

Three teams honored with annual Bowditch Prize

THREE INNOVATIVE TEAMS were honored with this year's Nathaniel Bowditch Prize, which recognized their significant contributions to enhance the delivery of quality patient care while also reducing the cost of that care. The annual award is named for the self-taught 19th century celestial navigator who helped raise funds for the construction of the MGH in the early 1800s.



CURRENT-DAY NAVIGATOR: Hutter, at left, is congratulated by Warshaw and Minehan.

"We don't often stop to recognize our colleagues who work continually – and many times, unnoticed – to make a difference in our everyday work lives," said David F. Torchiana, MD, MGPO chairman and CEO. "The Bowditch Prize gives all of us who work at MGH the opportunity to do just that – to acknowledge our co-workers and to thank them in a tangible way for all they have done and continue to do in developing new ways of practice and creating a workplace that is rich with creativity and individuality."

The Antimicrobial Stewardship Team, led by David Hooper, MD, chief of the Infection
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A place for reflection

Memorial bench honors beloved MGH leader



JUST BEFORE THE START of a memorial dedication ceremony to honor the late nursing leader Keith Perleberg, the sun peeked through the clouds, and the brisk spring breeze dissipated. It was a fitting moment for those gathered to remember and celebrate a colleague and friend who had brightened their lives on a daily basis.

"Today is a day to celebrate the life of Keith in a spot he loved," said Jeanette Ives Erickson, RN, DNP, FAAN, senior vice president for Patient Care and chief nurse. "We will forever keep him in our hearts and carry his values with us."

Perleberg, RN, MDiv, who died on May 15, 2012 at the age of 59, had worked at the MGH for two decades including as a staff nurse on the Psychiatry Unit, as the nursing director for Phillips House 20 and 21, and for the five years before his death, as the first director of the Patient Care Services Office of Quality and Safety. His background as an ordained Roman Catholic priest uniquely prepared him to connect with patients both spiritually and clinically.

A bronze nameplate on the granite memorial bench dedicated to Perleberg and unveiled during the May 14 ceremony reads, "In loving memory of Keith W. Perleberg, RN, MDiv: A dear friend, cherished colleague and true champion of excellence in every way." A small card with a handwritten message – "We Miss You" – was tucked within a bouquet of flowers placed on the bench, located on the Bulfinch lawn adjacent to the nursing sundial near the steps to the Treadwell Library. It was a location Perleberg visited frequently and enjoyed thoroughly.

During the ceremony, Rev. John Polk, DMin, BCC, director of the MGH Chaplaincy, blessed the bench, and MGH President Peter L. Slavin, MD, shared his memories of his friendship with Perleberg. "I will be reminded every time I see this bench of a great man who was kind, gentle
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— Bowditch

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Control Unit, was recognized for improving the timeliness of appropriate antibiotic use in sick hospitalized patients while minimizing antibiotic overuse, resulting in a 9 percent decrease in total antimicrobial expenditures during the 2012 fiscal year.

The MGH Department of Surgery's Quality and Safety Program, led by Matthew Hutter, MD, MPH, was selected for its work in leading quality and safety improvements in the department and across the hospital, resulting in a 20 percent reduction in the Department of Surgery's readmission rate over the past three years.

And, the MGH Diabetes Care Redesign Group, led by Debra Wexler, MD, and Stephanie Eisenstat, MD, was honored for significant improvements in insulin management and for generating enormous momentum for diabetes care improvement across the institution. The processes they created will be implemented in all primary care practices by the Primary Care Transformation Council in the first half of 2013.

On May 12, during the 13th annual Bowditch ceremony in the Trustees Room, Andrew Warshaw, MD, former MGH surgeon-in-chief and chairman of the Bowditch Prize Selection Committee, commended each member of the winning teams and took time to thank and congratulate the other 10 groups and individuals nominated this year. "As in past years, we had a very difficult time making a decision," he said. "All the nominees were outstanding, and every effort important."

Peter L. Slavin, MD, MGH president, said, "I congratulate the winners of this year's Bowditch Prize and applaud all of you who have been nominated for this distinction. Your desire to think creatively and strengthen the already high-quality care we deliver to our patients helps make the MGH a leading health care resource for the community, the region and the world."

MGH Board of Trustees Chair Cathy Minehan said the board established the Bowditch Prize in 2000 through the generosity of Charles and Nancy Munger and the Alfred C. Munger Foundation.



PEDALING POWER:
Maxwell takes a spin on her mountain bike.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HEATHER MAXWELL

Cancer survivor stays positive by giving back to others

HEATHER MAXWELL was shocked when she was diagnosed with a type of colon cancer that wasn't found in her family's history. However, the 30-year-old also was relieved to know that the symptoms she had experienced for years – and had tried to convince herself were minor problems not to worry about – were not all in her head.

In the summer of August 2011, Maxwell began a comprehensive treatment plan at the Mass General Cancer Center. It included eight cycles of chemotherapy, almost a month of proton beam radiation and finally an aggressive surgery to remove all of her colon. All the while Maxwell maintained her full-time job as an auditor, despite having to commute almost two hours a day from her home in Brentwood, N.H. for treatments. Throughout her cancer battle, Maxwell maintained her love for bicycling. Now, cancer-free for the past year, Maxwell has turned her attention to help others facing a different medical battle.

On May 19, Heather and a group of friends who share her passion for cycling will head to Topsfield, Mass. to participate in the Tour de Cure, a 62-mile fundraising ride that benefits the American Diabetes Association. This national group sponsors rides of all lengths in 44 states to raise awareness, education and money. "It's a great cause, and I'm happy to help because my father and many of my family and friends have diabetes," says Heather. "Someday I'd love to do a similar ride to raise money for cancer research as well."

Heather credits the MGH staff and her close knit family with helping her through the past two years. "After beginning each phase of my lengthy treatment, I felt like I was visiting friends, as the staff in each area of treatment were wonderful," Maxwell says. "Without the support of my wonderful husband David and my family and friends, my journey would have been much more difficult."

She also thanks her mother, Anita Paris, RN, of the MGH Vincent Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, for helping her remain strong. "My mother really was my wing man, my true inspiration," says Maxwell. "She visited me every single day of my treatment and kept reminding me that staying positive was the only way to get through it – and I did."

Paris on the other hand credits her daughter's determination and dedication with helping in her battle against cancer. "Her success story gives hope to others," Paris says. ■

Mootha named an HHMI Investigator

VAMSI MOOThA, MD, of the MGH Department of Medicine and the Department of Molecular Biology, is among 27 leading biomedical researchers from across the country selected as new Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Investigators. Beginning this fall, the five-year grant will support his continued investigation into the cellular power plants called mitochondria.

Mootha and his team have characterized the protein composition of these tiny subcellular components, developed tools that predict the function of those proteins, and are investigating the role of mitochondria in both rare inherited disorders and in common conditions such as cancer. “This is an exciting time for our laboratory,” he says. “HHMI support will allow us to focus on high-risk, high-reward projects and balance our efforts evenly between fundamental research and translational medicine.”

HHMI grants are designed to provide innovative researchers with flexible support that allows them to pursue findings into new, potentially unexpected directions. This year’s recipients were chosen from among 1,155 applicants. In 2006, Mootha was one of the first recipients of the HHMI Early Career Physician Scientist awards. He also received a 2004 MacArthur Foundation “genius grant,” led the team receiving the MGH Martin Prize for the best basic research publication of 2010, and received a 2011 Transformative Research Project Award from the National Institutes of Health. ■

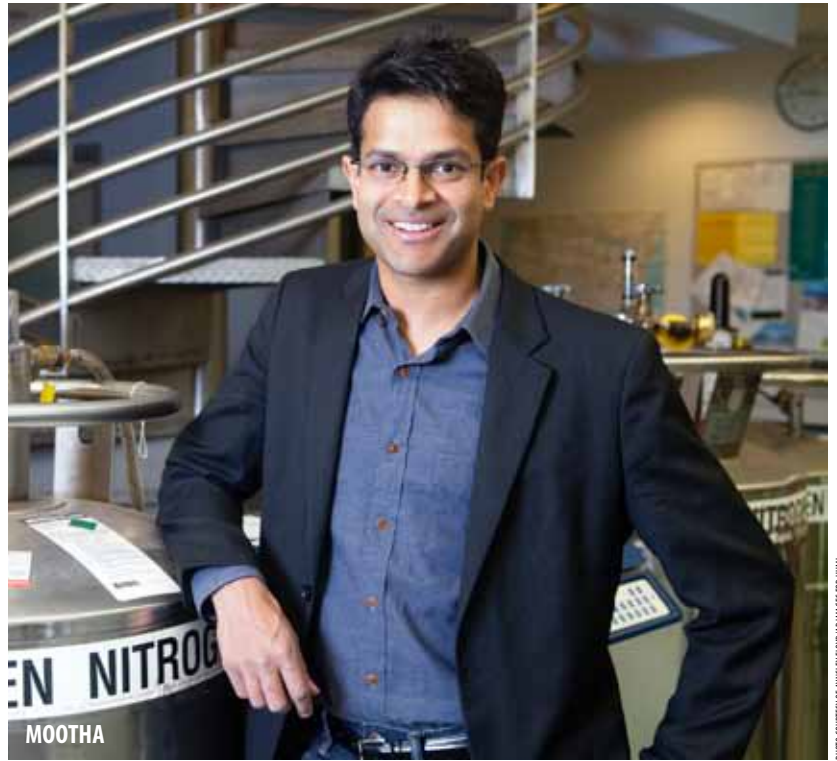


PHOTO COURTESY OF ANSLEY FRIEDMAN IMAGES FOR HHMI

Goldstein named chief of the Division of Pediatric Surgery

ALLAN GOLDSTEIN, MD, FACS, director of the Pediatric Neurogastroenterology Program, has been appointed chief of the Division of Pediatric Surgery for MassGeneral Hospital for Children (MGHfC) and will lead the division’s clinical, education, research and community service activities. Goldstein succeeds Joseph P. Vacanti, MD, who has held the position since 2003. Vacanti will remain as MGHfC’s surgeon-in-chief, with a focus on building the pediatric surgical specialties.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to lead the Division of Pediatric Surgery,” Goldstein says. “MGH has a long-standing and international reputation for its outstanding clinical and scientific contributions to the field of pediatric surgery.

I am privileged to work with a wonderful and very talented team of surgeons, nurses, investigators and administrative staff. Together, I am confident that we can continue to build on our reputation and to move our division and the field forward.”

Since 2003, Goldstein has served as the director of the Pediatric Neurogastroenterology Program and head of the MGH Neurogastroenterology Laboratory, which is focused on understanding how the intestinal nervous system develops and is organized and how it interacts with, and influences, other aspects of the intestine. Goldstein has worked extensively on researching the causes of and identifying novel diagnostic and therapeutic approaches for Hirschsprung’s disease – a serious

disorder of the bowel caused by the absence of nerve cells in the large intestine.

“We are all very pleased that Dr. Goldstein has accepted this position of leadership,” Vacanti says. “He will ensure the future clinical and academic success of the division in this time of challenge and change, and I look forward to his joining the leadership team of MGHfC to help chart the future of our hospital for children.”



— Perleberg

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and hardworking – and was unwavering in his commitment to providing excellent patient care,” Slavin said. “I hope when people come here they think about and celebrate the wonderful impact he had on all of our lives and also what he would want most, that we redouble our efforts to make an even greater difference in the lives of our patients.” ■



BENCHMARK: Ives Erickson delivers remarks during the dedication ceremony.

Announcements available online

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What everyone should know about mumps

ON MAY 13, the Boston Public Health Commission issued a mumps health alert after three confirmed cases – all people who had received the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine – were reported in the city, and 11 suspected cases are currently being investigated. Mark Pasternack, MD, chief of Pediatric Infectious Disease at MassGeneral Hospital for Children, answers questions about the acute and highly contagious viral illness.

What is mumps and how is it contracted?

Mumps is a viral illness spread through infected respiratory secretions. It can be spread through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes within three to six feet of another person or with direct contact with infected secretions, such as shared eating utensils or water bottles.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

Mumps begins with mild flu-like symptoms – low-grade fever, muscle aches, mild respiratory symptoms, loss of appetite and headache – and commonly causes salivary glands to swell on one or both sides of the face. Some patients may have mumps without any specific symptoms at all, and occasionally patients may have more severe symptoms.

Do only children get mumps?

Among unvaccinated individuals, mumps is most commonly a childhood illness. For vaccinated individuals, mumps commonly occurs in young adults and older individuals.

What are the possible complications?

In rare cases, patients may develop severe illness leading to inflammation of the central nervous system (meningitis or

encephalitis), testes, ovaries, kidneys, heart or joints. Hearing loss and miscarriage early in pregnancy may also occur.

My child or teen was vaccinated with the MMR vaccine, should I be worried?

Mumps vaccine is highly effective and protects 80 to 90 percent of vaccinated individuals, but the protective effect of mumps vaccine may decline over time. Most vaccinated individuals who developed mumps in recent epidemics did so at least 10 to 15 years after their second vaccine dose.

What should I do if I think my child or teen has mumps?

People with symptoms suggestive of mumps, particularly with salivary gland swelling, should contact their health care providers, who can obtain the simple screening tests necessary to confirm the diagnosis of mumps. Patients with suspected mumps should remain at home for at least five days after the onset of swelling. Those with possible complications should be evaluated promptly.

I thought the mumps was an old-fashioned disease, why is it the upswing?

Mumps outbreaks are thought to develop among vaccinated individuals due to gradual loss of immune protection, possible mismatches between the vaccine and the current mumps virus strains, and increased risk of viral spread due to close contact with infected individuals among young adults. Many epidemics have been associated with an unvaccinated individual returning from overseas travel to regions where mumps vaccine is not routinely administered.

Department of Psychiatry hosts inaugural symposium

THE INAUGURAL MGH Public and Community Psychiatry Symposium took place May 1 under the Bullfinch Tent. Organized by Derri Shtasel, MD, division director, and Oliver Freudenreich, MD, director of the MGH First Episode and Early Psychosis Program, the event provided an opportunity for staff to learn about a wide range of ongoing work related to public sector mental health and to forge new collaborations between colleagues. The formal program began with a keynote address by Albert Yeung, MD, director of Primary Care Research in the MGH Depression Clinical and Research Program, at right. It was followed by presentations from Mark Viron, MD, and Luana Marques, PhD, of the Department of Psychiatry. The event also featured a poster session showcasing the work of some 30 individuals and groups, ranging from medical students to senior faculty. ■

