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Robert Boston

Professor Thalachallour Mohanakumar is doing groundbreaking research on mammaglobin-A.

Promising Research May Lead to Breast Cancer Vaccine

by Betsy Rogers

The hopes of millions for a vaccine against breast cancer could be a major step closer to fulfillment, thanks to the groundbreaking work of Thalachallour Mohanakumar, the Jacqueline G. and William E. Maritz Professor of Surgery at the School of Medicine.

His research points to a novel approach that could be useful both in prevention and in treatment—vaccinating those at high risk of breast cancer and reducing the size of existing

malignant breast tumors. Mohanakumar, also professor of immunology and pathology and of medicine, has published promising study results in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* and *Breast Cancer Research and Treatment*.

In about 80 percent of breast cancers, a protein called mammaglobin-A, naturally secreted in breast milk, appears on cell surfaces. So Mohanakumar and his colleagues constructed a vaccine consisting of copies of the DNA sequence that

makes mammaglobin-A in humans. The researchers theorized that the DNA vaccine would “rev up” special immune cells, called T-cells, to recognize mammaglobin-A as a foreign molecule when it is displayed on the surface of cells as an antigen (a small protein that the immune system may recognize). The primed T-cells then would proliferate and attack when they met with mammaglobin-A antigens.

“Mammaglobin-A protein is especially interesting for cancer immunotherapy,”

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In Japan and the United States, Baseball Is the Name of the Game

by Carl Jacobs

Baseball may be America’s pastime, but passion for the sport also runs deep in the Land of the Rising Sun. Though a fan in a stadium in Japan may buy ramen or dried squid tentacles instead of peanuts and Cracker Jack™, the fervor for the game and its players is the same.

This shared passion has led, more and more, to shared events. To open the 2004 season, for

instance, the New York Yankees and the Tampa Bay Devil Rays played in Tokyo as the first game of the season, and, for spring training in 2006,

Major League Baseball is moving toward organizing a soccer-type world-cup format in which the best team of Japanese professionals can compete against the best team of professionals from other countries.

The most prevalent exchanges, though, are cultural crossovers by players. Some U.S. players join teams in Japan, hoping to extend their careers, and some of Japan’s best players join Major League Baseball. In 1995, pitcher Hideo Nomo was one of the first to blaze that trail as he joined the Los Angeles Dodgers. At least one Japanese pitcher each year made the trek across the Pacific until 2001, when the first position players came to the United States. Today, there are 13 Japanese players in Major League Baseball, and most still enjoy a large following in Japan.

Whether you say, “Play ball” or “Pure-bo-ru,” it’s all the same.

Because baseball relies on signs—from coaches to players and players to players—language is no barrier to playing the game. And having Japanese players and U.S. players on a team, as well as ones from other countries, makes for an interesting mix of cultures and languages in the clubhouse.

Most of the players coming from Japan have played six to 10 years in Japan, and most of them are 30 or over. “So, for them, it’s a chance to relive the excitement of their rookie year,” says Brad Lefton, B.S.B.A. ’86, a free-lance writer and documentary producer who lived and worked in Japan for about eight years and who has covered many Japanese players in Major League Baseball for network television in Japan.

Lefton says, “The decision for a Japanese player to come to the United States is exciting



Dan Donovan

St. Louis Cardinal So Taguchi’s batting average was .291 in 2004.

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Vaccine cont'd *from page 1*

Mohanakumar explains, “because of its frequent occurrence and because breast tumors express it at high levels.” Because it “is involved in breast development and secreted in breast milk,” Mohanakumar observes, “we had to prove first that we could elicit an immune response to a protein that is in the body normally.”

The team “humanized” test mice, engineering them so their immune systems would react to human mammaryglobin-A like a human immune system. They loaded specific cells in the mice with mammaryglobin-A antigens and injected the DNA vaccine. As they had hoped, they found that the vaccine stimulated the T-cells to attack the loaded cells.

Additionally, the researchers transferred vaccine-primed T-cells into two other groups of mice with tumors, one set displaying mammaryglobin-A antigens and one set without the

protein. Tumors with mammaryglobin-A antigens stopped growing and in fact shrank in size, but those without the protein continued to grow.

“What we have shown now,” notes Mohanakumar, “is that mammaryglobin is immunogenic—we can mount an immune response to mammaryglobin-A. Now we plan to conduct clinical trials in patients who are at very high risk for breast cancer and in patients who have had a relapse after initial treatment. We want to see if giving patients the DNA vaccine can prevent or eliminate breast cancer, or at least slow its growth.”

The research is funded in part by a grant from the Susan G. Komen Breast

Cancer Foundation. In addition, Mohanakumar, who consistently wins National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding, has received more than \$6 million in NIH funding for research currently in progress.

A prolific writer, Mohanakumar has published more than 300 articles in medical journals, almost 400 abstracts, and some 20 book chapters. Born in Madurai, Madras, India, and trained at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi and at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, he held appointments at Duke and at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond before coming to Washington University in 1987. ✦

“We want to see if giving patients the DNA vaccine can prevent or eliminate breast cancer, or at least slow its growth.”

—Thalachallour Mohanakumar

Baseball cont'd *from page 1*

but also risky.” Some players, such as Ichiro Suzuki, outfielder for the Seattle Mariners, are literally quick hits. (Suzuki set the record for most hits in a single season in 2004.) Others, such as outfielder So Taguchi, who, at the age of 32, joined the St. Louis Cardinals in 2002 from the Orix Blue Wave in Japan, had a rocky start. He started off slow at the plate in his first spring training and didn’t make the big-league club.

“He struggled through his first training camp,” Lefton says. He quickly found himself in the minor leagues, and the decision to leave Japan didn’t seem like the right one. The Cardinals even moved him down to AA ball and

asked him to go to a fall baseball league in Arizona that is mainly for 18- to 23-year-olds who are emerging prospects.

But Taguchi, who was born in Japan’s Hyogo Prefecture, didn’t give up on his dream and remained confident in himself. “He knew within himself, that he had the ability to succeed here,” says Lefton, who created a documentary on Taguchi. “He just had to be given enough time to bring his talent out.”

Not only did Taguchi begin learning English and its quirks, he also encountered a different game atmosphere. “In Japan,” Lefton says, “fans bring in drums and trumpets and other things that we don’t customarily take to the ballpark. Whereas our cheering is more motivated by what is happening on the field, Japanese fans have a set kind of cheering that starts with the first pitch and doesn’t end until the game is over, regardless of what’s happening on the field. They have cheers for each individual player, and, even if that player is 0 for 5 in the game, they still serenade him with the same song of support.”

Another difference is the unwritten code about where one sits in the ballpark. In Japan, fans of the home team usually sit on the first-base side or in the right-field bleachers; fans of the road team usually sit on the third-base side or in the left-field bleachers.

Despite the differences in language and the atmosphere in the stands, Taguchi and his wife,

Emiko, and their son, Kan, 1, “absolutely adore St. Louis,” Lefton says.

And as Lefton sees it, the next wave of Japanese players may be younger players who skip playing in Japan altogether and start out as young players on U.S. minor-league teams as they try to work their way up to the major leagues.

In the meantime, Japanese and U.S. fans are likely to become familiar with more and more teams in the other nation and with more and more players whose hometowns are on the other side of the Pacific. Whether you say, “Play ball” or “*Pure-bo-ru*,” it’s all the same. ✦

University’s Teams Have Superb Seasons

The women’s softball program, ranked No. 1 nationally most of the season, won the UAA title and closed the season at 47–3 overall, a school record. In the NCAA Tournament, the Bears lost the Regional Championship game.

The men’s baseball team also won the UAA title, and its 32–10 overall record also set a school record. In the NCAA Tournament, the Bears lost in their third game of the Regionals.



Dan Donovan

So Taguchi had six stolen bases during the 2004 season.

South Asian Awareness Week— a First at the University

The first South Asian Awareness Week at the University, held in March 2005, had two goals: bringing attention to and promoting South Asian identity, as well as raising funds for victims of the recent tsunami.

The week's theme was "Unity Through Diversity." "We wanted the week to promote solidarity between Muslims and Hindi, Indians and Pakistanis," says Satyam Khanna, Arts & Sciences Class of '06 and head of social awareness for Ashoka, the Indian Students Association.

Joining forces with Ashoka to present diverse activities, including movie screenings, lectures, and cultural events, during the week were three other University groups—ATMA, the Hindu Students Organization; the Muslim Students Association; and the Social Justice Center.

"We wanted the week to promote solidarity between Muslims and Hindi, Indians and Pakistanis."

—Satyam Khanna

The kickoff event provided samples of South Asian food, free henna art, and a lecture by Jerome Bauer, South Asian religions lecturer in Arts & Sciences. About 50 persons, including many non-South Asians, attended the event.



Kristin McGrath, Arts & Sciences Class of '06, Student Life

The week's finale was a dance marathon that featured two traditional dances, Garba and Raas, from the Indian state of Gujarat. Money from the cover charge went to Asha, a tsunami relief organization. Garba features circular rotation of partners and as many as 12 repeated steps. It becomes Raas (shown above) when each dancer has two small, polished wooden sticks, called dandiya.

"Everyone seemed to enjoy the week," says Shiv Kumar, Business Class of '07 and co-president of Ashoka. "People experienced different cultures, learned some dances, and had some fun. We hope the week will be an annual event."

NEWS BRIEFS

Joint program named top Sino-Foreign M.B.A. program

The executive M.B.A. (EMBA) program offered cooperatively by Washington University's Olin School of Business and the School of Management of Fudan University in Shanghai was ranked No. 1 in *World Executive Weekly's* 2004 "Top-10 Most Influential Sino-Foreign Joint MBA Programs." The evaluation committee focused first on the reputation and capability of each joint MBA program's foreign partner. Then they sent questionnaires to the CEOs of China's Top 500 enterprises and multinational companies, who are the largest employers of MBA graduates, to collect information about how graduates of each program fare in the business world. Only programs approved by the Ministry of Education in China were eligible.

Student receives Truman Foundation Scholarship

Pooja Agarwal, Arts & Sciences Class of '06, has been awarded a 2005 Harry S Truman Foundation Scholarship. The Truman Scholarship program is open to juniors interested in public-service careers. Agarwal, who is of Indian descent, is majoring in elementary education and in the Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology Program, both in Arts & Sciences. She has a growing interest in learning and memory, as well as the implications and applications of such research on educational instruction and policy.



Courtesy Photo

Pooja Agarwal

Surgeon receives Korean Overseas Compatriots Award

T.S. Park, the Shi H. Huang Professor of Neurological Surgery and neurosurgeon-in-chief at St. Louis Children's Hospital, recently received the Korean Overseas Compatriots Award from the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) at a ceremony in Seoul. KBS, the leading broadcast network in Korea, presents the national award to people in the fields of natural science, societal service, the arts, and business who enhance the image and reputation of the country while living abroad. Park, who was born in Korea and returns frequently to visit family, was recognized for developing one of the world's premier pediatric neurosurgery programs at the University's Medical Campus.

Professor writes book on women writers of Imperial China

The extremely rich and diverse tradition of women's writing in two millennia of imperial China (221 B.C.–1911) is the focus of a new volume of literary translations by Beata Grant, professor of Chinese and of religious studies, both in Arts & Sciences. *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China* (Harvard University Press, 2004) is co-authored with Wilt L. Idema, professor of Chinese literature in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The book includes contributions from a diverse range of writing women, including empresses, palace ladies, daughters of the elite, courtesans, nuns, peasant wives, and cross-dressing revolutionaries. This anthology offers a glimpse of women's writings not only in poetry but also in other genres, including essays and letters, drama, religious writing, and narrative fiction.



glimpses



Erin Dru Chapman (left), A.B. '05, and Jun Cai, A.B. (dance) '05, perform a comic dance choreographed by Christine O'Neal, artist-in-residence, during Washington University Dance Theatre.

David Marchant

Ramanath Cowsik, professor of physics in Arts & Sciences, is building an extremely sensitive torsion balance, an instrument used to measure small forces, in his search for new fundamental forces in nature.



David Kilper

Robert Boston



Enjoying Ted Drewes ice cream are Will Ross, assistant professor of medicine, associate dean, and director of the Office of Diversity at the School of Medicine, and first-year medical students Kari Wanat (center) and Noopur Gangorpadayay.

Lin Zhao, M.A. '02, a doctoral student in chemistry in Arts & Sciences, explains her research project during the 10th annual Graduate Student Research Symposium.



Kevin Lowder

Math team excels in national competition

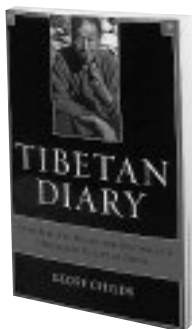
In the 2004 Putnam Competition, a renowned contest that pits mathematics competitors from colleges and universities throughout the United States, the Washington University team, comprising Po-Hsiang Lai, Joe Marincel, and Jon Pinyan, ranked No. 40. There was a total of 411 school teams. Coaches—all from Arts & Sciences—were Carl Bender, professor of physics; Mohan Kumar, professor of mathematics; and Richard Rochberg, professor of mathematics.

Policy change extends student visas

A State Department policy change initiated in February 2005 makes a visa clearance valid for four years for students and two years for working scientists. Previously, those who gained a visa had to go through the arduous clearance process every year, and delays in processing qualified applicants typically exceeded two months. Thanks to pressure from prestigious academic and scientific organizations and leaders of high-tech industries, the administration added staff and streamlined the process so clearance now takes less than two weeks, on average.

Anthropologist authors book on Tibet

Tibetan Diary: From Birth to Death and Beyond in a Himalayan Valley of Nepal (University of California Press, 2004) evolved from Geoff Childs' assorted notes that began to coalesce while he was doing fieldwork in Nubri, an ethnically Tibetan enclave in the remote highlands of Nepal. Whereas other books tend to treat Tibetans as timeless folk whose every thought and action is dictated by Buddhist principles, Childs, assistant professor of sociocultural anthropology in Arts & Sciences, treats culture as an environment that informs but does not predetermine human behaviors.



Spector lecture covers visions of a vendetta

At the 12th Annual Stanley Spector Memorial Lecture on East Asian History and Civilization, Henry D. Smith II, professor of East Asian languages and cultures at Columbia University in New York City, presented "Visions of a Vendetta: Chushingura in Ukiyo-e Prints" on March 18, 2005.

Alumnus serves on Commission on China

Adam Bobrow, M.A. '97, J.D. '97, a graduate of the joint law and East Asian Studies program in Arts & Sciences, became senior counsel for commercial rule of law for the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China in July 2004. The commission has a legislative mandate to monitor human rights and the development of the rule of law in China and to submit an annual report to the President and the Congress.

Physician tells of experience with tsunami victims

Sherwin Nuland, a physician, professor, and best-selling author, relayed his experiences in working with tsunami victims in Sri Lanka in an Assembly Series slide-show lecture titled "Tsunami Medical Diary." For two weeks, he worked as part of the medical team from Yale University (New Haven, Connecticut), which was the first medical team to arrive in the country. He described the incredible devastation in the nation, the courage of the people, and the incredibly long hours and exhausting work by the team. ✎



Business Alumna Plays Major Roles in China's Development

by Dawn Leslie Lenz

Carol Chu, M.B.A. '04, has been involved in some of the most extensive projects in modern Chinese history. Not only has she been responsible for the global communications campaign for Beijing's bid for the 2008 Olympics, but she also led the public relations campaign for the successful bid for the 2012 Shanghai Exposition. And somehow she still has found time for her demanding "day job" as executive director of the world's largest golf club—Mission Hills in Shenzhen, China.

Chu, who earned a business degree through the executive M.B.A. (EMBA) program offered cooperatively by Washington University's Olin School of Business and the School of Management of Fudan University in Shanghai, was drawn to the cross-cultural exposure the program offered. "This program," she says, "gives the opportunity for a well-balanced and global perspective on the modern business environment and how it is applicable in China's economy." And she has found many ways to apply what she has learned, especially in her position at Mission Hills.

This \$400 million development, built 10 years ago, is a phenomenon, having transformed a desolate area in southern China into a residential community, spa,



Carol Chu at graduation ceremonies

hotel, and Asia's largest country club, in addition to a golfer's paradise. On its 10 18-hole courses, 1,500 rounds, on average, are played daily.

Chu, a native of Hong Kong and the eldest of seven children, says, "Mission Hills is representative of China's amazing economic growth." She adds, "It is difficult for people to understand what double-digit growth in the economy is like. You really have to experience it to believe it."

Having attained exceptional professional goals in her career, Chu jokes that her current challenge is to become a single-digit handicapper. What she seriously hopes, though, is that her future will continue on the path of integrating China into the global economy. ✂

Courtesy Photo

Gupta Named New Dean of Business School

The new dean of the Olin School of Business, effective July 1, 2005, is Mahendra R. Gupta, senior associate dean of the Olin School of Business and the Geraldine J. and Robert L. Virgil Professor of Accounting and Management. He succeeds Stuart I. Greenbaum, who is retiring from the position after 10 years of service.

"Mahendra's 15 years at the University have prepared him well for his new position," says

Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton. "I look forward to supporting his efforts as he continues strengthening Olin and its national and international programs."



Mahendra R. Gupta

Gupta, whose research interests include technology, new ventures, health care, and marketing, has been published in leading academic journals in the United States and abroad. And, for his excellent teaching skills, students have given him the Reid Teaching Award seven times since 2001.

"We have the potential to make Olin one of the premier global institutions for business education and research," says Gupta, who grew up in India. After earning a B.S. degree in statistics and economics from Bombay University, he earned an M.S. degree in industrial administration from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. He held various managerial positions at companies in India before earning a doctoral degree from Stanford University in Stanford, California, in 1990. ✂

Washington University Alumni Clubs offer alumni and parents of current and former students a way to stay connected with the University. For information about the 11 Alumni Clubs in Asia, visit the following Web site: <http://aisweb.wustl.edu/alumni/internationalrelations.nsf>

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Alumni, parents, and friends of the University often help identify students who would benefit from a Washington University education. Refer names and addresses of talented prospective students to:

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