

# RADIOLOGY RESEARCH *UPDATE* August 2026, Issue 36

Department of Diagnostic Radiology and Nuclear Medicine

## RESEARCH DAY

The John Dennis, MD Memorial Lecture and Research Day were held June 5<sup>th</sup> and featured a keynote address by Yvonne Lui, MD on “A view of the trajectory: deep learning-based MR image reconstruction.”

**Yajie (Kevin) Liang, PhD**, was awarded the Reuben S. Mezrich Research Prize; **Bart Lane, MD** was awarded the Bruce Line Prize; and, in a first for the department, two residents won the RSNA Resident Research Awards this year: **Izzet Altun, MD** and **Aditya Panta, MD, PhD**. Congratulations to all the awardees!



L to R: Drs. Dheeraj Gandhi, Bart Lane, and Tarek Hanna



L to R: Drs. Charles Resnik and Izzet Altun



L to R: Drs. Tarek Hanna and Kevin Liang



L to R: Drs. Resnik and Aditya Panta

## GRANTS

**Thomas Ernst, PhD**, received \$2,118,130 for a four-year R01 grant from NIBIB for a project entitled “Fast motion navigators for brain diffusion MRI.”

**Yajie Liang, MD, PhD** received \$650K for a three-year Trailblazer R21 grant from **NIH/NIA** for a project entitled “Instrumented brain organoids transplantation for chronic stroke treatment.”

**Ze Wang, PhD** received \$200K from the Alzheimer's Association and the Foundation of the ASNR for a one-year project entitled “Non-invasive non-contrast agent-based sensitive BBB imaging for ADRD.”

**Cameron May**, received an RSNA Research Medical Student Grant in the amount of \$3000 for a project entitled “A Modular, Open-Source Platform for Multi-Reader, Multi-Case and Human-Factors Evaluation of AI in Radiology.” **David Dreizin, MD**, is his mentor.

## FEATURED PUBLICATIONS

Kim JB, **Wang J**, Chi Y, Wu J, Ng A, **Qiao G**, **Tan H**, **Janowski M**, **Walczak P**, **Liang Y**, Yang S. Elastomeric Micro-Balloons for Remote Control of Cerebral Blood Flow and Real-Time In Vivo Imaging of Rodent Brain Response to Hypoperfusion. *Adv Mater*. 2026 Apr 21:e18525 Epub ahead of print.

Hajj S, **Njonkou Tchoquessi RL**, **Rednam N**, Pandey A, Kline K, **Kundra V**. Imaging of De Novo Malignancy after Solid Organ Transplant. *Radiology*. 2026 Apr;319(1):e251384.

**Gerges Z**, Ramkumar A, **Hossain MI**, **Tee SS**. The Combined Predictive Value of the Triglyceride-Glucose Index and A Body Shape Index on All-Cause Mortality: a 26-year Prospective Cohort Analysis from the Rancho Bernardo Study. *Cardiovasc Diabetol Endocrinol Rep*. 2026 Apr 20;12(1):17.

**Wang J**, **Qiao G**, **Tan H**, **Russel C**, **Yang B**, Li MJ, Wang K, Xu J, **Chu C**, **Janowski M**, Fu TM, **Walczak P**, **Liang Y**. Intravital Multimodal Imaging of Human Cortical Organoid Transplantation in a Mouse Model of Chronic Stroke. *Adv*

*Sci (Weinh)*. 2026 Jul Epub ahead of print.

## SIGN CONFERENCE

*By Miroslaw Janowski*

The 6th SIGN Conference was held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, and proved to be a truly landmark event. Its defining highlight was the first-ever visit of a Nobel Laureate in Medicine to Zimbabwe — Thomas Südhof of Stanford University — who was awarded the inaugural Alavi Medal. This award honors Abass Alavi, a remarkably generous philanthropist, distinguished scientist, and physician, who performed the world's first FDG-PET scan 50 years ago and is himself a Nobel Prize candidate.

Other keynote speakers included two preeminent Chairs of Neurosurgery: Frederick Lang from MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, and Raphael Guzman from the University of Basel, Switzerland. The program was further enriched by an impressive roster of distinguished speakers, among them Alex Golby, Director of the AMIGO Suite at Harvard Neurosurgery, and Jürgen Götz from Australia, who pioneered the demonstration of focused ultrasound for Alzheimer's disease. It comes as no surprise, then, that the conference drew participants

from multiple continents and countries including Australia, India, Europe and the United States. A strong contingent of locals attended as well.

The exceptional scientific program was complemented by an equally memorable social agenda. Participants enjoyed a group visit to Victoria Falls — one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World — followed by a Sunset Dinner Cruise on the Zambezi River and a Cultural Dinner hosted by the Zimbabwe Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality. While the planned white-water rafting excursion was cancelled due to high water levels, it was seamlessly replaced by a safari at a Rhinoceros Sanctuary in Zambia. Many participants also extended their stay to experience additional safaris in Botswana and Zimbabwe.

Feedback from the event has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic: SIGN 2026 at Victoria Falls was described by many as one of the finest conferences they have ever attended. The combination of a breathtaking setting, world-class science, and the warmth of local culture and hospitality made it an experience that will be long remembered.

Admittedly, setting the bar higher after Victoria Falls is no small challenge — yet we are confident that the 7th SIGN Conference, to be held in Donostia – San Sebastián,

Spain, April 2–4, 2027, will rise to the occasion in its own distinctive way. After all, Donostia - San Sebastián boasts the highest density of

Michelin-starred restaurants of any city in the world — a culinary backdrop that promises to complement the science as memorably as the

Zambezi did the sunsets. We warmly invite you to join us there.

## SIGN CONFERENCE PHOTO GALLERY



Above: Presentation of the Alavi Medal to the Nobel Laureate Thomas Sudhof



Above: Gullapalli Young Investigator Awardees