

SNM AWARDS MALLINCKRODT FELLOWSHIP TO CARDIOVASCULAR PHYSICIAN

The Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) has selected Martha J. Senneff, MD, as this year's recipient of the annual Mallinckrodt Fellowship Award. Established last year by Mallinckrodt's Medical Division, the Fellowship Award is designated to fund promising research programs of outstanding nuclear medicine scientists. The \$30,000 grant will be presented to Dr. Senneff at SNM's Annual Meeting in Washington, DC in June.

Currently pursuing a four-year research fellowship in the cardiovascular division of Washington University School of Medicine, in St. Louis, Missouri, Dr. Senneff was chosen for her proposed study entitled "Evaluation of Perfusion Abnormalities in the Transplanted Heart." This planned research, wrote Dr. Senneff in her application to the SNM Awards Committee, "is directed towards the improved understanding of myocardial perfusion and the noninvasive detection of abnormalities in perfusion in patients with cardiac transplants through the use of positron emission tomography [PET]." The research project is designed to validate a convenient method for using PET to measure blood flow through walls of the heart to eliminate the need for routine cardiac catheterization in transplant patients. "Yearly cardiac catheterization subjects the transplant patients to a risk of morbidity and trauma," explains Dr. Senneff. "A major problem in the long-term survival following transplantation is the development of accelerated atherosclerosis. PET offers a less traumatic, noninvasive procedure to measure blood flow in these patients."

In a letter supporting Dr. Senneff's

application, Burton E. Sobel, MD, Lewin Professor of Medicine and director of Washington University School of Medicine's cardiovascular division, commented, "Her work will provide criteria for objective assessment of the status of the microvasculature and macrovasculature in transplanted hearts over time. . . the work has the potential of providing superior alternatives to present monitoring procedures."

In another letter of support, Steven R. Bergmann, MD, PhD, associate professor of medicine at Washington University, wrote "The long-term survival of patients with cardiac transplantation depends on early detection of [coronary disease] abnormalities." Furthermore, he explains, "Assessment of myocardial perfusion and perfusion reserve may be a more specific approach to early delineation of the complications in patients. The proposed project has the potential for improving the follow-up of [cardiac transplant] patients and for providing insights into the nature of perfusion and perfusion regulation in these patients who lack normal cardiac innervation." Dr. Senneff will conduct the newly funded research in collaboration with Dr. Bergmann.

Commenting on the recipient's qualifications, Dr. Sobel told *Newsline* that Dr. Senneff's previous studies in cardiovascular diseases "are particularly noteworthy and likely to change the thinking of the cardiovascular community with regard to the pathogenesis of this entity and the primacy of metabolic disturbances" and have "contributed substantively to tomographic delineation of regional oxygen consumption with the use of radiolabeled acetate and metabolic stress induced



Martha J. Senneff, MD

with dobutamine." He adds that "Dr. Senneff is committed to a career in academic medicine. She is conscientious, highly motivated, innovative, and meticulous in her acquisition of data and data analysis." According to Dr. Sobel, Dr. Senneff has already completed various research studies requiring a knowledge of positron-emitting radionuclides, image processing, and cardiovascular physiology.

"We were very pleased by the high caliber of all the research proposals submitted for consideration for the Mallinckrodt Fellowship Awards," says chairman of the Society's Awards Committee, William J. MacIntyre, PhD, past president of the Society. "Dr. Senneff's proposal to determine if PET can assess the status of coronary vascular disease in the heart transplant recipient combined the

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NEWS BRIEFS

Barry A. Siegel, MD Appointed Chairman of NRC's ACMUI

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) recently appointed Barry Siegel, MD, as Chairman of its Advisory Committee for the Medical Uses of Isotopes (ACMUI). Dr. Siegel, professor of radiology and director of the nuclear medicine division at Washington University's Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology, is the first non-governmental appointee to chair the Committee.

Dr. Siegel will serve as the principal interface between the NRC and ACMUI, which advises the Commission on the development of standards and criteria for regulating and licensing uses of radionuclides in medical care and research. As Chairman, Dr. Siegel will help establish the mechanics of the meetings and organize the agenda. Dr. Siegel told *Newsline* that he is looking forward to the prospect of chairing ACMUI and hopes that the Committee will provide an improved forum for the exchange of information between the medical community and the NRC.

Dr. John Glenn, chief of the NRC's

medical, academic, and commercial use safety branch, outlined some of the changes that the Commission hopes to see in ACMUI. He told *Newsline* that ACMUI will meet more frequently than in the past. Formerly, the Committee met about once every two years and only when there was a specific issue to discuss. Now, the Committee will meet at least twice a year and will formulate its own agenda.

The Commission selected Dr. Siegel because of his wide range of experience and extensive involvement in committee work. Dr. Siegel has formerly served as Chairman of the Food and Drug Administration's Radiopharmaceutical Drugs Advisory Committee and is vice-chairman of the American College of Radiology Commission on Nuclear Medicine and secretary of the American Board of Nuclear Medicine. ■

SNM/ACNP Testifies on DOE's 1991 Nuclear Medicine Budget

On April 3, R. Edward Coleman, MD, professor of radiology at Duke University Medical Center, in Durham,

North Carolina, appeared before the House Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development to offer testimony on the Department of Energy's (DOE) proposed fiscal year 1991 budget for nuclear medicine research. Speaking on behalf of The Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) and the American College of Nuclear Physicians (ACNP), Dr. Coleman stated that the Bush Administration's projected allocation of \$37,015,000 for the DOE's Medical Applications Program — which includes nuclear medicine research — is inadequate.

"We do not believe this funding level is sufficient," he told the Subcommittee, recommending a 10% increase to \$41,409,500. "In order to continue the progress and momentum achieved in . . . nuclear medicine . . . it is imperative that funding for research efforts be increased." Dr. Coleman, who is Chairman of the SNM's Scientific Affairs and Teaching Committee, told *Newsline*, "We felt that a ten percent increase was justified in the face of budget constraints that the Federal Government is facing."

The House is not expected to vote on the budget until the fall. ■

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latest advances in technology with an application to a population who could benefit greatly from the noninvasive technique." Dr. MacIntyre is staff nuclear physicist, department of nuclear medicine, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. Senneff, 28, graduated *magna cum laude* from Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa in 1982 and received

her medical degree from the College of Medicine, University of Iowa, Iowa City, in 1986. She joined the Washington University School of Medicine as a research fellow in July 1989, having completed three years of residency at the University's Barnes Hospital. "My work," says Dr. Senneff, "involves a marriage between the disciplines of cardiology and nuclear medicine."

She maintains that she was attracted

to the field of cardiovascular medicine while working her way through school at the American Cancer Society. Among the numerous awards Dr. Senneff has previously received are the Janet M. Glasgow Memorial Achievement Citation in 1986, the University of Iowa's College of Medicine Research Fellowship in 1983 and 1985, and the American Cancer Society Research Scholarship in 1978.