Recognition

Neurology Academy honors LaFrance for epilepsy research

PROVIDENCE – W. CURT LAFRANCE JR., MD, MPH, director of neuropsychiatry and behavioral neurology at Rhode Island Hospital, has received the American Academy of Neurology’s [AAN] Dreifuss-Penry Epilepsy Award. Established in 2001, the award recognizes physicians in the early stages of their careers who have made outstanding, independent contributions to epilepsy research.

“Dr. LaFrance has done seminal work on non-epileptic seizures. His work has not only identified the risk factors and markers for such events, but also he has pioneered innovative treatments that are improving the patients’ symptoms and quality of life,” said Shlomo Shinnar, MD, PhD, the AAN chair of the epilepsy subcommittee.

The award was presented to Dr. LaFrance at the 2013 AAN annual meeting in San Diego for his work largely done through the collaboration between Rhode Island Hospital’s division of neuropsychiatry and behavioral neurology and the hospital’s comprehensive epilepsy program. He presented his research on neuropsychiatric aspects of epilepsy and nonepileptic seizures (NES), describing the research on the diagnosis and treatment of NES.

“My interest in seizure disorders was sparked while attending the J. Kiffin Penry Epilepsy Minifellowship Program during my combined neurology psychiatry residency at Brown Medical School,” Dr. LaFrance said. “I am indebted to Dr. Penry’s legacy for the experience and exposure that launched my research and am honored to receive this award in his name.”

Board-certified in both neurology and psychiatry, LaFrance examines the overlap between brain and behavior in his clinic and in research. One of LaFrance’s areas of expertise is in the neuropsychiatric aspects of epilepsy with a research focus on treatment and diagnosis of patients with NES.

“Many treatments exist for epilepsy, but few exist for NES. Given the great need for NES treatments, my aim is to provide hope for this challenging population with NES and equip clinicians with effective treatment for this disabling and difficult to manage disorder, so often seen in our patients and epilepsy programs across the world,” he said.

CDC names Hasbro’s Dennehy Childhood Immunization Champion

Rhode Island professor and infectious disease specialist PENELlope DEnneHy, MD, director of pediatric infectious diseases at Hasbro Children’s Hospital, has been selected as the state’s 2013 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Childhood Immunization Champion.

CDC launched this annual award program to honor immunization champions in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia during National Infant Immunization Week.

Dennehy was nominated from a pool of healthcare professionals and other immunization leaders, all of whom have made significant contributions to childhood immunization in Rhode Island. Dennehy is the director of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Hasbro Children’s Hospital and a professor of Pediatrics at Brown University’s Warren Alpert Medical School.

“I am honored to be named Rhode Island’s CDC Childhood Immunization Champion. We owe the success that we have had in immunizing infants and children in Rhode Island to thousands of committed, dedicated healthcare professionals in our state,” said Dennehy. “We will continue to work together to make sure that all Rhode Island children are fully immunized against every vaccine-preventable disease.”

Dennehy sits on numerous boards and panels that aim to improve immunization rates in Rhode Island, including the Rhode Island Department of Health’s Vaccine Advisory Committee, the Rhode Island Hospital Immunization Task Force, and the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Additionally, she is renowned for her research in the epidemiology and etiology of viral gastroenteritis and viral respiratory disease, rotavirus disease and prevention, and the testing of vaccines and immunobiologic principles for prevention of rotavirus, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus.

“Through her lifelong passion for childhood immunization, Dennehy is an inspiration to her colleagues in healthcare,” said Michael Fine, MD, director of HEALTH. “Her work as a researcher and on the front lines at Hasbro Children’s Hospital is protecting children and saving lives.”
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**RI Heritage Hall of Fame inducts Dr. Charles J. McDonald**

**PROVIDENCE** — **CHARLES J. MCDONALD, MD**, was inducted into the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame April 19. He is the founding chairman of the Department of Dermatology at Alpert Medical School, physician-in-chief of the department of dermatology at Rhode Island Hospital, past president of the American Cancer Society, and author and researcher.

Dr. McDonald graduated from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University with a bachelor of science degree in chemistry and later received a master’s in biology from the University of Michigan. He earned a medical degree at Howard University College of Medicine.

Dr. McDonald completed his internal medical residency training at the Hospital of St. Raphael and dermatology residency training at Yale New Haven Medical Center. He remained at the New Haven Medical Center for a clinical pharmacology/oncology fellowship.

His professional interests include: mycosis fungoides and lymphomas of skin, chemotherapy of psoriasis, dermatology of black skin, cytotoxic and immunosuppressive therapy in skin diseases, cutaneous reactions to cancer chemotherapy, scleroderma and critical care dermatology.

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**Borkan named ACE Fellow**

**PROVIDENCE** — **DR. JEFFREY BORKAN**, chair of the Department of Family Medicine at Brown and assistant dean for Primary Care-Population Health Program Planning at the Alpert Medical School, has been named one of 50 members of the American Council on Education’s 2013-14 class of ACE Fellows.

The program prepares medical faculty – specifically family medicine physicians – for leadership positions at medical schools and academic health centers. During the ACE fellowship, Dr. Borkan said, he will explore two kinds of programs at other medical schools that can inform efforts at Brown: One would be programs similar to the Primary Care - Population Health track that the Alpert Medical School is planning. The other will be primary care institutes and centers that combine clinical, educational, research, and advocacy work in new ways that better serve the health of the populations they serve.

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**W&I’s Frishman named to board, deputy editor of specialty journal**

**PROVIDENCE** — **GARY N. FRISHMAN, MD**, a physician with the Center for Reproduction and Infertility at Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island, was selected to serve a term on the Board of Directors for the AAGL and Society of Reproductive Surgeons Fellowship in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery (MIGS).

AAGL is the leading association promoting minimally invasive gynecologic surgery among surgeons worldwide.

Dr. Frishman, who is also program director for the Obstetrics and Gynecology Residency at Women & Infants and associate division director for the Division of Reproductive Medicine, is a nationally respected authority on minimally invasive gynecologic surgery.

In addition to this appointment, Dr. Frishman was recently named deputy editor on the editorial board of the *Journal of Minimally Invasive Gynecology*. He had previously served as a contributing editor before being named to the editorial board’s number two slot.

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**Cancer Commission names Pricolo liaison for Southcoast**

**CHICAGO** — **VICTOR PRICOLO, MD, FACS**, chief of general surgery and colorectal surgery at Southcoast™ Health System, has received a three-year appointment from the Commission on Cancer (CoC) as cancer liaison physician.

Dr. Pricolo will be responsible for providing leadership for CoC initiatives within the Southcoast Hospitals Group program, and for collaborating with agencies such as the American Cancer Society on behalf of Southcoast. He will also evaluate, interpret and report data to the National Cancer Data Base (NCDB).

Dr. Pricolo received his medical degree from the University of Milan, Italy, and completed a surgical residency at Rhode Island Hospital.
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Area Appointments

CNE names Rardin director of minimally invasive surgery

PROVIDENCE – CHARLES RARDIN, MD, a uro-gynecologist at Women & Infants who has been director of the Robotic Surgery Program for Women since its inception, was recently named director of minimally invasive surgery for the entire Care New England Health System.

Southcoast names Hyder chief medical information officer

NEW BEDFORD, MASS. – MICHAEL HYDER, MD, MPH, has been named chief medical information officer for Southcoast Health System.

In addition to his current role as vice president of population health within Southcoast Physicians Network, Dr. Hyder will partner with Southcoast’s chief information officer to manage the conversion to a system-wide integrated information technology network.

Dr. Hyder will provide a strategic clinical vision for Southcoast during the transition from a health care system to a care management system. He will also lead the efforts to implement new technology into clinical and administrative areas across Southcoast. Dr. Hyder is a cardiac electrophysiologist and will continue to see patients in his clinical practice.

Obituaries

WARWICK – CHRISTOS H. ERINAKES, MD, 70, passed away surrounded by his loving family on Saturday, April 13, 2013 at Kent Hospital. He was the beloved husband of 46 years to Susan J. (Allard) Erinakes.

Dr. Erinakes graduated from Dean Jr. College and the University of Rhode Island. He completed his medical studies and earned his degree from the University of Padua, Italy. Dr. Erinakes was an obstetrician/gynecologist who began his practice in 1981 under the title Tollgate OB/GYN on Tollgate Road in Warwick and he was instrumental in bringing the first midwifery group to Kent Hospital.

Besides his wife, he leaves his children, Christina I. Erinakes Dooley (Peter) of Cranston, Nicole J. Chauvette (Derek) of Shaker Heights, OH, Alexandra N. McSparran (Steven) of Warwick and Nicholas H. Erinakes (Nicole) of Warwick; two brothers, James H. Erinakes (Kathleen) of West Warwick and Charles H. Erinakes of North Kingstown and his 12 grandchildren.

Memorial donations made in his name to: KEEP (Kent Employee Emergency Program), 455 Tollgate Rd., Warwick RI 02886.

NAPLES, FL. – FRANK GIUNTA, MD, died at his residence in Naples, Florida on April 12, 2013 at the age of 93. He was a graduate of Classical High School, Brown University, and Tufts University. Dr. Giunta practiced pediatrics in Providence from 1949 until his retirement in 1992.

He graduated from Tufts Medical School in 1943, served an internship at Rhode Island Hospital and was an officer in the Army Medical Corps from 1944 to 1946 during WW II in the Pacific theater fighting on Okinawa and later with the occupation troops in Japan.

Upon retiring from service he helped establish a two-year residency program in pediatrics at Rhode Island Hospital with the Providence Lying In, Chapin and Bradley Hospitals.

While at the Providence Lying In (Women and Infants) Hospital he did the first exchange transfusion in Rhode Island for a child with neonatal jaundice.

After his residency, he was a solo practitioner for 20 years and later joined Pediatrics Associates, from which he retired in 1992.

He was clinical Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Brown University, Division of Biology and Medicine and for a time Associate Chief of Pediatrics at Women and Infants Hospital.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Elizabeth (O’Neil) Giunta, a son F. Stephen Giunta of Middletown, RI; one daughter, Elizabeth Giunta Foley of Lynnfield, MA; three grandchildren and one sister, Mary Giunta Alessandro of Rhode Island. A memorial mass was held on April 20.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to Avow Hospice, 1095 Whippoorwill Lane, Naples, FL 34105.
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