WHAT'S HAPPENING

A newsletter for the Maine Medical Center family

MMC Receives \$1.3M from the NIH Toward Obesity Study



Robert Koza, PhD, looks at data inside his lab at the Maine Medical Center Research Institute.

Maine Medical Center (MMC) has received \$1.3 million from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to study how changes in the expression of a certain gene affect obesity. The hope is that studies of this gene, known as mesoderm specific transcript (*MEST*), could someday lead to new strategies for the treatment of obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Maine Medical Center Research Institute (MMCRI) Faculty Scientist Robert Koza, PhD, has been studying the epigenetic regulation of *MEST*. Epigenetic processes can determine whether genes are expressed, or "turned on." Dr. Koza's previous studies indicate that animals are less likely to become obese on a high-fat diet when *MEST* is not expressed or expressed at low levels. What scientists have yet to determine is the function of *MEST* in the body and the precise epigenetic processes that regulate its expression. This study aims to answer those questions.

"Identifying the molecular pathways by which *MEST* facilitates the expansion of fat mass and regulates blood glucose could be the first step toward a new way to help treat obesity," Dr. Koza said. "Years from now, these studies may also define new early interventions doctors could take to help patients prevent the

development of obesity and type 2 diabetes."

Metabolic diseases like obesity and diabetes are a focus of researchers at MMCRI because of their prevalence in Maine. In 2016, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention listed Maine as having a diabetes rate of 8.5 percent and obesity rate of 30 percent, the highest in New England.

Research reported in this publication was supported by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number R01DK120844. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

August Anniversaries

45 Years Diane Hansen, Coding Molly Jackson, Radiology

40 Years

Lora Dixon, EVS Theresa McGeehan, Health Information Management

35 Years

Barbara Barrett, PICC Line Ina Boulier, EVS Stacy Keenan, Food Services Andrea Killinger, R4

30 Years Christine Baran, IT Anne Boehm, PICU Robert Carpenter, IT Alice Doyle, Turning Point Brian Ellis, Patient Transport Anne Esposito, R3 Helyne May, P4C

25 Years

Anna Bannon, Pulmonary Medicine Christina Guthrie, Supply Chain Rodney Knights, Finance Carol McCarthy, Pediatric Specialty Care Patricia Neelon, General Surgery

'Anniversaries' Continued on Back

'Anniversaries' From Front

Deirdre Nielsen, Pharmacy Jessica Stowe, Neurosurgery Albert Swallow III, Chief **Financial Officer**

20 Years

Jonathan Adams, Ultrasound Emma Anastacio, EVS Heather Beaulieu, MRI Marcia Bradford, CICU Tracy Callahan, MaineHealth ACO Olga Celick, Pharmacy Merydeth Charlton, NICU Kristen Martin, Surgery Sundy Plumley, Radiation Therapy Elizabeth Pontius, Physical Therapy Lindsay Rosario, SCU3 Kathy Williamson, Portland Family Medicine

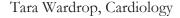
15 Years

Hillary Ames, Human Resources Wendy Benoit, Hospital Billing Linda Eda, EVS Debra Haase, Employee Health Victoria Hayes, Family Medicine John Larson, EVS James Nicholson, Security Elizabeth Pavao, Surgery David Peck, Food Services Eric Sawtelle, Distribution Catherine Shorr, Quality Customer Service Sharon Smith, OR

Kalli Varaklis, OB/GYN Administration

10 Years

Danna Allen, EVS Erin Beaver, Family Birth Center Shaun Campbell, Pharmacy Debra Cushman, Linen Processing Jason Dunton, Scarborough Jonathan Bausman, Surgery Center Jami Gardner, Neurology Alison Gilbert, Anesthesiology Nancijean Goudey, ED Nursing Catherine Hagerman, Anesthesiology Paul Han, MMCRI Bryan Hayes, Digestive Disease Sean Heavin, General Mechanical Marie Janoushek, CTICU Glenn Jones, Distribution Thomas Kinkead, Urology Meghan Libby, Pharmacy Brittany McKenney, Oncology Sarah Milliken, Family Birth Center Osvaldo Montanez, General Stacie Emerson, Admitting Mechanical Sara Moon, R2 Angela Mowatt, Children's Health Carolyn Palmer, R7 LuAnn Perakis, P6 Gary Perry, Sterile Processing Ruth Prue, Neurology Dianne Shaw, Patient Access Emily Siegel, Pediatric Specialty Care



5 Years

Virginia Adams, Anesthesiology Allyson Allard, ED Nursing Lin-Lee Allen, Poison Control Sarah Austin, Nursing Clinical Resources Newborn Pediatrics Daniel Becker, Patient Transport Elizabeth Benham, R2 Elizabeth Blazick, Vascular Surgery Pauline Boyce, Critical Care Aaron Carpenter, IT David Chalmers, Urology Kristin Clark, Anesthesiology Martin Coyne, Supply Chain Diane Neff, MaineHealth April Cummings, P3CD Danielle Currier, Hospital Medicine Alyssa Damon, ED Nursing Terence Doherty, Distribution Brian Dougher, Safety Office Zachary Eller, R5 Tracie Everett, Prenatal Center Rebecca Ferland, Financial Services Stacey Fletcher, Admitting Charlotte Goodson, Lactation Consultation Maxine Guay, Neurology Lee Hallagan, General Surgery Mackenzie Henry, ED Nursing Mark Howell, Security

Victoria Hynes, Tobacco Independence Sarah Keller, Endocrinology & Diabetes Emily Krams, Occupational Therapy Katherine Lafferty, **Outpatient** Care Michael Lai, R4 Alex Lary, Patient Access Bridget Laskey, Pharmacy Amy Lecureux, Emergency Brenda Libby, Supply Chain Breanna Manson, Continuing Care Nursery Jesse Mcleod, Cardiac Cath Lab Sokear Meak, Linen Processing Yasmin Mohamud, EVS Alain Mukendi, EVS ACO Stacy O'Brien, Endocrinology & Diabetes Rebecca Owens, Cardiology Wendy Poitras, Otolaryngology Angela Ranger, Endocrinology & Diabetes Matthew Sanborn, Neurosurgery Gregory Sawyer, Sports Surgery Angela Umbro-Hussey, Endocrinology & Diabetes Francis Ungvary, Hospital Billing Tanya West, Hospital Billing

What's Happening is published weekly by the **COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING DEPARTMENT**

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