In February 2014, Jeffrey Markey, MD, a third-year resident, Matthew Russell, MD, assistant professor of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, and Marika Russell, MD, assistant professor in the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, had the opportunity to spend a week performing surgery in Guatemala as part of a global health team.

While we in the U.S. often take for granted the advanced medicine that is available to us, we sometimes forget that much of the world today continues to lack basic medical and surgical care. That was seen firsthand by three members of the UCSF Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Department who recently traveled to Nuevo Progreso, Guatemala, for a week-long surgical excursion with the Hospital de la Familia (HDLF). Assistant Professors Matt Russell, MD, and Marika Russell, MD, and third year resident Jeff Markey, MD, supported the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, and Marika Russell, MD, assistant professor in the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, had the opportunity to spend a week performing surgery in Guatemala as part of a global health team.
Message from the Chair

Moving Swiftly, Following New Alliances

UCSF is a very large organization, but it can certainly move quickly when it has determined the appropriate vision and direction. That is evident by recently announced clinical alliances, and UCSF is boldly moving ahead as a result.

In January, UCSF and Children’s Hospital & Research Center Oakland announced that they were entering into a new affiliation. As such, UCSF is now intimately involved in BayChildren’s Physicians, a pediatric multi-specialty physician foundation that previously was solely operated by Children’s Oakland. The new alliance is now the largest children’s care organization in Northern California. The Benioff family has recognized the potential of this organization by donating $100 million to recruit new clinicians and scientists to this partnership to further strengthen the quality of care and research that can be delivered by this entity.

The combination of UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital, San Francisco and the newly named UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital, Oakland has the potential to be the leading children’s care network in the state and perhaps the country. This Department stands ready to grow with the new entity to improve otolaryngology – head and neck surgery medicine and research for all children.

Attesting to our size, UCSF’s reputation as an outstanding research institution is verified by its position as the largest recipient of NIH funding in the world. With $492 million secured by 914 grants, one could conclude that the business of UCSF is research. Further, U.S. News & World Report has consistently ranked UCSF among the top five schools in quality of research education as well as in quality of primary care education, a distinction held by no other medical school.

On the education front, this Department has recently been approved by the ACGME to expand our residency program to four residents per year. This initiative was under the expert stewardship of Program Director Steve Pletcher, MD. Our educational focus has always been unapologetically concentrated upon our residency program, and with our increasing surgical volume and our growing faculty, we are very excited by the prospect of concomitantly growing the residency program.

Our residency experience is truly outstanding, and the opportunities are broad. As an example, Ruwan Kiringoda (PGY-4) and Daniel Faden (PGY-3) have both recently been appointed to the AAO-HNS CORE Grant Study Section. Other examples of incredible educational opportunity are included within this newsletter.

Finally, there is much to say about our fantastic new facilities. I recently toured our Helen Diller Family Comprehensive NCI-Designated Cancer Hospital and the UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital, San Francisco. The facilities are absolutely outstanding and nothing short of state of the art. We are excited about moving our surgical oncology practice and our pediatric practice to this $1 billion hospital complex on UCSF’s Mission Bay research campus by February 1, 2015. We are also in the process of recruiting additional clinical faculty to augment the staffing at these new hospitals. Opportunities like this may only come once in a lifetime, and we plan to live up to the institution’s confidence in us to maximize the impact afforded by this growth.

Warmly,
Andrew H. Murr, MD
Chairman
Professor of Clinical Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery,
Roger Boles, MD Endowed Chair in Otolaryngology Education
Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery

Lustig Appointed Chair at Columbia

Lawrence Lustig, MD, Professor of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery and Director of UCSF’s Douglas Grant Cochlear Implant Center, has accepted the position of Chair of the Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery and Otolaryngologist-in-Chief at New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center, effective July 1, 2014.

Lustig earned a medical degree and completed a residency in Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at UCSF. He completed a fellowship in Otology, Neurotology and Skull Base Surgery at Johns Hopkins University before serving on the faculty at Johns Hopkins. He also was a member of the Johns Hopkins Listening Center and cochlear implant team, after which he joined the faculty at UCSF.

Dr. Lustig has published more than 125 articles in peer-reviewed journals, as well as book chapters. He co-edited a textbook, Clinical Neurotology: Diagnosing and Managing Disorders of Hearing, Balance and the Facial Nerve.

“I know that Larry will be a tremendous asset at Columbia,” said department Chair Andrew Murr, MD, in announcing the move. “We will miss him very much at UCSF, and we wish him all the best in his new role as department chair at Columbia OHNS.”
The inability to close the eye is a common yet serious threat to ocular health for those with facial paralysis. Assistant Professor Rahul Seth, MD, and Associate Professor P. Daniel Knott, MD, facial plastic surgeons and experts in the management of facial paralysis, joined 11 other UCSF innovators and seven California Institute of Technology (Caltech) scientists to envision answers to address this and other medical challenges requiring novel solutions at the one-day UCSF-Caltech Innovation Symposium on January 11, 2014.

Facial paralysis may occur for many reasons and results in a loss of eye closure function. There is a strong need for an improved treatment to enable facial paralysis patients to achieve successful eye closure.

The current standard treatment for compromised eye closure is upper lid weighting, in which a weight is surgically inserted in the eyelid. While a weight will facilitate eyelid closure via gravity, there are some disadvantages. Common problems with eyelid weights arise from the fact that they are non-dynamic, cannot reproduce a blink, and have gravity dependence.

A related issue is that for optimal eye health, the most important period for eyelid closure is at night, when gravity is least effective due to the patient's horizontal lying position. Finally, upper eyelid weights are adjustable only with surgical removal and replacement.

Drs. Knott and Seth, presented their work and collaborated on scientific strategies for a potential engineered solution with Caltech faculty at the 5th annual symposium, held at UCSF. The “Upper Eyelid Spring for Dynamic Eye Closure in the Setting of Facial Paralysis” has the goal of solving eyelid closure problems via a bone-anchored eyelid spring. It is intended for patients in whom the nerve to the eyelid closing muscle is non-functional but the nerve to the eyelid opening muscle functions well, due to the fact that closing and opening the eyelid is controlled via two separate nerves.

Although palpebral springs currently exist, Drs. Knott and Seth were motivated to develop improvements with the goal of a lower extrusion rate and the possibility for the mechanism to relax upon blink initiation. In addition, the possibility of easily adjusting the palpebral spring without additional surgery is a goal of the collaboration.

UCSF faculty and Caltech scientists plan to continue collaborating on this project and others that were discussed at the Symposium. The goal is to move from the formulation of ideas to implementation, with a promise of potential long-term benefits to facial paralysis patients.
OHNS Welcomes Miller to Faculty

Mia Miller, MD, joined the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery as a new faculty member in December 2013, and she has been appointed the Director of the Center for Balance Disorders at UCSF. Dr. Miller graduated Summa Cum Laude from Harvard College with an AB in Biochemical Sciences, where she was awarded a John Harvard Scholarship and won the Detur Prize for Academic Excellence. That was followed by a research fellowship in the Laboratory of Biochemistry at L’Ecole Normale Superieure in Paris, France, after which she earned her medical degree from Harvard Medical School. Dr. Miller then completed a surgical internship in Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at UCLA, followed by an Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery residency at the same institution, where she served as chief resident. Prior to her UCSF appointment, Dr. Miller completed a two-year clinical fellowship in the Department of Otology, Neurology and Skull Base Surgery at UC San Diego. Dr. Miller’s research interests are in the areas of imaging modalities and Meniere’s disease.

Goepfert Receives Humanitarian Travel Grant

Fourth-year resident Ryan Goepfert, MD has received a Humanitarian Travel Grant from the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. The Academy awards the funding to senior otolaryngology residents who wish to pursue humanitarian work abroad.

In April 2014, Dr. Goepfert travelled to Ica, Peru, with an organization called Healing the Children. In Ica, he performed cleft lip and palate surgery with a small team of American facial plastic surgeons and staff.

Dr. Goepfert noted that he was very grateful for the grant, stating that “it is certainly very exciting to be supported for something you are passionate about.”

A future issue of Heads Up! will report on Dr. Goepfert’s experience in Peru.

Graduating Chief Residents Accept Fellowships

Congratulations to the following three Chief Residents who graduate in June 2014. All plan to continue their training with clinical fellowship positions.

Chase Heaton, MD, will become the Bryan Hemming Fellow in the UCSF Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery. His fellowship will focus on Head and Neck Surgical Oncology.

Ilya Likhterov, MD has accepted an Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgical Oncology fellowship position at Beth Israel Hospital in New York, NY.

Brandon L. Prendes, MD, will become an Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgical Oncology fellow at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.

We wish Chase, Ilya and Brandon much success in their new positions!

Carol Bradford Visits as Roger Boles Lecturer

Carol R. Bradford, MD, Professor and Chair of the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Michigan, spent time at UCSF on September 12, 2013 as the Eighth Annual Roger Boles, MD Endowed Lecturer. Dr. Bradford, who specializes in head and neck cancer surgery and reconstruction as well as cutaneous oncology and sentinel lymph node biopsy, discussed the “Re-Emergence of Primary Surgery for Head and Neck Cancer” during her formal lecture that evening.
image the phantom noise that is called tinnitus. Dr. Cheung believes the basil ganglia, an important central part of the brain controlling awareness, plays a key role in the creation of tinnitus when it allows perception of phantom noise to come to the forefront. His research with Parkinson's disease patients found that deep brain stimulation for Parkinson's disease could also have a suppressive effect on tinnitus – that by manipulating the brain electronically, the perception of noise can potentially be lessened or eliminated.

"I am now actively pursuing treatment ideas introduced in the PBS broadcast," commented Dr. Cheung. "The first is an NIH-funded Phase 1 trial of Deep Brain Stimulation for the treatment of troublesome tinnitus, and the second is a Department of Defense-funded multimodal imaging of tinnitus using high field fMRI and magnetoencephalographic imaging technologies."

Please save October 2, 2014 for the Ninth Annual Roger Boles, MD Endowed Lecture.

PBS NewsHour Highlights

Dr. Cheung’s Tinnitus Research

The tinnitus research of UCSF Otolaryngology Professor Steven Cheung, MD, was featured in a November, 2013 PBS NewsHour story. In the story, correspondent Miles O’Brien discussed new treatments for tinnitus, a challenging problem for an estimated 50 million Americans and the primary service-connected medical complaint among combat veterans.

Using functional MRI, Dr. Cheung’s research group has been able to
were able to make a substantial difference in the lives of rural Guatemalans like:

■ the woman complaining of progressive airway obstruction who had her thyroid removed,
■ the people hoping to end years of leaking ears who had their ear drums replaced, and
■ the 12-year-old boy, unable to breathe through his nostrils for ten years, who had a metal wire removed from deep in his nose a decade after placing it there as a toddler.

HDLF was established 40 years ago following the chance meeting in western Guatemala between a San Francisco businessman and an Italian priest. Today HDLF is estimated to serve as the primary care source of more than 200,000 Guatemalans and Mexicans over nearly 200 square miles. Four times each year an American multi-specialty surgical team travels to Nuevo Progreso to operate. On these occasions patients travel from across the region for care, often making two or three day journeys. The visiting surgical team includes members from throughout the United States and includes general, ophthalmologic, plastic, obstetrics/gynecology and otolaryngologic specialties.

Members of the UCSF Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Department had sought ways to export their talents and tend to those in need, when they learned of the opportunity with the HDLF. “I’d had some experience performing head and neck surgery in Zanzibar as a medical student”, said Dr. Markey. “I was searching for an opportunity to care for patients in an international setting, for patients with few other options. HDLF was a perfect fit – and when Matt and Marika Russell agreed to join I knew we’d found the right dynamic to really do some good.”

The team atmosphere was a productive one. The surgery crew evaluated and treated 700 patients during the week and performed 150 surgeries. In addition to the procedures described above, the team performed cleft palate repair, cataract removal, hernia repair, tympanoplasty and thyroidectomy. Guatemalans and Mexicans, young and old, traveled to Nuevo Progreso for treatment and were often in the operating room the very same day.

Dr. Matt Russell added that the multitude of procedures and clinic visits, no matter how simple, “can often have a profound impact on someone’s quality of life.”

“Matt and Marika Russell were fantastic, the country was beautiful, and I’ll never forget the patients,” says Dr. Markey. “I’d encourage all residents and faculty alike to get involved with global surgery.”

“Despite the fact that most of us had never met before, our commitment to high quality service led to amazing teamwork.”
 – Matt Russell

“I’d encourage all residents and faculty alike to get involved with global surgery.”
 – Jeffrey Markey
Forming a Different Take on Beauty

“M y experience at UCSF was remarkable and greatly influenced the things that I have gone on to do. While I did not necessarily learn to do the specific procedures that I now do while I was in my residency, I learned how to operate and how think in a way that made what I am doing now a natural extension of my training,” says Jeffrey Spiegel, MD, Chief of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Boston University School of Medicine.

What Dr. Spiegel does now is primarily cosmetic facial plastic surgery, which has led to a great deal of research into facial attractiveness and gender. As a result, a large number of people come to see him for facial feminization surgery, which is often part of having a sex change.

“After I operate on someone, you would not know they were once a man. As a result, there has been a lot of interest in my practice from all over the world. That’s definitely the most interesting or unusual part of my practice,” he says.

Dr. Spiegel came to UCSF in 1994 after receiving his MD from the University of Michigan Medical School. At that time, Robert Schindler, MD, was the Department Chair. Some of the staff of attendings who worked with the young resident were Drs. Steve Cheung, Andrew Murr, Corey Maas, Anil Lalwani, Mike Kaplan, and Kelvin Lee.

He remembers that Dr. Roger Boles was still working at UCSF then, and observes that he “happened to be at UCSF with a very illustrious class of residents and fellows, many of whom have gone on to achieve great things and several of whom have become chairmen” including Dr. Larry Lustig, “who was one of my co-residents a couple of years ahead of me”.

“It was great to work with the attendings at the time because they were skilled surgeons, good teachers, they were enthusiastic, and they were also serious about academics. I learned a lot about how to structure a career from them.

“And it was equally valuable working with that group of residents during those years. They also taught me how to be a good resident, how to start your career while still in residency, how to work on research papers and projects, as well as how to do all those things independently.

“My co-residents also taught me the value of travelling to academy meetings and interacting with colleagues and peers elsewhere. As a resident we had very comprehensive training,” Dr. Spiegel recalls.

At the time of his training, microvascular surgery was very new and exotic and there were not a lot of places that did it. He wanted to pursue microvascular surgery following residency, so he applied to the two or three programs in the country where it was offered. That led to a fellowship at Harvard, where he worked with, among others, the famed William Montgomery, MD. That is when Dr. Spiegel learned microvascular surgery and received additional training in facial plastic surgery as part of the AAFPRS fellowship curriculum.

Following his fellowship, Dr. Spiegel decided to join the faculty at Boston University School of Medicine, where he started off doing a lot of head and neck and microvascular surgery.

However, when he joined Boston University no one else there was doing microvascular surgery, so he was called upon to do not just reconstructions of head and neck patients but also orthopedic patients.

“I was doing flaps to cover leg wounds and similar traumas. But I also did nasal reconstruction and plastic surgery, and over time that part of my practice started to grow until I was doing primarily cosmetic facial plastic surgery,” he notes.

As his practice has progressed, so has his academic growth. As a full professor, he continues to do research, write papers, and teach at the medical school. In addition, each year a fellow trains with him to learn facial plastic surgery.

Having performed so many cases of facial feminization surgery, Dr. Spiegel has come to appreciate a broader understanding of beauty.

“Looking to the future, I have been writing and speaking about a different approach to what attractiveness is,” he says.

“I think we will see a gradual drifting away from measurements that try to quantify beauty and we will see movement towards what I call evolutionary attractiveness. I also believe we are gaining a different understanding of facial aging. Facial plastic surgery is no longer just about lifting and tightening. Sometimes it is about restoring volume or targeting specific areas that our brains target. It is becoming more individualized and more specific – customizing what each individual needs.”

Additional information is available at www.DrSpiegel.com.
News from the UCSF Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery
http://ohns.ucsf.edu

Upcoming Events

Farewell Reception for Lawrence Lustig, MD
Thursday, June 12, 2014; 3:00-6:00 PM | Mt. Zion Campus, San Francisco, CA

Inaugural Alumni Lecture | Speaker: Nadim Bikhazi, MD
Friday, June 20, 2014; 12:00 PM
UCSF, 513 Parnassus Ave., Room N-225, San Francisco, CA

OHNS Resident Research Symposium
Friday, June 20, 2014; 1:00 – 4:30 PM
UCSF, 513 Parnassus Ave., Room N-225, San Francisco, CA

Francis A. Sooy Endowed Lecture | Speaker: Myles Pensak, MD
Saturday, June 21, 2014; 7:30 AM – 12:00 PM
UCSF, 513 Parnassus Ave., Room N-225, San Francisco, CA

Annual Year-End (Graduation) Dinner
Saturday, June 21, 6:00 PM | Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco, CA

Ninth Annual Roger Boles, MD Endowed Lecture | Speaker: Douglas A Girod, MD
Thursday, October 2, 2014 | 5:00 pm Lecture, 6:00 pm Reception
UCSF Mt. Zion Campus, San Francisco, CA

Saliendoscopy / Salivary Duct Surgery Course
November 6, 2014 | Hotel Kabuki, San Francisco, CA

Head and Neck Cancer and Endocrine Surgery Update CME Course
November 7-8, 2014 | Hotel Kabuki, San Francisco, CA

Pacific Rim Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery Update CME Course
February 14-17, 2015 | Honolulu, Hawaii

For further information about CME courses please go to http://cme.ucsf.edu.
For information on departmental events please visit http://ohns.ucsf.edu
or contact Agnes Ritter at aritter@ohns.ucsf.edu.