

CAREY BALABAN, PHD APPOINTED TO COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC TRUSTEES

The Deafness Research Foundation (DRF) welcomes Dr. Balaban, Professor of Otolaryngology to its CST. DRF leads funding of private research in hearing and balance science and the CST provides scientific advice and guidance for DRF-funded research projects and initiatives. Dr. Balaban will assist in strategic planning and advocacy for the DRF agenda, including efforts for the Department of Defense and Veterans Administration.

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PHYSICIAN PROFILE: BEYOND THE CLINIC

BY BARRY HIRSCH, MD

Under the direction of Barry Hirsch, MD, the University Ear Nose & Throat Specialists' Division of Otology/Neurotology at The Eye & Ear Institute leads in offering both otologic services to the people of western Pennsylvania, and volunteer activities that support the educational and hearing health care needs of our community and schools for the hearing impaired. Two such schools, the DePaul School for Hearing and Speech and Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, provide focused academic and language training for severely hearing impaired children. Dr. Hirsch not only serves on both boards of directors but is also an integral, comprehensive resource for information on maximizing hearing potentials and health of the children's ears.



Dr. Hirsch examines Lauren, one of the children under his care.

in a timely manner. The team also discusses otologic treatment issues and suggestions with the school's audiology staff.

But Dr. Hirsch's volunteer activities don't stop there. He also serves as the Executive and Medical Director of the Western Pennsylvania

Lions Hearing Foundation, a not-for-profit service organization founded in 1986. The need and focus of the Lions Hearing Foundation has evolved over time to provide hearing instruments to the people in western Pennsylvania who could not otherwise afford them. Initially, the organization provided resources for harvesting and

storing temporal bones for replacement of ossicles (hearing bones) during otologic surgery. They also purchased electro-mechanical devices for people whose larynx had to be removed due to cancer. Prior to insurance carriers covering the cost of cochlear implants for deaf patients, the Lions provided key assistance to those who needed help to obtain that technology, which was considered experimental during the early 1990s. Currently, cochlear implants are usually covered by many insurance providers. Hearing aids, on the other hand, are rarely covered by insurance and can be very costly, so the Lions now provide assistance for this area of hearing care.

The Foundation board, composed of the Lion governors from the six districts throughout

Continued on page 8

FROM THE CHAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY



In a school of medicine, a specialty department such as Otolaryngology (ears, nose, and throat) has a mission to provide outstanding care to patients in an environment of education and continued practice improvement. It also has a commitment to research because it is through research that progress is made and new and more successful therapies become available. Most research begins in the laboratory. As findings are

made and after safety has been evaluated, some of these research discoveries may be become available for patient use.

In the Department of Otolaryngology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and UPMC, our experts are outstanding, very well qualified individuals. Many of our doctors have had subspecialty training. They care for patients at University Ear, Nose & Throat Specialists in The Eye & Ear Institute alongside medical students, residents and fully trained ear, nose, and throat specialists who serve as observers and assistants. This is a time-honored approach to medical education which helps establish the next generation of physicians. Likewise, our researchers operate major laboratories and are currently conducting clinical research projects in areas such as head and neck cancer, dizziness, and ringing in the ears (tinnitus). The department also performs research which seeks to reduce scarring associated with healing, as well as other projects which study the effect of changes in atmospheric pressure on the ear.

Today's investments in education and research, from research participation to private philanthropy, help ensure outstanding and potentially improved medical care in the future. The hospital and medical school invest in this process, as does the federal government which makes funds available on a competitive basis for investigators to use toward the completion of their research. But despite these sources of aid, continuing progress in research on ear, nose and throat diseases depends on the everyday generosity of grateful patients, families and friends, businesses and foundations who champion our mission. We thank you for your support.

Jonas T. Johnson, MD

The Dr. Eugene N. Myers Professor and
Chair in Otolaryngology
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
Eye & Ear Foundation Chair, The Eye & Ear Institute

DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY



The UPMC Eye Center is the Department of Ophthalmology of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. We are 23 clinical faculty strong, and we cover all of the specialty and subspecialty areas of eye care. These include cataract surgery, comprehensive ophthalmology, cornea and external disease, glaucoma, neuro-ophthalmology, oculoplastic surgery, optometry, pediatric ophthalmology and strabismus, refractive surgery, and retina – both medical retina and vitreoretinal surgery. We provide care 24 hours a day, seven days a week through our regular clinical and emergency services, and do our very best to be available for care within 48 hours of a patient's request to be seen. We are present at nine locations through the city and suburbs of Pittsburgh.

The UPMC Eye Center is focused on the delivery of the absolutely highest quality care in a patient centered environment. Our clinical standard is to offer patients appointments within 72 hours, frequently within 24-48 hours. Providing access to excellent care in convenient locations is central to our clinical mission.

We are among the top 15 ophthalmology departments in National Institutes of Health funding. We have 18 basic scientists working passionately to identify causes and cures for diseases of the eye, including macular degeneration, glaucoma and diabetes, as well as infectious diseases and tumors. Some of our scientists are studying the very genes and molecules that form the eye, and we are already working on bionic vision – substituting other senses and feeding visual information to the brain in new ways. We strive to cure the diseases that today afflict us, and we are taking many paths to that goal.

Teaching of the next generation of ophthalmologists and scientists studying the eye happens every day at UPMC Eye Center. Through our highly competitive residency program, our medical students, clinical fellows, graduate students and postdoctoral associates – we are training those who will provide care and seek out new solutions far into the future.

Joel S. Schuman, MD, FACS

Eye & Ear Foundation Professor and
Chairman of Ophthalmology
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
Director, UPMC Eye Center, The Eye and Ear Institute

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

BY LAUREN WALLY

Dr. Paul “Kip” Kinchington knows what it is to be busy. An Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, Molecular Microbiology and Genetics in the Department of Ophthalmology, he also makes time to be an active member of the Shadyside/Squirrel Hill Lions Club, a husband and dad to two children, ages 5 and 7, as well as perfecting his two loves — windsurfing and custom coin jewelry making.

Kip moved from his native England to the United States in 1983, working in Bethesda, Maryland before joining the University of Pittsburgh in 1991. Here, his NIH-funded research examines the ways in which two human herpes viruses – herpes simplex virus and the Varicella Zoster virus (VZV) – interact with host cells, particularly sensory neurons which are activated by sensory input such as vision. He is one of a few researchers examining VZV, the cause of chickenpox and Herpes Zoster, also known as shingles. Shingles is a debilitating disease which causes long-term pain, can be extremely difficult to treat, and can even result in serious eye damage or vision loss. According to Dr. Kinchington, “this is a horrible and terrible affliction, particularly in the elderly, that can depress people to the point of making them think of giving up and considering suicide.” His goal is to determine why VZV causes such pain and how we may be able to better treat it.

Kip also helps folks on a more intimate level in his role as an active, as well as founding member and secretary of a Pittsburgh chapter of a

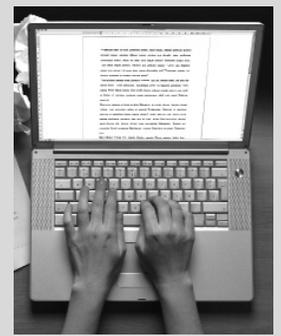


Paul Kinchington, PhD

Lions Club. “Many people think that the Lions is just about collecting eyeglasses and selling brooms for those in need; however, it’s much more,” he says. The Squirrel Hill chapter raises monies to help those in need, especially the vision impaired. For example, they support rehabilitation camps

for those adjusting to vision loss, and work with the Pittsburgh Schools vision specialists to ensure that students can “see” and have access to glasses when they can’t afford them. Lions-associated foundations have also generously funded eye research at Pitt, including their most recent donation to the Louis J. Fox Center for Vision Restoration, a joint program of the UPMC Eye Center and the McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine. The Center is the first national, comprehensive, multi-disciplinary research and clinical program dedicated to ocular regenerative medicine.

Dr. Kinchington’s life is one of giving back. For more information on his research and work with the Lions, email kinchingtonp@upmc.edu. To make a charitable gift, contact the Eye & Ear Foundation at 412-383-8756 or info@eyeandear.org.



IN YOUR OWN WORDS

The Departments of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology at UPMC and the University of Pittsburgh are founded on a commitment to leading-edge research, education, and clinical care programs. All efforts of the Eye & Ear Foundation are designed to support those programs. This newsletter in particular is aimed at connecting readers with the very best in eye, ear, nose, throat, head and neck care and building awareness and support for the life-changing work in Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology. You – **yes, you!** – can help us achieve these goals. Share your story at www.eyeandear.org. Or email info@eyeandear.org and tell us what you’d like to read more about in *Sight + Sound*. We’d love to hear from you!

SHARE THE GIFT OF HEARING



Don’t throw out your old or unwanted hearing aids! Recycling your used hearing aids is a great way to make a tax deductible gift through the Eye & Ear Foundation that will directly impact the quality of life for an adult or child suffering hearing loss or impairment. Any make or model, regardless of age, can be donated to the Hearing Aid Recycling Program. Your gift really can make a difference.

To participate, please securely package the hearing aid along with your name, address and telephone number and mail to:

The Eye & Ear Foundation
Hearing Aid Recycling Program
203 Lothrop Street, S119 BST
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

SOME THINGS ARE HARD TO SWALLOW

BY ROXANN DIEZ GROSS, PHD

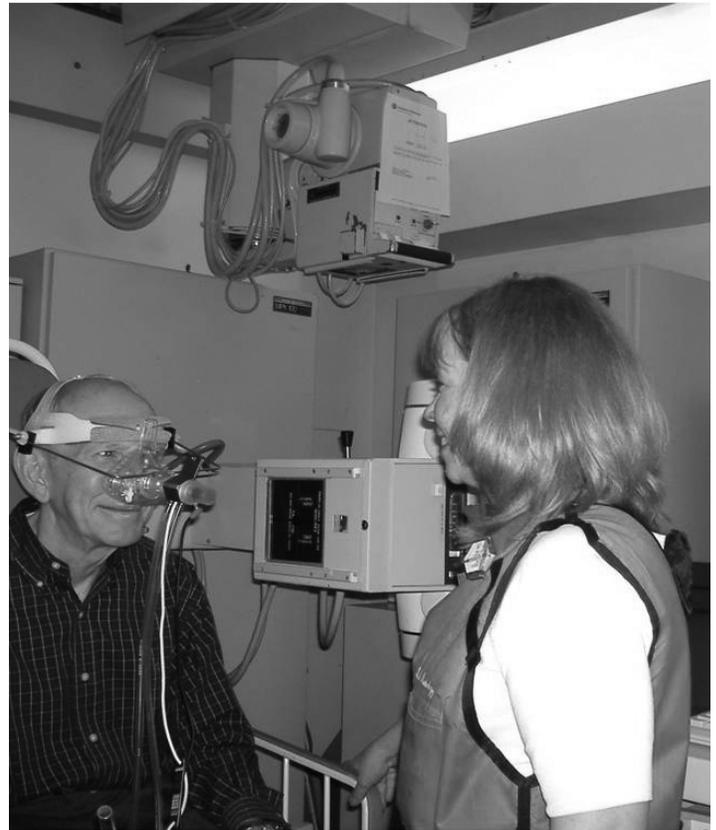
Each day we receive great comfort and pleasure when we quench our thirst and enjoy foods that are full of flavor. But imagine being unable to drink liquids or eat anything...for days... months...years. What if your child, parent or loved one was unable to eat or drink safely? How would family gatherings be affected? For many people and their families, this is reality. In fact, an estimated 15-18 million Americans have dysphagia (DIS-FAY-JA), or difficulty swallowing.

Though seemingly a simple function, swallowing is a complex and highly coordinated sensory and motor action that changes depending upon what and how much we place in our mouths. Many conditions place people at risk for a swallowing disorder. Stroke, head or spinal injury, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), muscular dystrophy and polymyositis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), dementia, scleroderma, head and neck cancer, and many more can all impair swallowing ability.

There is little government funding to support research dedicated to improving swallowing function. Nevertheless, the experts of UPMC's Swallowing Disorders Center are devoted to helping people who cannot eat and/or drink normally.

In collaboration with the Emphysema Research Center (ERC) at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, we completed the first study to define and measure the mechanism that generates airway pressure during each swallow. This helped develop the first non-invasive method to evaluate swallowing airway pressures. We have tested the method on healthy adults, persons with Parkinson's disease, and patients with moderate to severe COPD. Our findings will soon be used to detect impaired breathing and swallowing patterns, treat, and one day prevent dysphagia.

Currently, we have a project underway in collaboration with Pitt's Neurology Department and ERC. Together, we are conducting the first study to measure lung volume at the time of each swallow in patients with Parkinson's disease. Early evidence shows that mistimed swallows within the respiratory cycle are more likely to result in aspiration (food and drink entering the airway). This work is important because the most common cause of death for Parkinson's patients is aspiration pneumonia. The Swallowing Disorders Center is also working to improve care for head and neck cancer patients. Patients that receive chemotherapy and radiation often develop dysphagia and some are at risk of permanently losing the ability to swallow. To combat this, we have been studying the beneficial effects of high dose Omega-3 fatty acids given in the form of liquid fish oil. As a result, many of our research participants have done exceedingly well and were able to eat solid food throughout their treatments.



Dr. Gross's study for Parkinson's patients shows lung volume when they swallow—this will help her lab better understand breathing and swallowing coordination.

The progress of our Center continued just this past summer. On June 30, 2009, I received a US patent (7,555,329 B2) for a computer program and method that use X-ray images to measure how much food or drink enters the airway or remains in the throat after swallowing. This new capability gives our research studies much greater accuracy and we hope to further develop the technology so that it can be made available to others. In a similar vein, we will soon begin an exciting pilot study with Pitt's ERC that will measure pressures in the esophagus while participants swallow at different lung volumes. This work will support a new therapeutic technique that appears to be highly effective for patients that have the sensation of a lump in their throat or feel food sticking in their chest or neck. This problem, like dysphagia, has a devastating effect on quality of life.

So much media attention is focused on eating, over-eating, unhealthy eating, dining out, fast food, dieting, anorexia and obesity—we even have a Food Network. Yet millions of children and adults struggle with altered diets or silently use feeding tubes, just to get sufficient nourishment. Through research and care, we are committed to preventing dysphagia and restoring swallowing function to as many as possible.



GRATEFUL PATIENTS, RESEARCH PARTNERS

Breathing and swallowing are vital functions that many take for granted. Yet patients with Parkinson's disease or COPD struggle with them daily. One patient under the care of Dr. Roxann Diez Gross at The Eye & Ear Institute understands this all too well and was excited to help when an opportunity arose to support research in this area.

A generous year-end gift from this grateful patient is enabling Dr. Gross's lab to complete a study identifying patients' lung volume during each swallow. Findings from the study will also provide information about the respiratory system's behavior in relation to swallowing.

Like this generous donor, your support can make the difference. Give today.

MEET THE FOUNDATION

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

It is truly an honor to serve as the Executive Director of the Eye & Ear Foundation of Pittsburgh. I started this position this past December and already feel close to the people, the programs, and the mission. The Foundation exists to advance and promote the leading-edge academic and research efforts of the Departments of Otolaryngology and Ophthalmology at the University of Pittsburgh, with the ultimate goal of enhancing patient care.

It is only natural for anyone to get excited when they see the work of these exceptional departments first hand. I have spent most of my time in my first few weeks meeting with faculty and exploring the labs and facilities in The Eye & Ear Institute, the building that houses these two departments, to learn about the latest advances in science. I can tell you today's clinical advances in care have improved the lives of countless individuals who previously would have suffered loss of senses or possible death. It is surprising that only a handful of medical research centers in the United States focus their research efforts on these issues. In Pittsburgh though, we have been on the leading edge of this research for years. It is my hope that through the Foundation, with your help, we can create a future where people will not have to live without sight, sound, speech, taste, smell, balance, or the ability to swallow.

Generous support from individuals helps to close the gaps in research not covered by NIH (National Institutes of Health) funding. Gifts to the Eye & Ear Foundation enable The Eye & Ear Institute to seed new research by emerging researchers, and attract and retain the best and brightest in faculty, staff and students. Philanthropic support also funds core facilities and leading-edge equipment for research, education and care – providing new science for new solutions.

I encourage you to call or visit us at the Eye & Ear Foundation. Our Program Manager, Jacquelin Walker, or I, would be happy to meet with you to schedule a tour of some of the research areas. This will allow you to see and hear, like I have, how far we've come and the potential for the future.

Best,

Lawton Snyder
Executive Director

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EAST MEETS WEST

BY LAUREN WALLY

Did you know that dry eye disease is more common than glaucoma and cataracts? Surprisingly, 4.3 million people in the United States suffer from the disease. Dry eye is caused by the inability to produce enough tears or the appropriate quality of tears to keep the eye healthy and comfortable.

Despite maximum medical therapy for dry eye, including over-the-counter artificial tear supplements and surgery to redirect the flow of tear production, a number of patients still experience aggravating symptoms.

There is an alternative procedure available at the UPMC Eye Center though, one of the few ophthalmology facilities in the United States offering this holistic approach—acupuncture.

Acupuncture is an ancient traditional Chinese healing technique. It is based upon the idea of living beings possessing a life force called Qi (pronounced “chi”), which flows throughout the body. When a person is in pain or suffering from a disease, it is believed that their Qi is blocked.

Acupuncture is a technique used to restore the flow of Qi. Deepinder K. Dhaliwal, MD, an Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, Director of the Cornea and Refractive Surgery Services at the UPMC Eye Center, and a licensed acupuncturist, is a pioneer in using acupuncture for the treatment of dry eye disease. She believes that this holistic approach may be the solution that many patients need. It is a very safe procedure, and there are usually no side effects associated with the treatment. Needles are not placed near the eyes or in the face, which is a common misconception. Treatment must be performed on two visits, one day apart. It may then be repeated after nine to twelve months, but this time varies among patients.

In 2007, the UPMC Eye Center’s Center for Integrative Eye Care (CIEC) opened its doors under the direction of Dr. Dhaliwal and began to address the need for such alternative therapies. The first program of its kind in the

United States, the Center includes both clinical and research components. Its mission is to enhance the level of patient care through alternative therapies that complement traditional ophthalmology, and to increase understanding of the mechanisms and benefits of these therapies through rigorous clinical trials. Although the effectiveness of acupuncture as a treatment for some conditions that do not respond fully to traditional Western medicine can be demonstrated, the underlying mechanism that provides relief is not well understood yet.

Dr. Dhaliwal is currently pursuing research that attempts to illuminate the workings of acupuncture in addition to measuring and documenting its effectiveness. The CIEC is conducting an IRB-approved, double-blind, randomized, controlled clinical trial to objectively assess and document the efficacy of acupuncture as a treatment for dry eye. There is presently no such study in peer-reviewed literature. Active recruitment is currently underway for the study, and there is no cost for the acupuncture treatment for study participants. When enrolled, participants are randomized to either receive the real acupuncture treatment or a false treatment. There are a total of six study visits. At the end of the study, patients that received the false treatment are entitled to receive a real acupuncture treatment at no cost. If interested in participating in this study, please call the study coordinator, Theresa DiCaprio, at 412.624.4797.

Dr. Dhaliwal believes the overall approach of the Center for Integrative Eye Care will be of great benefit to patients as they strive to improve ophthalmic conditions that affect their everyday life. According to Dr. Dhaliwal, “We have been able to make a dramatic impact in people’s lives with the use of acupuncture as an adjunctive treatment for dry eye disease. I am excited to offer patients the best of Eastern and Western medicine and look forward to publishing our results in the peer-reviewed literature.”



Deepinder K. Dhaliwal, MD

To support research for alternative therapies at CIEC, contact 412-383-8756 or info@eyeandear.org. Or make a gift via our secure Website, www.eyeandear.org.

I am
excited to
offer patients
the best of
Eastern and
Western
medicine



Robert L Hendricks, PhD -- Joseph F Novak Chair in Ophthalmology Research.

UNIVERSITY HONORS DR. HENDRICKS

BY JACQUELIN WALKER

On March 25, 2010, Robert L. Hendricks, PhD will be recognized by the University of Pittsburgh as the Joseph F. Novak Chair in Ophthalmology Research as part of the Provost's Inaugural Lecture Series. Dr. Hendricks' lecture, "Scientific discovery is a journey best enjoyed with friends", will be delivered at 4:30pm in Posvar Hall at the University. The Provost's Inaugural Lectures are given by named/endowed Chairs and newly-appointed distinguished professors.

The Eye & Ear Foundation's campaign to establish the Novak Chair began in 2005 with the intent to honor Pittsburgh's own Dr. Joseph F. Novak. For more than half a century, Dr. Novak dedicated his life to ophthalmology—as a practicing physician, consultant to U.S. Steel, professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and Eye & Ear Foundation board member. In March 2006, Dr.

Hendricks was named as the incumbent holder of the Novak Chair for his own commitment to immunology and ophthalmology research.

At the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Hendricks holds joint appointments as a professor in the Departments of Ophthalmology, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics and Biochemistry. He also serves as Director of the Ophthalmology and Visual Science Research Center, as well as Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Ophthalmology. Here, Dr. Hendricks has focused his research on herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1). This virus is usually associated with infections of the face and can result in cold sores, eye disease, and even infection of the lining of the brain. In the case of eye disease, HSV-1 progressively scars the cornea, making it a leading infectious cause of blindness. Dr. Hendricks' lab is studying the interaction between HSV-1 and the body's immune cells with the hope of finding better treatment and one day, developing a vaccine.

Dr. Hendricks' research has received generous support from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) throughout his years at the University of Pittsburgh. However, the philanthropy of everyday people – grateful Eye & Ear patients and families, former patients and friends of the Novaks, and businesses committed to advancing leading-edge science and enhancing patient care – has played an integral role in providing Dr. Hendricks with protected research time by making the Novak Chair a reality. The Eye & Ear Foundation is proud to support our physicians and scientists as they strive for new science and new solutions.

YOUR GIVING MATTERS!

As a supporting organization, but a separate 501 (c)(3), the Eye & Ear Foundation is focused solely on raising philanthropic support and awareness for the ground-breaking research, leading education, and people-centered care programs of the Departments of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology at The Eye & Ear Institute. There are many worthy efforts within both departments, and various ways to give through the Foundation.

Annual giving is the lifeblood of the departments. Gifts, including stock, can be made to the Foundation by phone, mail, email, or via our secure

Website, www.eyeandear.org. Pledges can also be made, payable over three to five years.

Endowed and planned gifts are two other excellent ways to support the work of the Eye & Ear by providing secure research time for our physician-scientists. Endowed gifts allow the departments to recruit exceptional leaders in the fields of ophthalmology and otolaryngology, or to recognize and retain talented faculty members. Planned giving can establish a legacy within our departments that you can be proud of.

To ensure new science and new solutions, private support is more important than ever. Anyone, regardless of age or income level, can be a philanthropist. Partner with us today.

You can purpose your gifts to be unrestricted, allowing them to be applied where they're most needed. But you may also designate your gift or pledge for a specific area of interest. All gifts are accepted in accordance with Eye & Ear Foundation Gift Acceptance Policies and Procedures. For details, please contact Executive Director Lawton Snyder at 412-383-8756 or lawtons@eyeandear.org.

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The official registration and financial information
of the Eye & Ear Foundation may be obtained
from the Pennsylvania Department of State
by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania,
1 (800) 732-0999. Registration does not
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Beyond the Clinic continued from page 1

western Pennsylvania, has developed criteria for financial eligibility for those in need. Comprehensive otologic examinations and audiologic assessments are conducted by one of The Eye & Ear Institute's otolaryngology physicians at one of seven offices in the region. Though most potential patients have care provided at Eye & Ear in Oakland, the other satellite facilities ease travel hardships for those in distant communities like Cranberry, Indiana and Level Green. Hearing aid distribution is overseen by the Division of Audiology under the direction of Dr. Catherine Palmer.

Hearing loss can be devastating and has the potential to isolate people. But thanks to Dr. Hirsch and the experts in the Division of Otology at the Eye & Ear, community organizations like The Western Pennsylvania Lions Hearing Foundation and the DePaul School for Hearing and Speech and Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, comprehensive care and community outreach can be offered to those in need, from the youngest patients to the oldest. Drs. Barry Hirsch and Yael Raz, and Ryan Marovich, PA-C lead the Ear and Hearing Center of the Division of Otology/Neurotology



LIONS MEETING WITH DR. HIRSCH
(seated): P. Blair; B. Hirsch, MD; K. Laskody;
C. Battistone (standing): M. Downing; S.
Pityk; D. Taylor; J. McGaughey; R. Yeager;
J. Schimmel; E. Musselman (not present):
T. Roberts, President

at Eye & Ear. The Division gladly welcomes Andrew McCall, MD from Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, who joins the clinical and research teams this summer.

For appointments with the Ear and Hearing Center, call 412-647-2100 (Oakland) or 412-621-0123 (Shadyside). If you'd like to support the research and clinical programs of the Division of Otology, contact the Eye & Ear Foundation at 412-383-8756 or visit www.eyear.org.