



Lymphatic Research MATTERS

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LYMPHATIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION
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In This Issue

Research Matters
Leadership Matters
Support and Awareness Matters
Communication Matters

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Research Matters

LYMPHATIC RESEARCH: IMPORTANT FINDINGS ON MULTIPLE FRONTS

University of Pittsburgh announces discovery of a genetic mutation responsible for inherited lymphedema, opening possibilities for pharmaceutical interventions.

Results of a National Institutes of Health-funded study conducted by University of Pittsburgh researchers, including LRF Scientific/Medical Advisory Council Member

Robert E. Ferrell, PhD, have identified a novel causal genetic mutation for families with primary lymphedema. Prior research had associated six different causal genes with primary lymphedema.

This study reports mutations in a gap junction protein, connexin 47, causing primary lymphedema in a number of families. Connexin 47 is believed to be important for cell to cell communication. The findings appeared in the May 27, 2010 issue of the [American Journal of Human Genetics](#). Co-authors include: include Robert E. Ferrell, Ph.D., Catherine J. Baty, D.V.M., Ph.D., Mark A. Kimak, M.S., Jenny M. Karlsson, M.S., Elizabeth C. Lawrence, B.S., Marlise Franke-Snyder, M.S., Stephen D. Meriney, Ph.D., Eleanor Feingold, Ph.D., and David Finegold, MD., all of the University of Pittsburgh.



Robert Ferrell,
PhD



David Finegold, MD

The research was based on findings from the [University of Pittsburgh Lymphedema Family Study](#). Launched in 1995 to gather data from families with inherited lymphedema, the study has registered several hundred families with the aim of identifying the genetic basis of primary lymphedema.

"These results are significant because they give us insight into the cell-cell communications between lymphatic endothelial cells that underlie a subset of cases with primary lymphedema. With further research, we hope to be able to target this gene with drugs and improve its function" said Dr. David N. Finegold in a recent interview with LRF Board Member Myrna Barzelatto. Dr. Finegold

is professor of human genetics, University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health and co-principal investigator of the Lymphedema Family Study. His research leading up to this latest discovery appeared in a 2008 issue of LRF's medical journal, [Lymphatic Research and Biology \(LR&B\)](#).

Breakthrough Research on Triple-Negative and Inflammatory Breast Cancers from Southern Illinois University School of Medicine

Groundbreaking research presented to the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) shows promise for a combination of pharmaceutical agents to treat rare forms of breast cancer previously unresponsive to drug therapies. Sophia Ran, PhD, Associate Professor, Southern Illinois University (SIU) School of Medicine, Department of Microbiology, Immunology & Cell Biology, announced the findings of her research team at the [April 20, 2010 AACR meeting](#).

Dr. Ran's research career has been rooted in lymphatics and lymphangiogenesis, particularly as it relates to understanding the underlying mechanisms of metastatic cancer. She is a member of the SIU Simmons Cancer Institute and of the American Association of Cancer Research. She has been published in preeminent biomedical journals, including [Blood](#), [International Journal of Cancer](#), [Pathophysiology](#), and LRF's peer-review journal, [Lymphatic Research and Biology](#).



Sophia Ran, PhD, (left) with research associate

"In many ways the lymphatic system remains a mystery of human biology," said Ran in a recent interview. "A large part of that mystery holds the answers to better understanding exactly how tumor cells recruit nearby lymphatic vessels which then serve to transport diseased cells through lymph nodes and to other organs in the body. Understanding the molecular mechanisms of this process will lead to development of new drugs -- or combinations of drugs - to halt proliferation of malignant and tumor lymphatic endothelial cells before they can spread beyond the initial site."

LRF congratulates and applauds the many researchers making history in lymphatic research!

LRF POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS - CLASS OF 2010-2012

LRF is pleased to announce the selection of three exceptional young researchers as our 2010-2012 Postdoctoral Fellows:

Helene Maby-El Hajjami, PhD, University Central Hospital

Project Title: Development of transcriptional differentiation approaches for treatment of lymphedema-distichiasis syndrome

Guy Malkinson, M.Sc., Weizmann Institute of Science

Project Title: Genetic analysis of lymphatic system development in zebrafish

Li-Chin Yao, PhD, University of California, San Francisco

Project Title: Development and Maintenance of lymphatic endothelial cell specializations in mouse respiratory tract

LRF will fund each of these dedicated scientists for a two-year term to pursue research and publish findings that will advance biomedical knowledge of the lymphatic system. The LRF Postdoctoral Fellowship Grant helps young researchers establish careers in this exciting and growing field. To date, all eight of our prior LRF Fellows continue their remarkable work in various aspects lymphatic science, helping to create a more hopeful future for all affected by lymphatic disorders.

We will have more on our new Fellows in the next e-edition of *Lymphatic Research Matters*.

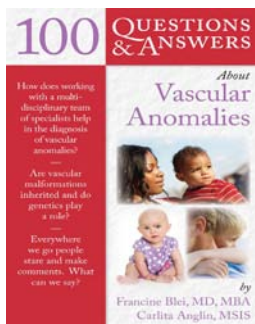
GET INVOLVED!

Additional funding is sought to expand the LRF Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. Naming and/or memorial opportunities available. If you or someone you can introduce LRF to is able to commit \$100,000 to fund a lymphatic research fellow for a full two-year term, please contact [Jacqueline Reinhard](#) to discuss possibilities. Individuals, foundations, and corporations are welcome!

Leadership Matters

FROM RESEARCH TO TREATMENT:

DR. ROCKSON ENVISIONS THE ROAD AHEAD



Stanley G. Rockson, MD

Stanley G. Rockson, Stanford Center for Lymphatic and Venous Disorders, Stanford University School of Medicine, has published an article entitled *Current concepts and future directions in the diagnosis and management of lymphatic vascular disease* in the June 2010 issue of *Vascular Medicine* ([Read Abstract](#))

Dr. Rockson details "substantial growth in the elucidation of lymphatic structural biology and the function of this system in health and in disease," over the past decade and foresees a more positive future: "As insight into the complex biology of the lymphatic vasculature continues to expand through focused biomedical investigation, the translation of these mechanistic insights into targeted, rationally conceived therapeutics will

become increasingly feasible."

The ten-year period Dr. Rockson summarizes has been ten years over which he has partnered with LRF, serving with distinction as the Chair of the LRF Scientific/Medical Advisory Council and as editor-in-chief of *Lymphatic Research and Biology*, LRF's peer-review biomedical journal.



Francine Blei, MD

FRANCINE BLEI, MD, CO-AUTHORS NEW BOOK ON VASCULAR MEDICINE

Francine Blei, MD, Medical Director of the Vascular Birthmark Institute, New York, NY, has co-authored a recently released book entitled: 101 Questions and Answers About Vascular Anomalies.

Dr. Blei is a long-time supporter of LRF and serves as associate editor of *Lymphatic Research and Biology*, LRF's official peer-review biomedical journal. The work is intended to be a resource for those affected by vascular anomalies and incorporates information about resources for networking, disease-specific foundations and psychosocial issues. To read more about it, review the table of contents, or to



contact the publisher, [click here](#).

Support and Awareness Matters

TEAM LRF ENTERS 2010 ING NYC MARATHON



GUARANTEED ENTRIES AVAILABLE!

LRF has been named an official charity for the 2010 ING NYC MARATHON! *TeamLRF* has a limited number of guaranteed entries to the race which will take place on Sunday, November 7th. Our contract with the ING NYC MARATHON requires runners to fundraise or donate a minimum of \$2500 to LRF. Runners will receive a TeamLRF running shirt, visor and lightweight running jacket.

If you or someone you know are interested in running the NYC Marathon with *TeamLRF* please contact team captain, [Doron Ilan](#).

All runners welcome! If you are already entered into the marathon, consider running with *TeamLRF*. For runners without the official 'charity' designation, a lower fundraising requirement can be negotiated.

A Special THANK YOU to LRF Young Fundraisers WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS.....



***Who can resist a fresh-baked treat and
a cool glass of lemonade on a hot summer's day?***

Charlie, Julia, and Isabelle (a.k.a. Izzy) went all out for their recent LRF Fundraiser. Home baked goodies and beautiful smiles lit up the neighborhood, refreshed passers-by and raised funds for a cause close to their hearts. Isabelle's younger brother has intestinal lymphangiectasia, a rare disorder involving deficiencies of lymphatic vessels of the small intestine.

Get Involved!

You're never too young or too old to make a difference! Please contact us with your ideas to raise awareness and funds for LRF this summer.

LOOKING AHEAD TO LRF FALL EVENTS

Save the Date: Thursday, October 28, 2010

Join us for

LRF's FALL DINNER-DANCE

Unwrap the Gift of Lymphatic Research!

With Silent and Live Auctions

The beautiful [Old Westbury Golf and Country Club](#) will be the site of a spectacular fall evening of fine dining and '*Dancing with the Stars of Lymphatic Research*' -- our wonderful supporters, researchers and patients.



Honorees

Sidney & Sharon Braginsky

McKenna

Mihaela Skobe-Crosby, PhD

Event Co-Chairs

Joe & Donna Cole Boyd Dyer Roy & Melissa Reichbach

Please mark your calendar and [contact us](#) for opportunities to support/sponsor this event.

And to get in shape for all that dancing . . .

Join us to *Stomp Out Lymphatic Diseases . . .*

LRF's first WALKATHON - September 19, 2010

Get your running shoes on and join us for a morning of fun and fitness at Long Island's beautiful [Belmont Lake State Park](#) for LRF's first Walkathon. All walkers, teams, and sponsors welcome!



Please see the LRF website or contact our Special Events Coordinator, [Kristin King](#), for additional information, for materials to form your own Walk Team, and for sponsorship opportunities.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Help is needed for pre-event coordination, local walkathon promotion and 'day of' support. If you live in the NYC-Long Island-Westchester area, please consider joining our office team to make LRF's first walkathon a success. Contact [Kristin](#) to learn how you can help.

GET INVOLVED!

If you can't make it to Long Island on September 19th, consider having a Walkathon in your area. Our **LRF WALK PLANNING GUIDE** has all the instructions and materials you will need; and our staff will always be just a phone call away. Contact [Kristin](#) for more information.

Communication Matters

Thank you for reading *Lymphatic Research Matters e-edition*. We welcome your ideas, comments, and feedback. [Click here to reach our editor.](#)

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