



**SP**ondylo**Ar**thritis **R**esearch & **T**reatment **N**etwork

Volume 3 Issue 2

## SPARTAN NEWS

Greetings!

As we start the new academic year, it is exciting to see enthusiastic new fellows embarking on their rheumatology training. Their future is bright, and that makes the future of Spondyloarthritis bright too.

Since the annual meeting, we have been working to finalize the CLASSIC study. There will be an investigator meeting at ACR for those that are signed up to participate. We are planning for Sunday evening. Details to follow.

The SPARTAN-GRAPPA symposia have continued this year. I'd like to thank Atul Deodhar and Philip Mease for chairing these outstanding meetings over the last several years. The Education committee has taken on the oversight of these, and Joerg Ermann has agreed to chair the ACR symposium in November.

I want to thank Michael Weisman for agreeing to chair the Web communications committee. Jonathan Kay will be joining his team; we look forward to continued improvement in our website and dissemination of information to our members.

Finally, Liron Caplan is now chairing the registry committee. He will help create the foundation for the registry via the CLASSIC study participants. If there is interest in particular research questions, please contact us now so we can think of these in a prospective manner.

All the best,  
Lianne



Lianne Gensler, MD  
Chair, SPARTAN

**SPARTAN Annual Research and Education Meeting**

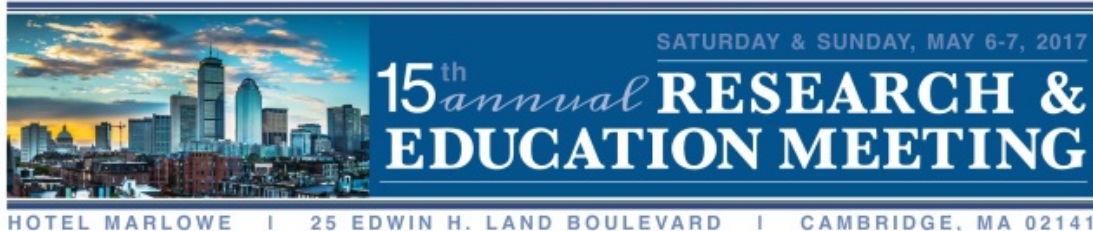
## Recap

The 15th annual meeting of members took place in Cambridge, MA on May 5-7th. The event was graciously hosted by Joerg Ermann, MD, with co-hosts Maureen Dubreuil, MD and Mark Fisher, MD/MPH. Approximately 150 investigators, trainees, and industry representatives attended the meeting, which included a pre-meeting Research Coordinator Workshop, Trainee Symposium, and Investigator Meeting for a planned Classification Criteria study. Scientific sessions centered on axial imaging in Spondyloarthritis, finding and defining axial Spondyloarthritis, fellows oral and poster abstract presentation, interactive clinical case discussions, and a session dedicated to cellular disease mechanisms. A Saturday evening cruise in Boston Harbor rounded out the weekend's events.

The Laurie Savage Lifetime Achievement Award was established this year to honor an individual who has gone beyond the call of duty to provide exceptional dedication to Spondyloarthritis research, patient care, and education. The initial award was given to Laurie Savage in appreciation of outstanding vision, exceptional dedication, and passionate commitment to the field of Spondyloarthritis.

# SPARTAN

SPONDYLOARTHRITIS RESEARCH AND TREATMENT NETWORK



Save the date for next year's meeting Friday May 4 and Saturday May 5, 2018 at the Hotel Marlowe. Pre-meeting workshops will be held on Thursday, May 3.

## SPARTAN Seed Grant Awardees Announced



The inaugural round of seed grant funding recipients was announced at the SPARTAN Annual Meeting in Cambridge in May.

**Dr. Kristi Kuhn, MD, Ph.D.** (University of Colorado SOM) will be investigating *Understanding the pathophysiology of spondyloarthritis by characterizing trafficking lymphocytes in the gut-joint axis*, while **Runsheng Wang, MD, MHS** (Columbia University Medical Center) will be studying *N-of-1 trials of Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs in Spondyloarthritis with adaptive design*.

Recipients receive \$10,000 per year for up to two years in support of their investigations.

## Summary of Literature

- Mark Hwang, MD

1. Park, W., Yoo, D. -, Miranda, P., Brzosko, M., Wiland, P., Gutierrez-Ureña, S., . . . Braun, J. (2017).

**Efficacy and safety of switching from reference infliximab to CT-P13 compared with maintenance of CT-P13 in ankylosing spondylitis: 102-week data from the PLANETAS extension study.** *Annals of the*

*This study in an open-label extension of the Program evaluating the Autoimmune disease INvestigational drug cT-p13 in AS (PLANETAS) study, a 54-week randomized controlled study comparing the biosimilar CT-P13 and its infliximab reference product (RP). They followed 174 patients who completed the first 54 weeks of the PLANETAS study up to 102 weeks with patients who were originally randomized to RP switched to CT-P13. Similar response curves were noted between the maintenance on CP-T13 and switched to CT-P13 arms; 80.7% and 76.9%, respectively, achieved an ASAS20 response at 102 weeks.*

2. Lambert, R. G. W., Bakker, P. A. C., Van Der Heijde, D., Weber, U., Rudwaleit, M., Hermann, K. - A., . . . Landewé, R. (2016).

**Defining active sacroiliitis on MRI for classification of axial spondyloarthritis: Update by the ASAS MRI working group.** *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, 75(11), 1958-1963. doi:10.1136/annrheumdis-2015-208642

*This update from the ASAS/OMERACT MRI working group reexamined the current ASAS definition of positive MRI in axSpA. The working group examined studies up to 2014 from clinical registries worldwide and specifically considered SI joint structural changes as well as spinal MRI changes. The ASAS definition of positive MRI for AxSpA remains 'active sacroiliitis' that was further clarified in this study.*

3. Stolwijk, C., van Onna, M., Boonen, A., & van Tubergen, A. (2016).

**Global prevalence of spondyloarthritis: A systematic review and meta-regression analysis.** *Arthritis Care and Research*, 68(9), 1320-1331. doi:10.1002/acr.22831

*This systematic review and meta-analysis studied the global prevalence of SpA and its subtypes. Large variations in prevalence were seen based on geographic area and studies' case collection method.*

4. Paramarta, J. E., Turina, M. C., Noordenbos, T., Heijda, T. F., Blijdorp, I. C., Yeremenko, N., & Baeten, D. (2016).

**A proof-of-concept study with the tyrosine kinase inhibitor nilotinib in spondyloarthritis.** *Journal of Translational Medicine*, 14(1) doi:10.1186/s12967-016-1050-2

*In a small, proof-of-concept clinical trial of 28 patients, patients were randomized 1:1 between nilotinib, a tyrosine kinase inhibitor, vs. placebo for 12 weeks followed by an open label extension for 12 weeks. Disease activity, synovial inflammation, and inflammatory markers were noted to improve in peripheral SpA patients however this was not observed in the axSpA patients.*

## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The communications committee has met regularly over the past year and facilitated

the regular publication of this newsletter, with 4 newsletters issued since May 2016. Liron Caplan is stepping down from his position as Chair of the Communications Committee to focus on the development of SPARTAN's Registry. Board member Michael Weisman will be assuming the Chair of this committee moving forward. The Committee has recently expanded the scope of SPARTAN's website with substantial additional content that includes the organization's history, archiving of past newsletters, and improved navigation. Suggested improvements to the website are strongly encouraged...please contact committee member Mark Hwang (hwangm[at]wustl.edu).

## Announcing our new and improved website...

Check us out at [www.spartangroup.org](http://www.spartangroup.org)

## SPARTAN CLINICAL TRIALS

- Vikas Majithia, MD

The clinical trials sub-committee (CTC) has been busy the last year moving forward with its agenda of improving the clinical care for patients with spondyloarthritis (SpA) by providing a platform to facilitate clinical trials in SpA in North America under the umbrella of SPARTAN. The potential role and mission of CTC was discussed in detail at annual meeting in 2016. In addition, the CTC coordinated the clinical trial workshops at 2016 and 2017 annual meetings. These workshops provided a refresher on conduct of SpA clinical trials for investigators as well as study coordinators/research assistants. CTC also coordinated hands on workshops on metrology for the SpA investigators and study coordinators at 2016 annual meeting in Denver and facilitated these workshops at 2017 annual meeting at Boston. In the upcoming year, CTC plans to finalize its mission statement and goals and provide this information on SPARTAN website. CTC is also diligently working on developing a questionnaire to collect information about North American investigators who are interested in performing SpA clinical trials.

## SPARTAN-GRAPPA SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE



Saturday, September 23  
8:00 am - 3:30 pm  
InterContinental Cleveland  
9801 Carnegie Avenue

[Register for Cleveland](#)



Saturday, October 14  
8:00 am - 3:30 pm  
Louisiana State University  
LSU Lions Clinic Building  
2020 Gravier Street

[Register for New Orleans](#)



Wednesday, November 8  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

*details and registration for  
the Post-ACR annual  
symposium coming soon...*

[www.spartangroup.org](http://www.spartangroup.org)

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