Message from the Chief

As we head into the holidays, I want to celebrate the season of giving by sharing three examples of philanthropy with you.

I begin with a story from a grateful patient. After Dr. Rick Friedman performed a successful surgery to improve the hearing of a young boy who had required hearing aids most of his life, the Mills family reciprocated by creating the Annual Mills Auditory Foundation Golf tournament to help raise funds for hearing research.

A second patient of mine – a woman with profound progressive hearing loss – had come seeking treatment after becoming more and more isolated from her husband and friends. After I performed two successful cochlear implants to restore much of her hearing, she was so pleased with the result she asked if she could help support our mission of teaching, research and clinical care. She and her husband showed their appreciation with a gift to the department to help us support the recruitment of a hearing scientist who will investigate new approaches to overcome deafness.
Lastly, in our Alumni Spotlight we feature Dr. Roberto Cueva, one of our former resident trainees who supports our teaching mission by assigning royalties to the department from sales of his invention.

Philanthropy can be thought of as a "love of mankind," with the express purpose of promoting the welfare of others through a material gift. The unexpected gifts described above are a testament to the fact that philanthropy can be transformative in ways nobody can anticipate.

With the help of these gifts and other funding sources, we are now in the process of expanding our services with new facilities and added clinical expertise. Over the past year, we have been working with the medical group planners and hospital strategists to build upon the strength we have achieved over the past five years. This includes a doubling of our clinic space along with a complete renovation in the Perlman Ambulatory Office building. This new facility will house a dedicated Rhinology, Sinus and Anterior Skull Base Center, expansion of the Acoustic Neuroma, Otology and Skull Base Surgery Center, Facial Nerve Paralysis and Reanimation Center, Facial Plastics and Reconstructive Surgery and a full service Audiology diagnostics, Cochlear implant and hearing aid services.

**UC San Diego Sinus Center**

We are proud to be expanding the Rhinology and Sinus faculty – under the direction of Dr. Adam DeConde --with the recruitment of Dr. Carol Yan. Dr. Yan joins us as a surgeon-scientist to become part of the Rhinology and Anterior Skull Base team at UC San Diego. She attended Princeton University as an undergraduate and completed her medical school and residency training at the University of Pennsylvania. She moved back to the west coast to complete her rhinology and skull base fellowship at Stanford University under the mentorship of Drs. Peter Hwang, Zara Patel, and Jayakar Nayak. She brings to the UC San Diego Sinus Center a broad experience in all facets of clinical rhinology, including treatment of inflammatory sinonasal disease, benign and malignant sinonasal and skull base tumors, and treatment of olfactory loss. She has clinical and translational research interests in the inflammatory profile in chronic rhinosinusitis patients following surgical therapy, novel treatments for patients with olfactory dysfunction, and the screening of Alzheimer’s disease biomarkers through nasal secretions.

**UC San Diego Facial Nerve Center**

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Jacqueline Greene, who completed a two-year Facial Plastic and Reconstructive surgery fellowship with microvascular training focused on Facial Reanimation surgery with Dr. Tessa Hadlock at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Harvard Medical School. Dr. Greene was an undergraduate at MIT and then attended UC San Diego School of Medicine. She completed her residency at Northwestern University. She brings to the UC San Diego Facial Nerve Center expertise in complex facial reconstruction and facets of adult and pediatric facial reanimation surgery as well as microvascular training in gracilis free tissue transfer for smile reanimation and nerve repair. She has conducted extensive research in biomaterials and bioelectronics, tissue engineering, neural regeneration and translational research and is working jointly with researchers in Bioengineering and Neuroscience. She will also be our designated hospitalist at Jacobs Medical Center. Her focus will be to join Drs. Quyen Nguyen, Ryan Orosco, and Amanda Gosman to expand our expertise in facial nerve paralysis treatments.
The UC San Diego Center for Voice and Swallowing has expanded with the recruitment of Dr. Andrew Vahabzadeh-Hagh, who has joined Dr. Phil Weissbrod and the SLP group. This Center offers total care of voice and swallowing conditions. Dr. Weissbrod also has an appointment as Adjunct Professor at CSUSM, teaching the course - Imaging of the palate at the Department of Speech Pathology. Dr. Andrew Vahabzadeh-Hagh has two new provisional patents filed: Tracheostomy support system and Thermal Endoscope for Clinical diagnostics.

UC San Diego Acoustic Neuroma Program

The Acoustic Neuroma program, under the co-direction of Drs. Rick Friedman and Marc Schwartz, is busier than we thought possible. They have exceeded all expectations in attracting patients and just performed their 300th Acoustic neuroma case since starting at UC San Diego. Additionally, they have successfully developed an Auditory Brainstem Implant program for patients whose eighth nerve is no longer viable and precludes a customary cochlear implantation. Dr. Friedman has been invited as speaker at the Quadrennial Acoustic Neuroma International Conference in Rochester, MN.

Head and Neck Cancer Center Team

Our Head and Neck Oncology surgeons, who have teamed up with Medical Oncology, are developing new research programs funded by a large grant under the auspices of the “Cancer Moon Shot” initiative. Dr. Joseph Califano was named Physician-in-Chief at the Moores Cancer Center recently and has provided his steady hand to the clinical operations of our NIH designated Cancer Center. Dr. Charles Coffey has completed the Surgical Education Research Fellowship offered by the American College of Surgeons.

Dr. Joseph Califano has received an award from the National Cancer Institute to develop a routine spit or blood clinical test for throat cancers. He has recently received a UH3 award, titled "Optimizing an Assay for High Risk HPV DNA in Body Fluids" that will facilitate movement of a genomic-based test into the routine clinical care environment. The test is designed to detect DNA from high-risk human papilloma virus related oropharynx carcinoma (HPVOPC). HPVOPC is a cancer that is rapidly increasing, surpassing the incidence of cervical carcinoma in the U.S.
The UC San Diego Health Head & Neck Center is at the forefront of clinical practice and research in several aspects of the management of salivary gland disorders. Dr. Charles Coffey has developed a wide referral base for the use of salivary endoscopy and extended gland-preserving techniques for the management of inflammatory salivary diseases, and serves on the faculty of courses, which seek to foster expertise in these techniques amongst head & neck surgeons.

Dr. Coffey was named the Program Chairman for the Neoplastic Diseases section of the 5th International Salivary Gland Congress, which will be held in the United States for the first time this October in Philadelphia, PA.

The cover image for *The Laryngoscope* September issue highlights a recent study by Dr. Ryan Orosco and his colleagues titled "Hybrid Supracricoid Partial Laryngectomy with Cricohyoidoepiglottopexy via Transoral Robotic Surgery". Along with Dr. Meijin Nakayama from Yokohama City University and Dr. Chris Holsinger from Stanford University, the study describes a novel minimally-invasive "hybrid" technique that combines the da Vinci Single Port (SP) robotic platform with a well-established partial laryngectomy procedure that is traditionally performed through a large neck incision. The cover image shows an endoscopic view at the end of the procedure, highlighting the delicate suturing within the neo-larynx that is now possible using next-generation flexible robotic instrumentation.

No less important is the plan to replace the Hillcrest facility with a new acute care hospital, an ambulatory facility with a same-day surgery suite and academic offices. The proposed Hillcrest Campus 2019 Long Range Development Plan (2019 LRDP) reflects years of planning and collaboration with internal campus stakeholders, adjacent communities and agencies. Our Otolaryngology Clinics are being designed in the new facility and will be staffed by Dr. David Hom and Dr. Sapideh Gilani. Both of these physicians have handled a full clinical load in this busy Level 3 trauma hospital as well as shouldering the teaching responsibilities of medical students and residents. I know all of the faculty are greatly appreciative of two very experienced surgeons who maintain the very highest standards of patient care in the downtown area.
UC San Diego has made a commitment to expanding out to the greater San Diego County area with a new multi-specialty clinic in Rancho Bernardo, at Via Tazon. We have been asked to have a presence in this facility and Sharon L. Mick, BSN, FNP who has been in the Division for 13 years and a graduate of UCLA and LSU, is now seeing a full range of patients there once a week. Leslie N. Kon is a Family Nurse practitioner that received her BS, MSP and FNP degrees at Johns Hopkins University. She will be practicing at Perlman Clinic under Drs. Deconde and Yan direction on the expansion of our rhinology and skull base practice. She will eventually see her own patients as well as extending her practice to the Division’s location in Rancho Bernardo.

Our faculty have also received some accolades this past year.

Dr. Deborah Watson, Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery and Director of our residency program, was nominated in April 2019 to be on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors at the American Academy of Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery. Our residency program has been granted extra funding approval for an additional Oto-HNS resident position.

The National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) celebrated the exceptional and hard work of women grantees at NIBIB in acknowledgement of the United Nation’s International Day of Women and Girls in Science. Dr. Quyen Nguyen was one of the five awardees on Feb 19, 2019. Dr. Nguyen’s TEDMED talk has more than one million views.

Dr. Hom Co-Chaired the National 2019 COSM Annual Spring Meeting for the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in Austin, Texas in May 2019 and was selected to be on Advisory Board of the Facial Plastic Surgery Clinics of North America (2018 - present)

Center for the Future of Surgery Microsurgical Lab
We are also celebrating the opening of the brand-new state-of-the-art microsurgical laboratory in the Center for the Future of Surgery, which debuted on October 12, 2019. This 15-station lab is equipped with surgical microscopes, high-speed drills and monitors and will be used for training residents in Otolaryngology, Neurosurgery and Plastics and hosting CME events with community physicians. It has been on the drawing board for eight years and with the support of many donors, it has finally come to fruition. We will demonstrate and practice the nuances of techniques, such as drill performance, light versus forceful pressures, preservation of brain structures and other critical movements that are needed for optimal surgical outcomes in the microsurgical laboratory.

Images of the Microsurgical laboratory

It should be evident that this is an exciting time in Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery, with great new facilities being built, an expansion of our faculty and opportunities to create new programs that will improve health care delivery to our community.

Alumni Spotlight

Roberto Cueva, MD

“It’s hard to believe that I began my UC San Diego journey nearly 36 years ago as a Surgery Intern, then Resident in Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. Originally, I had planned to become a Facial Plastic Surgeon, but sometime during my third year of residency, I changed my focus to Otology and Neurotology. Due to the timing of this decision, I had missed the deadline for applying for Neurotology Fellowships and had to wait a year after finishing Residency to begin the next phase of training. I had the immense good fortune to undertake my Fellowship at the Otology Group with Dr. Michael Glasscock in Nashville.

Roberto Cueva, MD

Dr. Harris was very supportive during this time and had a faculty position waiting for me upon completion of my Fellowship in August of 1990. After two years as a full-time faculty member at UC San Diego, the Kaiser system recruited me to start their internal Skull Base Surgery program based at the San Diego Kaiser hospital. I had remained a clinical faculty member, and given the growing volume of skull base cases at Kaiser, Dr. Harris approached me to consider establishing a Neurotology Fellowship program via collaboration between UC San Diego and Kaiser. In 1993, we accepted our first Neurotology Fellow, Dr. Michael Ruckenstein, who is now Vice Chairman at University of Pennsylvania.
In the early 1990s, I conceived and patented a design for an electrode to allow reliable cochlear nerve monitoring during vestibular schwannoma surgery in an attempt to improve hearing preservation. AD-Tech Medical Instrument Corporation licensed the technology to manufacture and distribute the electrode. With its commercial success (and after thoughtful consideration motivated by my commitment to resident and fellowship training), I decided to assign the royalty income from the sales of the electrode to the UC San Diego Otolaryngology-HNS Resident Education Fund. Happily, this decision has provided funds to support resident/fellow travel to meetings and for courses to grow annually.

In our collaborative efforts for the neurotology fellowship program, we have trained 18 Neurotology Fellows. My ongoing active affiliation as a UC San Diego clinical faculty member and the blessing of my practice has allowed me to achieve much more than I had ever imagined at the beginning of my career. One of the highlights of my career is having served on the American Otological Society Council and as their President from 2017 to 2018.

I am excited about the future of the UC San Diego Neurotology Fellowship following the addition of my fellow alumnus and good friend Dr. Rick Friedman, whose international reputation as a vestibular schwannoma and skull base surgeon has resulted in exponential growth in the volume of skull base surgeries performed at UC San Diego. The UC San Diego Neurotology Fellowship is now one of the highest volume programs in the country. We have much to be proud of as UCSD Otolaryngology-HNS Residency alumni. I am delighted to be able to financially support my alma mater and will continue to do so for years to come – I encourage you to do the same.”

Emeritus Professor Elizabeth Keithley, PhD

Dr. Elizabeth Keithley came to UCSD in 1985 after having completed her post-doctoral fellowship in the anatomy and physiology of the ear at the Eaton Peabody Laboratory at the Mass Eye and Ear, Harvard Medical School. Dr. Keithley was an integral part of our otologic research program collaborating with Dr. Harris and Dr. Ryan and a PI on numerous NIH and VA grants until her retirement in 2004. She made contributions to the understanding of immune activity in the inner ear and mechanisms of age-related cochlear degeneration as well as analysis of human temporal bones with various otologic diseases. Through her generous philanthropic support she made possible the recruitment of two additional research faculty. It is fitting that she has been honored by the National Foundation that funds hearing research.

Pictured above is Timothy Higdon (left), the Hearing Health Foundation (HHF) CEO, and John Dillard (right), Chair of the HHF Board of Directors. The photo commemorates the Collette Ramsey-Baker HHF Leadership Award, which was presented to Dr. Keithley (middle) as the outgoing Board Chair of the HHF in October, 2019. Dr. Keithley has had a longstanding involvement with the Deafness Research Foundation, now the HHF, which raises funds for research related to hearing loss.
Advanced Hands-On Thyroid Ultrasound Workshop  Designed for practitioners experienced in performing thyroid ultrasonography, the comprehensive workshop focused on recent advances in diagnosing thyroid nodules and the use of ultrasound in examining cervical lymph nodes and parathyroid adenomas. Real-time ultrasound findings of metastatic lymph nodes and parathyroid adenomas were demonstrated on patient volunteers.

ENDO 2019 New Orleans March 23-26, 2019

COSM AAFPRS Austin Meeting May 1-2 2019, Co-Chairs Dr. David Hom and Dr. Robin Lindsey (from Mass Eye & Ear)
Resident’s Bowl at last Triological Midwinter Meeting - UCSD placed first

Aria Jafari MD, Andrey Finegersh MD, Daniel Schaerer MD

Kevin Brumund, MD - Invited Speaker - E. Chester Ridgway Trainee Conference, Surgical Considerations in Management of Thyroid Disease 88th Annual Meeting of the American Thyroid Association Washington, DC, October 2018. Invited Speaker - What Does it Look Like? 2nd Annual UCSD Multidisciplinary Head & Neck Cancer Conference La Jolla, CA Feb 2019

Rick Friedman, MD, PhD. – 8th Quadrennial International Conference on Vestibular Schwannoma - Cochlear FLAIR signal changes in hearing preservation vestibular schwannoma surgery. Rochester, Minnesota June 19-21, 2019

Jeffrey Harris, MD, PhD. - 2019 Triological Society Combined Sections Meeting in Coronado, CA Jan 24-26, 2019 Presidential Citation; Invited Keynote speaker at the Surgical Research and Innovation Ideas Symposium, Doha, Qatar, April 10-14, 2019 and Visiting Guest Surgeon at the Hamad Medical Corporation, Doha, Qatar, April 13-15, 2019. Guest Faculty at the UCI Otolaryngology Update, Anaheim, CA. Presented research paper on cognition and hearing loss at the CORLAS meeting, Sept, 2019, Bern, Switzerland.


Quyen Nguyen, MD - The cost of skull base surgery for the resection of vestibular schwannoma – COSM 2019 Other CPA Tumors: Advancing Care through Ideas and Innovation 2019 - Mayo Civic Center in Rochester, Minnesota, June 19-21, 2019.

Deborah Watson, MD - Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery Panel: Innovation and Trends in Aesthetic Rhinoplasty - Panel Speaker, Triological Society Combined Sections Meeting, Coronado (San Diego), CA January 2019
Head and Neck Surgery Residents

**SUNNY HAFT, MD (PGY-6)**
Hometown: Bowie, MD
Undergrad: Williams College; Art History and Studio, Chemistry
Medical School: University of Pennsylvania
Outside Interests: Anything outdoors, wake surfing, hiking, playing with Dexter my labradoodle, taco festivals, homebrews
Research Interests: HPV Head and Neck Cancer

**JOHN PANG, MD (PGY-6)**
Hometown: Clearwater, Florida
Undergrad: University of Florida, Chemistry
Medical School: Johns Hopkins University SOM
Outside Interests: Golf, music, dogs, surfing, and running
Research Interests: Head and neck cancer, health care economics, HPV oncogenesis mechanisms

**DAVID BRACKEN, MD (PGY-5)**
Hometown: Tullamore, County Offaly, Republic of Ireland
Undergrad: Sam Houston State University; Bachelor of Music: Vocal Performance.
Studied Vocal Pedagogy and Choral Conducting.
Medical School: University of Texas: Houston
Outside Interests: Opera, Karaoke, Soccer, Racquetball
Research Interests: Non-invasive monitoring methods of swallowing and phonatory function, Multidisciplinary Education in care and treatment of Laryngectomees, Chromoendoscopy techniques in laryngoscopy, Performing Arts Medicine, Application of 3D printing for medical education.

**BHARAT PANUGANTI, MD (PGY -5)**
Hometown: San Jose, CA
Undergraduate: Saint Louis University; Health Information Management/Biology
Medical School: Saint Louis University
Outside Interests: Sports (spectator and player), working out, golf, food, politics, history, reading
Research Interests: Cancer genetics, social media

**JOSHUA STRAMIELLO, MD (PGY-4)**
Hometown: Tampa, FL
Undergrad: University of South Florida; Biomedical sciences, minors in Anthropology and Biophysics
Medical School: University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine
Outside Interests: Outdoor activities with my kids and playing guitar
Research Interests: Innovation in Otolaryngology, 3D printed pediatric airway stents, Tele-robotics
ANDREY FINEGERSH, MD, PHD (PGY-4)
Hometown: Mission Viejo, CA
Undergrad: UCLA; Psychobiology
Medical School: University of Pittsburgh
Outside Interests: Family (married with 2 kids), exploring San Diego, traveling, golf, tennis, home remodeling projects
Research Interests: Epigenetic mechanisms of head and neck cancer, clinical research

JESSE QUALLIOTINE, MD (PGY-4)
Hometown: Fairfax, VA
Undergrad: Columbia University; Biomedical Engineering
Medical School: Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Outside Interests: Dog beach, rock climbing, jogging, succulents, music
Research Interests: Nanoengineering applications in Head & Neck surgery, HPV-associated oropharynx cancer, translational research

EMILY FUNK, MD (PGY-3)
Hometown: Lancaster, PA
Undergrad: Stetson University; Spanish
Medical School: Penn State University College of Medicine
Outside Interests: traveling, baseball, exploring San Diego, boating, music/concerts, local wines and beers, cooking, hiking, reading
Research Interests: robotic technology, innovative design, tumor virology and immunology

ROBERT SADDAWI-KONEFK, MD, PHD (PGY-3)
Hometown: South Bend, IN
Undergrad: University of Southern California, Neurosciences
Medical School: UC San Diego
Outside Interests: Surfing, Camping and Backpacking, Family Time
Research Interests: Immuno-Oncology, Immunotherapies and Mechanisms of Tumor-Immune Resistance

KAYVA CRAWFORD, MD (PGY-2)
Hometown: Portland, OR
Undergrad: University of Washington; Spanish, Bioethics and Humanities
Medical School: Tufts University School of Medicine
Outside Interests: marathon running, piano, reading, hiking, painting, baking
Research Interests: population-based research, head and neck oncology, pediatric otolaryngology
FARHOUD FARAJI, MD, PHD (PGY-2)
Hometown: Sacramento, CA
Undergrad: University of California, Berkeley; Molecular & Cell Biology
Medical School: Saint Louis University
Outside Interests: Terrestrial and marine naturalism, scuba and freediving, climbing, hiking, yoga, travel, culinary arts, sailing, live music, horticulture and botany.
Research Interests: Head and neck oncology, metastasis biology, transcriptional biology, cell-mediated immunity, medical education.

OMID MOSHTAGHI, MD (PGY-2)
Hometown: San Diego, CA
Undergrad: San Diego State University; Biology.
Medical School: University of California, Irvine.
Outside Interests: Surfing, hiking, camping, and spending time with family.
Research Interests: Hidden hearing loss, dizziness, tinnitus, patient decision making, and bioelectric technology.

MORGAN DAVIS, MD (PGY-1)
Hometown: Jackson, Mississippi
Undergrad: University of Mississippi (Ole Miss); Biochemistry, minors neuroscience and biology
Medical School: University of Mississippi School of Medicine
Outside Interests: working out, playing with my dog Cali, traveling, cooking, Netflix
Research Interests: Facial analysis, tissue regeneration and healing especially in minority populations, head and neck oncology, vestibular

MENA SAID, MD (PGY-1)
Hometown: Los Angeles, CA
Undergrad: University of California, Los Angeles; Biology
Medical School: University of California, Davis
Outside Interests: Running, golf, cheering on the UCLA Bruins
Research Interests: Comparative effectiveness research, clinical

BENJAMIN OSTRANDER, MD (PGY-1)
Hometown: Kenwood, California
Undergrad: University of California, San Diego - Bioengineering, Global Health
Medical School: Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Outside Interests: Music (from playing guitar and piano to attending concerts), the great outdoors (cycling, hiking, camping, surfing...), art (museums, photography, painting), food & drink (discovering, appreciating, cooking, brewing...)
Neurotology and Skull-Base Surgery Current Fellows

KAREEM TAWFIK, MD
Hometown: Kansas City, KS
Undergraduate Education: University of Kansas; BA, French Language and Literature; BA, Human Biology with a Concentration in Psychology
Medical School: New York University School of Medicine
Otology Fellowship: University of Cincinnati Medical Center / Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center
Outside Interests: Enjoying San Diego with my wife and two children, hiking, surfing, exercising, traveling
Research Interests: Outcomes after resection of acoustic neuroma, hearing preservation surgery for acoustic neuroma, pediatric hearing loss, pediatric cochlear implantation, cochlear nerve deficiency in CHARGE Syndrome

YIN REN, MD, PhD
Hometown: Ann Arbor, MI
Undergraduate: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
Medical School: Harvard Medical School
Graduate School: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
Outside Interests: food and cooking, traveling, photography, soccer, hiking, spending time with family
Research Interests: Biomarkers in vestibular schwannomas and hearing loss, drug delivery to inner ear, nanotechnology, hearing preservation outcomes
The Division of Otolaryngology is grateful for the many contributions we have received from our friends and patients over the past years in support of our research and educational mission. We believe it is our highest calling to attempt to understand the disorders that affect our population and community, and to discover new ways to treat them.

The Division of Otolaryngology is very proud of our residency, fellowship training programs, and of our early-career surgeon-scientists that work for high-risk, high-reward research. These early research initiatives are the seeds of tomorrow’s breakthrough discoveries and the can only be funded by philanthropy.

Your tax-deductible donations will help us achieve our important mission, which we hope will benefit our own lives, as well as the lives of our children and grandchildren.

The Division has two key Funds at the UC San Diego Foundation, both worthy of your year-end charitable support:

The Otolaryngology Research Fund (Fund #2130)
The Otolaryngology Alumni Fund for Resident Education (Fund #4071)

One hundred percent of your donation will go to your chosen designated purpose – no fees, no indirect costs. In addition, you may be eligible for a tax deduction – please review this with your trusted advisors. If you have questions or need assistance with donating to the Division of Otolaryngology, please contact our colleague, Malcolm Aste, at 858-246-1558 or at maste@ucsd.edu.

Thank you for supporting the Division of Otolaryngology at UC San Diego School of Medicine.

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Committed to providing the most advanced medical and surgical care in the world, the Division of Otolaryngology provides services and specialized training in a variety of specialties, including otology and neurotology, head and neck surgery, facial and reconstructive surgery, surgical oncology, laryngology and thyroid and parathyroid surgery.