

THE

CANCER LETTER

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John Durant Named ASCO Executive VP; A New Position, New Voice In Washington

John Durant, an oncologist, university administrator, and former cancer center director, has accepted the newly created position of executive vice president of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the society announced last week.

Durant, a former ASCO president and board member, is now positioned to become a leading spokesman and advocate for cancer-related interests in Washington.

"We are delighted that Dr. Durant has agreed to become the society's first executive vice president," said Karen Antman, ASCO president and

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In Brief

Curran Moves From Fox Chase To Jefferson; Groundbreaking For UNC Lineberger Center

WALTER CURRAN JR. has been named chairman of radiation oncology at Thomas Jefferson Univ. Curran was director of clinical research, radiation oncology, at Fox Chase Cancer Center. He will continue to serve as deputy group chairman of the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group, and as chairman of the RTOG Brain Tumor Committee, as well as principal investigator on three national clinical protocols. . . . **LINEBERGER COMPREHENSIVE** Cancer Center of the Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill broke ground last month for an \$18 million expansion. The first phase of the project, for administrative, cancer control and prevention space, is scheduled to be finished by late 1995. The second phase would be completed in 1997. . . . **NIKOLAY DIMITROV**, professor of medicine, Michigan State Univ., has received the Jack Breslin Endowed Professorship in Hematology/Oncology. Dimitrov is deputy director of the MSU cancer center. It is the first endowed professorship in the College of Human Medicine. . . . **ABRAHAM ABUCHOWSKI**, chairman of the board of Enzon Inc., received the Triumphs Through Technology award from the Leukemia Society of America. The company developed Oncaspar, a drug that has benefited many patients with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. . . . **JAMES EDWARD ROTHMAN**, researcher and administrator at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, received the 1994 V.D. Mattia Award from the Roche Institute of Molecular Biology. He was honored for his discoveries which helped explain how chemical messengers are released from synapses between brain cells and how cells release hormones

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New Voice In Washington: ASCO Executive VP Durant

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chief of medical oncology at Columbia Univ. College of Physicians and Surgeons. "He is uniquely qualified to ensure that our goals and interests are well defined and articulated."

Durant, said he plans to resign from his job as vice president, health affairs, and director of the medical center at the Univ. of Alabama at Birmingham on Jan. 1. Durant, 64, said he plans to take the new job full-time on April 1.

The society created the position of executive vice president last year on the recommendation of its Strategic Planning Committee. The committee also suggested moving the ASCO headquarters, operated through a contract with the Chicago-based Bostrom Corp., to the Washington, D.C., area (**The Cancer Letter**, April 23, 1993).

The society maintains a government relations office in Washington, through a contract with the law firm of Fox, Bennett and Turner.

Was Offered Job Twice

ASCO officers said the society's rapid growth over the past two decades, and increasing involvement in regulatory and clinical practice issues, made the new position necessary.

"It became apparent that we needed a full-time executive to coordinate and oversee the activities of both our Chicago and Washington offices and our various contractors and committees," John Glick, ASCO president-elect and director of the Univ. of Pennsylvania Cancer Center, said to **The Cancer Letter**.

THE CANCER LETTER

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"The society has grown in size, budget, activity very quickly and has extensive involvement in scientific education and research, and in representing the practice needs of community oncologists," Glick said.

Durant was offered the ASCO job last spring, and nearly accepted. In fact, the society had planned to announce his acceptance at its annual meeting last May. When Durant turned it down, ASCO launched a new search.

"A variety of circumstances made me rethink [the job]," Durant said to **The Cancer Letter**. Univ. of Alabama officials can remain in their jobs after age 65 with yearly review. "But the oldest one I know of is 67, and I'm not ready to retire yet," Durant said.

Also, Durant said, he does not want to move to Washington until his daughter graduates from high school and is in college.

In the second search, Durant was one of four final candidates.

Durant served as ASCO president from 1985 to 1986, on the Board of Directors from 1979 to 1982, and has been active in various society committees. He has also held top leadership positions in other scientific and medical organizations.

Durant was president of the Alabama Division of the American Cancer Society and currently is a member of the ACS national research grants advisory committee. He was a board member of the American Board of Internal Medicine. He is also a past president of the Association of American Cancer Institutes and the American Radium Society. At this time, Durant serves on the Public Issues Committee of the American Association for Cancer Research.

Durant also has been an advisor to NCI, first as a member of the Cancer Centers Review Committee and chairman of the Southeastern Cooperative Cancer Study Group in the 1970s, and chairman of the NCI cooperative group chairmen committee from 1978 to 1982.

To Play A "Pivotal Role"

Appointed to the National Cancer Advisory Board by President Ronald Reagan in 1986, Durant led the board's Cancer Centers Subcommittee through a contentious period in which NCI established new guidelines and review procedures for cancer center grants.

"Dr. Durant is one of the leading figures in medical oncology," Glick said to **The Cancer Letter**.

"We think he is the ideal physician to lead ASCO in its expanding educational, scientific, and practice activities.

"He is a thoughtful, intelligent, articulate spokesman for oncology on a national basis already," Glick said. "We expect him to play a pivotal role in the national debate on oncologic issues."

George Canellos, ASCO's immediate past president, agreed. "Dr. Durant brings the administrative experience, the professional experience, the visibility, the contacts—all the features that will make him ideal as the first person in the executive director's job," he said. "He brings a lot of maturity and soundness."

Durant received an MD from Temple Univ. in 1956, and completed internship at Hartford Hospital in Hartford, CN. After serving in the Navy, he did his residency at Temple Univ., then spent a year as a fellow at Memorial Hospital in New York. He returned to Temple as an instructor in medicine.

In 1968, Durant moved to Univ. of Alabama as associate professor medicine. He became director of the university's cancer center in 1970 and led the center in its successful application for an NCI core grant and status as a comprehensive cancer center.

In 1982, Durant became president of Fox Chase Cancer Center. He returned to Alabama in 1988.

"This Is Like Coming Home"

Durant said the ASCO position will be a culmination of the many jobs he has held, both paid and voluntary.

"The people in the organizations I will have contact with are the people I've interacted with throughout my career," Durant said to **The Cancer Letter**. "This is like coming home, to my specialty and to my friends. That's a pretty nice feeling."

The society will have to make several management decisions over the next year or two. At its meeting last week, the ASCO board voted to look for office space in Washington. This was a change from last year, when the board, split between those who advocated a Washington office and those who argued that would place too much emphasis on politics, compromised on locating in Bethesda.

"We felt it was important to have an office in Washington because of our increasing activity with Congress," Glick said to **The Cancer Letter**.

Durant said he hoped the Washington headquarters could be established in the fall of 1995.

One of Durant's key roles will be to represent ASCO's interests in Washington. "The most important thing I'm going to do is work with the ASCO president and board to implement the society's goals," Durant said. "There hasn't been anybody who had the full-time responsibility for keeping the ball rolling."

NCI appropriations and leadership, with the resignation of two division directors, are areas of concern, Durant said.

"In Congress, there will be a lot of new faces and ideologues, non-ideologues, and novices," Durant said. "If the current noise that sounds highly confrontational continues, then what we'll see is a continuation of gridlock. I happen to believe that the American people want gridlock—they vote for it regularly. There is a momentum for change followed by a fear of change."

Managed care "is going to be murkier than it was," Durant said. "I don't expect much to come out of Congress with the possible exception of insurance reform." The momentum for health care reform has moved to the states, where there could be "50 different solutions," he said.

"It will be an interesting time to be in Washington," Durant said. "I hope the oncologic community can promote a bipartisan approach.

"I have always been one who promoted cooperation and collaboration, and it will be important that all of the various oncologic constituencies pull in the same direction."

Other issues Durant said he will be targeting are the relationship between the society and its state affiliates, paying more attention of ASCO's international members, and continuing to promote the society's *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Founded in 1964, ASCO has more than 9,300 members engaged in clinical research and patient care in the US and abroad.

ASCO Guidelines On CSFs Advise Use In Fewer Patients

The American Society of Clinical Oncology has advised physicians to use colony stimulating factors in fewer patients.

In guidelines on the use of CSFs, ASCO recommended that oncologists not routinely use the drugs to prevent infection in chemotherapy patients.

The ASCO guidelines were the first major oncology recommendations made by the organization.

The guidelines were published in the November issue of the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, which was mailed to ASCO's 9,700 members.

Neupogen, made by Amgen Inc., is the only drug in the U.S. currently approved for treatment of chemotherapy-induced neutropenia. Immunex Corporation's Leukine is approved for use in bone marrow transplants and is awaiting U.S. regulatory approval for the cancer chemotherapy indication.

"In general, for previously untreated patients receiving most chemotherapy regimens, primary administration of CSFs should not be used routinely," said a summary of the recommendations. Primary administration involves the use of the drugs immediately following chemotherapy to prevent infectious complications.

ASCO advised that when the risk of developing febrile neutropenia, or a low white blood cell count accompanied by fever or infection, is deemed to be greater than 40 percent, CSFs can be used with chemotherapy. Most chemotherapy regimens, except for bone marrow transplants, are designed to have a lower than 40 percent risk.

Increase Use In Certain Patients

ASCO did recommend increased use of CSFs in patients who previously developed infections during chemotherapy.

ASCO also recommended increased use of CSFs for patients deemed to be at high risk for chemotherapy induced infection such as those with AIDS, pneumonia or open wounds.

ASCO advised that CSFs not be used as a therapy for patients already admitted to the hospital suffering from chemotherapy induced infection. Five clinical trials of CSFs failed to demonstrate a speedier drop in fever or a reduction in hospitalization in such patients. The ASCO guidelines advise oncologists to use CSFs less frequently than currently.

Avon 1995 Grant Applications Available; Deadline Is Jan. 17

The National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations announced that applications for the first cycle of 1995 grants from the Avon Breast Health Access Fund are now available. The application deadline is Jan. 17, 1995.

The fund, which is entering its second year, awards grants twice a year to support community-based programs that can improve women's access to breast

health education and early detection services. The program is administered by NABCO.

During 1994, the fund distributes over \$800,000 to 50 programs that use innovative techniques to reach diverse audiences, NABCO said.

"Reaching women—especially underserved women—in their communities and improving their access to breast health education and services is the mission of The Avon Breast Health Access Fund," said Amy Langer, NABCO executive director. "In 1995, we hope to award grants to a larger number of organizations and continue to link women to life saving early detection services."

Grant recipients must be non-profit organizations that provide education and access to early detection services. Grant recipients for the first funding cycle will be notified in March 1995.

Application instructions can be obtained by writing or faxing to: NABCO, 9 East 37th Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10016, Fax: 212/689-1213.

The Avon Breast Health Access Fund's second 1995 funding cycle will be available in April 1995 with a deadline of June 30.

The Avon Breast Health Access Fund is part of Avon's "Breast Cancer Awareness Crusade," which the company began October 1993. Since that time, the campaign has raised nearly \$7 million through the sale of Avon's Breast Cancer Awareness Pink Ribbon Pin and Key Ring.

The profits from the sales fund local programs which provide education and early detection services to low income and older women. Avon has also given \$3 million to YWCA of the USA's ENCOREplus program which provides breast and cervical cancer education and early detection services to the underserved.

ACS Awards Medal of Honor To Holland, Sporn, RWJ

The American Cancer Society has awarded its Medal of Honor to: **Jimmie Holland**, chief of psychiatry service and Wayne E. Chapman Chair in Psychiatric Oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, **Michael Sporn**, chief of the NCI Laboratory of Chemoprevention, and the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**, a grant-making organization based in Princeton, NJ.

Holland received the medal "developing the field of psychosocial and behavioral oncology and the

methods for diagnosing and treating psychiatric problems in people with cancer and, for her dedication to improving the quality of life for tens of thousands of cancer patients."

Sporn was honored for "groundbreaking studies related to the growth of cells and chemoprevention." Sporn's early studies involving breast, bladder, and epithelial cancers, "increased the understanding of how biologically active substances such as retinoids and closely related compounds stimulate growth of cancer cells."

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was honored for its "extraordinary contributions in the field of tobacco control, including initiation of educational, advocacy and research programs of unprecedented strategic importance and generous support of research to improve health and basic health care for all Americans."

The foundation finances tobacco control programs including: the \$10 million SmokeLess States; Statewide Tobacco Prevention and Control Initiatives program which helps state coalitions develop tobacco reduction strategies; a Smoke-Free Families program and a \$5 million Tobacco Policy Research and Evaluation Program to identify, analyze and evaluate public and private sector policies aimed at reducing tobacco use.

In 1993, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded grants totaling \$137 million.

Distinguished Service Awards

The society's Distinguished Service Award was presented to:

—**O. Ross McIntyre**, founder and past president of the Norris Cotton Cancer Center at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. McIntyre is also chairman of the Cancer and Leukemia Group B, a cooperative group.

—**Ernest Borden**, professor of medicine and director of the Univ. of Maryland Cancer Center and former president of the ACS Wisconsin Division. Borden received the award for his role in the development of interferon.

—**Joan Hermann**, director of social work at Fox Chase Cancer Center and a pioneer in oncology social work.

—**Laura Hilderley**, an expert on radiation oncology nursing and a member of the ACS National Board of Directors.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to **Salome Gluecksohn-Waelsch** of the Albert

Einstein College of Medicine, and the Humanitarian Award was presented to **Oliver Beahrs**, professor emeritus of surgery at Mayo Medical School.

The National Volunteer Leadership Award was presented to **Charles Osburn**, a member of the Ohio Division's Executive Committee and past chairman of the National Board of Directors Executive Committee, and **Murray Stein**, professor emeritus of oral surgery at Case Western Reserve Univ.

Cancer Meetings Are Listed For Next Three Months

December

American Society of Hematology—Dec. 2-7, Nashville, TN. Contact ASH, Tel: 202/857-1118.

President's Cancer Panel—Dec. 5-6, Holiday Inn Bethesda, MD. Topic: Review and Evaluation of the Federal Trade Commission Cigarette Testing Method.

American Endocurietherapy Society—Dec. 7-10, Fort Myers, FL. Contact AES, Tel. 215/574-3158.

San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium—Dec. 8-10, San Antonio, TX. Contact Lois Dunnington, Tel: 210/567-4745.

Basic and Clinical Aspects of Prostate Cancer—Dec. 8-12, Palm Springs, CA. Contact American Assn. for Cancer Research, Tel: 215/440-9300, FAX 215/440-9313.

Understanding and Treating Fatigue in Cancer Patients—Dec. 14, New York City. Contact Cancer Care Inc., Tel: 212/302-2400.

January

Mechanism-based Toxicology in Cancer Risk Assessment—Jan. 11-13, Chapel Hill, NC. Contact National Toxicology Program Liaison office, Tel: 919/541-0530.

Mechanism of Action of Retinoids, Vitamin D and Steroid Hormones—Jan. 14-19, Whistler, British Columbia, Canada. Contact American Assn. for Cancer Research, Tel: 215/440-9300, FAX 215/440-9313.

Retroviral Integrase Molecular Biology and Pharmacology/A Novel Target for the Treatment of AIDS—Jan. 19-20, Bethesda, MD. Contact Technical Resources Inc., Conference management, Tel: 301/770-3153, FAX 301/468-2245.

Renal Cancer: State of the Art Management—Jan. 21, Cleveland, OH. Contact Cleveland Clinic

Foundation, Tel. 800/762-8173 or 216/444-5695, FAX 216/445-9406.

Fifth International Congress on Anti-Cancer Chemotherapy—Jan. 31-Feb. 3, Paris, France. Contact Prof. David Khayat, SOMPS, Hpital de la Pitie-Salpetriere, 47, Bd de L'Hopital, 75651 Paris Cedex 13, France.

February

Advances in the Biology and Therapy of Renal Cell Carcinoma—Feb. 3-4, Houston, TX. Contact Coni Tierney, Conference Services, Tel: 713/792-2222, FAX 713/794-1724.

International Congress: Colorectal Cancer, From Gene to Cure—Feb. 9-11, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Contact European Cancer Center, Tel: 0031-20-644-4500/4550, FAX 0031-20-644-4551.

Molecular Biology of Cancer: Implications for Prevention and Therapy—Feb. 13-18, Maui, HI. Contact American Assn. for Cancer Research, Tel: 215/440-9300, FAX 215/440-9313.

Radiation Therapy Oncology Group Semi-Annual Meeting—Feb. 17-19, San Francisco, CA. Contact Nancy Smith, RTOG, 1101 Market St., Suite 1400, Philadelphia, PA 19107, Tel: 215/574-3205.

Chromosomes in Solid Tumors—Feb. 19-21, 1995, Tucson, AZ. Contact Nancy Rzewuski, Arizona Cancer Center, Tel. 602/626-2276.

Advances in the Biology and Clinical Management of Melanoma—Feb. 21-24, Houston, TX. Contact Coni Tierney, Conference Services, Tel: 713/792-2222, FAX 713/794-1724.

The Human Genome Project: Commercial Implications—Feb. 28-March 2, 1994. San Francisco, CA. Contact Cambridge Healthtech Institute, Tel. 617/487-7989.

In Brief

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into the blood stream. . . . **CAROL ESTWING FERRANS**, assistant professor of nursing at Univ. of Illinois at Chicago, received the 1994 Oncology Nursing Society Quality of Life lecture, at the society's fall meeting last month in Pittsburgh. . . . **FRANK BRESCIA** has been appointed director of medical oncology at the Cancer Center of Georgia at Georgia Baptist Medical Center. Brescia was medical director of Calvary Hospital in New York City. . . . **EMILIO BARBERA** has been appointed senior cancer center scientist at Hipple Cancer Research Center, Dayton, OH. Barbera will head the Biology of Cancer Metastasis Division.

RFPs Available

RFP NCI-CM-57221-28

Title: **Operation of An Animal Diagnostic Laboratory**

Deadline: Approximately Feb. 3

The Biological Testing Branch in NCI's Div. of Cancer Treatment is seeking organizations with the capabilities and facilities to monitor the health status on NCI animal production contracts. To be considered, each respondent must have existing diagnostic facilities and staff, 1) must be able to provide documentation of current experience in the successful performance of physical examination, 2) viral serology, 3) histopathology and 4) bacterial culturing on laboratory animals. Approximately 1,000 animals, annually, sent at a rate of 20 per week will be provided to the diagnostic contractor at no cost. It is estimated that approximately 10,000 serological tests will be performed annually. One cost-reimbursement, completion type contract will be awarded as a result of the solicitation. This contract is planned to be incrementally funded over a five-year period. The proposed contract project represents a recompetition of Contracts N01-CM-17533 (Univ. of Miami) and N01-CM-17534 (Univ. of Missouri).

Contract Specialist: Carolyn Barker, Treatment Contracts Section, RCB, NCI, Executive Plaza South Rm 603, 6120 Executive Blvd. 7220, Bethesda, MD 20892.

RFP NCI-CP-505 -22-13

Title: **Chemical Carcinogen Reference Standard Repository**

Deadline: Approximately Jan. 30

The Chemical and Physical Carcinogenesis Branch of NCI's Div. of Cancer Etiology seeks a contractor to provide and maintain a Chemical Carcinogen Reference Standard Repository. The Repository shall provide a centralized source of well-characterized and documented reference compounds for the carcinogenesis research community. The contractor shall perform chemical characterizations and develop analytical protocols to ensure chemicals of uniform, high quality. The Contractor shall maintain a computerized chemical inventory system. The facility shall provide for the safe storage, repacking and distribution of known or suspected chemical toxins/carcinogens for use in cancer research and in carcinogenesis testing primarily as reference compounds. Detailed plans for the Repository to include the exact location, floor plans, personnel commitments, supplies, overall operating and safety plans shall be furnished by offerors.

Contracting Officer: Sharon Miller, NCI, 6120 Executive Blvd MSC 7224, Executive Plaza South Rm 620, Bethesda, MD 20892-7224, or FAX 301/480-0241.

NCI Contract Award

Title: Clinical trials of biological response modifiers. Contractor: Univ. of Pittsburgh, \$2,872,844.