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as the No. 4 department in the country.



UCLA Medical Group ranks as
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Did You Know?

IMPACT Program Renewed



The California Department of Public Health, Cancer Detection Section recently renewed the UCLA-administered Improving Access, Counseling & Treatment for Californians with Prostate Cancer (IMPACT) program. The \$9.3 million contract brings the total amount of state money awarded for the program to \$88.5 million. Dr. Mark S. Litwin created and directs the program along with UCLA Urology faculty members James Orecklin, MD, MPH, and William Aronson, MD. IMPACT has established a network of providers

who deliver free prostate cancer treatment to low-income, uninsured or underinsured men throughout California in their local communities.

Give Now. Here's How.

Contributions to the UCLA Department of Urology support our research programs and help our faculty make the cutting-edge discoveries that can save lives. You can make a gift to the department by logging on to <http://giving.ucla.edu/urology>. Please call (310) 206-3079 if you have any questions about making a gift to UCLA Urology.

DEPARTMENT of UROLOGY UPDATE

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DEPARTMENT *of* UROLOGY

UPDATE



No Place Like Home

Ben Armentrout-Wiswall is discussing how he and his husband, Tom, came to adopt their three children when he is momentarily interrupted by the need to address a misadventure involving their 2-year-old.

“Augustus likes to climb in the other kids’ wheelchairs,” Ben says upon returning to the conversation. “Then he buckles the seatbelt and can’t get out.”

There’s nothing unusual about a father of three young children experiencing difficulty getting through a discussion without frequent timeouts to attend to his kids’ needs. But the wheelchairs in the Armentrout-Wiswall home signify that this family is anything but typical.

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UCLA Discovery Shows Promise for Advanced Prostate Cancer

The Phase III clinical trial of MDV3100, a drug for patients with advanced prostate cancer that was developed based on discoveries in the laboratories of UCLA Urology’s Prostate Cancer Research Program, has shown a significant improvement in survival for patients who were not responding to chemotherapy. For more information on this important development, visit www.urology.ucla.edu.



Frank Clark Urology Center



Annalise and Alex Armentrout-Wiswall

“I feel good about giving that home to children who otherwise almost certainly wouldn’t have been adopted. They’re beautiful, happy kids who love each other and love us.”

— Ben Armentrout-Wiswall

continued from cover

All three Armentrout-Wiswall children have spina bifida, a congenital disorder in which a small opening in the back results in part of the spinal cord growing outside the body. The condition’s manifestations vary greatly, but often children with spina bifida have some degree of paralysis, problems with bowel and bladder control and, in some cases, attention and/or learning difficulties. The Armentrout-Wiswall children receive their urological care from Bernard Churchill, MD, director of the Clark-Morrison Children’s Urological Center at UCLA.

Early on in their relationship, Ben and Tom began discussing the possibility of adopting children. “We did a lot of soul-searching and decided we wanted to be able to provide a home for a child who might not otherwise have one,” Ben explains. “Children with disabilities generally are not adopted, so we agreed that we’d be open to such a child.”

That child turned out to be Alex, the son of a Mexican national who was visiting relatives in the United States in 2003 when she went into labor. Alex was born two months early with spina bifida, as well as hydrocephalus — a buildup of fluid in the brain. “There was concern that she couldn’t care for Alex’s special medical needs,” Ben says. “He was definitely a high-risk baby, but we said yes.”

When Alex was 3, the Armentrout-Wiswalls decided to adopt a second child. “We were looking for a healthy Hispanic baby girl who would be a little sister to Alex,” Ben recalls. But Alex’s pediatrician had a different suggestion. She had encountered a 13-month-old non-Hispanic girl with spina bifida living in a group home for children with severe physical and mental disabilities. Annalise was the only child in the home who wasn’t fed with a tube. She wasn’t cognitively impaired, but was surrounded by children who were. “Our pediatrician knew this was not a good environment for her, and she felt the commonality of spina bifida would be much more important to the siblings than having the same ethnicity,” Ben says. “She suggested that we meet her.” In July 2006, Annalise joined the Armentrout-Wiswall family.

Two children with disabilities was plenty, and the Armentrout-Wiswalls had no intention of expanding. But three years later, when Ben contacted the pediatrician with a minor

concern about Alex, she mentioned that there was a child in the neonatal intensive care unit with spina bifida. Augustus was two weeks old and had been left at the hospital by birth parents who didn’t believe they could provide for his special medical needs. Did Ben and Tom know anyone who might be interested in adopting him? The Armentrout-Wiswalls asked around and spoke with the hospital social worker to see if anyone was lined up to adopt Augustus. There wasn’t, so they did.

Raising three children with disabilities has been a strain on the couple’s time, energy and financial resources, admits Ben, who stays home full-time to take care of the kids (with part-time nursing help in the afternoons) while Tom works as a human resources executive at a major film studio. The biggest daily concerns are the bowel and bladder incontinence issues, which, if not attended to, can lead to more serious health complications. Other concerns have to do with mobility and finding the right equipment, such as wheelchairs. “But we certainly have no regrets,” Ben says.

For Alex, now 8, the cognitive concerns never materialized. “He’s a bright and happy kid,” Ben says. Alex uses a wheelchair to get around, but he can scoot and climb stairs without it. He is now learning to catheterize himself.

Annalise had a rough start — her hip sockets weren’t forming properly, so she had surgery that left her in a body cast for three months. She has seen Dr. Churchill for multiple surgeries on her bladder, but is doing much better now, and is able to crawl and pull herself up to a standing position with a coffee table or other support.

Ben describes 2-year-old Augustus as “kind of a miracle baby.” Although Augustus has spina bifida, the lesion is so low on his back that his mobility is normal. As of now he doesn’t need to be catheterized; whether he has bladder and bowel incontinence won’t be clear until he is toilet trained.

For all of the challenges, Ben has a message for prospective adoptive parents. “I would urge them not to rule out the ‘less than perfect’ child,” he says. “There are lots of kids who might not look like other children, but who are beautiful and very deserving of a loving home. I feel good about giving that home to children who otherwise almost certainly wouldn’t have been adopted. They’re beautiful, happy kids who love each other and love us.”

Letter from the Chair

I am honored and humbled to have been named chair of UCLA Urology, a program with few peers in the management of patients with urologic disorders and in developing new therapies that save and improve lives in Southern California and around the world. The 2011-12 *U.S. News & World Report Best Hospitals* rankings place UCLA fourth in the nation out of nearly 1,500 hospital urology programs, and best in the West — a position we have held every year that such a designation has been made. I look forward to building on this foundation of excellence.

UCLA Urology begins with U...and you, the patient (or potential patient) are the reason we are here. At some point in our lives nearly all of us will be affected by a urologic condition. Urologic diseases can weigh heavily on quality of life, or they can threaten survival. They can

cause considerable physical pain or can be the source of substantial psychic distress. At UCLA Urology we are driven to provide the most humane, high-quality care for these conditions while simultaneously pursuing new and better ways to treat and prevent them. Our vision is to improve urologic health and health care by creating world leaders in urologic health and science; discovering the basis for urological health and cures for urologic disease; optimizing urological health through community partnerships; and, most important, healing humankind, one patient at a time.

To realize our ambitious goals, we need you. Generous support from the friends of UCLA Urology advances our ability to provide the best clinical care, research, and training in urology. Please consider a donation of any



magnitude and become a partner in these vital efforts. We will keep you apprised of our progress and growth with newsletters, lectures, tours, and special announcements. We look forward to welcoming you as a Friend of UCLA Urology.

— Mark S. Litwin, MD, MPH
*Professor and Chair
UCLA Urology*



Alumni Spotlight

Dana N. Scott, MD

“I knew that to effect change in the community I was going to have to work a bit harder, and the UCLA Urology residency program really prepares you for that.”

Dr. Scott had been leaning toward a career in academic medicine before she came to UCLA, first for her medical education and then for her UCLA Urology residency training. But patients she encountered during her rotations at Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital — the South Los Angeles facility where Dr. Scott was born, the year it opened — convinced her she had a different calling.

At the hospital, which serves a low-income, medically underserved minority population, Dr. Scott was struck by how many patients were being treated for the first time for a disease that had already progressed to a late stage —

individuals who, with better, earlier access to medical care, might have had different outcomes. “I’m from this community,” Dr. Scott says, “and I realized it was important for me to use the top-notch training I was getting from UCLA to help these people receive better care.”

That is why, after graduating from the UCLA Urology residency program last summer, Dr. Scott joined a private practice in Inglewood, CA. In addition to seeing patients, she is keeping herself busy speaking at churches and other community events, with a particular focus on prostate cancer awareness.

African American men, who make up a significant portion of the community surrounding Dr. Scott’s practice, are at the highest risk for developing prostate cancer. Moreover, Dr. Scott notes that for reasons having to do with education and insufficient access to regular medical care, men in underserved communities tend to have low rates of prostate cancer screening, increasing the likelihood that those who do develop prostate cancer won’t be diagnosed until a late stage, when treatment is less likely to be successful.

Dr. Scott sees a great need in her community for education about the value of screening and the importance of understanding risk factors, including race and having first-degree relatives who have been diagnosed with the disease. “A lot of information that we take for granted as medical professionals is not well understood by the community, including how we screen for prostate cancer and what an abnormal rectal exam or elevated PSA means,” Dr. Scott says. “I want men to understand all of this so that they can make informed choices.” Beyond education, Dr. Scott provides the men she sees in her outreach efforts with access to care. For those who lack insurance, she will provide free services or refer them to clinics where they can receive no-cost care.

“My training, particularly going to county facilities, taught me how to manage high volumes of patients with complex diseases and provide quality care with limited resources,” says Dr. Scott. “I knew that to effect change in the community I was going to have to work a bit harder, and the UCLA Urology residency program really prepares you for that.”

Research Updates

Experimental Prostate Cancer Test Improves on PSA

A new test for prostate cancer that measures levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) as well as six specific antibodies found in the blood of men with the disease is more sensitive and more specific than the conventional PSA test, according to UCLA Urology and Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center researchers. The antibody plus PSA (A+PSA) assay also was found to reduce the rate of false positives — tests that indicate the presence of cancer when no disease is actually present.

“This is a very promising new approach,” says senior study author Gang Zeng, PhD, associate professor of Urology and a Jonsson Cancer Center researcher. “Instead of using just one parameter, PSA, to test for prostate cancer, we use multiple parameters that can be measured in a single reaction.” The study was published in the *Journal of Translational Medicine*.

With the new test, sensitivity (the percentage of men with prostate cancer who were correctly identified as having a malignancy) was 79 percent, compared with the 52 percent found in PSA testing. Specificity (the percentage of healthy men correctly identified as not having prostate cancer) was 84 percent, compared with the 79 percent found when testing for PSA alone.

In addition to measuring multiple parameters, the test is based on the patient’s phenotype — the way cancer genes are expressed — rather than on the genes themselves, unlike other proposed PSA alternatives, Dr. Zeng says. He will soon begin a National Cancer Institute-sponsored clinical trial to further study whether A+PSA is superior to PSA in diagnosis, early detection, and risk assessment.

Bladder Cancer Patients Not Receiving Recommended Care

Nearly all patients with high-grade, non-muscle-invasive bladder cancer are not receiving the guideline-recommended care that would best protect them from a recurrence, a finding UCLA Urology and Jonsson Cancer Center researchers characterized as alarming.

Of the 4,545 bladder cancer patients in the study, only one received the comprehensive care recommended by the American Urological Association and the National Comprehensive Cancer Network guidelines.

Receiving the recommended comprehensive care for high-grade bladder cancer is critical because it can significantly minimize the likelihood that patients will die from their cancer, says Karim Chamie, MD, MSHS, a UCLA Urology postdoctoral fellow in urologic

oncology and health services research, and lead author of the study. The findings were published in the American Cancer Society’s peer-reviewed journal *Cancer*.

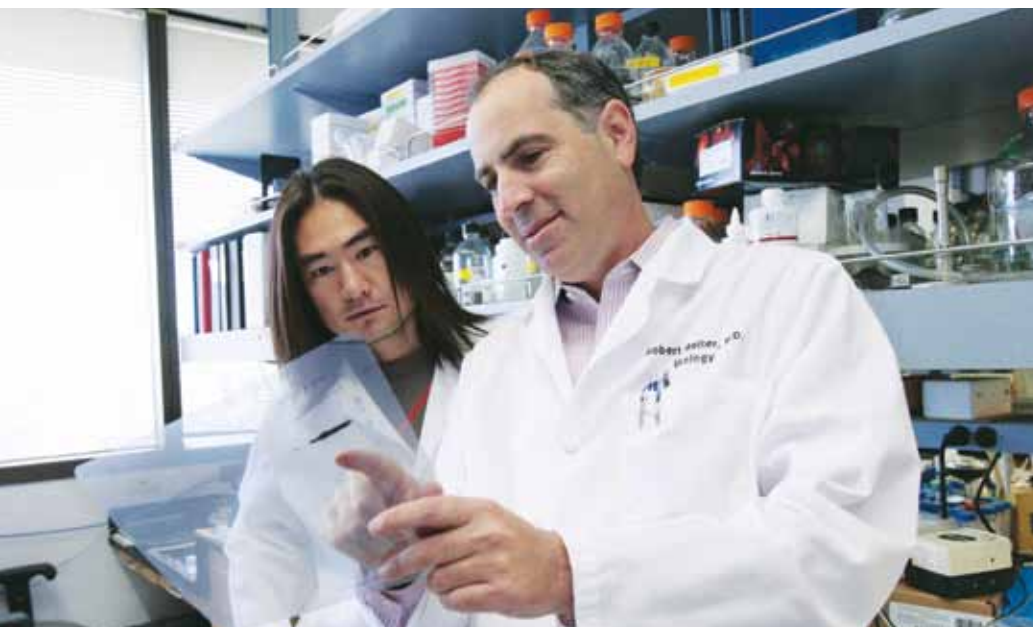
“We were surprised by the findings in this study, particularly in an era when many suggest that doctors overtreat patients and do too much in the name of practicing defensive medicine,” Dr. Chamie says. “This study suggests quite the contrary, that we don’t do enough for patients with bladder cancer. If this were a report card on bladder cancer care in America, I’d say we’re earning a failing grade.”

Potential Drug for Deadly Type of Prostate Cancer

UCLA Urology and Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center researchers are seeking to develop and clinically test human antibodies with the potential to inhibit the growth and spread of prostate cancer in an aggressive form of the disease, also known as castration-resistant prostate cancer, that has become resistant to hormone therapy.

The research group, headed by Robert Reiter, MD, MBA, professor of Urology and director of the Specialized Program of Research Excellence in prostate cancer, has found that a cell-surface protein, N-cadherin, is upregulated, or “turned on,” in such patients. Dr. Reiter and colleagues then confirmed in mouse models that N-cadherin is both sufficient and required for castration-resistant prostate cancer growth. This led them to develop antibodies targeting the protein. Using those antibodies in the mouse models, they were able to slow the growth of tumors, prevent metastasis, cause some tumors to regress, and delay progression to castration resistance. Results of their research were published in the journal *Nature Medicine*.

“This therapy may be particularly useful in men who are failing the newest forms of treatment that target the androgen receptor, which regulates testosterone,” Dr. Reiter says. “This could potentially offer an effective alternative or addition to those hormone therapies.”



Donor Spotlight

UCLA Urology wishes to acknowledge its generous benefactors, whose contributions have fueled the department's mission of pursuing research, patient care, education, and community engagement.

The Steven C. Gordon Family Foundation has been an early and continuous supporter of the Prostate Imaging Project and the Active Surveillance Program for prostate cancer. By combining advanced prostate imaging with targeted biopsy, the program allows men with low-risk prostate cancer to be safely observed and men with serious cancers to receive prompt curative intervention.

In 2011, UCLA Urology announced the inaugural **Laurence R. Meyerson and Deborah L. Faiman Travel Award for Research in Urologic Oncology and/or Renal Transplantation**. Dr. Meyerson and Ms. Faiman established this fund to enable a UCLA Urology resident or fellow to participate in a domestic scientific meeting or conference.

The David Vickter Foundation is a new donor to UCLA Urology, helping to fund various aspects of the department's mission. **Dr. Lenore Jacoby and Ms. Fran Feinman**, trustees, are pleased to partner with Dr. Mark Litwin, chairman, in his leadership role at UCLA Urology.



Steven C. Gordon

Kudos

Jeffrey Bassett, MD, UCLA Urology resident, received a New Investigator Award from the Tobacco Related Disease Research Program, entitled "New Diagnosis of Bladder Cancer: Smokers' Opportunity to Quit."

Timothy Daskivich, MD, UCLA Urology resident, was awarded a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program fellowship at UCLA for 2012-14.

Nestor Gonzalez-Cadavid, PhD, adjunct professor of Urology and director of the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Urology Research Laboratory, was named editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Impotence Research* through 2015. He was also named a member of the International Academy of Sexual Medicine.

Jiaoti Huang, MD, PhD, professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and director of Urologic Pathology, received funding from the U.S. Department of Defense Prostate Cancer Research Program for a three-year grant, "The Function of Neuroendocrine Cells in Prostate Cancer."

Aqsa Khan, MD, UCLA Urology resident, was awarded a blue ribbon for her American Urological Association poster, "Evaluating the Quality of

Urinary Incontinence and Prolapse Treatment (EQUIPT) Study: Quality Indicator Development for Urinary Incontinence."

Mark S. Litwin, MD, MPH, professor and chair of UCLA Urology, received the Distinguished Service Award from the American Urological Association (AUA) for outstanding contributions to the goals of the AUA, including committee service, editorial contributions to urological publications, as well as his leadership of the Urologic Diseases in America project.

David H. Nguyen, PhD, a researcher in the laboratory of **Gang Zeng, PhD**, associate professor of Urology, was awarded a postdoctoral fellowship from the Jonsson Cancer Center Foundation. His study, "Modulation of Immune Responses Through a New Class of Damage-Associated Molecular Patterns," investigates a new class of targeted cancer vaccines.

Shlomo Raz, MD, professor of Urology and chief of the Division of Female Urology, Reconstructive Surgery, and Urodynamics, received the Presidential Citation, one of the highest honors bestowed by the American Urological Association (AUA).

Clinical Trials

KIDNEY CANCER

For patients with either advanced or localized kidney cancer, a number of trials are being conducted by UCLA Urology in partnership with companies such as Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, Aveo, Novartis and Bristol-Myers Squibb. These include investigations of the innovative drug therapies Sutent, Pazopanib, TKI258, Tivozanib and BMS-936558.

PROSTATE CANCER

For patients with metastatic and non-metastatic prostate cancer, UCLA Urology has active trials with companies such as Medivation and Millennium to investigate new medications that include MDV3100 and TAK-700.

BLADDER CANCER

New clinical trials will begin soon for bladder cancer.

For more information about these and other trials, and for details on eligibility, please visit www.instituteofurologiconcology.ucla.edu or call (310) 206-5930.

“Between my parents and me, we have three functioning kidneys, so we jokingly refer to ourselves as the one-kidney family. I’m just so grateful for their support and for the care I’ve received at UCLA.”

— Kevin George



Kevin George with his mother, Carrie George, who donated a kidney to her son in February 2010.

A Special Family Bond

Disneyland calls itself “the happiest place on Earth,” and Kevin George wouldn’t argue — as often as he can, he escapes to the theme park with family or friends. But for George, who turned 26 in October, the happiest place on Earth was a hospital room at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center in February 2010.

Born with a rare congenital disorder called Drash syndrome, which required removal of both of his kidneys at the age of 2, George as a toddler received a remarkable gift from his father, who donated one of his kidneys to his son. But within six days, George’s body rejected the kidney, and he spent the next 18 months receiving life-sustaining dialysis treatments as he waited on the transplant list for the possibility of another donor.

In 1990, when George was 4, his family got the call that a new donor kidney was available — this from a deceased donor. That kidney would provide George with 19 years of function. However, in the spring of 2009, the kidney failed and George was returned to three-times-a-week dialysis treatments.

Fortunately, a new matching donor had been lined up — George’s mother. And so on February 9, 2010, George once again received the ultimate parental gift. “When we went in, there was both excitement and anxiety,” he recalls. “But I distinctly remember waking up the next morning and thinking to myself, ‘I haven’t felt this good in years.’ I could actually feel my body coming back to life.”

George has spent quite a bit of time at UCLA since 1998, when his family moved to California. He has had multiple urologic issues beyond his kidney disease, including hypospadias and frequent urinary tract infections that necessitated ureteral reimplantation surgery while he was a pediatric patient under the care of the Clark-Morrison Children’s Urological Center team. “Kevin has congenital urologic abnormalities that have needed repair along the way, and that require continuing management,” says Jennifer Singer, MD, associate clinical professor of Urology, who performed George’s most recent transplant.

There were many challenges for both Dr. Singer’s team and the medical team that prepared George for the transplant. Dr. Singer notes that highly specialized centers such as UCLA have become more skilled at grappling with the immunity concerns presented by transplant patients, and for George there was the added issue that the previously transplanted kidney was still producing antibodies with the potential to affect the new organ. Because the risks were considered too great, the prior kidney was not removed, so Dr. Singer’s team had to find a place for the new one, while paying attention to George’s other urologic disorders.

“Kevin’s new kidney is functioning great, and the good news is that his last one was able to function for nearly 20 years, when the average life expectancy of a living donor kidney is 12-15 years,” Dr. Singer says.

“The fact that a young child with a fatal illness is now an active, intelligent young adult who we believe can look forward to many years of excellent function from his current transplant is a remarkable achievement that we tend to take for granted,” adds Gabriel M. Danovitch, MD, the nephrologist who has been involved in George’s care for the last several years, helping to prepare him for the transplant.

By any measure, George, now working full-time as a technical coordinator at Rolling Hills Covenant Church in Palos Verdes, CA, comes from a remarkably close family. “They get so much support from each other,” Dr. Singer marvels. “They all come to UCLA for his appointments and are very involved in Kevin’s care.”

The family bond has grown even stronger now that George has a new lease on life with his mother’s kidney. “It’s special,” George says. “Between my parents and me, we have three functioning kidneys, so we jokingly refer to ourselves as the one-kidney family. I’m just so grateful for their support and for the care I’ve received at UCLA.”



Study Seeks to Improve End-of-Life Care

One of the key factors driving up the nation's health care costs is treatment of terminally ill patients in their final days. And yet, says Jonathan Bergman, MD, a UCLA Urology Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar, such care is often not what patients and their families want.

In fact, notes Dr. Bergman, who graduated from the UCLA Urology residency program last summer, studies have shown that life-sustaining treatment in the final days is associated with reduced quality of life, reduced quality of death and care that is frequently not in harmony with patients' values.

"The end of life is one piece of health care where you might actually do a better job by intervening less aggressively," Dr. Bergman says. "It's not that we should deny life-sustaining treatment to patients who want it. The problem is that in many cases we don't ask, and we just go ahead with care that the patient *doesn't* want."

Dr. Bergman is working with Dr. Mark S. Litwin on a pilot study aiming to enhance communication between urologists and patients on end-of-life goals. The study, which is taking place at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, is looking at the potential for physician education to improve the quality of end-of-life care by better understanding and meeting patients' wishes.

Part of the impetus for the study is that end-of-life care is not covered in most medical school curricula. "Physicians see it as their role to address these issues, but they don't know how because they've never been taught," Dr. Bergman says. For the study, his group has developed an educational module to teach urologists how to deliver high-quality end-of-life care. That is being coupled with point-of-care reminders about issues they should address during the clinic visit. The study will examine whether better addressing patients' goals results in improvements in measures such as patient satisfaction, quality of life, depression and pain.

Dr. Bergman points out that when patients don't want life-sustaining care in their final days, it doesn't mean the physician's role is limited. "It's important to look at the patient as a human being with emotional, spiritual and family needs, as well as clinical needs such as treatment of pain and depression," he says. "We have a lot of resources to help treat the individual more broadly, and often we don't take advantage of them because we shy away from discussing the situation. As urologists who tend to have long relationships with our patients, we should be part of all of their decisions at the end of life, not just the urology-specific decisions."

Comings & Goings

Three residents graduated from the UCLA Urology training program last June. Following are updates on their activities:



Jonathan Bergman, MD, remained at UCLA Urology as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar. He is embarking on a study at the West Los Angeles VA Medical

Center aiming to improve the quality of end-of-life care.



Ramdev Konijeti, MD, is working as a postdoctoral fellow in molecular and cellular oncology at Harvard Medical School's Dana-Farber Cancer

Institute. He is studying the changes that occur in the cell's ability to metabolize fat in advanced prostate cancer under the mentorship of Massimo Loda, MD.



Dana N. Scott, MD, has joined a private urology practice in Inglewood, CA. Her clinical interests include prostate cancer, laparoscopic/

robotic surgery, male erectile dysfunction, incontinence in both men and women, and stone disease.