Han leads obesity program

Pediatric Endocrinologist Joan Han, MD, is the new director of Le Bonheur and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center’s Pediatric Obesity Program. The four-armed approach to fighting obesity includes the Metabolic Research Center. Han comes from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at the National Institutes of Health. She has spent her career studying genetic determinants of obesity in the general population and in patients with rare disorders associated with obesity, such as Alstrom, Bardet-Biedl, Prader-Willi and WAGR/11p deletion syndromes.

Atanasovska: IRB coordinator

Kostadinka Atanasovska is the CFRI’s new IRB regulatory coordinator. She is a recent graduate of The University of Memphis, where she worked as an Anatomy & Physiology Lab instructor and a graduate assistant at the Lipman School Montessori classroom. Kostadinka spent five years in the Regulatory Affairs Department at ACORN Research, LLC (currently Vector Oncology) and is a certified clinical research professional. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Freed-Hardeman University and a Master of Science in Biology from The University of Memphis.

Research Day set for Nov. 19

The 7th annual Pediatric Research Day, organized again this year by Dr. Ae-Kyung Yi, is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 19. Dr. Carlton M. Bates, chief of the Pediatric Nephrology Division at the Pittsburgh Children’s Hospital and the University of Pittsburgh, is the 2014 James C. Hunt Distinguished Visiting Professor and will serve as keynote speaker. In addition, five UTHSC faculty members will present their current research in kidney diseases in children. The afternoon will feature poster presentations of a broad spectrum of ongoing research in basic science, translational and clinical research being conducted here in Memphis at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center.

BMIC to manage Dup15q Alliance data

After months of effort and participation in the Dup15q Alliance Consortium, the CFRI Biomedical Informatics Core (BMIC) has now been officially selected and funded by the Dup15q Alliance Consortium to serve as its Data Management Center. The mission of the Dup15q Alliance is to provide family support, promote awareness and foster research, particularly in developing targeted treatments to individuals with chromosome 15q duplication syndrome. The Dup15q Alliance Consortium comprises clinics in cities across the United States, including Boston, New York, Lewisburg (PA), Miami and Weston (FL), St. Paul (MN), Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles, and Memphis.

Le Bonheur awards research grants

Five investigators were recently tapped to receive $25,000-$30,000 for research, as part of Le Bonheur’s Research Grants Program. The researchers were selected among 17 applications -- members of Le Bonheur’s medical and nursing staffs, and investigators in the Children’s Foundation Research Institute were eligible to apply. The grants program promotes meritorious clinical and basic investigation at Le Bonheur. It is especially designed to support studies by individuals who are in the early stages of their research career and individuals who are initiating new lines of investigation. Congratulations to the awardees.

Amali Samarasinghe, PhD
"Resistin-like molecules reduce influenza virus-induced morbidity in mice"

Dave Bridges, PhD
"Prediction of weight gain in inbred mouse strains"

Emma Tillman, PharmD, PhD
"Fish oil in parenteral nutrition associated liver disease"

Eszter Volgyi, PhD
"Obesity, exercise and sensorimotor development in children"

Abbas Babajani-Feremi, PhD
"Optimizing language mapping based on high gamma activity"