2015 has been a very exciting time for the department. Our Block III medical students continue to perform well above the national median on the NBME Obstetric and Gynecology Shelf Exam. Further, 17 of our fourth year students matched in ACGME Obstetric and Gynecology residencies across the country evenly distributed between university and community programs. Fifteen residents graduated from the MSU CHM Affiliated Obstetric and Gynecology Residency Network located in Grand Rapids, East Lansing and Flint and we wish them success in their career advancement. We welcome Ron Chandler, PhD who will be joining us from the Department of Cell Biology at the University of North Carolina, August 16th in Grand Rapids. Our clinical practice is growing with the addition of Dr. Rajan who joined us in May. I congratulate the faculty and staff for a terrific year so far and we look forward to continued progress and accomplishment.

Richard M. Leach, M.D., FACOG, FACS
Professor and Chair
Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology
Dr. Anita Avery, who joined the team as a provider with the MSU Health Team in July 2014, was elected in April to chair the Health Care Delivery Committee. She was also re-elected to the Michigan State Medical Society Board for a second term. Please join us in congratulating Dr. Avery for representing the Department of OB/GYN so well!

We are pleased to announce the newest addition to our clinical team! Dr. Rajan joined us in May 2015 and is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology in the College of Human Medicine at Michigan State University. Dr. Rajan has been a practicing Obstetrician -- Gynecologist for 30 years. His work involves all areas of women’s health, including obstetrics, gynecology and infertility. Dr. Rajan uses patient-centered care to help improve patient health and quality of life. Dr. Rajan began seeing patients in May.
June 18, 2015 marked an historic day for the state of Michigan, MSU, and the Grand Rapids community as ground was broken to prepare for the construction of the new biomedical research facility which will be the future home of the OB/GYN research team. President Lou Anna Simon, College of Human Medicine Dean Marshia Rappley, Provost June Pierce Youatt, and Alyssa Fedorko, MD/PhD student in the lab of Dr. John Risinger, were invited to speak about the importance of the new facility to an enthusiastic crowd of community members, faculty, staff, and CHM students. The six-story, $88 million dollar facility will house up to 44 research teams and will be completed in 2017.
More Research News

In May, the Department of OB/GYN and Reproductive Biology hosted the 2015 meeting for the Michigan Alliance for Reproductive Technologies and Science (MARTS) at the College of Human Medicine Secchia Center in Grand Rapids. Keynote speaker Dr. Bruce Murphy, from the University of Montreal, presented his research on the orphan nuclear receptor, liver receptor homolog-1. The MARTS forum highlights the exemplary basic, translational, and clinical research programs throughout the state of Michigan and is comprised of researchers, clinicians, and educators from the state and neighboring regions.

The OB/GYN research team is gearing up for the annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Reproduction in San Juan, Puerto Rico that will be held from June 18 — June 22. Michael Strug, DO/PhD candidate and mentee of Dr. Asgi Fazleabas, has received a Larry Ewing travel grant to present his poster: *Postpartum uterine repair is mediated by the Notch family transcription factor, RBP-Jκ, in the mouse*. The following team members will also be presenting:

- Niraj Joshi, postdoctoral fellow in the Fazleabas lab: *Increased expression of microRNA-29c (miR-29c) decreases the expression of Deocorin which is associated with progesterone (P) resistance in baboons and women with endometriosis.*
- Ren-Wei Su, postdoctoral fellow in the Fazleabas lab: “Continuously activated Notch signaling inhibits progesterone receptor expression via hyper-methylation of its promoter.”
- Sharra Poncil, lab technician for Dr. Karen Racicot: “Cervical viral infections as a potential cause of preterm labor.”
- Jitu George, postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Dr. Jose Teixeira: *Specific deletion of LKB1/Stk11 in the Müllerian duct mesenchyme drives hyperplasia of the prostatic stroma and tumorigenesis*
- Julienne Brock, physiology graduate student in the Teixeira lab: *Mechanisms Driving Tumorigenesis and Histotype Differentiation of High-Grade Serous Ovarian Cancer in Stk11/Pten-Deleted Mouse Ovarian Surface Epithelium*
- Amanda Patterson, postdoctoral fellow in the Teixeira lab: *Over-activation of stromal beta-catenin results in sub-fertility due in part to decidualization defects.*
- Y. Sangeeta Devi, Assistant Professor: *Significance of the association of PRAP/HSD17B-7 with the intracellular domain of PRL-RS in estradiol production by the corpus luteum.*
Arianna joined the lab of Dr. Karen Racicot, Principal Investigator with the OB/GYN research team based in Grand Rapids, in June. She earned a Ph.D. in Genetics from Michigan State University in 2014 — title of her dissertation: Determining the role of Interferon Regulatory Factor 6 in oogenesis and extra-embryonic development — and a B.S. in Biological Sciences from North Carolina State University in 2008. As a postdoctoral fellow, Arianna will be responsible for designing and conducting research experiments in the area of pregnancy and fetal origins of disease, mentoring students, assisting with manuscripts and grant proposals, and presenting research at local and national meetings. Please give a warm welcome to Arianna!
Ahn JI, Yoo JY, Kim TH, Kim YI, Ferguson SD, Fazleabas AT, Young SL, Lessey BA, Ahn JY, Lim JM, and Jeong JW (2015) cAMP-Response Element-Binding 3-like protein 1 (CREB3L1) is required for decidualization and its expression is decreased in women with endometriosis. Accepted Current Molecular Medicine.


PUBLICATIONS cont.


PRESENTATIONS


Devi YS. Poster. “Professor: Significance of the association of PRAP/HSD17B-7 with the intracellular domain of PRL-RS in estradiol production by the corpus luteum.” San Juan, Puerto Rico. June 2015.


**PRESENTATIONS cont.**


- **Joshi N.** Poster. “Increased expression of microRNA-29c (miR-29c) decreases the expression of Deocorin which is associated with progesterone (P) resistance in baboons and women with endometriosis.” San Juan, Puerto Rico. June 2015.

- **Kim TH.** Poster. “Stromal-epithelial crosstalk of Mig-6 has an important role for tumor suppression via progesterone in endometrial cancer.” American Association for Cancer Research, Philadelphia, PA. April 2015.


- **Patterson AL.** Poster. “Over-activation of stromal beta-catenin results in sub-fertility due in part to decidualization defects.” San Juan, Puerto Rico, June 2015.


**FUNDED GRANTS**

- **Fazleabas AT.** Co-Investigator - 2 R44 HD075571 (02-05) (SBIR – Phase II) “Novel ex vivo Immunoabsorption Therapy to Treat Preeclampsia.” Apr 2015 – Mar 2019

- **Meghea CI.** Principal Investigator. NIH/Fogarty. “Family Smoking Cessation in Romania Using Pregnancy as a Window of Opportunity.”