

# ARChiveS

## ARCS® Atlanta Chapter Newsletter

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Spring 2011

### Former ARCS Scholar Shares Breakthrough Research

If you have ever wondered whether our investments in young scientists were worthwhile, Dr. Franklin West's presentation at the January Business meeting would have more than reassured you. How proud we all were to hear from Dr. West about his groundbreaking work in the field of stem cell research!



*Morehouse President Dr. Robert Franklin, Speaker Dr. Franklin West and Dr. Cheryl Franklin*

Dr. West received his ARCS scholarship while pursuing his undergraduate studies at Morehouse College. He completed his PhD at the University of Georgia and is now an Assistant Professor in the Regenerative Bioscience Center of the Rhodes Center for Animal and Dairy Sciences where he works alongside of his mentor Dr. Steve Stice.

Presidents and the Pope have publicly commented on the promise of stem cells. Yet in many ways they remain a mystery. We know that stem cells have the capacity to save and improve lives – applications include developing disease models, toxicology screening and cell therapy. Dr. West provided us an informative primer in stem cell and germ cell research and engaged us in a discussion about the future and the important stem cell work being done at UGA.

Currently, there is not a good model to study germ cells derived from stem cells. Tissues for study are limited and there is no human model. This deficit presents a significant challenge leading Dr. West and his team to seek new means of developing a homogeneous germ cell line. Recently Dr. West's group was able to maintain cells in continual culture through twenty splits over 180 days. This is the first time this has been accomplished. They were able to create a culture where over 90% of the cells were germ cells.

Germ cell lines provide real promise for many medical breakthroughs, including helping

couples experiencing infertility. Screening toxins with stem cell-derived germ cells have also been used to study toxins like Agent Orange. This Viet Nam era toxin is still causing malformations in Vietnamese children today. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation supports work in Africa and Asia using the promise of domestic livestock species stem cells to develop animals who are resistant to avian and swine flu.

Named by *Georgia Trend* as one of Georgia's best and brightest 40 under 40, Franklin West has attracted the attention of laymen and scientific leaders throughout the country. He certainly held our rapt attention as he made his research accessible to those of us without the benefit of a scientific background. Our investment in Dr. Franklin West has already reaped great benefits for mankind and it will be exciting to follow his progress. Dr. West expressed his heartfelt gratitude for support from ARCS and encouraged us to continue to inspire young investigators with our philanthropy.

Kathryn Graves, Contributor

### Upcoming Events

- May 11 Annual Meeting and Luncheon
- June 1-4 ARCS National Annual Meeting Ritz Amelia Island
- June 8 Old/New Board Meeting-Home of Kay Weiss
- Nov 17 Scholar Awards Luncheon Ritz Downton

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## ARCS Light Award Shines On a Beacon of Service

Each ARCS Foundation chapter annually selects an ARCS Light. An ARCS Light is a special honor awarded to an Active Member who has given the highest quality service to her chapter on a long-term basis.

**Past Atlanta ARCS Lights include:** Cheryl Dixon, Carol Teem, Cecy Jones, Alice Brown, Patsy Drummond, Frannie Graves, Lexi Mitch, Mary O'Connor, Kitty Hawks, Clare Whitfield, Teed Poe, Betty Feezor, Kay Weiss, Lisa Bankoff, Pat Leake, Anne Boyd, Jeanne Berry and Janie Wilson. Nominations for Atlanta's 2011 ARCS Light came from our entire chapter membership, and the former ARCS Lights met in early January to select this year's honoree from among those nominated.

We are proud to name **Susie Deyo** as our 2011 Atlanta ARCS Light. Our choice was announced at the January General Meeting, and Susie will also be recognized at this year's National Annual Meeting in June at Amelia Island. Unfortunately, due to illness, Susie received her surprise announcement via cell phone call from last year's ARC Light, Janie Wilson.

According to Janie, Susie Deyo has been a beacon of service. "For Susie, no job has been too big (VP Membership) or too small (Historian). For Susie, no job has been too exhilarating (Co-Chair, Retreat) or too tedious (Database and Directory). And for Susie, no job has been too rich (Treasurer) or too poor (Assistant Treasurer)."

Since joining ARCS Atlanta in 1996, Susie has given her best to all of these chapter responsibilities...and more. Susie, we are proud to honor you and to say thanks for your many years of dedicated service to our chapter.

Janie Wilson, Contributor



*Susie Deyo, 2011 ARCS Light Honoree*



*Janie Wilson Makes Tele-announcement to  
Susie Deyo at January meeting*

### SPRING LUNCHEON

Chastain Horse Park  
4371 Powers Ferry Rd, NW  
Wednesday, May 11  
10am – 2pm

Our speaker Sandra Thurman, The President and CEO for the International AIDS Trust, is one of the world's most respected and recognized experts on AIDS issues.

A former executive director with AID Atlanta in the 1980s, Thurman was named "AIDS Czar" in 1997 by President Bill Clinton.

RSVP by May 2  
\$35 per person

to

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## From the President's Desk

Since being together for the General Meeting (remember the snow!), we've been really busy and had some wonderful educational adventures.

A very special treat was the first lecture of the Atlanta ARCS Endowment Series. Debbie Liss' concept is to raise endowment funds by providing opportunities for members to meet and interact with prominent and respected scientists and technological experts who are committed to the goals and objectives of ARCS. The first event was with Dr. Donald Stein, Distinguished Professor of Emergency Medicine and Asa G. Candler Professor of Emergency Medicine and Neurology at Emory. He updated us on his work on traumatic brain injury and the use of Progesterone. His work is remarkable and to be able to discuss it with him was - I can't think of a better word - awesome!

In February, I attended the ARCS National Board meeting in Phoenix. In addition to being involved with national issues, there was the opportunity to meet with other chapter presidents. It was a special sharing time; we all have a lot to learn from each other. An exciting national project currently underway is the revamp of our website and database. The work required to establish the site is called Project Mercury. Mercury was the first U.S. space project and the name of the ancient god of Speed. They promise it will be a speedy transaction!

The goal is to "go-live" in September. I extend my thanks to Gracia Conn and Betty Feezor for their help with this undertaking.

This year, the ARCS National Annual Meeting "Atlantic Adventure - Science by the Sea" will be held June 1-4 at the Ritz Carlton Hotel on Amelia Island, Florida. I encourage you to attend because it's not often that these meetings are held near Atlanta. In addition to the general business meeting, presentations by Chris Palmer, an environmental and wildlife film producer sound especially interesting. A Cumberland Island Boat Tour is also planned. To register Go to General Information on the ARCS website and click on National Annual Meeting.

As this year comes to an end, I want to thank the Atlanta ARCS members - Active and Associates - for being a part of this group which contributes to the greater good of our community. Everyone is willing to work and we have accomplished some difficult tasks. Plus, ARCS members insist on having a good time along the way!

See you at the May meeting.  
Kay

### Condolences

We extend our sympathy to Lisa Bankoff and her family on the loss of her father, Marshall Rodd Herron, Jr. on January 31.

### Changes

Marty Gillin has a new email address: [martygillin@me.com](mailto:martygillin@me.com)




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## Mark Your Calendars!

**Plans are in the works for our 2012 ARCS trip to the Queen City, also known as Cincinnati, Ohio.**

Twenty-five rooms have been reserved for us at the historic 1931 art deco Netherland Hilton Hotel so please mark your calendars for **April 26 to 29, 2012**. In 1929, Walter W. Ahlschlager and Colonel William Starrett of New York were hired for the construction of the hotel. Starrett was well known as the builder of Washington D.C.'s Union Station and Lincoln Memorial, and New York City's Empire State Building and Penn Station. Ahlschlager designed the Peabody Hotel in Memphis and the Hotel Intercontinental in Chicago. So make plans to travel north with us across the Ohio River to stay in one of Cincinnati's finest hotels as we discover what Winston Churchill once called "The Most Beautiful City In America".

For a virtual tour of the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, please visit: <http://www.mpoint.com/psn/directlink.asp?id=16748>

# Science Corner

## Science Corner

### Emory Top Contributor to Drug Discovery

A new study finds that Emory University is the fourth largest contributor in the nation to the discovery of new drugs and vaccines by public-sector research institutions. The contributors include federally funded universities, research hospitals, and federal laboratories.

The research was published in the Feb. 10 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The authors were from the Boston University School of Management, the Norwegian Radium Hospital Research Foundation, Boston University School of Law and the Office of Technology Transfer of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The researchers identified 153 FDA-approved drugs and vaccines that were discovered at least in part by public-sector research institutions during the past 40 years. The top five contributors were the NIH (22), the University of California System (11), Memorial Sloan-Kettering (8), Emory University (7), and Yale University (6).

Source: Emory Woodruff Health Sciences Center, 02.11.2011



### UGA Technology Commercialization Program Ranks Among Best in the Nation



For the third consecutive year, the University of Georgia technology commercialization program has been ranked among the nation's best for moving technologies into the marketplace.



The University of Washington and UGA are the only two universities in the country to hold the distinction of ranking first and second respectively for the past three years for the total number of licenses and options executed.

The rankings, published in December by the Association of University Technology Managers, are based on 2009 survey data from 181 U.S. universities, hospitals and research institutions.

The UGA technology commercialization program ranked second among all U.S. universities with 124 licenses and options executed. The University of Washington took first place with a total of 231. Other top ranked universities reported as systems, including the 10-campus University of California System, with a combined total of 237, and the nine-campus University of Texas System, with a combined total of 161.

Source: Research Facts & Reports, UGA Research News, 03.04.2011

Linda Kay McGowan, Contributor

## Grady Hospital Tour Enlightens Members

Atlanta can't live without Grady. That's what we learned on our ARCS tour of Grady Hospital on April 13. Grady is the only Level I Trauma Center within a hundred mile radius of Atlanta. In addition, Grady houses one of only two burn centers in Georgia and is home to a fabulous new Stroke and Neuroscience Center funded with a \$20 million dollar gift from Bernie Marcus.

Lisa Borders, President of the Grady Foundation, gave us an excellent overview of Grady's dramatic turnaround after ARCS member Ada Lee Correll's husband Pete made Grady's success his priority. Sharing little known facts, Ms. Borders stated "Grady's budget is bigger than the City of Atlanta's and employs over 4,000 people." She told us that Atlanta is "the buckle on the stroke belt," with almost twice as many strokes as other parts of the country. That's why Bernie Marcus' gift for the Stroke Center is so important.

Dr. Leon Haley, head of the emergency room, briefed us on Grady's outstanding trauma services. "If the President of the US visits Atlanta, Grady reserves an ER room for him because if he should suffer an accident, Grady is the hospital best equipped to deal with major trauma," according to Dr. Haley. Grady's ER room treats an average of 350 patients a day including 3 to 5 trauma patients rushed to the hospital by helicopter.

Dr. Haley reported that Grady received a \$28 million dollar grant as the coordinating site for 30 hospitals doing a double-blind trial of the use of progesterone for brain injury. He also explained that Grady is a major teaching hospital working with 188 residents each year. It also trains nurses, physician's assistants and pharmacists. He proudly pointed out that the ER is soon to expand from 900 square feet to 11,000 square feet because of another generous gift from Bernie Marcus.

ARCS members and guests next toured the Burn Center and were briefed by its director, Elaina Hall. Then we saw the Stroke and Neuroscience Center. Neurologist Dr. Michael Frankel and Executive Director Gerald Szkotnicki showed us an amazing array of specialized equipment used in diagnosing and treating the brain. We saw that each patient room includes an alcove for family. "It seems that having family close at hand is actually therapeutic; patients improve faster when surrounded by loved ones," affirmed to Mr. Szkotnicki.

One of the most impressive additions to the Grady system is that they have "gone digital." We were shown portable computers that can be rolled to bedside so the physician can input information. No more struggling to read doctors' famously undecipherable handwriting. All the important info is right there and available, even to a doctor at home.

One last point of interest was provided by ARCS member Gracia Conn's husband Dr. Doyt Conn, Emory Chair of Rheumatology, who arranged for a overview on lupus from Dr. Sam Lim, a leading investigator of the its epidemiology.

We came away from our visit to Grady proud that our city is home to such an outstanding institution and grateful that there are generous and dedicated people like Bernie Marcus and Pete Correll to make and keep it great.

Congratulations and thanks are due to Brooke Weinmann and Anita Kern for arranging such an outstanding ARCS field trip. And special thanks go to Ada Lee Correll for making it all possible.

Clare Whitfield, Contributor



*Sally Jobe, Lisa Borders, Kay Weiss*

## ARCS First Endowment Lecture Has Life Saving Message



*Dr. Donald Stein, PhD*

World renowned neuro-scientist Donald Stein, PhD & Distinguished Professor of Emergency Medicine at Emory, joined 30 ARCS members and their guests Tuesday, March 15 for the first ARCS-ATLANTA "Mind Raising" Lecture.

The evening, hosted by Debbie Liss at her home, generated \$700 for the ARCS Endowment. Members and Guests paid \$25 each—100% tax deductible, going directly to the ARCS Endowment.

Bucking the trend of neurological research for more than 3 decades and ridiculed at times by his medical peers, Stein set out to prove that the female hormone Progesterone could be a life-saving treatment for traumatic brain injury.

His treatment is now in worldwide clinical trials and if successful, will become a standard treatment for brain injury, and perhaps later for stroke and diseases like Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Dr. Stein is also in intensive discussions with the US Army and the NFL, both of whom are now considering Progesterone as a first-line treatment for traumatic brain issues.

Dr. Stein captivated the audience with his lecture and Q&A that lasted more than 90 minutes. He was guest speaker two years ago at the ARCS Award Luncheon and he updated us all on all the exciting new developments since that time.

Debbie Liss, Contributor

## ARCS Tours the KIA Motors Plant

Sparks fly. Huge robotic arms lift automobile body panels high in the air, twist them in the air and place them precisely where needed to weld them together. Open mouthed in wonder, ARCS members are led through a vast factory where robots seem to do all the work. No, we are told, KIA employs almost 2,000 workers, mostly from around West Point, Georgia. They are monitoring the robots and doing precision work that the robots can't do quite as well. The place is ENORMOUS, and spotlessly clean. This is a world most of us know precious little about. But it is a world that is bringing economic life back to an area of Georgia decimated by the departure of the textile mills. This plant turns out KIA Sorentos and Hyundai Santa Fe models, amazingly both on the same assembly line.

On February 17, 2011, 30 ARCS members and guests drove down highway I-85 past La Grange to Exit 6 where we could see the KIA Motors Plant, huge in the distance. We gathered at the *Quick Start* workforce training center, built and staffed by the Technical College System of Georgia, of which ARCS member Lynn Cornett is a board member. After we were seated in a large meeting room with "Welcome ARCS" from KIA up on the big screen, Lynn introduced us to *Quick Start*, the Georgia program that trains workers for KIA.

Then KIA PR man, Patrick Sands, gave us an excellent briefing with videos, and we were treated to tasty box lunches before heading out to the automotive assembly plant itself. But before we could go anywhere we donned protective goggles (because of the sparks) and earphones so we could hear Patrick's description of what we were seeing. First we saw the stamping shop where a HUGE stamping press from South Korea stamps steel into the panels that make up the front, sides and back of the cars. Then we saw 250 robots



*ARCS Members and Guests at Plant Tour with KIA Hosts*

making 2200 spot welds to put each car together. We couldn't go in the paint shop, but it has six miles of conveyer belts! We saw the cockpits and dashboards delivered on conveyer belts and assembled by real human beings.

The whole place runs on the "just in time" delivery system; parts are delivered just in time to be assembled. No parts just sit around anywhere, nor do any cars. As soon as they are finished they are on their way to dealers. The KIA plant turns out 57 vehicles per hour, all of which are rigorously inspected and test driven before sent off by truck or train to KIA dealers around the country. Every car has

already been purchased by a KIA dealer before it is assembled.

We were awed by the brain power it must have taken to design and develop such a precision driven robotic system ensuring thousands of parts delivered just in time and thousands of welds placed in precisely the right spots. Many thanks are due to **Brooke Weinmann** and **Anita Kern** for organizing this remarkable ARCS tour and to **Lynn Cornett** for helping to make it possible. And kudos to **KIA** for hosting us and opening our eyes to the most advanced automotive plant in the country.

Clare Whitfield, Contributor



*Sherry Lundeen trying to make a fast getaway!*

## Henrietta Lacks Comes Alive for ARCS Book Club

On March 30, ARCS sponsored our second Book Club event and it was a perfect blend of enlightenment, engagement and entertainment. First off the Book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot, chosen by Brooke Weinman and Anita Kern, was a carefully documented and well written story about Henrietta Lacks, her family and her historic contribution to science. The author thoroughly described the history of cell production and medical breakthroughs based on Henrietta's cellular legacy. ARCS readers were unanimously enlightened by the book, and today it has earned a well-deserved spot on the *New York Times* best seller list.

Secondly, Dr. Roland Pattillo, Professor with the Morehouse School of Medicine, delivered an insightful overview of his work and discussed the evolution of cell research over the past 50 years. Introduced by ARCS member Dr. Cheryl Franklin, she stated, "Dr. Pattillo is a prolific scientist and an accomplished scientist. A man who has written over 80 articles, 50 Journal Abstracts, 24 chapters and an entire book, he has contributed mightily to the scientific and medical community." Dr. Pattillo began his post-graduate career at Johns

Hopkins working with Dr. Gey, the first physician to successfully grow cells outside the living body. These cells, known as the HeLa strain originated from Henrietta Lacks. Since that time, Dr. Pattillo has devoted his career to discovering applications of trophoblastic research to prevent and treat polio, sickle cell anemia, diabetes, cervical cancer and a number of other life threatening conditions.

Dr. Pattillo, in conjunction with Morehouse School of Medicine, has convened an annual HeLa Conference for the last 16 years. He has taken up the mission to keep Henrietta Lacks' story alive. He believes that we have an obligation "to know her story, know her family and know the person," who has enabled the medical, pharma and scientific communities to achieve over 60,000 modern medical discoveries, based on HeLa cells. In fact, Dr. Pattillo and his wife have gone so far as to personally fund the creation of a headstone to commemorate Ms. Lacks in her previously unmarked grave in Clover, Virginia.

Dr. Pattillo lauded the work of ARCS and implored us to continue to fund rising stars in the field of science and medicine. He is particularly proud of the work of Dr. Franklin West.

Dr. West, a former ARCS scholar, was the featured speaker at our January meeting and will give the keynote address at the 2011 HeLa Conference.

The final surprise for ARCS members was a performance by students of an original play with music, based on *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, written by Ms. Lauriette Johnson, a third grade teacher at Mount Carmel Christian School in Stone Mountain, Georgia. The play featured student-performed soliloquies based on the lives of key people featured in the book. Letters to Henrietta read by the children conveyed the sentiments of the author and the research doctors as well as touching expressions of Henrietta's five children.

Each spoke to her from the heart about how much they missed her in their lives and how proud they each were of her contributions to the betterment of all mankind. The play concluded with a rousing song about the promise of life which had the entire audience up and clapping along with the young students.

Many thanks go to Clare Whitfield for organizing an ARCS trifecta that enlightened, engaged and entertained.

Anne Deeley Easterly, Contributor



Charlotte Halbert, Dr. Pattillo, Kay Weiss, Lauriette Johnson



Student Actors of Mount Carmel Christian School



## May 11th ARCS Annual Meeting and Luncheon Speaker

Sandra L. Thurman

Currently, Ms. Thurman is Director of the Interfaith Health Program at the Rollins School of Public Health where she is a faculty member in the Hubert Department of Global Health.

In 1997 Ms. Thurman was appointed by President Bill Clinton as the Director of the Office of National AIDS Policy at The White House earning her the title of the country's "AIDS Czar." Following her tenure in the White House, Sandy established the International AIDS Trust to create strategic opportunities for galvanizing leadership, mobilizing resources, and promoting effective interventions in the global battle against AIDS. For over two decades, Ms. Thurman has been a leader and advocate for people with AIDS at the local, state, and federal levels.

Ms. Thurman previously served as the Director of Citizen Exchanges at the United States Information Agency. From 1993 to 1996, Ms. Thurman was the Director of Advocacy Programs at The Task Force for Global Health.

From 1988 to 1993, Ms. Thurman served as Executive Director of AID Atlanta, a community-based nonprofit organization that provides health and support services to people living with HIV/AIDS and offers an array of HIV prevention programs. Under her leadership, AID Atlanta, the largest and oldest AIDS service organization in the south, tripled in size, and became a multi-million dollar agency.

Anne Deeley Easterly, Editor

Joan Heazel, Publisher

Corrie Johnson, Publisher

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