

A look back, and ahead, at CTSI Annual Forum 2017

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The University at Buffalo Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) held its 2nd Annual Forum on March 28. Faculty, staff and stakeholders in the CTSI gathered in the Clinical and Translational Research Center (CTRC) to take stock of progress that's been made so far and what needs to be done in the coming year.

Following opening remarks by Michael E. Caine, MD, Vice President for Health Sciences and Dean of the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (JSMBS), SUNY Distinguished Professor and CTSI Director Timothy F. Murphy, MD, provided an overview of recent accomplishments and what to expect in the third year of the NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA), which was granted to UB in August of 2015.

Murphy talked about the transformation of clinical research at UB that has taken place since the CTSI was instituted, beginning with implementation of improved tracking of clinical studies system-wide, and a significant reduction in the amount of IRB approval time. He discussed the ongoing build-out of the Translational Imaging Center, the CTSI biorepository and research pharmacy. He said recruitment to clinical studies will get a big boost from the recent implementation of the new i2b2 platform, which will allow clinical researchers to make better use of electronic health data for feasibility studies and, with IRB approval, execution of recruiting strategies. The CTSI's pilot studies program has seen a 13:1 return on investment since it was implemented in 2011, and is now able to allocate three times the funding as compared to earlier years because of the CTSA.

Murphy shared the following priorities for 2017-18:

- Full implementation of the Clinical Trials Management System
- Accelerated start-up of all clinical studies
- Continued support and tracking of the Translational Pilot Studies Program
- Continued expansion and growth of the Imaging Center, biorepository and research pharmacy
- Expanded education and training programs
- Active engagement in CTSA national consortium
- Further opportunities for applying for CTSA U01 and R21 grants

Three CTSI Scholars were introduced by SUNY Distinguished Professor and Mentored Career Development Program Director Margarita L. Dubocovich, PhD. Presenting their research were: Nikhil Satchidanand, PhD, research assistant professor, Department of Family Medicine, JSMBS; Ellen Volpe, PhD, RN, assistant professor, School of Nursing; and Umesh Sharma, MD, assistant professor, Department of Medicine, JSMBS.

SUNY Distinguished Professor and Charles and Mary Bauer Professor and Chair, Department of Medicine, JSMBS, Anne B. Curtis, MD, chaired the inaugural UB Clinical Research Achievement Award session. She awarded certificates to four investigators who presented on their research published in major journals during 2016.

Presenting were:

Sebastian G. Ciancio, DDS, Distinguished Service Professor and chair, Department of Periodontics and Endodontics, School of Dental Medicine, "Anesthesia Given by Intranasal Mist"

Rina Das Eiden, PhD, senior research scientist, Research Institute on Addictions, "Cascade Model for Adolescent Substance Use"

Timothy F. Murphy, MD, "Effect of Antibiotics in COPD"

Gil I. Wolfe, MD, professor and chair, Department of Neurology, JSMBS, "Randomized Trial of Thymectomy in Myasthenia Gravis."

The half-day event concluded with "Advancing Creativity in Clinical and Translational Research," a presentation by Larry W. Hawk, PhD, professor in the Department of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences.