

BARLOGIE RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM IMF

Dr. Bart Barlogie's habit of putting his patients' needs before his own has earned him boundless respect and appreciation. It also earned him the Robert A. Kyle Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the International Myeloma Foundation to Barlogie May 8 at a special event held at The Peabody in Little Rock.

The director of the Myeloma Institute for Research and Therapy at UAMS' Arkansas Cancer Research Center, Barlogie was recognized by colleagues and officials for devoting almost 30 years to finding a cure for multiple myeloma. Among the evening's highlights was an announcement by Chancellor I. Dodd Wilson that UAMS planned to raise funds to endow a chair in myeloma research in honor of Barlogie and his efforts toward curing the rare form of cancer. Dr. Ernest Ferris, chairman of UAMS' Department of Radiology, called Barlogie "a patient's best friend" and presented him with a \$40,000 donation to the Myeloma Institute's Patient Awareness Fund.

A video presentation by Gov. Mike Huckabee touched on Barlogie's commitment not only to his work but to his patients. Donna Lambert of St. Louis, a patient of Barlogie's, echoed those sentiments in a short speech while Dr. Emil Freireich of the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston complimented his former employee for his dedication to "learning about the disease from patients, not mice."

Dr. Brian Durie and Susie Novis of the International Myeloma Foundation com-



Dr. Barlogie (top, second from left) chats with Denis McDonald (far right) of New Orleans, his wife, Louise, and Dr. John Shaughnessy following the dinner. (Above) Barlogie accepts the Robert A. Kyle Lifetime Achievement Award.

mended Barlogie for the passion displayed in his work. Dr. Robert Kyle of the Mayo Clinic, for whom the award was named, complimented Barlogie for his ability to recognize that when it comes to treating myeloma, what matters most is fulfilling the obligation to the patient.

John Shaughnessy, director of the Myeloma Institute's Lambert Laboratory of Myeloma Genetics, characterized Barlogie as a perfectionist. "Since 1989, Bart and his team of physicians have had over 20,000 clinic visits from patients with myeloma. I think Bart himself has seen nearly a third of these
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MIRT REACHES LANDMARK WITH 5,000TH TRANSPLANT

The Myeloma Institute for Research and Therapy recently reached a milestone that sets it apart from other facilities of its kind. In July the MIRT performed its 5,000th stem cell transplant, the majority of which have been autologous transplants for the treatment of multiple myeloma, making the institute clearly the leader in the number of transplants performed as part of multiple myeloma treatment.

The myeloma program was started at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 1989 by Dr. Bart Barlogie, who was drawn to the Arkansas Cancer Research Center at UAMS from M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas. During the past 15 years, Barlogie and his colleagues have pioneered novel therapeutic approaches to the treatment of multiple myeloma, a cancer of plasma cells. They were the first to introduce the concept of high-dose chemotherapy supported by peripheral blood stem cell transplant as an alternative to standard chemotherapy treatment for multiple myeloma. The concept evolved into the even more effective practice of tandem transplants — two stem cell transplants a few months apart — which has greatly increased rates of remission and survival.

Bone marrow transplants, as part of a comprehensive therapy for multiple myeloma initiated by Barlogie and the Myeloma Institute team, have doubled the median

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patients. His patients always wonder why they have to wait so long to see him. It's because every patient gets the best Bart has to offer and that takes time!" said Shaughnessy, who noted that Barlogie's labors at UAMS have more than doubled the survival rate of myeloma patients.

Barlogie, upon receiving the award from Kyle, thanked his associates as well as his patients, asking those in attendance to stand and be recognized for their contributions to his pursuit of a cure for myeloma. "I was born on May 10, 1944, in the ruins of World War II. My mother and my stepfather taught me that you had to work hard to build something from the ashes. Mother always told me that what I could get in my head no one could take away," said a visibly touched Barlogie.

"In medicine and the scientific profession, we stand on each others' shoulders. We remember that we are not creating things out of nothing but out of a succession of scientists and clinicians whose work allows us to pursue our vision. What we try and accomplish is about patients. A diagnosis of multiple myeloma is worse than many things . . . it's really very difficult . . . different patients deal with it differently. It's not sufficient to just double the survival rate. We have to keep the momentum and energy and learn to deal with failure. I was evidently given tough genes and work in an environment where we don't give up."

Anyone interested in making a donation to an endowed chair in honor of Dr. Bart Barlogie's work in the treatment of multiple myeloma can contact the Myeloma Institute's Betty Tucker at tuckerbettya@uams.edu or (501) 296-1504, ext. 1634.

ROBYN'S FRIENDS "LONG FOR A CURE"

Approximately 300 guests turned out for an evening of food and fun dubbed "Friends Long For A Cure – Celebration of



DeDe Lambert (left, center) joins a group of friends for the May 21 event. (Lower left) Don and DeDe Lambert (left) take time out to talk to Marion and Van Lear Black. Alyson Hall (lower right, with husband Brian, daughter Taylor and son Connor) organized the evening's festivities.



Life," held May 21 at Windows Off Washington in St. Louis, Mo.

Robyn Long, a multiple myeloma patient currently being treated at the Myeloma Institute for Research and Therapy, was the evening's honoree. Proceeds from the event, which included a dinner, a silent and live auction and dancing to a live band, went to the Myeloma Institute. Chris Kerber, radio play-by-play broadcaster of the St. Louis Blues hockey team, served as the auctioneer.

The festivities were coordinated by Alyson Hall, Long's best friend, whose mother died of myeloma in 2003. DeDe and Don Lambert of St. Louis, who established the Lambert Laboratory for Myeloma Genetics at MIRT, served as honorary chairpersons.

A party for the sponsors of "Friends Long For A Cure" was hosted by DeDe and Don Lambert on May 17 at Truffles, a bistro with a casually elegant atmosphere in Ladue. The guests were treated to an update on clinical and research progress by MIRT Director Dr. Bart Barlogie.

MIRT A Home Away From New Home For Robyn Long

Robyn Long had every reason to be excited. She and her husband, Randy, were within a day of closing on their beautiful new home in Chesterfield, Mo., a suburb of St. Louis, when she got the news. A bone marrow biopsy revealed that the pain Long had suffered in her back for almost a year was in fact multiple myeloma.

Long is no stranger to the threat of cancer. She was diagnosed with cervical cancer in 1997 and, after a radical hysterectomy, was considered in complete remission. But five years later, a persistent pain in her back led Long to visit her local oncologist. "I went through a lot of tests, I even had surgery that March, but no one could figure out what was causing the pain," said Long.

The results of her biopsy caught Long slightly off-guard. She had some knowledge of myeloma; the mother of her best friend, Alyson Hall, had recently died of the rare form



Robyn Long (far right) was joined by her husband Randy and daughters Sara and Mandi at the "Friends Long For A Cure" event.

of cancer. She decided to put off treatment for a week to allow her to complete the purchase of her home. For the next three months, she underwent a series of chemotherapy treatments with little success.

"It just wasn't working, so I went to another doctor to get a second opinion," said Long. "I just felt like nobody could give me an answer that would work."

In early 2003, Long, whose family owns a car dealership in Eureka, Mo., was discussing her illness with a business associate who knew of a co-worker who had been treated at the Myeloma Institute. "He said I needed to find out all I could about the Myeloma Institute," said Long, who turned to the Internet to learn more about the MIRT and its director, Dr. Bart Barlogie. "Everyone I met online said he was one of the top doctors in the world. That was all I needed to know."

Long's first appointment at MIRT was in April 2003. Two months later, she underwent a stem-cell transplant. When she returned to Little Rock in late July, "Dr. Barlogie came in and said the transplant had failed," Long said. "But he said it was no big deal, that they had other things they could do."

The next step was treating Long's cancer with Velcade, a new drug approved for treatment of myeloma by the Food and Drug Administration earlier that year. "We tried the Velcade for several months, and I came back to MIRT to find out that it wasn't working either," said

Long, who agreed to take part in a Phase II clinical trial of a drug called Revimid, designed to improve the body's immune system functions.

Currently in the 10th round of treatment, Long saw some improvement in her health shortly after entering the trial. "My M (monoclonal) spike, my beta 2-microglobulin level, they were all coming down. The numbers were coming down very slowly but they were coming down."

Even more reassuring to Long was the disappearance of tumors on her skull and lung. "I've still got the tumors on my sacrum (part of the spinal column). They're not growing, but they're not getting any smaller. Dr. Barlogie is trying different things to deal with it, he may even put me back on Velcade for that extra little push to get me into remission."

Long credits her family, including her husband, Randy, and daughters, Sara and Mandi, for helping her through a difficult period and has even come to look at the MIRT as a second home. "I look forward to every trip to Little Rock. It's like I'm walking into a giant home where all of these people are going through the same thing I am. The feeling you get is so incredible, the nurses, the doctors. . . it seems like everyone wants to help you. That doesn't happen everywhere."

SUPPORTIVE CARE HELPS PATIENTS DEAL WITH DISEASE, TREATMENT

It's not enough to treat the complications that inevitably arise as a result of therapy for multiple myeloma, according to Dr. Elias Anaissie. Anticipating these complications and doing whatever is necessary to help patients overcome them is equally important.

With that goal in mind, Anaissie and a team

of physicians, nurses, pharmacists and research scientists are seeking ways to identify those patients most likely to experience



Elias Anaissie

Research and Therapy, Anaissie has devoted the last eight years at the Myeloma Institute to studying problems like fatigue, anemia, infections and depression, and attending to patients who experience these side effects.

"The key is to anticipate what the patients will have and not wait until they have the complications," explained Anaissie. "Most patients tell you that the most difficult problems they encounter are the complications from cancer treatment. What we're trying to do is prevent these complications and help patients go through treatment as safely and comfortably as possible."

The Supportive Care staff connects with patients on a daily basis, including weekends.

"We provide at least 95 percent of our myeloma treatment on an outpatient basis; the only time we admit someone to the hospital is if close monitoring is necessary," says Anaissie. Patients seen in the outpatient setting are more likely to be relaxed, sleep and eat better and get the exercise they need, and are less likely to be exposed to potential infections, he added.

By researching the complications, the Supportive Care team is able to determine the best way to deal with them based on the patient's myeloma treatment. Through one of Anaissie's ongoing studies of fatigue, patients are given a drug to increase red-blood cell production from the onset of their myeloma

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survival to 6-7 years, and raised 10-year survival rates from 5 percent to as high as 30 percent.

An autologous stem cell transplant consists of collection of peripheral blood stem cells from the patient before the patient undergoes high-dose chemotherapy. The patient's own stem cells are then given back to the patient to promote recovery from the high-dose chemotherapy.

"After 5,000 transplants, we know more about myeloma and how to treat it than anybody else in the world," said Barlogie. "We've learned so much from our patients, about their needs and what works best for them. We could not have come so far without their cooperation."

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treatment. "We don't want to wait until the anemia develops," said Anaissie, adding that the drugs are provided at no cost to the patients on the study. The study also includes assignment of patients to exercise or to usual activity, with the goal of examining the effects of exercise on cancer fatigue. Preliminary results are encouraging. Compared to patients

performing the usual activity, patients assigned to the exercise group sleep better, walk longer distances and are able to lift more weight. This study is being conducted in collaboration with a team of researchers from the UAMS School of Nursing.

With immediate access to specialists in everything from behavioral medicine to social services, and who have expertise in the problems encountered with myeloma patients, the Supportive Care program offers a unique approach to myeloma therapy, noted Anaissie, who joined MIRT's staff in 1996 after 12 years at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. "Team members who are focused on myeloma and the therapies we offer understand that a patient cannot wait long to receive supportive care therapy. The advantage here is having immediate access to the appropriate experts"

Complications go hand-in-hand with treatments, said Anaissie. "There's no way around it. But our research experience tells us who is likely to get what complication and what to do to prevent it and treat it if it develops. With Supportive Care, our focus is on prevention, not just treatment."

PINEDA-ROMAN JOINS MIRT FACULTY



Mauricio Pineda-Roman, M.D., has joined the Myeloma Institute for Research and Therapy faculty as an Assistant Professor of Medicine.

Dr. Pineda-Roman received his medical degree from the Universidad del Valle School of Health Sciences in Colombia. He completed an Internal Medicine residency at Maricopa Medical Center in Phoenix, Ariz., where he was recognized as an Outstanding Senior Resident. Dr. Pineda-Roman completed a fellowship in Hematology/Oncology at Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Prior to fellowship, Dr. Pineda-Roman practiced Internal Medicine in Arizona for three years.

Dr. Pineda-Roman has numerous publications and presentations to his credit, including presentations at annual meetings of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. He is a member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the American Society of Hematology and is board certified in Internal Medicine and board eligible in Hematology/Oncology.

Fluent in Spanish, Dr. Pineda-Roman will be seeing patients in the outpatient clinic.

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