Comprehensive Transplant Center - Year In Review

Fiscal year 2016 was another great year for the Comprehensive Transplant Center (CTC). Thank you to everyone whose contributions helped make FY16 a success!

Research Highlights
Investigators in the CTC submitted 53 grant proposals totaling $28.6M and were awarded $11.8M for 44 different projects. This represents a 40% increase from the prior year in the number of proposals submitted and the increase in amounts awarded.

This year the CTC hosted 2 colloquia highlighting the innovative research being conducted at Northwestern. September 30th-October 2nd Dr. Joseph Leventhal hosted the 2nd Annual International Workshop on Clinical Tolerance. Sixty international attendees participated in this workshop, which included a comprehensive review of all ongoing trials of tolerance in solid organ transplant and a discussion of current and future challenges to widespread clinical application of tolerance induction protocols. In July, Dr. Michael Abecassis hosted a colloquium highlighting the work from the first year of the Program Project Grant (P01). The half-day session, CMV P01 Symposium: Epigenetics of Cytomegalovirus Latency and Reactivation, featured expert speakers from around the country. The following day the annual joint meeting of the P01 Internal and External Advisory Boards was held. During this meeting, all three projects and the three cores presented progress and next steps and gained valuable feedback from the Advisory Board members.

Dr. Jason Wertheim’s application for a VA Merit Review Award, Extracellular Matrix Induction of Renal Stem and Progenitor Cell Development, was selected for funding by the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center.

The Histocompatibility Lab, directed by Dr. Anat Tambur, was selected to serve as the Core Lab for a multi-center study, Astagraf XL® to Understand the Impact of Immunosuppression on De Novo DSA Development and Chronic Immune Activation in Kidney Transplant sponsored by Astellas. We will also be one of the clinical sites for the trial.

Education Highlights
We submitted a competitive renewal application for another 5 year funding segment for the Transplant Surgery Scientist Training Program (TSSTP), a T32 funded by the NIAID. We currently have two slots for T32 fellows and have requested a third slot during the next funding segment.

With 90 applications, the CTC Summer Student Immersion Program accepted 25 students from a diverse pool of educational backgrounds (high school students, college students, medical school and engineering students). Every student who participates in the program is given a project and assigned a mentor for the summer. They must formulate a hypothesis and execute a succinct hypothesis-driven project. A critical review of the literature is performed, data are collected and analyzed, and results are summarized and presented to the entire research team.

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