro, and Buz Jinnah. The audience gained knowledge and understanding in new developments in basal ganglia physiology that help explain the features of movement disorders, new neuroscience methods like optogenetics, potential non-dopaminergic treatments entering trials and that may come into clinical practice, the role cerebellar dysfunction plays in the expression of dystonia, and DBS surgery targets outside the classically defined basal ganglia that may come into clinical use.



**Alexxai V. Kravitz, PhD** is a Postdoctoral Fellow at Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease, San Francisco, CA. He presented “Regulation of motor behavior by optogenetic control of basal ganglia circuitry.”



**Susan H. Fox, MD, PhD** is an Associate Professor of Neurology, MD Center, Toronto Western Hospital, University of Toronto. She presented “Beyond dopamine: Non-dopaminergic treatment therapies of movement disorders.”



**H. A. (Buz) Jinnah, MD, PhD** is a Professor of Neurology, Human Genetics and Pediatrics, Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA. He presented “Outside basal ganglia systems: Dystonia.”



**Elena Moro, MD, PhD** is an Associate Professor of Neurology, Movement Disorders Center, Toronto Western Hospital, University of Toronto. She presented “Outside the classic basal ganglia: Pedunculopontine Nucleus.”

The winners of the best abstracts were **Aleksandar Videnovic** for his abstract on “Circadian rhythm of melatonin secretion is altered in Parkinson’s disease” and **Roger Kurlan** for his abstract on “A Multicenter Randomized Placebo- Controlled Clinical Trial of Pramipexole for Tourette’s Syndrome”. They receive a certificate and a \$500 monetary award. We congratulate them and the other nominees **Daniel Lieberman, Eric Tsang, Daniel Claassen, Doug Gunzler, Sandipan Pati, and Shea Gluhm**.

This year’s symposium was supported by TEVA Neuroscience, Genetech, Biogen Idec, IPSEN, Lundbeck Inc., The *Movement Disorders Society*, UCB, Valeant Pharmaceuticals International, NeuroSearch, Ceregene, Inc., and Medtronic Neurological. Those participating in the exhibits were: TEVA, Lundbeck, Valeant and IPSEN. The Parkinson’s Disease Foundation had a table with resources available for attendees.

The Symposium is presented by the PSG, Huntington Study Group, Cooperative Ataxia Group, Dystonia Study Group, Myoclonus Study Group, Tourette Syndrome Study Group and the Tremor Research Group. PSG and HSG members serve on the organizing committee with members from the hosting working group. This year the organizing committee consisted of **Robert Hauser** and **Tony Lang**, Chair and Co-Chair of the PSG Classic Motor Working Group, along with **Laura Gaines, Karen Marder, Michael Schwarzschild, and Leo Verhagen**; the PSG Symposia Committee consisted of **Roger Albin**, Chair, **Laura Marsh, Elena Moro, Michele Tagliati**, and **Roseanna Battista**; members of the HSG Symposia Committee consisted of **Andrew Feigin**, Chair, **Jang-Ho Cha**, and **Hubert Fernandez**. Special thanks goes out to **Donna Moszkowicz**, PSG Development and Event Manager, for her work with our supporters and exhibitors and **Karen Rabinowitz**, PSG Legal Counsel, for her assistance in preparation of the symposium.

We encourage you to access the reprints on-line through the *Movement Disorders* journal at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/mds.23729/full> or through the PSG website at [www.parkinson-study-group.org](http://www.parkinson-study-group.org).

The meeting concluded with a joint reception for all meeting attendees including sponsors hosted by the Executive Committee. Special thanks goes to the Parkinson’s Disease Foundation for their financial support of the annual meeting.

## PSG MJFF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR ANALYSIS OF BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES

The PSG Scientific Review Committee (SRC) has been involved with the creation of a central repository for PSG biological samples. There has been increasing demand for PSG biospecimens and the need to secure state-of-the-art storage and handling of these precious samples became more imminent.

Funding from The Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF) made it possible to transfer these samples to Indiana University where they are being inventoried and stored appropriately. The DNA in short supply will be amplified to increase its use. Under the supervision of PSG member Tatiana Foroud, these samples will be handled with state-of-the-art equipment and personnel with the expertise needed to inventory and distribute samples.

Included in this collaborative grant, MJFF is supporting up to \$1 million dollars for datamining grants to support the identification and validation of novel biomarkers through use of the DATATOP biospecimens in combination with the DATATOP clinical data. A request for proposals was announced on April 13, 2011. This yielded quite a few Experimental Summaries that were reviewed and invited to submit full proposals due by July 27, 2011. The anticipated award announcements will be made in October 2011 with anticipated funding to start in November 2011. A separate Grant Review Committee (GRC) has been established to review these proposals. Members from the PSG SRC and PSG Biomarkers Working Group serve on this committee along with MJFF members. We are excited about the research possibilities that this collaborative work will generate!

## PSG Scientific Review Committee

Other proposals submitted to the PSG SRC will be reviewed as usual. PIs are encouraged to work with the PSG Working Groups in developing their research ideas. To submit a proposal, please visit the PSG website and use the "new proposal toolkit".

The SRC welcomed three new members with expertise in biostatistics: **Sue Leurgans** from Rush University, **Jordan Elm** from USC and **Barbara Tilley** from University of Texas HSC. We thank the following members for their dedicated service who rotated off this year: **Yuko Palesch, Stan Fahn, Lisa Gauger, Tatiana Foroud, and Laura Marsh.**

With Carlie Tanner assuming the Co-Chair of the PSG Executive Committee, **Web Ross**, as Co-Chair of the SRC, was asked to assume the Chair of the SRC. Dr. Ross invited **David Simon** to serve as Co-Chair of the SRC and he willingly accepted this position. We look forward to their leadership and appreciate their service to the SRC.

## PSG Mentoring Committee

### PSG Advisor Program

Last year, the recipient of the MCRA benefitted from connecting with an advisor while preparing his grant. We want to encourage new investigators who are initiating a research career or continuing an existing research area to apply. This valuable resource is managed by the PSG Mentoring Committee and a bank of advisors are ready to help you find a local mentor in your area (both research and geographic) or help you find specific research funding sources (foundations, etc.) for your research. If you would like to participate in this program, please complete the [application form](#) on the PSG website.

### Mentored Clinical Research Award (MCRA)

The PSG has received a \$100,000 grant from the **Parkinson's Disease Foundation** (PDF) to award 2 MCRA grants this year with supplemental funding through the PSG. The PSG received 18 applications. After review and recommendations from the Mentoring Committee, the PSG Executive Committee was proud to award **Joshua Shulman, MD, PhD** and **Jessica Calleo, PhD**. Dr. Shulman will study "**Genetic and Transcriptional Analysis of Susceptibility for Parkinson's Disease Neuropathology**" with his mentors Philip De Jager, Lewis Sudarsky and Clemens Scherzer and Dr. Calleo will study "**Behavioral Treatment of Anxiety in PD (BehTA-PD): A Pilot Study**" with her mentors Laura Marsh and Melinda Stanley. *Congratulations!*



L to R: Josh Shulman and Jon Stoessl

## FUTURES IN CLINICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM

Presented at the American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting, April 11 and April 12, 2011 in Honolulu, Hawaii

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) approached Joel Perlmutter, Chair of the PSG Mentoring Committee, about incorporating our annual mentoring program with the AAN's Future in Clinical Research Luncheon making it a two-day program this year at their annual meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii. The Mentoring Committee felt this would be an opportunity to respond to the feedback received from residents and fellows that wanted the program longer and a chance to interact with mentors.

On Monday, April 11 the program featured an overall introduction to a career in clinical research with speakers Joel Perlmutter from the PSG, Walter Koroshetz and Michael Weinrich from NIH, and Robin Brey of the University of Texas. On Tuesday, April 12 various mentoring sessions were held by the PSG/PDF, Alzheimer's Association, the American Epilepsy Society, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Both days were well attended with near 100 residents and fellows on Monday and 35 residents and fellows for the PSG/PDF session.

During the PSG/PDF mentoring session on Tuesday, a group of exceptional mentors participated. Facilitated by **Jon Stoessl, CM, MD**, Co-Chair of the PSG Mentoring Committee, mentors included **Michael Schwarzschild, Buz Jinnah, Jonathan Mink, Cynthia Comella, Joel Perlmutter, Un Kang, Stan Fahn, and James Beck** from the PDF. The mentors shared how they got started in their clinical research careers and how important mentoring is throughout their career. Ample time was allowed for a question and discussion period which the attendees appreciated the interaction with the mentors. Dr. Stoessl brought important information regarding Canadian funding to the PSG/PDF mentoring session. Handouts included information on NINDS funding, K awards and grant writing tips.



L to R: Buz Jinnah, Jonathan Mink, Un Kang and Michael Schwarzschild



L to R: Dr. Altman, Dr. Higuchi and Dr. Sarma

Three neurology residents received a \$1,000 travel scholarship from the PDF. They were chosen for their abstracts on Parkinson disease as described below:

**Dr. Robert Altman**, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec – "A Pilot Randomized Placebo-Controlled Trial of Caffeine for Excessive Daytime Somnolence in PD".

**Dr. Masa-aki Higuchi**, Fukuoka University, Nanakuma, Japan – "Correlation between the Apathy Emerging after Bilateral Stimulation of the Subthalamic Nucleus in PD and the Preoperative Decrease Perfusion Region in the Brain".

**Dr. Anand K. Sarma**, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas – "Idiopathic PD and Vascular Parkinsonism: Differing Demographics and Presentation".



L to R: Robert White and Joel Perlmutter



L to R: Cindy Comella, Melissa Armstrong and Christina Vaughn

## STUDY UPDATES

### **SURE-PD** by Alice Rudolph

**SURE-PD** (A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, dose-ranging trial of oral inosine to assess safety and ability to elevate urate in early Parkinson's disease) has had an increase in enrollment rate over the past 7 months and has now enrolled 61 of its originally planned 90 subjects.

With 45 subjects having already reached their Week 12 Visit, the pre-planned interim short term analysis is currently underway. Assuming this analysis indicates that inosine treatment thus far has been safe, well-tolerated and effective at elevating urate, SURE-PD will continue. In addition, the Steering Committee anticipates that the results may be supportive of an upcoming submission to NINDS of a larger phase 3 trial of inosine as a urate-elevating therapy designed to slow the rate of clinical decline in PD. This study is funded by The Michael J. Fox Foundation.

### **PostCEPT** by Emily Flagg

**PostCEPT** (A Longitudinal Observational Follow-up of the PRECEPT Study Cohort) remains on hold to in-person study visits for 2011 while we await notification from NIH regarding funding opportunities that may result from the LABS-PD grant re-submission completed in March 2011.

### **PROBE** by Emily Flagg

**PROBE** (Blood  $\alpha$ -Synuclein, Gene Expression, and Smell Testing as Diagnostic and Prognostic Biomarkers in Parkinson's Disease) is undergoing manuscript preparation to report on the results of the synuclein and transcriptomics data. The manuscript is planned for submission towards the end of third quarter 2011.

### **SPIN-PD** by Jennifer Harman

#### **SPIN-PD** (S**P**ectroscopy **I**N Diagnosis of **PD**)

The Parkinson Study Group (PSG), under the direction of Anthony Lang, MD (Toronto Western University), and Bernard Ravina, MD, MSCE (University of Rochester), conducted a multi-center observational study in individuals with Parkinson disease (PD). The purpose of the study was to assess the potential for biomarkers in diagnosis of PD. Thirty-seven research centers across North America enrolled 314 research participants. Data analyses are currently being conducted.

Biospectroscopy technologies are able to identify the presence of biomarkers in blood plasma. Previously Molecular Biometrics, Inc. has demonstrated these biomarkers could be used to distinguish PD subjects from normal elderly controls. The goal of this study is to expand on earlier studies to determine if this technique can serve as a quick, non-invasive method of early identification of PD (see reference: Schipper et al. *Biomarkers Med.* 2008;2(3):229-238).

### **STEADY-PD** by Cheryl Deeley

**STEADY-PD** (Safety, Tolerability, and Efficacy Assessment of Dynacirc CR for PD) completed study enrollment on October 31, 2010. Approximately 2/3 of the subjects have completed the study and 32 subjects remain active. Last subject visits are expected mid November 2011. STEADY-PD is a pilot Phase II doubleblind, placebo-controlled tolerability and dose finding study of isradipine CR in subjects with early Parkinson's disease. Isradipine CR is a dihydropyridine calcium channel blocker, approved for treatment of hypertension. This class of calcium channel blocking agents may provide neuroprotection and may reduce the risk of developing PD and slow disease progression. Secondary endpoints include the impact of isradipine CR on motor disability, blood pressure, cognition, PD quality of life and PD-related disabilities. Dr. Tanya Simuni at Northwestern University and Dr. Kevin Biglan at the University of Rochester lead this study. This study is funded by The Michael J. Fox Foundation.

### **Statement re Termination of QE3 study,**

**5/27/11** The NINDS has stopped the QE3 Phase III study of Coenzyme Q10 for treatment of early PD acting on the recommendation of the study's Data Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB). At the time of the most recent DSMB review, the results of a preplanned interim analysis showed that it would be futile to complete the study because it would be very unlikely to demonstrate a statistically significant benefit of active treatment over placebo. To date, the investigators have not found any safety concerns related to CoQ10 at dosages of 1200mg/day and 2400mg/day for up to 16 months of treatment. Site investigators and coordinators have informed participants of the study closure and have encouraged each participant to schedule a final study visit.

The QE3 study, administered by the PSG, enrolled 600 patients with early PD from 67 sites throughout North America. Participants were randomized to receive either 1200mg/d or 2400 mg/d of active CoQ10 or matching placebo. All participants also received vitamin E at a dosage of 1200 IU/day.

The Principal Investigators and the PSG are committed to conducting a detailed analysis of the complete data set from the QE3 study and to disseminating the results through the scientific review process. All are indebted to the participants for their time and dedication to this study.

Importantly, findings of the QE3 study are specific to PD, and they do not reflect the possible value CoQ10 may have in other disorders.

## A Comprehensive Review of Movement Disorders for the Clinical Practitioner

St. Regis Hotel, Aspen, Colorado  
July 25-28, 2011



**Cathi Thomas**

Every year Stan Fahn, Joe Jankovic, and Mark Hallett direct a comprehensive CME course on Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders. Movement disorder fellows apply and about 20 are selected to receive a stipend to attend the course. The faculty also offers three fellowships for coordinators.

This year, Cathi Thomas was nominated and selected for the fellowship. Cathi is Program Director of the Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorder Center at Boston University Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts. Cathi has been involved in clinical research for over 25 years. She has worked on many PSG trials including ELLDOPA, FOUND, TEMPO, PRECEPT, Presto, PROBE, PramiBID, QE3, RAPID, and SPIN-PD. Currently, she is coordinator for the STEADY-PD and SURE-PD trials. Cathi has been a valued PSG member since 1997 and served on the Nominating Committee and currently is a member of the Credentials Committee and Executive Committee.

In her role on the Executive Committee, Cathi facilitated the "All Coordinator's" meeting at the PSG Annual Meeting in May. Cathi is known for her many contributions to the PSG and continues to share her expertise and assistance wherever needed. *Congratulations Cathi!*

21st Annual Course  
**A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF  
MOVEMENT DISORDERS  
FOR THE CLINICAL PRACTITIONER**  
St. Regis Hotel, Aspen, Colorado  
**July 25 - 28, 2011**  
for additional information: <http://www.ColumbiaCME.org> tel. 212-305-3334

Endorsed by:  The Movement Disorder Society

 <b>COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY</b> College of Physicians and Surgeons  <b>STANLEY FAHN, M.D.</b> Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons New York, New York	 <b>BCM</b> Baylor College of Medicine  <b>JOSEPH JANKOVIC, M.D.</b> Baylor College of Medicine Houston, Texas	 <b>WIN</b>  <b>MARK HALLETT, M.D.</b> Bethesda, Maryland
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For further information about the course you can contact any of the faculty or visit: <http://ColumbiaCME.org>.

## "Coordinator's Corner"

by Cathi Thomas

It was a pleasure to organize this year's coordinator session at the annual PSG meeting in Irving, Texas. Following tradition, coordinators were welcomed by Alice Rudolph. Alice led introductions highlighting years of service in the PSG. New PSG coordinators as well as coordinators with 25 years-plus of experience were in attendance. This year's coordinator meeting focused on initiatives to enhance recruitment. The Parkinson Disease Foundation (PDF) and The Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF) have developed programs to inform the Parkinson's community about the importance of participation in research and how to connect with the numerous research trials in North America. A synopsis of these programs is included below.

### PDF Parkinson's Advocates in Research

by Ronnie Todaro of the Parkinson's Disease Foundation

Ronnie Todaro, Director of National Programs with the PDF was joined by PDF Research Advocates Israel Robledo of Midland, TX and Linda Morgan of Ashville, NC to discuss the PDF Parkinson's Advocates in Research Program (PAIR). The focus of this program is to bring the educated voices of people with Parkinson's disease (PD) to important issues in clinical research. PDF Research Advocates work to expand understanding of support for research, increase participation in clinical studies and bring the perspective of people with PD to all levels of the research process. Research advocates attend a three-day Clinical Research Learning Institute where they learn from clinical research experts (a number of whom are PSG members), become familiar with the science of PD and the clinical research process; and gain leadership and advocacy skills to confidently interact with the scientific community. Following the Learning Institute, graduates work closely with PDF staff and fellow Research Advocates through ongoing education, resource sharing and networking opportunities to strengthen the role that people with PD play in the research process.

To date, there are over 100 PDF Research Advocates in 36 states across the country who: speak at educational conferences and support groups on the importance of clinical research and study participation; serve on scientific review committees and clinical research advisory boards; and review and comment on clinical study design and protocol, the informed consent process and enrollment strategies.

If you would be interested working with a PDF research advocate within your study site, please contact Ronnie Todaro at [rtodaro@pdf.org](mailto:rtodaro@pdf.org) or 800-457-6676.



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### **MJFF offers resources for trial recruitment**

by Claire Meunier of The Michael J. Fox Foundation

As The Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF) provides more funding to clinical trials, it has begun to take a more strategic approach to trial recruitment. MJFF is invested in developing resources to support recruitment for all Parkinson's trials — not just those MJFF sponsors or funds. The Foundation has put in place a clinical trial strategies team with the goal of speeding trial recruitment, and therefore trial results.

"PD clinical trials are often faced with challenging delays in subject recruitment," says Todd Sherer, PhD, CEO of The Michael J. Fox Foundation. "Developing strategic approaches to speed subject recruitment will not only reduce the time and financial expenses associated with trials but also accelerate our ability to get answers on promising therapies that can significantly impact patients' lives."

To help streamline and speed trial recruitment, MJFF is offering two new tools free of charge to the field:

The **Recruitment Best Practices Manual** compiles the results of due diligence conducted with all clinical sites carrying out the Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative (PPMI), MJFF's landmark biomarker effort, and other trials the Foundation has funded in the past six months. This document compiles recruitment ideas that have worked well for multiple sites. It includes tactics appropriate at study launch and as recruitment wanes over time. The Recruitment Best Practices Manual is attached to this newsletter.

**Fox Trial Finder** is a clinical trial matching service that will launch in summer 2011. This smart and simple solution connects willing volunteers with the Parkinson's clinical trials that urgently need them, streamlining the flow of participants into studies and speeding progress toward therapeutic breakthroughs. Both people with PD and control volunteers can conduct tailored searches for clinical trials based on their medical history and location. They can also save a profile to receive alerts about matches that occur when new trials start recruiting. Trial coordinators can review potential volunteer matches for their trials, including detailed de-identified volunteer profiles, and reach out to promising leads via the tool.

Fox Trial Finder is launching to volunteers in mid-July, but is already accessible exclusively to clinical trial coordinators at <http://trialteams.foxtrialfinder.org>. If you are currently recruiting for a trial, contact Laura Dalle Pазze at [ldallepazze@michaeljfox.org](mailto:ldallepazze@michaeljfox.org) to start recruiting with Fox Trial Finder. MJFF is also hosting a special Webinar demonstration on **July 21, 2011, at 2 p.m. ET** to show how clinical trial coordinators can use Fox Trial Finder to recruit. RSVP for this webinar is requested to [ldallepazze@michaeljfox.org](mailto:ldallepazze@michaeljfox.org).

**FOX TRIAL FINDER**  
THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION FOR PARKINSON'S RESEARCH

### **PSG Introduction to Clinical Trials Course**

The **PSG Introduction to Clinical Trials Course** was held at the PSG Annual Meeting on Friday, May 13, 2011 presented by the PSG/PDF Mentored Clinical Research Awardees Xiang Gao, Greg Pontone, Amie Peterson and Jim Boyd as part of a new initiative of the PSG Mentoring Committee. Born out of an idea from Xiang Gao several years ago, these MCRA recipients met over several conference calls to develop this program.

The course is composed of a sequence of three one-hour seminars. One seminar will be presented each year during the PSG annual meeting. Both incoming and outgoing MCRA awardees will contribute to the project over its three year course. As one of the main goals of the PSG is to advance knowledge and improve the treatment of Parkinson's disease through the conduct of multicenter clinical trials the seminars will focus on: 1) providing a brief introduction to clinical trial conduct and methodology; 2) introducing new members to PSG clinical trial development and member participation and 3) how to approach data mining from completed PSG trials. This format will teach new members the fundamentals of clinical trial conduct and facilitate participation in PSG trials and database mining.

The first seminar was well attended with 48 people. Drs. Pontone and Ravina focused on clinical trial development and implementation, followed by Drs. Gao, Henchcliffe and Schwarzschild speaking on how to get involved in PSG clinical trials with Drs. Peterson and Kang talking about datamining opportunities. The audience had a chance to ask questions to the panel of speakers facilitated by Dr. Boyd. This course will be posted on the PSG website and a pdf of the presentations given can be obtained by contacting [Roseanna Battista](#).

*Future programs:*

#### **PSG ANNUAL MEETING – May 2012**

##### **Presentation 2: Trial Implementation**

- A. Recruitment
- B. Trial Design and Statistical Approaches
- C. Project and Data Management
- D. Data Analysis

#### **PSG ANNUAL MEETING – May 2013**

##### **Presentation 3: Ethics, Regulatory Concerns, and Investigator Responsibilities**

- A. Contracts/IRB and Confidentiality
- B. Safety Monitoring
- C. Ethical Issues
- D. Clinical Trial Reporting and Investigator Responsibilities

Please visit the PSG website often for other course offerings such as the Clinical Investigator's Training Course offered by the FDA Center for Biologics Evaluation & Research (CBER), November 7-9, 2011 in Silver Spring, MD.

## Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee has reviewed 6 applications since last newsletter. We welcome the following investigators and coordinators:

**Roy Alcalay, MD, MSc**, Assistant Professor of Neurology, Columbia University, New York, NY.  
**Coordinator: Ani Arkun**

**Brian Berman, MD, MS**, Assistant Professor, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CO.  
**Coordinator: Teresa Derian, RN**

**Andrew Duker, MD**, Assistant Professor of Neurology, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH.  
**Coordinator: Maureen Gartner, RN**

**Eric Farbman, MD**, Assistant Professor, University of Nevada School of Medicine, Las Vegas, NV.  
**Coordinator: Margie Hyderkhan, BS, MA, CCRC**

**Marta San Luciano, MD, MS**, Assistant Professor of Neurology, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Brooklyn, NY.  
**Coordinator: Sofya Glazman, MD**

**Tao Xie, MD, PhD**, Assistant Professor, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL.  
**Coordinator: Joan Young, CCRC**

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The Credentials Committee consists of **Karen Marder, Chair, Rodger Elble, John Goudreau, Claire Henchcliffe, Stacy Horn, Paige Pancake, Alex Rajput, Johan Samanta, Thyagarajan Subramanian, and Cathi Thomas**. We welcome new members Rodger Elble, John Goudreau, and Paige Pancake. We appreciate the service of **Christine Hunter, Mark Lew, and Lin Zhang** who rotated off the committee this year.

You must be credentialed in order to participate in PSG studies. The Credentials Committee reviews applications about 3 times per year. We encourage anyone interested in becoming a credentialed PSG investigator to contact [Roseanna Battista](#) for application materials.



We will be creating a web page for credentialing soon. You will be able to visit the PSG web site for information on the credentialing process, how to apply and get the materials needed.

## Nominating Committee 2012

The PSG Executive Committee has appointed a PSG Nominating Committee for 2012. Committee members are **Karen Marder, Chair, Carlie Tanner, Stan Fahn, Fred Wooten, Cathi Thomas and Charles Adler**. This year they will be working on forming a slate of candidates for Chair and Co-Chair, one Investigator and one Coordinator for the Executive Committee.

Anyone interested in running for any of these positions should contact [Roseanna Battista](#).

**The PSG welcomes the following PSG members recently appointed to committees:**

### Executive Committee

Cindy Casaceli, MBA representing the CTCC and Eric Macklin, PhD representing MGH Biostatistics. They serve as ex-officio members.

### Standards Committee

Deborah Hall, MD, PhD, Movement Disorders Section, Department of Neurological Sciences, Rush University, Chicago, IL.

### Publications Committee

Marian Evatt, MD, Assistant Professor of Neurology, Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA.

### Study Budget Committee

Donald Higgins, Jr., MD, Samuel S. Stratton VA Medical Center, Albany, NY

Cindy Miller, CRC, Kingston Neurological Associates, Kingston, NY

Anne-Marie Wills, MD, Massachusetts General Hospital, Charlestown, MA.

### Symposia Committee

Laura Marsh, MD, Chief, Department of Psychiatry, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX.

### Mentoring Committee

Jay Nutt, MD, Oregon HS University, Department of Neurology, Portland, OR.

Joshua Shulman, MD, PhD, Instructor in Neurology at Harvard Medical School and Associate Neurologist at Brigham & Women's Hospital, Boston, MA.

Jessica Calleo, PhD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX.

## Calendar of Events

### **November 7-9, 2011**

FDA Center for Biologics Evaluation & Research (CBER), Clinical Investigator's Training Course, Silver Spring, MD. More information is on the [PSG website](#).

### **Thursday, May 10, 2012**

NET-PD Meeting, Four Seasons, Irving, Texas.

### **Thursday, May 10, 2012**

PSG Executive Committee meeting, 8:00 pm-10:00 pm, Four Seasons, Irving, Texas.

### **Friday, May 11-Saturday, May 12, 2012**

PSG 24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING, Four Seasons, Irving, Texas.

### **Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:00-6:00 pm**

PSG 26<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM, Four Seasons, Irving, Texas.

### **October 1-4, 2013**

3<sup>rd</sup> World Parkinson Congress, Montreal, Canada. For more information, visit [www.worldpdcongress.org](http://www.worldpdcongress.org).

### **Reminder:**

The PSG posts Academic Positions on the PSG website. This is very helpful to fellows or other researchers when looking for employment in the field. If you have any open academic or staff position(s) available within your institution, please send an email advertisement to [Donna Moszkowicz](mailto:Donna.Moszkowicz@psg.org) for posting.

### **Comments? Questions?**

Please let us know...your comments and questions will be kept confidential. We also welcome your feedback on the newsletter and your ideas for topics for future newsletters.

Please send all correspondence to [Roseanna Battista](mailto:Roseanna.Battista@psg.org) or contact [Karen Marder](mailto:Karen.Marder@psg.org).

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**July 2011  
Volume 6, Issue 1**

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*The Parkinson Study Group (PSG) is a non-profit, cooperative group of Parkinson's disease experts from medical centers in the United States and Canada who are dedicated to improving treatment for persons affected by Parkinson's disease.*