



The AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG) Network is the largest HIV/AIDS clinical trials organization in the world. We currently have 34 domestic & 25 international sites.



Happy New Year!



Letters from Leadership



ACTG Network Chair and Principal Investigator, Dr. Judith Currier Shares her Outlook for 2018

When I graduated from Medical School in 1985, it was the early days of the AIDS pandemic. The new and mysterious disease baffled researchers and clinicians alike and it was clear to me there was an overwhelming need for more people to get involved. I had an interest in Immunology, Infectious Diseases and primary care medicine, so it was during my residency at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston I chose to focus on combating AIDS. At the time, I was hopeful progress would be made in finding treatments, but never imagined we could return a severely impaired immune system to near normal levels with treatment as we can today. As we head into 2018, some 30 plus years since my residency, I am honored to be the new Chair and Principal Investigator of the ACTG Network.

One of the great strengths of the ACTG Network is the rotation of leadership positions

across the group. I am grateful to Dr. Dan Kuritzkes for his leadership over the past seven years as he continues as past Chair. I look forward to working with Dr. Joe Eron as the Network's new Vice Chair and leader of the Scientific Agenda Steering Committee and Dr. Grace Aldrovandi, the new Laboratory Center Principal Investigator. I am also excited to work with the new and continuing leaders of the Transformative Science Groups (TSG). I welcome the new Vice Chairs, Dr. Kelly Dooley for the TB TSG and Dr. Charlie Flexner for the ARTS TSG as well as Dr. Liz Connick as Chair of the WHISC.

I have always been passionate about HIV/AIDS clinical research; however, I am now passionate in a different way than in the past. I now know what is possible when significant advances in basic science are applied to patient care through translational clinical research. As Chair and Principal Investigator, I am committed to supporting and guiding the ACTG Network as we continue to conduct high impact studies supporting our mission to reduce the global burden of HIV disease and its complications, including tuberculosis and viral hepatitis.

Highlights of our work in 2018 are expected to include the launch of the PHOENix trial to evaluate a new strategy for the prevention of MDR TB (A5300B). We also plan to open trials to evaluate combinations of long acting ART drugs in populations that struggle with adherence (A5359). In addition, we will launch new studies of cutting edge tri-specific neutralizing antibodies for treatment (A5377), immune based therapies for Hepatitis B (A5368), HIV (A5370) as well as therapeutic vaccines to improve immunologic control of HIV (A5369/A5374). We will open the first global study of minimal monitoring of Hepatitis C treatment (A5360) and will continue to play a significant role in the completion of enrollment in the landmark REPRIEVE Trial (A5332). The hard work of the talented investigators around the globe, our experienced and dedicated site staff and the commitment of our community representatives make this all possible.

Thank you for this incredible opportunity to serve as Chair and Principal Investigator of the ACTG Network.

Wishing you a healthy and productive 2018!

Sincerely,
Dr. Judy Currier

University of Colorado Site Celebrates 25 Years of HIV/AIDS Treatment Progress

Investigators and Study Participants Reflect on The Past

Dr. Constance Benson, Dr. Robert "Chip" Schooley and Dr. Thomas Campbell, along with two brave study participants, were recently highlighted in an article discussing the impact the University of Colorado, Denver site has made over the past 25 years. Past study

participants, David Dillon and Patrick Terry share why they chose to take part in ACTG Network trials and provide a perspective on what it was like to be diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in the early 1900's. In addition, Dr. Campbell reflects on the impact of Dr. Schooley joining the site in 1989 and offers his thoughts on the future with regard to developing the most effective treatments and an eventual cure for HIV.

To read this thoughtful article, click [here](#).

A5345 Featured in Infectious Disease Advisor

Q & A Style Article Addresses Safety and Ethical Considerations of Intensely Monitored ART Pause Study

Dr. Jonathan Li and Dr. Karine Dube were recently interviewed for an article in *Infectious Disease Advisor* regarding A5345: Biomarkers to Predict Time to Plasma HIV RNA Rebound. Participants in A5345 will pause ART under carefully controlled conditions that include close clinical and laboratory monitoring. As soon as HIV becomes detectable above a certain level, ART will be immediately restarted and participants will be monitored until the virus is suppressed. The A5345 study team, with oversight from the NIH's Division of AIDS, has worked closely with laboratory and research sites to ensure participants are pausing ART for the shortest possible time. Although there are risks associated with ART interruption, this strategy of very close monitoring and rapid ART restart has proven safe in recent studies.

To read this insightful article, click [here](#).

2018 National HIV/AIDS Awareness Days

Outreach, Recruitment & Retention Working Group Suggests Planning Ahead

The ACTG Network's Outreach, Recruitment & Retention (OR&R) Working Group typically puts together a few handy resources to help sites commemorate National HIV/AIDS Awareness Days. Recognizing these awareness days is an easy way for sites to inform local communities about the work the ACTG Network conducts and to educate the general public about the need for continued HIV/AIDS research.

The OR&R suggests marking 2018 HIV/AIDS Awareness Days on your calendars now so site staff can plan ahead to take part in these important days:

February 7: National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 10: National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

May 19: National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

June 5: HIV Long-Term Survivors Day
June 27: National HIV Testing Day

March 20: National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

April 10: National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day

April 18: National Transgender HIV Testing Day

May 18: HIV Vaccine Awareness Day

September 18: National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day

September 27: National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

October 15: National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day

December 1: World AIDS Day

This Moment in HIV/AIDS History

January 11, 1990: The Paul Wynne Journal Airs on California TV News Stations

In 1987, Paul Wynne was diagnosed with AIDS. Two years later, he decided to film a video diary documenting his struggle with the disease. The Paul Wynne Journal began airing on January 11, 1990 on KGO-TV in San Francisco (where he had been an entertainment reporter) as well as on KCET-TV in Los Angeles. Typical episodes featured Paul's own anecdotes and observations about the difficulties of living with AIDS. The series ran until June 20, 1990, with the final few episodes being filmed from his hospital bed in the San Francisco Veteran's Affairs Medical Center. Paul Wynne died on July 6, 1990 at the age of 46.

The Paul Wynne Journal collection contains master and composite video tapes of Paul's Journal. Also included in the collection are letters he received in the wake of airing the series. It won rave reviews from television critics in the area and KGO-TV received scores of calls and letters praising the station for its courage and Paul for sharing his story.

To view the Paul Wynne Journal collection, click [here](#).

Source: Willamette University is the copyright holder for the Paul Wynne Journal collection



Thank you for taking the time to read the ACTG Network's Monthly Newsletter. If you would like to be a guest blogger, have your clinical research site highlighted or would like to nominate a colleague for the Spotlight, please [click here](#). We welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Patrick Bayhille

Senior Research Communications Specialist

AIDS Clinical Trials Group Network

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