

Joslin Diabetes Center's 50-Year Medalist Study Update

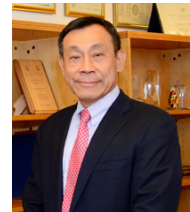
Winter, 2018

Greetings from Joslin Diabetes Center's 50-Year Medalist Program! We are writing to thank you for your continued participation and support of the Medalist Study and to update you on happenings in the program and some of the many exciting developments related to our research.

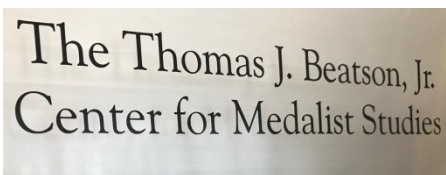
Medalist Celebration and Grand Opening of Medalist Study Center



In the spring, we hosted our 5th and largest Medalist gathering here in Boston. Two hundred and seven Medalists attended with their families. Those who attended our Medalist celebration learned about our current research efforts and had the opportunity to participate in breakout sessions with some of Joslin's best researchers and clinicians, including **Dr. George L. King** who founded the Medalist Study.



Not only did the Medalists get a chance to catch up, but they also visited Joslin Diabetes Center for the unveiling of the **Thomas J. Beatson, Jr. Center for Medalists Studies**.



The Center was established by a generous contribution by the late **Tom Beatson**, a Medalist who passed away in 2016. Thanks to Tom's original generosity, and that of the Beatson Foundation founded after his passing, the Medalist Study has a new home where the research



manager, coordinator, data analyst and visiting fellows and students can work together to further our research.

We continue to award 50, 75, and 80-Year Medals along with 25-Year Certificates to people who reach these milestones. Please continue to encourage others to notify us of their achievements living with Type 1 Diabetes! We anticipate that our next Medalist gathering will take place in 2019 and hope many of you can join us at that time.

New Team Members



Megan Brissett, MS, RT (R), has joined us as the Project Manager on the study. She recently completed her Master's degree in Applied Physiology with Teachers College, Columbia University. Her focus is on co-morbid disease prevention and management through physical activity. Previously, she worked as a Clinical Exercise Physiologist in cardiac rehab and as a Radiographer. She enjoys various activities including cycling and yoga, playing the piano and photography. A native of Connecticut, she is excited to be on our team and is enjoying experiencing all that Boston has to offer.

Dr. Hetal Shah, MD, MPH, has joined us as a Co-Investigator. A physician and epidemiologist, Dr. Shah's focus for the past several years at Joslin was to tease out the genetics of diabetic complications and leverage these markers to enhance treatment options in type 2 diabetes. In her new role with the Medalists' Study, she hopes to expand her research to study protective factors against complications in type 1 diabetes. Aside from being passionate about helping individuals with diabetes, Dr. Shah brings with her a diverse background, having lived Africa, Asia and now the US. And her interests include music, dance, writing and volunteering.



Samantha Megan Paniagua, MPH has joined our team as Data Analyst. She recently completed her Master's degree in biostatistics and epidemiology from Boston University. She is interested in investigated health disparities of those with chronic conditions and how it impacts their quality of life. She enjoys playing video games and spending time with her family.

Vanessa Bahnam, BS has joined our team as a Study Coordinator. She is excited expand her experience in research and interacting with patients and lab work. She intends to continue onto graduate school for her Master's in Public health and aspires to go into clinical work. She enjoys various activities like exercising, photography and travel.



Note: Dr. Hillary Keenan has left Joslin to pursue additional research opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry. We wish her all the best in her future pursuits and are very grateful for the many wonderful contributions she made during her 14 years with the Medalist Study.

Presentations, Publications and New Studies

Medalist Study members attended the annual American Diabetes Association meeting this past summer in San Diego and had the opportunity to make several presentations. One presentation compared the Medalist group to others with long-duration, type 1 diabetes. Another presentation outlined the discovery of protective factors in the eyes and kidneys, and the effects on cognition, bone health and complications for people with long-duration, type 1 diabetes.

Additionally, Joslin researchers working in the Medalist Study have published that major discovery about the factors which may be protecting the Medalists from kidney diseases, in *Nature Medicine*, one of the most prestigious journals in the world.

We also updated the first paper on the 50-Year Medalist Study in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*. We have included the abstract with this update. In the paper, we report that Medalists are living longer with fewer complications, and that even after living with type 1 diabetes for 50 years, maintaining a good A1c is still important for preventing complications.

As we've reported previously, the formal Medalist Study recruitment has stopped. However, we strongly encourage you to contact us to arrange for your follow up study visit so that we may continue to gather important data.

The data is being used in many new studies such as the Microbiome Study, which determines whether changes in gut bacteria could be responsible for changes in the body's ability to make insulin and longitudinal studies on the eye, kidney and beta cells.

The Longitudinal Study, which is open to all Medalists who completed a baseline visit, is ongoing. There are many new discoveries yet to be made from the data you are providing.

Thank You for Your Support

Without your help we would not be able to continue making seminal discoveries within the Medalist data. Many of you have consented to tissue donations which has helped us make tremendous strides in identifying therapies for diabetic nephropathy and retinopathy and may even help find a cure for type 1 diabetes.

Your financial support has been invaluable as well. Finding a cure for type 1 diabetes is a top priority and your generous donations have helped keep the Medalist Study going. Should you or your loved ones wish to make new or ongoing donations, please visit www.joslin.org/donate and designate your gift in the drop down menu to the **Medalist Study Fund**, or call the Office of Philanthropy at (617) 309-2412.

We sincerely thank those of you who have provided your updated contact information as well. Should you need to schedule a follow up visit, or have any other questions, please contact Vanessa Bahnam at (617) 309-3421 or Vanessa.Bahnam@joslin.harvard.edu

Sincerely,

The Medalist Study Team

George L. King, MD ,Hetal Shah, MD, MPH, Daniel Gordin, MD, Ward Fickweiler, MD, Jennifer Sun, MD, David Pober, PhD, I-Hsien Wu, PhD , Megan J. Brissett, MA, RT (R), Samantha Paniagua, MPH, Vanessa Bahnam, BS

P.S.



Are you on Facebook? We have a dynamic **Medalist Facebook Group**, which is a wonderful forum for meeting one another, asking questions and exchanging ideas. This group is private, which means you need to be invited to join, and only other group members can see your posts. Please let us know if you're interested and we will invite you to join!