

# SOUND WAVES

UC San Diego  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Division of Otolaryngology / Head and Neck Surgery

February 2021



2020 UC San Diego Otolaryngology Graduation

## Message from the Chief

It has been a difficult year for everyone and the photo above is a testament to the impact it had just on one event in June. That photo was done when we typically enjoy a celebratory day in honor of our graduating residents and fellows but because of Covid-19 we had to make due with a Graduation by Zoom. Despite the social distancing and restrictions it placed on every aspect of our academic life and patient care, many of our surgeons reached milestones for research in the division. In this newsletter you will learn how our talented faculty are making discoveries that will move our specialty forward and help patients suffering from disorders of the head and neck. Dr. Carol Yan and colleagues have published the first paper in the literature on chemosensory dysfunction and COVID-19. Dr. Quyen Nguyen has been granted permission to begin a FDA multi-institutional clinical trial which highlights nerves and tumors during surgery. Dr. Moshtaghi and others published a paper "Patient Experience with a Novel Telemedicine Program in the COVID-19 Era" in collaboration with our Colorectal colleagues on patient satisfaction with telehealth enabling patient consultation from home, by video, to their physicians which post-pandemic is certainly going to remain as an option long after Covid has passed.

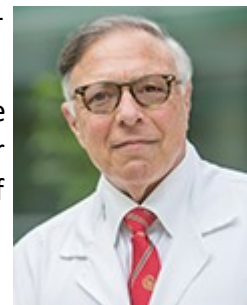
Dr. Ryan Orosco has been pursuing research in futuristic robotic surgery that pairs with telemedicine applications.

Dr. Joseph A. Califano III and colleagues have received a major, transformative, philanthropic gift establishing the

“Hanna and Mark Gleiberman Head and Neck Center”. This will enable Dr Califano and the head and neck team to continue to provide world-class care to our community and to forge new innovative research in the decades to come. An example of the groundbreaking research stemming from the Moores Cancer Center laboratories, he and his colleagues have identified the molecular mechanism which is activated by (THC) in human papillomavirus (HPV)-positive head and neck squamous cell carcinoma. Along with identifying the molecular mechanism his group also published a key study on the regulation of genes in cancers in the journal Nature Communications.

In this newsletter we underscore the fact that “crisis brings opportunity” and I am proud of the resilience and selflessness of my faculty. They have demonstrated in this most trying time of our generation, that we can overcome adversity and seek ways to improve our lives and those of our patients who need care regardless of a raging pandemic.

Jeffrey Harris, MD, PhD



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## *“Hanna and Mark Gleiberman \$12 million gift transforms head & neck cancer care at Moores Cancer Center”*

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Thanks to the generosity of Hanna and Mark Gleiberman, we are happy to celebrate the newly named **Hanna and Mark Gleiberman Head and Neck Cancer Center**. This transformative \$12 million gift will broaden the depth and impact of our cutting-edge head and neck cancer research program, and support innovative clinical care for our patients and their caregivers.

We know that our team members, patients, and their caregivers are our most important resource. In recognition of this, **Gleiberman Head and Neck Cancer Center** will fund novel clinical trials, programs for pilot research projects, significant endowment to support key researchers, as well as support for collaborative clinical care, ensuring the excellence of the center for generations to come. Hanna and Mark, the founder and CEO of San Diego-based real estate investment firm MG Properties Group, recognized that the team-based integration of clinical care, research and supportive care provided by the center was a key factor in their decision to provide such extraordinary support.

“Particularly during a pandemic as serious as COVID-19, illnesses such as cancer continue to impact health and human lives as never before. This makes our mission of providing comprehensive, integrated head and neck cancer care paired with a world class clinical and translational research effort as important as ever. Hanna and Mark have joined our team as partners who understand how important this work is to both serve our local community and to fundamentally transform care for all head and neck cancer patients,” says Joseph A. Califano III, MD, director of Gleiberman Head and Neck Cancer Center and physician-in-chief at Moores Cancer Center.

“Partners such as Hanna and Mark are central to what makes Moores Cancer Center the quality place it is for cancer research and care. I am so grateful for their gift and honored by their partnership,” adds Scott Lippman, MD, Chugai Pharmaceutical Chair and director of Moores Cancer Center.

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## *Anonymous Donor Award*

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Rick Friedman, MD, PhD, and Jeffrey Harris, MD, PhD were recently awarded a \$1.3 million grant over two years from an anonymous donor to embark on a study of Meniere's disease. The purpose of the grant is to perform a GWAS (genome wide association study) in Meniere's patients to identify mutations that may underlie its pathogenesis and thereby lead to potential treatments. Meniere's disease is a chronic inner ear disorder that causes disabling vertigo, tinnitus and hearing loss. According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, there are approximately 615,000 Meniere's disease cases in the US, with ~45,500 new cases each year. Its prevalence increases with age which can lead to a serious decline in quality of life and depression. Along with this incredible Grant Dr. Friedman was also funded a 5 year NIH grant titled The Genetic Basis For Age-Related Hearing Loss In Outbred Mice.

## ACOUSTIC NEUROMA PROGRAM



*Rick Friedman,  
MD, PhD*

The UC San Diego Health Acoustic Neuroma Program has continued its growth consulting with approximately 400 regional, national, and international patients this past year.

We had our largest surgical year to date with over 180 cases done making us the largest center in the US. Our hearing preservation and facial nerve outcomes are top-rated and we are the leading Auditory Brainstem Implant Center in the US.

Here at UCSD we have the largest volume of ABI in the nation. The ABI is used for hearing rehabilitation primarily in patients with NF2 and no stimuable auditory nerve. These devices are placed at the time of tumor resection. Placement involves securing the device in the lateral recess of the 4<sup>th</sup> ventricle over-

lying the dorsal cochlear nucleus. Our center is one of few in the nation performing this operation and it is reserved when hearing preservation surgery is no longer an option.

*Marc Schwartz, MD*



## UC SAN DIEGO SINUS CENTER

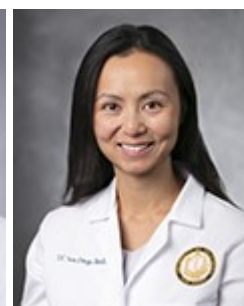
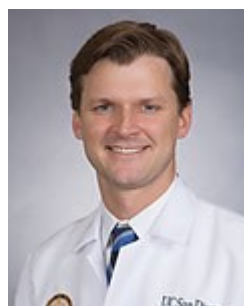
The Rhinology and Anterior Skull base team (Dr. Adam DeConde and Dr. Carol Yan) has been active during the COVID-19 pandemic. Along with current head and neck residents Farhoud Faraji and Ben Ostrander, they have published two notable clinical papers demonstrating the association of smell loss and COVID-19. The studies have been featured nationally and internationally by nearly 200 media outlets including NPR, WebMD, and Newsweek and with the initial study landing perhaps the top Altmetric score of all otolaryngologic articles.

You can read more about the articles here: <https://wiley.altmetric.com/details/79628076news> and <https://wiley.altmetric.com/details/80500133> or listen to the Podcast Scope it Out produced by the *International Forum of Allergy and Rhinology* which features the research: <https://www.scopeitoutpodcast.com/podcast/>.

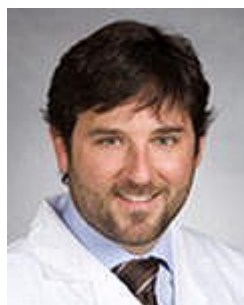
Currently, the team is actively investigating the underlying mechanisms associated with olfactory loss and COVID-19.

Clinically, the Anterior Skull Base Program has expanded with the recently recruited, endoscopically-trained Anterior Skull Base Neurosurgeon, Dr. Tom Beaumont. Since his arrival, the team has expanded the endoscopic approach to complex skull base tumors and pathologies, allowing for a less-invasive surgical treatment with faster recoveries.

*Adam Deconde, MD and Carol Yan, MD*



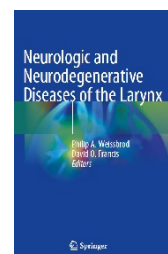
## UC SAN DIEGO CENTER FOR VOICE AND SWALLOWING



The cover of *The Laryngoscope* featured research by Dr. Philip Weissbrod, on High-Density Surface Electromyography. Dr. Philip Weissbrod is the editor of a new text book, *Neurologic and Degenerative Disease of the Larynx* — Weissbrod PA, Francis DO, editors 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Berlin, DE: Springer 2020.

<https://youtu.be/BSX3Wrh-xeg>

*Philip Weissbrod, MD*



Dr. Andrew Vahabzadeh-Hagh performed the first-ever Selective Laryngeal Adductor Denervation and Reinnervation (SLAD-R) surgery in San Diego for the definitive treatment of adductor spasmodic dysphonia. Dr. Vahabzadeh-Hagh is the recipient of Galvanizing Engineering in Medicine (GEM) Award for project titled: "Development of an Injectable Biomaterial for Dysphagia Rehabilitation" in collaboration with Dr. Karen Christman from the Department of Bioengineering.

*Andrew Vahabzadeh-Hagh, MD*





## UC SAN DIEGO FACIAL NERVE CENTER

The UC San Diego Facial Nerve Center continues to grow and advance in its mission to provide state-of-the-art comprehensive facial nerve care to children and adults with facial paralysis.

We are pleased to offer every facet of facial nerve care for our patients from medical management of acute-onset facial paralysis, Botox chemodenervation, acute nerve exploration and repair for facial nerve trauma, eyelid weight placement and lower lid tightening, static suspension with fascia lata as well as dynamic facial reanimation surgery including nerve transfer and microvascular gracilis free flaps for smile reanimation. We offer minimally invasive procedures such as static suture suspension, brow lifts and eye care under local or minimal anesthesia.

Our multidisciplinary team includes Drs. Jacqueline Greene, Quyen Nguyen, Ryan Orosco, Frederic Kolb and Amanda Gosman, spanning Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Neurotology and Skull Base surgery, Head & Neck Oncologic Surgery and Plastic Surgery.

Our dedicated team of Facial physical therapists continue to offer the highest quality care and neuromuscular retraining and rehabilitation for patients with facial paralysis. As the program continues to expand, we have established the UCSD Facial Nerve Center database to track facial reanimation outcomes and look forward to exciting updates in our clinical and translational research programs.

*Jacqueline Greene, MD*



### Welcome Dr. Cornelius Jansen



We are pleased to welcome Dr. Cornelius Jansen to our team! He earned his Medical Degree and did General Surgery and Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery Residency at Johns Hopkins. He is Board Certified by the American Academy of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery.

Dr. Jansen graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry at Brown University. He completed research at the Rhode Island Hospital, The National Institutes of Health and at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He has published articles for publications in Immunology, Laryngeal Cancer and Hearing loss. Dr. Jansen has also worked at the FDA on the Over the Counter Drug Review.

*Cornelius Jansen, MD* He has received the Carpenter Prize as an undergraduate and a Travelling Research Award from the Association for Research in Otolaryngology as a Resident.

He has worked at the Maui Medical Group where he served as Vice-President and Personnel Director for 10 years. He then worked at Kaiser Walnut Creek in the Head and Neck Surgery Department for the next 20 years.

After co-inventing a tumor marker for fluorescence-enabled real-time detection of tumor margins and a nerve marker for fluorescence-enabled real-time illumination of nerves with Dr. Tsien, The tumor marker was licensed by Avelas Biosciences, INC and received Breakthrough Designation from the FDA in late 2020. Dr. Nguyen founded Alume Biosciences, INC (Alume) in 2017 to enable the clinical translation of the nerve marker. Alume has received an allowance from the United States Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) to proceed with clinical trial testing in patients undergoing head and neck surgery (NCT04420689) at University of California, San Diego, Stanford and Harvard. Dr. Nguyen currently holds an active NIH R33 grant and an industry-sponsored grant.

*Quyen Nguyen, MD*



### UCSD Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery Rancho Bernardo

Audiology, Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, and Voice and Swallowing are now seeing patients at UC San Diego new location in Rancho Bernardo.

Address: 16950 Via Tazon San Diego, CA 92127 Phone: (858) 605-4456

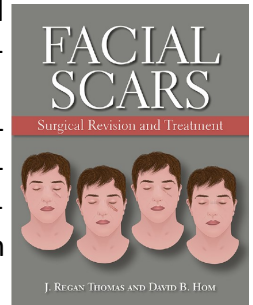




David Hom, MD

Dr. David Hom recently published a textbook in 2019 entitled **Facial Scars: Surgical Revision and Treatments** by PMPH-USA, as Co-editor with Dr Regan Thomas. This book comprehensively describes the healing characteristics of facial skin scarring, its current surgical treatments and future promising treatments. This textbook received an outstanding book review score of 93/100 by Doody.

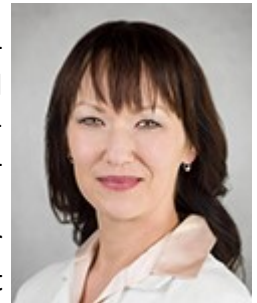
Dr. David Hom successfully completed the Business and Entrepreneurship Academic in Medicine (BEAM) Course offered by UCSD Rady School of Management in Oct 2020. This healthcare-business course covered topics of innovation, management, entrepreneurship, leadership, and strategic planning in relation to medicine.



Over the last year, Dr. Elina Kari has published 6 manuscripts regarding the genetics of pediatric hearing loss, the imaging of pediatric hearing loss, and osteointegrated hearing implants.

Her current research projects are examining the relationships between motor and language development, the factors affecting delays in the pediatric cochlear implant evaluation process and the nuances of cochlear implant programming in children with abnormal/absent cochleovestibular nerves. Recently her Triological Society Thesis has been accepted in support of her membership in this senior society.

Dr Kari also served as one of the investigators for a clinical trial examining a novel drug for Meniere's disease. Clinically, she continues to have a busy neurotology practice serving adult and pediatric patients at UCSD and at Rady Children's Hospital.



Elina Kari, MD



Deborah Watson, MD

Dr. Deborah Watson, our Residency Program Director, has successfully expanded our residency program gaining approval from the Otolaryngology RRC during their April 2020 meeting. She also directed and edited our incredibly informative residency recruitment video which has become widely viewed around the country.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpHE1nhIWb0&feature=youtu.be>

This production piece is serving as one of the primary examples for other UCSD residencies in their task to create program informational videos as part of the national shift to virtual residency interviews due to the COVID pandemic. To cap off her accomplishments, she reached her 20-year milestone last fall with our program as faculty.

## Stapedectomy operation for Otosclerosis is a more cost-effective procedure than hearing aids

Employing a cost-effectiveness analysis of stapedectomy, a highly refined surgical procedure that has been practiced for many years for a form of conductive hearing loss, Drs. Jeffrey Harris and Danielle Gillard, at the time a UCSD medical student, performed a comparison with hearing aids to determine which is more cost-effective. This study clearly demonstrated that stapedectomy is a cost-effective strategy for treating otosclerosis from a patient perspective because it maximizes quality of life and minimizes patient cost. This procedure done as an outpatient in less than an hour has a 95% success rate for hearing improvement. Gillard DM, Harris JP. Cost-effectiveness of Stapedectomy vs Hearing Aids in the Treatment of Otosclerosis. *JAMA Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg.* 2020;146(1):42-48

## HEAD & NECK CANCER CENTER TEAM



Defining a New Paradigm for Control of Genes in Cancers - A research team led by Dr. Joseph Califano published a key study on the regulation of genes in cancers in the journal *Nature Communications*, on May 16, 2019. Califano and the team discovered that the brakes on many cancer genes, including lung and head and neck cancers, are turned off at transcriptional start sites, where DNA translation is started, rather than at a distance as has been previously thought in other cancers. This mechanism of turning off key genes that prevent cancers involves changes in key proteins, histones, that change the way the DNA code is read. In addition, the team defined a key subtype of HPV related head and neck cancers that use this mechanism in combination

with changes to DNA structure, called methylation, and that this subtype of cancer contains specific mutations to genes that broadly change DNA structure. "This represents a key shift in the way we understand how the HPV virus causes cancer, as well as the way that genes are turned off in many different types of cancer," explains Califano. "This also opens up avenues for therapies based on drugs that change the way genes are turned on and off."

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### UC San Diego Uses MedRobotics – First In California For Patient Care

UC San Diego Health Head & Neck Surgeons have become the first in California to use the Medrobotics Flex Robotic System in patient care. The Flex system uses a combination of articulated robotic telescope and flexible instrumentation to navigate non-linear pathways, providing access to target anatomy without the line-of-sight requirement of rigid instrumentation. This ability can prove particularly valuable for surgeons working in the pharynx and larynx, where a variety of factors may make it difficult or impossible to achieve direct line-of-sight access.

Surgeons at UC San Diego Health will employ this flexible robotic system across a range of applications, including tumor resection, sleep surgery, and microlaryngeal surgery. It is anticipated that this technological advance will permit continued advances in minimally-invasive surgical approaches in the head & neck space, optimizing functional outcomes for patients.



*Charles Coffey, MD*

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### Dr. Theresa Guo receives ACTRI KL2 Award

As part of UC San Diego Altman Clinical and Translational Research Institute (ACTRI), the KL2 grant mechanism is an institutional equivalent of a K23, K01, or K08 award for junior faculty. KL2 awards provide a tailored mentored research experience to promising faculty clinical and translational researchers. As a KL2 awardee, Dr. Guo will receive up to three years of support for her research which is focused on identification of splice variant derived neo-antigens in head and neck squamous cell carcinoma as targets for tumor vaccine therapy.

### Ryan Orosco receives career development funding through the Altman Clinical & Translational Research Institute

Dr. Orosco's work focuses on moving futuristic technologies from the engineering lab toward potential use in the clinical setting. He received a 12-month SUSTAIN (Supporting Under-represented Scholars in Translational and Interdisciplinary Networks) Award from the ACTRI. He will continue his translational robotic surgery research with his engineering colleague, Dr. Michael Yip. Tissue modeling studies may lead to improvements in transoral robotic surgery methods. Additional work in semi-autonomy explores methods to train robots to perform surgical tasks like suction-

## Success with clinical trial of intraoperative fluorescence imaging



Ryan Orosco, MD

Despite the disruptive effects of COVID-19, a group of pioneering surgeons at UCSD, Stanford, and Harvard led by Dr. Ryan Orosco launched a first-in-man Phase I/II clinical trial. This is an intraoperative imaging study that evaluates a novel drug (ALM-488) designed to make surgery safer through the fluorescent illumination of nerves---*A Study of ALM-488 to Highlight Nerves in Patients Undergoing Head & Neck Surgery*, [ClinicalTrials.gov NCT04420689](https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/study/NCT04420689). The hope is that providing surgeons with better visualization of sensory and motor nerves will result in safer surgery formillions of patients across the globe. This work grew out of a robust collaborative environment at UCSD been a UCSD Center for Fluorescence-Guided Surgery, Moores Cancer Center.

Surgical Phase I trials are exceedingly rare, and this clinical trial has a story that goes beyond being yet another innovative study at a world-class institution. This clinical trial was uniquely born out of a long-standing collaboration between UCSD Surgery and the Center for Fluorescence-Guided Surgery, Moores Cancer Center, Pharmacology, Chemistry and Biochemistry. Dr. Quyen Nguyen and Nobel Laureate Dr. Roger Tsien worked on the underlying technology with their team in our UCSD basic science laboratories for more than a decade. In the hope of making surgery safer, they searched for a compound capable of making nerves glow fluorescently. Ultimately, they developed this ideal compound, and Dr. Nguyen carried the torch after the passing of Dr. Tsien in 2016. She presented her data to the FDA and obtained clearance in May 2020. Today at UCSD, we are testing this novel drug in patients less than a mile away from where it was discovered. This current trial is expected to complete accrual in early 2021, and the team is looking forward to the next step in translational development with a Phase III study.

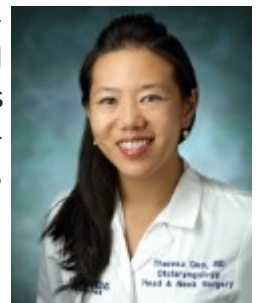
The potential scientific implications are profound. In the way that X-rays and the microscope allowed surgeons to do things that never-before were possible, fluorescent nerve imaging may revolutionize the world of surgery forever. Though this current study evaluates nerves in the head and neck, the future impact of this novel drug could be applied in a whole variety of surgical fields including colorectal, urologic, and orthopedic procedures. There is a lot of work to be done before realizing such a paradigm shift, but we are proud that such a leap forward is happening at UCSD.

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## Theresa Guo, MD Joins UC San Diego Health Head and Neck Cancer Center

This year, the Head & Neck Cancer Center proudly welcomes Dr. Theresa Guo on to our team of Head & Neck surgeons. Dr. Guo received her medical degree from the Cleveland Clinic, Lerner College of Medicine, Case Western Reserve University, following completion of her bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She then went on to complete her residency training in Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and fellowship training in Advanced Head & Neck Surgical Oncology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Throughout her training, Dr. Guo has also cultivated extensive experience in basic and translational research, which has helped to establish her reputation as a promising young investigator in genomics and personalized medicine for head and neck cancer. Her research is focused on utilizing computational and bioinformatic technologies to understand splicing alteration in head and neck tumors. She has previously identified several splicing variants that contribute to oncogenesis in head and neck tumors, and she plans to continue this work at UCSD to translate this genomic knowledge towards development of novel biomarkers and targeted therapies.



Theresa Guo, MD

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## Rebecca and John Moores Cancer Center

UC San Diego Health  
3855 Health Sciences Drive  
La Jolla, CA 92037 Phone (858) 822-6100







## EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO OTOLARYNGOLOGY EMERGENCIES SUO BOOTCAMP - Aug 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

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### First Southwest Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery Hands-on Boot Camp

By David Hom, MD, FACS

The PGY -1 year is the crucial time in surgical residency to learn how to respond to emergencies in “real time.” Simulation-based education as introductory boot camps are important to equip the early resident with the necessary procedural skills to become a proficient young surgeon.

By exposing residents early in their training with simulation based training, it gives them the early opportunity to practice diagnostic, technical and managerial skills before encountering them in emergent “real-life” situations. For this purpose, we successfully organized and completed our 1st Southwest Otolaryngology Hands-on Boot Camp entitled **“Effective Responses to Emergencies in Otolaryngology”** on August 1, 2020. A combination of simulation airway stations, pig tracheas, skeletal models and cadavers were used during this boot camp at UC San Diego’s Simulation Center and the Center of the Future of Surgery.

Residents from UCLA, UCI, Cedars Sinai and UC San Diego attended this hands-on boot camp course. Due to the COVID circumstances, the program was modified so that several of the simulation surgical exercises occurred outdoors and PPEs were worn. The faculty course instructors were from UC San Diego, UCLA and Cedar Sinai programs. This hands-on boot camp was made possible through a competitive national educational grant awarded from the Society of University Otolaryngologists (SUO) to UCSD Division of Head & Neck Surgery to implement this program in the Southwest United States. (Investigators Drs Hom, Harris, Coffey and Orosco)

Metric survey measurements were made for future publication to determine how such a hands-on boot camp can influence early self-confidence and reduce anxiety regarding emergent procedures.

This boot camp also received industry support from KLS and Integrative Life Sciences.

The next hands-on Otolaryngology boot camp at UC San Diego is planned to include more residency teaching programs in the Southwest region in August 2021.



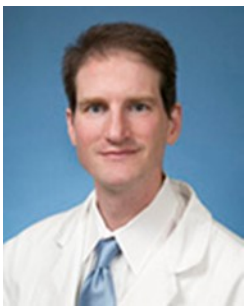


## UC SAN DIEGO MICROSURGERY LAB

As you know, there are many fine programs in the US who provide superb care to their patients and have great resources for training future Otolaryngologists. UCSD is among those programs. We have produced many leading Otolaryngologists in academics and in communities across the nation. Our residency and fellowship programs are highly sought after, and our new hospital and clinics have provided us unparalleled facilities in which to deliver patient care second to none. We have opened our new Microsurgical Laboratory in the Center for the Future of Surgery. It houses 15 temporal bone dissections stations with individual television monitors, drills for lateral and anterior skull base and complete microsurgical instrumentation. *Jeffrey Harris, MD, PhD*

## ALUMNI CLINICAL FELLOW SPOT

### QUINTON S. GOPEN, MD



I was fortunate enough to serve as the neurotology fellow at UC San Diego from 2004 – 2006 under Dr. Jeffrey Harris, the Chief of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery. Dr. Harris is a true master in the field and is internationally renowned for his surgical acumen and research expertise. I recall entering the fellowship with only a very basic understanding in this area and really depended on Dr. Harris and his mentorship to provide me with the necessary knowledge and skill set I would need to propel my career over the subsequent 15 years since my graduation.

My training during my tenure at UC San Diego was exceptional and comprehensive in all aspects of patient care, including medical and surgical practice. Dr. Harris gave me the support I needed in complex and difficult cases yet allowed me to grow and mature my own practice with measured independence when appropriate. I also had the opportunity to participate in didactic and informal teaching with the residents, medical students, and audiology students. I was particularly enthralled by the stories Dr. Harris shared with me about how he accomplished his research innovations in autoimmune inner ear disease and the tremendous breakthroughs he was able to make in that field. I am forever grateful for my time I spent training at UCSD – the entire faculty always treated me with respect and support!

Dr. Gopen is an Associate Professor of Head and Neck Surgery as well as Neurosurgery at UCLA Medical Center. He also currently is the Chief of the Division of Head and Neck Surgery at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. Dr. Gopen serves as the program director for medical students rotating through the department and is an oral and written board examiner for the American Board of Otolaryngology.

## ALUMNI RESEARCH FELLOW SPOT

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### SATOSHI FUKUDA, MD, PHD



I graduated from Hokkaido University School of Medicine and finished my residency in Otolaryngology there as well. My research interests were in viral infections of the inner ear, inner ear immunity, mumps deafness, navigation surgery and head and neck surgery.

I came to UCSD as a research fellow to study viral infections of the inner ear and inner ear immunology under Professor Jeffrey P. Harris from 1985-1987. It was a great scientific experience for me to work under Prof. Harris and his renowned lab. With this collaboration we produced

many important scientific publications.

After returning to Japan, my achievements during my fellowship helped me to be selected as Professor and Chairman, Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine. Hokkaido University is one of the 7 Classical National Universities in Japan so I was very honored to have this title.

After 2001, I served as Director of Cancer Center of University Hospital, Director of University Hospital, Vice Director of Hokkaido University, Director of Translational research and Educational Center.

During my career I was elected President of Japan Society for Head and Neck Surgery, Director of Oto-Rhino-Laryngological Society of Japan, Committee Member of Science Council of Japan, Corresponding member and International Otolaryngology Committee Member of AAO-HNS. Fellow of International College of Surgeons, Founding Fellow and Governing Council Member of Asian Society of Head and Neck Oncology, served as President of 114th Annual Meeting of Oto-Rhino-Laryngological Society of Japan and the 33th Annual Meeting of Japan Society for Head and Neck Center. During career, I received the distinguished award of Hokkaido Medical Association and the Governor of Hokkaido Prefecture Award for my contributions in "Organ Function Preservation in Head and Neck Cancer". I also received the Vice President Award at the Annual Meeting of AAO-HNS for my work on a navigation system in temporal bone and head and neck surgery.

I retired from Hokkaido University on March 31st, 2017 and was honored as a Professor Emeritus of Hokkaido University.

I have always followed US Major league baseball and I am a big fan of the San Diego Padres. I love San Diego and it's a "La Joya" of my heart.

## Residency News

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### **Subinternships Rotations**

In 2020, when the Coalition for Physician Accountability released their restrictions on visiting subinternship rotations around the country due to the COVID pandemic, UC San Diego Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery responded rapidly with a solution for 4<sup>th</sup> Year Medical Students. Dr. Deborah Watson, our Program Director, developed a Virtual Otolaryngology Subinternship which we hosted during the months before our interview season began. Each two-week rotation was held by Zoom and included a variety of individualized interactions with our faculty and residents, either in groups or one on one. This interactive, more personal experience was one of only a few being offered in the country for our specialty.

<https://medschool.ucsd.edu/som/surgery/divisions/Otolaryngology/education/residency/Pages/Virtual-Subinternship.aspx>

In addition, Dr. Watson and Dr. Hom were the Senior Examiners who recently administered the ABOHNS **Virtual Oral Exam** to our resident graduate candidates around the country. This was a unique virtual experience that has made history for our specialty. Our thanks to Dr. Watson and Hom, the other co-examiners, and all members of the Board who made this possible through their intense time and effort.

### **AAO-HNSF Core Grant**

Jesse Qualliotine developed a multidisciplinary and interdepartmental collaboration between our Division and the Department of Nanoengineering to study detection of HPV-associated malignancy with synthetic micromotors. He was awarded the AAO-HNSF Resident Research CORE Grant for this project, which led to a first author basic science presentation within the same year (Qualliotine, Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery 2019).

## HEAD & NECK SURGERY CURRENT RESIDENTS



### **David Bracken, MD (PGY-6 – Chief)**

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. (ex. High Density Surface Electromyography (HD sEMG), 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-6 – Chief)**

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



### **Andrey Finegersh, MD, PhD (PGY-5 – Chief)**

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-5)**

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



### **Joshua Stramiello, MD (PGY-5)**

Hometown: Tampa, FL

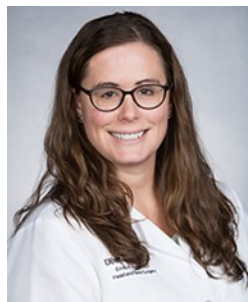
Undergrad: University of South Florida; Biomedical sciences, minors in Anthropology and Biophysics

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





**Emily Funk, MD (PGY-4)**

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



**Omid Moshtaghi, MD (PGY-3)**

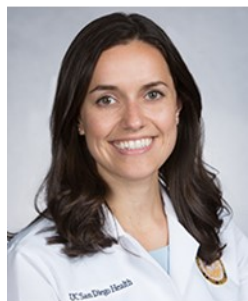
Hometown: San Diego, CA

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.



**Kayva Crawford, MD (RSCH/PGY-4)**

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 (RSCH/PGY-3)**

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.



**Robert Saddawi-Konefka, MD, PhD (RSCH/PGY-3)**

Hometown: South Bend, IN

Undergrad: University of Southern California, Neurosciences

Medical School: UCSD

Outside Interests: Surfing, Camping and Backpacking, Family Time

Research Interests: Immuno-Oncology, Immunotherapies and Mechanisms of Tumor-Immune Resistance



**Morgan Davis, MD (PGY-2)**

**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 migraine



**Benjamin Ostrander, MD (PGY-2)**

**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...)

**Research Interests:** Biodesign and surgical innovation, global surgery, facial reanimation, taste and olfaction



**Mena Said, MD (PGY-2)**

**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 informatics



**Jeffrey Bernstein (PGY-1)**

**Hometown:** Carmichael, CA

**Undergrad:** UC Berkeley

**Medical School:** UC San Diego

**Outside Interests:** Running, Cycling, Birding, Outdoors, Live music

**Research Interests:** Vestibular schwannoma, invasive fungal sinusitis, sinusitis-related neurocognitive changes, functional/structural neuroimaging



**Samuel Early, MD, MS (PGY-1)**

**Hometown:** Vancouver, WA

**Undergrad:** Stanford University; BS Biomechanical Engineering

**Graduate School:** Stanford University; MS Bioengineering

**Medical School:** University of California - San Diego

**Outside Interests:** Cycling, hiking, running, kayaking, baking, Taiwanese street food, sustainable seafood

**Research Interests:** Hearing loss, Vestibular Schwannoma, cholesteatoma, drug delivery to the middle and inner ear



**Andrew Yousef (PGY-1)**

**Hometown:** Glendora, CA

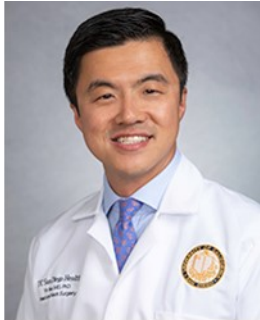
**Undergrad:** University of California, San Diego - Human Biology & Economics

**Medical School:** University of California, San Francisco

**Outside Interests:** Hiking, basketball (both playing and watching), working out, viola, attending concerts, traveling, crosswords

**Research Interests:** Surgical education, bettering care and outcomes in underserved populations

## HEAD & NECK SURGERY CURRENT FELLOWS



**Yin Ren, MD, PhD (PGY-7)**

**Hometown:** Ann Arbor, MI

**Undergraduate:** Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

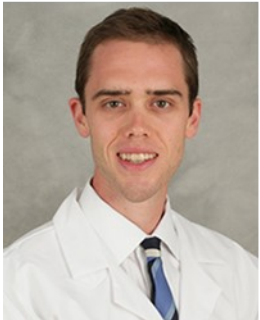
**Medical School:** Harvard Medical School

**Residency:** Mass Eye & Ear - Harvard

**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



**Alexander Claussen (PGY-6)**

**Hometown:** Edwardsville, IL

**Undergrad:** University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana

**Medical School:** Southern Illinois University School of Medicine

**Residency:** University of Iowa

**Outside Interests:** Coffee, travel, ultra trail running, mountain biking

**Research Interests:** Cochlear implant biology, intracochlear inflammation and loss of residual acoustic hearing after cochlear implantation, pharmacologic otoprotection.

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## Notes from our 2020 Graduates — Drs. Sunny Haft and John Pang

When my wife and I matched at UCSD we were ecstatic, and the past six years have certainly lived up to the initial hype. Looking back now, I see that I entered at a time of great transformation within the division. With every new faculty member that joined, I gained a new mentor and a fresh new way of looking at some different aspect of otolaryngology. The constant growth reflected my own transformation through residency, and taught me that my evolution as a surgeon is never static, even beyond training. Next year, as I take the cross-country leap back home to join as faculty at University of Maryland, I am excited to translate the years of investment from my mentors into a career in academic general otolaryngology. I am likewise indebted to my fellow residents who have shared this journey with me, and whose humility, sense of adventure, and humor will be a source of inspiration for my career beyond. **Sunny Haft PGY 6 Resident graduate 2020.**

Of all the challenges that residency has brought, none are greater than having to bid farewell to a group of people who are truly beyond compare. I wish to thank our extraordinary faculty, with special recognition to Drs. Califano, Brumund, Coffey, Orosco, and Kolb for sharing their collective passion for cancer surgery. That you entrusted me to help care for your patients has been both humbling and inspiring, and I will surely pass on your pearls of wisdom to future generations. To Sunny, I could not ask for a more wonderful co-chief and friend. And finally, I am delighted to have trained with such a talented and smart group of residents, who have taught me more than I could ever teach in return. As I look towards fellowship and beyond, you make me fully confident that the future of our field is brighter than ever. **John Pang PGY 6 Resident graduate 2020**

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## *IN THE NEWS*

**01/04/2021**

### **REGIONAL MEDIA**

“[UCSD Nurse Shares Vaccination Experience](#),” **San Diego 7**, features **David Flores**, clinical nurse, and **Paul Schalch**, MD

**12/18/2020**

### **NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA**

“[Top 10 Cancer Research News Stories of 2020](#),” **Technology Networks**, cites research by **Joseph Califano III**, MD

**08/16/2020**

### **NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA**

The Daily Beast. Smell Tests for COVID-19 Are Coming to a College Near You. Aug 16, 2020. **Yan, CH**.

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/smell-tests-for-covid-19-are-coming-to-a-college-near-you>

Making Lemonade: Our COVID-19 Story - Short Film <https://www.makinglemonade.film>. **Yan, CH**

**08/14/2020**

### **THE UC SAN DIEGO HEALTH NEWSROOM**

News Feature: “[UC San Diego Health Flexes New Robotic Surgical Capabilities](#),” features **Charles Coffey**, MD, **Joseph Califano, III**, MD, and **Paul Schalch Lepe**, MD

Blog: “[How Dangerous are E-Scooters](#),” features **David Hom**, MD

**08/11/2020**

### **NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA**

Reader’s Digest: 10 Coronavirus Symptoms Everyone Should Watch For. Aug 11, 2020. **Yan, CH**.

<https://www.rd.com/list/coronavirus-symptoms-everyone-should-watch-for/>

**08/07/2020**

### **NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA**

“[Health Beat: Regaining a singing voice after cancer](#),” **WFMZ-TV**, features **Erin Walsh**, speech-language pathologist, and **Philip Weissbrod**, MD.

**07/24/2020**

### **NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA**

“[Health Beat: Talking without a tongue: Cynthia's story](#),” **WFMZ-TV**, features **Liza Blumenfeld**, speech pathologist, and **Joseph Califano, III**, MD

**07/09/2020**

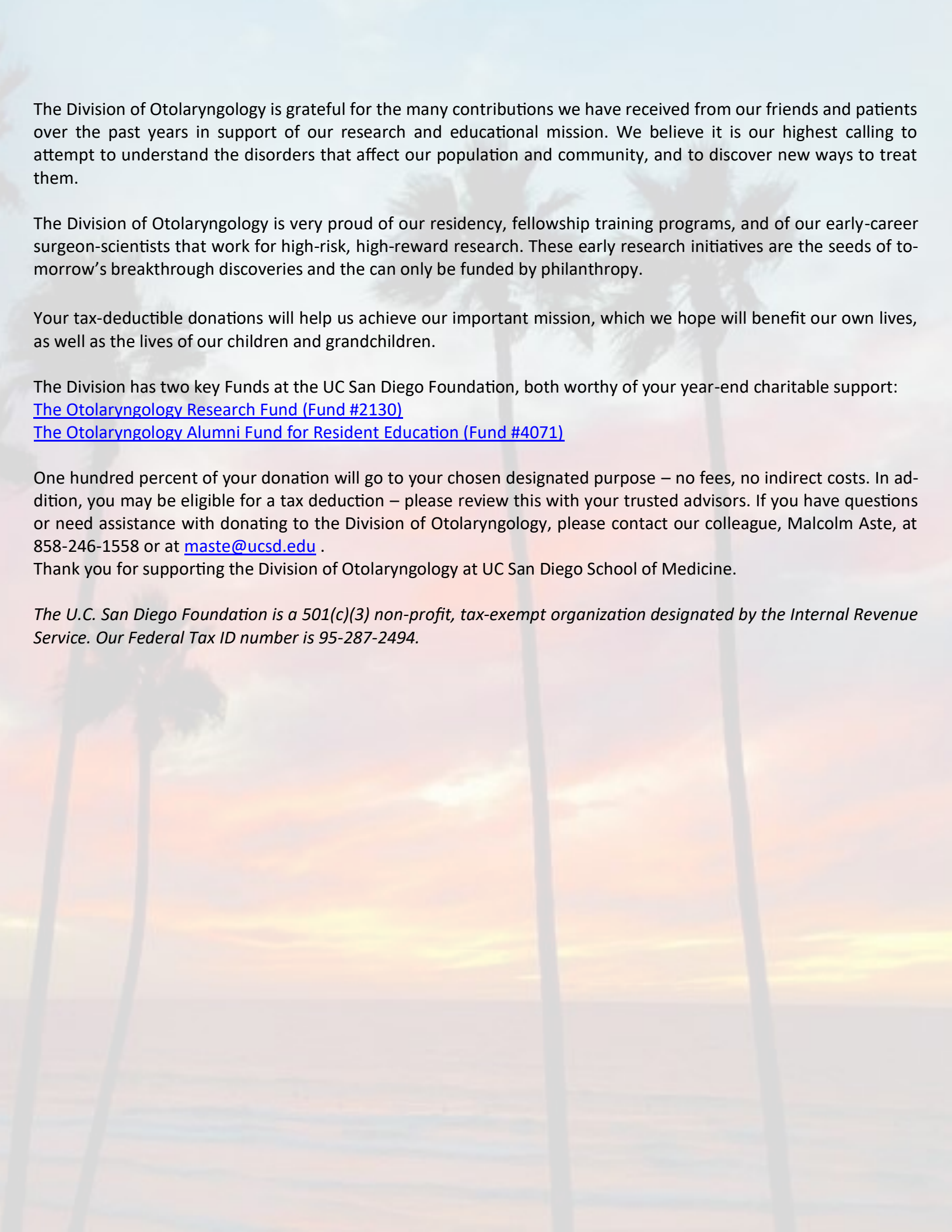
### **NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA**

“[Fever checks are flawed for flagging COVID-19. Are smell tests better?](#)” **PBS NewsHour**, features **Carol Yan**, MD See also [KQED](#)

**07/02/2020**

### **NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA**

“[Fever checks are a flawed way to flag Covid-19 cases. Experts say smell tests might help](#),” **STAT**, features **Carol Yan**, MD

The background of the entire page is a soft-focus photograph of several palm trees silhouetted against a vibrant sunset sky. The sky transitions from a pale blue at the top to warm oranges and yellows near the horizon, where the sun is partially visible. The palm trees are tall and slender, with their fronds clearly visible against the bright sky.

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](mailto:maste@ucsd.edu) .

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

*The U.C. San Diego Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt organization designated by the Internal Revenue Service. Our Federal Tax ID number is 95-287-2494.*

# The Division of Otolaryngology

## Head and Neck Surgery

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.



UC SAN DIEGO — JACOBS MEDICAL CENTER



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