

# **Symposium Speaker Spotlight: Dr. Mark Girgis to Discuss Advances in Pancreatic Surgery**

The Hirshberg Foundation is pleased to have three UCLA doctors, Dr. Hines, Dr. King and Dr. Girgis, joining us at the 13th Annual Symposium on Pancreatic Cancer to address recent *Advances in Pancreatic Surgery*.

Mark Girgis, MD is an Assistant Professor of Surgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He also has a joint appointment at the UCLA/Olive View Medical Center.

His interests include robotic and minimally invasive approaches to surgical oncology and more specifically on pancreatic diseases in his clinical practice as well as research endeavors. He received advanced training in robotic surgery and surgical oncology in his fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh. He is a member of the group of pancreas surgeons at UCLA that provide the highest level of care for their patients. He is committed to the improvement of cancer care through innovative technological advancements as well as ground breaking research. His research endeavors focus on developing novel peptides targeting pancreas cancer for radioligand therapy and is part of a multidisciplinary group that collaborates on a variety of projects centered on developing new therapies for cancer patients.

Dr. Girgis will speak on *Advances in Pancreatic Surgery* to update us on surgery options and new techniques, including robotic surgery, that are now available to pancreatic cancer patients.

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# **Symposium Speaker Spotlight: Dr. Jonathan King to discuss Advances in Pancreatic Surgery**

The Hirshberg Foundation is pleased to have three UCLA doctors, Dr. Hines, Dr. King and Dr. Girgis update us on surgery options and new techniques, including robotic surgery, that are now available to pancreatic cancer patients.

Jonathan King, MD, is an Assistant Professor in the Division of General Surgery at UCLA. He attended the University of Maryland for his M.D. degree before coming to UCLA for his general surgery residency. After residency, Dr. King spent two years in Pittsburgh, PA (UPMC) for a surgical oncology fellowship before returning to Los Angeles to join the surgery faculty.

He is board certified in Complex Surgical Oncology and has particular interest in pancreatic cancer and disseminated peritoneal malignancies. He has expertise in robotic-assisted minimally invasive pancreas surgery and performed UCLA's first minimally-invasive pancreaticoduodenectomy (Whipple procedure) and has started UCLA's program for hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemoperfusion (HIPEC). In addition to his clinical interests, Dr. King is a translational and clinical investigator with active research interests in the biology of exosomes and pancreatic cancer metastasis. He has authored numerous peer-reviewed manuscripts and abstracts as well as book chapters in some of the authoritative surgical textbooks. Dr. King is an enthusiastic surgical educator and is developing the UCLA residency training curriculum for robotic-assisted surgery and

he is a member of numerous professional societies.

Dr. King will speak on *Advances in Pancreatic Surgery*, specifically how robotic-assisted minimally invasive surgery is benefiting patients.

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## **Symposium Speaker Spotlight: Dr. Joe Hines to discuss Advances in Pancreatic Surgery**

The Hirshberg Foundation is pleased to have a trio of presentations to update us on surgery options and new techniques, including robotic surgery, that are now available to pancreatic cancer patients.

Introducing the robotic surgeons is Dr. Joe Hines, the Professor and Chief of the Division of General Surgery, Robert and Kelly Day Chair in General Surgery and the Vice Chair for Clinical Practice and Strategic Planning. He serves as the Director of the UCLA Agi Hirshberg Center for Pancreatic Diseases.

Dr. Hines attended the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and was inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society in 1989. He trained in general surgery at UCLA, including two years of research in gastrointestinal physiology, and was then recruited to the UCLA faculty in 1997. While at UCLA he has received the Department Golden Scalpel Award for teaching excellence 10 times and the UCLA School of Medicine Award for Excellence in Education. His research has focused on angiogenesis, cytokines, and pancreatic carcinogenesis,

including the role of diet in modulating these processes. Dr. Hines' research has been consistently funded by NIH, and he has served in the NIH Scientific Review Committee Tumor Progression and Metastasis. Dr. Hines is past-President of the Society of University Surgeons and has served as the Vice-President of the Pacific Coast Surgical Association, President of the Southern California Chapter of the American College of Surgeons, and now on the Board of Governors of the American College of Surgeons and as a Director of the American Board of Surgery.

Dr. Hines will kick off the presentation on *Advances in Pancreatic Surgery* at the 13th Annual Symposium at UCLA.

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## **Symposium Speaker Spotlight: Dr. Zev Wainberg to discuss Advances in Chemotherapy**

The Hirshberg Foundation is excited to have Dr. Wainberg join us at the 13th Annual Symposium on Pancreatic Cancer to share information about the advancements that have been made in the treatment of this disease.

Dr. Zev Wainberg is Associate Professor of Medicine at UCLA and co-director of the UCLA GI Oncology Program. He was trained in medical oncology and hematology at UCLA. He completed his residency training at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and received his MD from the Sackler School of Medicine, New York Program at Tel Aviv University. His research involves a variety of clinical trials in multiple gastrointestinal cancers

including pancreas, colon, gastric and esophageal.

Dr. Wainberg's laboratory-based research efforts involve the testing of novel therapeutics against all gastrointestinal cancers. Currently, he is the recipient of several grants focused on the targeting of cancer stem cells and in molecular classification of GI cancers. Dr. Wainberg will speak on recent Advances in Chemotherapy at the 13th Annual Symposium at UCLA.

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## **Dr. Anirban Maitra to discuss Why is Pancreatic Cancer so Hard to Treat?**

The Hirshberg Foundation is excited to have Anirban Maitra, MBBS, joining us at the 13th Annual Symposium on Pancreatic Cancer to share important information about the challenges of treating this cancer and the best way forward to make a difference in patient outcomes.

Anirban Maitra, MBBS, is Professor of Pathology and Translational Molecular Pathology at UT MD Anderson Cancer Center, and has been the Scientific Director of the Sheikh Ahmed Center for Pancreatic Cancer Research since August 1, 2013. Over the past decade, his group has made several seminal observations in the biology and genetics of pancreatic cancer. He also has extensive expertise with genetic modeling of pancreatic cancer and with experimental therapeutics and drug development for this disease. Dr. Maitra brought to Houston his passion for improving patient survival by discovering and developing ways to detect

and treat pancreatic cancer.

“We need to remember that what we do in the lab needs to end up in patients. It’s not about an elegant experiment and an excellent scientific publication – it’s all about translation, translation, translation [to humans]” Dr. Maitra stresses. In his presentation at the 13th Annual Symposium, Dr. Maitra speak on *Why is Pancreatic Cancer so Hard to Treat and what can we do about it?*

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## **We’re Fighters!**

*By Leslie N.*

This year our family learned the devastating news that my father had pancreatic cancer. Having watched a very close friend pass one year earlier from this horrific disease, I was in disbelief. The thought of having to go through the experience of watching my father suffer at this time in his life was more than I could handle. But we’re fighters, and we circled our wagons and prepared ourselves for what we knew lie ahead.

My father is a retired doctor and very strong man but he was up against an opponent that was bigger and tougher than him. As I watched both he and my stepmom struggle I reached out to the Hirshberg Foundation for guidance on how I could help them help themselves. That one phone call literally changed my life and the path of our experience through this struggle.

First I learned that there were resources offering support to both the patient as well as family members in need. Second I learned how I could get involved in an organization that one day

will help save the lives of my family members and friends. And third, but most important, I learned that there was a small group of people who had walked the walk, just a phone call away, available to comfort me at a moments' notice. I immediately became part of a family who understood and sincerely cared.

While my father was going through chemotherapy and preparing for surgery my sister and I volunteered on the L.A. Cancer Challenge planning committee. And when my father had his surgery Agi, Amy and the Hirshberg Foundation team were by our side, offering support. Two weeks post-op our team Carabet's Crew walked proudly in honor of our father who was recovering from the Whipple Procedure performed by the best of the best, Dr. Hines.

The LACC may not be the biggest 5k/10k around but in all my years of participating in similar events I have never felt the love, support and determination I experienced that morning. To be surrounded by so many people who care, understand and are working toward a common goal of curing pancreatic cancer gave us hope that one day we'll be able to prevent other families from having to watch their loved ones suffer.