

UC SAN DIEGO DIVISION OF GASTROENTEROLOGY

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LETTER FROM THE CHIEF



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome to the Spring 2013 Newsletter for the UCSD Division of Gastroenterology. You will likely notice our new newsletter format which includes a new section called Research Spotlight. I also encourage you to visit our Division Website (<http://gastro.ucsd.edu/Pages/default.aspx>) which is also undergoing formatting changes. In this issue we introduce a new faculty member, Dr. Samir Gupta, who joins us from UT Southwestern and brings expertise in family colon cancer syndromes and colon cancer screening in underserved populations. We also highlight the research labs of Dr. David Brenner, Dr. Bernd Schnabl, and Dr. Ekihiro Seki who collectively comprise a robust programmatic focus on liver inflammation and fibrosis. You also will find details regarding the 2013 UCSD DDW Reception which we invite you to attend. Finally, you will see from the section on Division publications that our faculty members are making substantial contributions to the scientific literature of Gastroenterology in both the basic science and clinical medicine arenas. I hope you enjoy the newsletter. We look forward to seeing you at Digestive Disease Week in Orlando in May.

Best regards,



William J. Sandborn, M.D.

Chief, Division of Gastroenterology

UC San Diego

WELCOME SAMIR GUPTA, MD, MSCS


Samir Gupta, M.D., MSCS
Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine

Education:

- ◆ Masters of Science in Clinical Science with Distinction
University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center
- ◆ Certificate in Advanced Training in Clinical Research
University of California, San Francisco
- ◆ Gastroenterology Fellowship
University of California, San Francisco
University of Pennsylvania
- ◆ Internship and Residency in Internal Medicine
University of California, San Francisco
- ◆ M.D. University of Michigan
- ◆ B.A. Biomedical Science and English University of Michigan



Dr. Samir Gupta is the newest addition to the UC San Diego GI faculty. Dr. Gupta's research and clinical focus includes prevention and screening of colorectal cancer, as well as the evaluation and management of patients with hereditary GI cancer syndromes such as Lynch Syndrome.

Dr. Gupta was recruited from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, where he served as the principle investigator of 3 randomized controlled trials of strategies for boosting screening among the underserved, lead a number of observational studies in the areas of colorectal polyp epidemiology, polyp risk assessment, and management of Lynch Syndrome, and served as the lead physician for a GI cancer genetics clinic at Parkland Health and Hospital System. He has previously obtained grant funding from entities such as the NIH, the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, and the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy.

Here in San Diego, Dr. Gupta will care for patients at UC San Diego and the San Diego Veterans Affairs Healthcare system, and work closely with investigators across multiple disciplines to develop research focused on developing new approaches to colorectal cancer screening and management of patients with colorectal polyps. He is especially keen to aid in diagnosis and management of patients with complex polyps, suspected polyposis syndromes such as Familial Adenomatous Polyposis and Hyperplastic Polyposis Syndrome, and other GI cancer syndromes, such as Lynch Syndrome.

Publications of Interest:

Khatami S, Xuan L, Roman R, Zhang S, McConnel C, Halm E, **Gupta S**. Colonoscopy utilization after elimination of copay for screening in a large employer sponsored health plan: implications for national health care reform. *Clin Gastroenterol Hepatol* 2012 Mar 5 (Epub ahead of print).

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Newsorthy Notes
Sheila Crowe, M.D. has joined the Medical Advisory Board of the Celiac Disease Foundation by invitation. The CDF national office is based in Los Angeles.

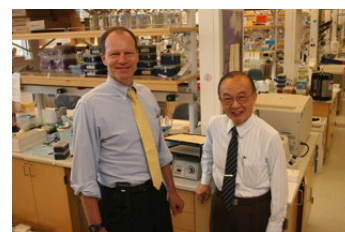
RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT



David A. Brenner, M.D.
Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences
Dean, UC San Diego School of Medicine

David Brenner is Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences and Dean of the School of Medicine at the University of California, San Diego. A distinguished physician-scientist and leader in the field of gastroenterological research, Dr. Brenner first joined UC San Diego in 1985 as a gastroenterology fellow, later joining the School of Medicine faculty, and serving as a physician at the Veterans Affairs (VA) San Diego Healthcare System. In 1993, Dr. Brenner became professor and chief of the Division of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition at the University of North Carolina

at Chapel Hill. He was ultimately recruited to UC San Diego from the Columbia University Medical Center College of Physicians and Surgeons, where from 2003 to 2007 he was Samuel Bard Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine, a member of the Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center, a member of the Columbia University Institute of Nutrition, and physician in -chief of New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia. The overall goal of his research is to characterize the molecular pathogenesis of liver inflammation and fibrosis in order to gain new insights into therapy. His research has utilized five different models of hepatic fibrosis that are relevant to human liver diseases; serial carbon tetrachloride treatment as a model of post-necrotic fibrosis, common bile duct ligation as a model of secondary biliary fibrosis, choline deficient amino acid supplemented diet as a model of non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, intragastric ethanol feeding as a model of alcoholic liver disease, and high fat diet as a model of diet induced obesity. From 2011-2012, he was president of the American Association of Physicians (AAP) and in 2012 he received membership to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) a prestigious non-profit organization that works outside of government to provide unbiased and authoritative advice to decision makers and the public.



David Brenner, MD, and Shu Chien, MD, PhD, are leading a collaborative effort to create more efficient treatments for liver disease.



Community Celebrates Groundbreaking of Altman Clinical and Translational Research Institute Facility

Shovel Ceremony – from left to right: Steve Relyea (Vice Chancellor, External and Business Affairs), Gabriel Haddad (MD, Chair of the UC San Diego Department of Pediatrics and Physician-In-Chief of Rady Children’s Hospital – San Diego), Paul Viviano (CEO, UC San Diego Health System), David Brenner (MD, Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences and Dean of the UC San Diego School of Medicine), Lisa Altman, Steve Altman, Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla, Lindsay Altman (daughter), Jessie Altman (daughter), Gary Firestein, MD, Director of the Clinical and Translational Research Institute, and Andy Altman (son)

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT



Bernd Schnabl, M.D.
Assistant Adjunct Professor

Dr. Bernd Schnabl is an Assistant Adjunct Professor in the Gastroenterology Division at UCSD School of Medicine. Trained as physician scientist in the field of gastroenterology and hepatology, he is combining his expertise in clinical medicine with basic science in the field of chronic liver diseases. Since he has been appointed to the UCSD faculty, he has been investigating changes in the intestinal microbiome and linking these changes to liver disease. Dr. Schnabl is a member of three distinguished medical societies and he is on the Editorial Board for two liver journals. Throughout his career, he has been honored with a number of awards and distinctions. These include a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Award from the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungs-

gemeinschaft, DFG), a Schering-Plough Unrestricted Educational Award from the European Foundation for the Study of Liver Diseases (EASL) and an American Gastroenterological Association (AGA)/Astra Zeneca Fellowship - Faculty Transition Award (FFTA).

The major focus of the Schnabl laboratory is to decipher molecular mechanisms involved in the onset and progression of chronic liver diseases. Within this primary focus they primarily investigate changes in the intestinal microbiome and the host mucosal immune system occurring during early stages of liver disease. In addition, a very important part of the laboratory is a translational aspect to identify targets for therapy and to generate interventions that are able to prevent or treat liver disease. The Schnabl research lab has successfully shown that alterations in the microbiome can either occur as quantitative (bacterial overgrowth) or qualitative (dysbiosis) changes in several preclinical models of liver disease. They have also demonstrated the importance of intestinal inflammation in the onset of microbial translocation and liver disease progression. Having established this innovative new research, they have published their results in *Nature*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (PNAS)*, *Gastroenterology*, *Hepatology* and *Journal of Hepatology* in recent years.

Dr. Schnabl received a Mentored Clinical Scientist Research Career Development Award (K08) by the NIH/NIDDK in 2009. He was also awarded a R01 entitled "Microbiome and intestinal innate immune response in alcoholic liver disease" from the NIH/NIAAA in 2011. He is expected to receive a U01 grant "Microbiome as therapeutic target in alcoholic hepatitis" from the NIH/NIAAA for 5 years. The U01 is part of a consortium consisting of an international group of basic and clinical investigators with extensive expertise in alcoholic hepatitis, both in clinical terms as well as the underlying biology and signaling pathways. The consortium consists of three scientific projects, led by three Principal Investigators, with Dr. Schnabl serving as the PI for the UCSD efforts. He is currently also receiving funds from a research grant from ABMRF/The Foundation for Alcohol Research.

For a full listing of publications, lab members and research activities, please visit the lab website

<http://gastro.ucsd.edu/schnabl-lab>



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

**Ekihiro Seki, M.D., Ph.D.**
Assistant Adjunct Professor

Dr. Ekihiro Seki started his career in medicine as a GI-hepatobiliary surgeon in Japan. His research career started on the study of Toll-like receptors (TLRs), a type of pattern recognition receptors that senses microbial products, in liver diseases. His PhD studies determined regulatory mechanisms of how TLR4 signaling activates caspase-1 and IL-18 in Kupffer cells (**Seki et al, J Immunol 2001**) and how TLR-MyD88 signaling initiates liver regeneration (**Seki et al, Hepatology 2005**).

Dr. Seki joined Dr. Brenner's laboratory at Columbia University in New York City where he determined that TLR4 signaling in hepatic stellate cells is crucial for the development of liver fibrosis (**Seki et al, Nature Medicine 2007**). He came to UCSD in 2007 as an Assistant Project Scientist, and currently is an Assistant Adjunct Professor. Dr. Seki received independent research laboratory space in the Leichtag Biomedical Research Building following his first R01 funding in 2010. The laboratory's major interest is to understand the role of innate immune and inflammatory signals in chronic liver diseases, such as alcoholic and non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, liver fibrosis, and hepatocellular carcinoma with special interest in the interplay between different hepatic cells (hepatocytes, Kupffer cells and hepatic stellate cells) and the crosstalk between different intracellular signaling (TLRs, TNF receptor, IL-6 signaling, TGF- β signaling, chemokine receptors) in the liver. Dr. Seki publishes in top-tier journals (*Journal of Clinical Investigation, PNAS, Gastroenterology, Hepatology, ACER*) and he is a recipient of the AASLD/ALF Fellow Research Prize at the AASLD meeting in 2006, ALF Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Award in 2006 and AASLD/ALF Liver Scholar Award in 2009. Currently, Dr. Seki is supported by two R01 grants and one research project in the UCSD Superfund research program.

Lab website: <http://gastro.ucsd.edu/seki-lab/Pages/default.aspx>



UPCOMING EVENTS



On behalf of William J. Sandborn, you are cordially invited to attend the annual UCSD Gastroenterology DDW Reception which is taking place on May 19, 2013.

Date: Sunday, May 19, 2013

Time: 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Location: The Peabody Orlando, Florida Ballroom B

9801 International Drive, Orlando, Florida 32819

For More Information contact: Maureen Wade mywade@ucsd.edu

Newsworthy Notes
Robert Gish, M.D. just returned from 2 meetings in Ha Noi and Saigon on Liver Disease with over 400 total attendees.

GI SAYS, "GOODBYE" TO DR. DECLAN MCCOLE



GI Says Goodbye to Declan McCole, Ph.D., Assistant Adjunct Professor

Faculty and Staff from the GI Division wish Dr. Declan McCole farewell on Jan. 23, 2013.

Dr. McCole has been with the UCSD GI Division since he was a postdoc in Martin Kagnoff's lab in 1998. He joined Kim Barrett's lab in 2000 and became an Assistant Project Scientist in 2004 and Assistant Adjunct Professor in July 2009. We wish him great success as Assistant Professor of Biomedical Sciences at UC Riverside. We'll miss you!

*May brooks and trees and singing hills
Join in the chorus too,
And every gentle wind that blows
Send happiness to you.*

Irish Prayer

AWARDS AND HONORS



Dr. Kim E. Barrett,
Professor of Medicine and
Dean of Graduate Studies, UC San Diego

Dr. Kim E. Barrett became the 86th President of the American Physiological Society on April 23, 2013 at the Experimental Biology meeting in Boston. Dr. Barrett is the fifth woman to hold that office in the Society's 125-year history. Congratulations Dr. Barrett!



Dr. Sheila E. Crowe
Professor of Medicine and
Director of Research, UC San Diego

Congratulations to **Dr. Sheila E. Crowe**, Professor of Medicine and Director of Research who is the recipient of the 2013 American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) Distinguished Educator Award. She will receive this award in May at the DDW Conference in Orlando, Florida.



At this year's 2013 Training Director's Workshop in Phoenix, AZ, it was announced that effective July 1, 2013 Dr. **Thomas Savides** will become the Director of the Program Director's Caucus. The caucus incorporates members of the four societies (AGA, AASLD, ACG, and ASGE) and it will be the job of the Caucus in 2013-14 to establish the GI milestones for the ACGME NAS that all GI programs will have to implement into their programs by July 2014. Dr. Savides appointment as Director means that our Associate Director, **Denise Kalmaz, MD** will step into the position of Program Director of our Fellowship Training Program. We congratulate both Dr. Savides and Dr. Kalmaz for their new appointments.



The American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) has selected **Dr. Amir Zarrinpar**, GI Fellow as the recipient of the 2013 Elsevier Pilot Research Award.



Dr. Pradipta Ghosh, Associate Professor recently received the Visionary Fellowship award for Cancer Research from the Department of Defense.



Dr. Rohit Loomba, Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine was awarded the T. Franklin Williams Scholars Alumni Executive Leadership Award - 2013.



Dr. Robert Gish, Professor of Clinical Medicine has been awarded a Hepatitis B Virus CDC grant. The major goal of this grant is to screen 2000 Asian Americans for HBV and link them to care.

The UCSD Health Matters Show, "Screening for Colon Cancer" was just awarded the Gold Aurora award!

(Produced by Rachel Bradley, Host David Granet and Guest Thomas Savides)

The Aurora awards are an independent and international Film & Video Competition for commercials, cable programming, documentaries, industrial, instructional and corporate videos. (Health Matters has previously won Emmy, Freddie and aurora awards.)

<http://www.uctv.tv/shows/Colon-Cancer-Screening-Health-Matters-23837>

DIVISION PUBLICATIONS

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Kisseleva T, **Brenner DA.** Inactivation of myofibroblasts during regression of liver fibrosis. *Cell Cycle.* 16;12(3), 2013. Review

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GASTROENTEROLOGY MISSION STATEMENT



ORGANIZATION STATEMENT

The UCSD GI Division will provide the best clinical care to those afflicted with gastrointestinal and liver diseases, investigate at the clinical and basic levels the best way to improve those diseases, and educate trainees on how to best approach the care of patients with those diseases. The UCSD GI Division will strive to be nationally recognized through its faculty as well as innovations that will improve the care of patients with gastrointestinal and liver diseases nationwide.

The UCSD GI Division was founded in 1970 by Henry Wheeler, M.D. who served as its first Division Chief. Later, Jon I. Isenberg, M.D. led the Division from 1979 to 1993, followed by C. Richard Boland, M.D. from 1995 to 2003, John M. Carethers, M.D., from 2004 - 2009 and William J. Sandborn from 2011-Present. The GI fellowship Training Program commenced in 1974 and the NIH Training Grant was initially funded in 1976. The Division has trained several local gastroenterologists in San Diego, as well as developed several academicians at University-based medical schools, including some with leadership and administrative positions.

Faculty, Fellows and Alumni join us on Facebook by logging into your Facebook account and typing in the search menu "UCSD Gastroenterology Fellows and Alumni" and click "ask to join." You can also go to <http://www.facebook.com/groups/11427778649025>

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Making the Most of Your Charitable Gifts

Here are just a few options on how you can support UC San Diego Division of Gastroenterology:

Option 1 – The simplest way to donate is a **gift of cash** (including checks and credit cards). Remember if you itemize you may be able to receive a charitable deduction for 2013 for your gifts received on or before December 31st. You may contribute directly to UCSD GI by visiting our page at <http://www.gastro.ucsd.edu> and clicking on the ABOUT tab and choosing "Support Our Work" on the left hand column.

Option 2 – A gift of **appreciated securities** also offers an attractive opportunity to support the Division of Gastroenterology. By contributing appreciated securities that you have held longer than 12 months, you will receive a charitable income tax deduction, in most cases for their full fair market value, and avoid any capital gains tax liability. It is important to remember that your securities must be transferred to the U.C. San Diego Foundation by December 31st for the 2013 tax year.

UCSD GI Clinical Referral

General GI	619-543-2347
Hepatology	619-543-6303
Interventional Endoscopy	858-657-6882
Motility	619-543-6834
IBD	858-657-8787
Celiac	619-543-2347

VA Medical Center

Gastroenterology Section (111D)
 3350 La Jolla Village Drive
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 Fax: (858) 552-4327