BIOGRAPHIES

Meeting of the Research Advisory Committee on Veterans' Gulf War Illnesses
RAC-GWVI
July 7, 2020

RAC-GWVI LEADERSHIP

Lawrence Steinman, M.D. Dr. Lawrence Steinman, RAC-GWVI Chair, received his BA in physics from Dartmouth College, graduating Magna Cum Laude in 1968, and graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1973. He did an internship and residency in neurology at Stanford University and from 1974 to 1977 and was a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Chemical Immunology at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, receiving an NIH post-doctoral Fellowship. Dr. Steinman is Board Certified in Neurology and Psychiatry, is Senior Attending Physician at Stanford's Hospitals, the Zimmerman Professor of Pediatrics and Neurology, and from 2002 to 2011 he served as Chairman of the Interdepartmental Immunology Program. He received teaching awards during this time, particularly for his course on the Brain and the Immune System. He served in 2014–2015 on the Institute of Medicine–National Academy of Science panel on Considerations for Designing an Epidemiologic Study for Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and Other Neurologic Disorders in Pre and Post 9/11 Gulf War Veterans. Dr. Steinman received numerous honors: From 1988 to 2002 he twice received the Senator Jacob Javits Neuroscience Investigator Award from the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke. In 1994, he won the Friedrich Sasse Prize from the Free University of Berlin. In 2004, he won the John Dystel Prize from the American Academy of Neurology and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. In 2008, he received an Honorary Doctorate from Hasselt University. In 2009, he was elected to the Institute of Medicine, now called the National Academy of Medicine. In 2011, Dr. Steinman won the Charcot Prize for Lifetime Achievement in MS research from the International Federation of MS Societies. In 2015, he received the Cerami Award in Translational Medicine. In 2017, he was elected a Fellow of the American Association for Advancement of Science. In 2015, he became the first neuroimmunologist elected to the National Academy of Sciences. Dr. Steinman's research focuses on what provokes relapses and remission in multiple sclerosis, the nature of the molecules that serve as a brake on the brain inflammation, and the quest for a tolerizing vaccine for autoimmune diseases like type 1 diabetes and neuromyelitis optica. He has developed two antigen-specific therapies, using DNA vaccines, for MS and type 1 diabetes. He was senior author on the seminal 1992 *Nature* article that reported the key role of a particular integrin in brain inflammation. This research led to the development of the drug Tysabri, which is used to treat patients with MS and Crohn's disease. Dr. Steinman holds patents in the areas of immunology and for therapies of Huntington Disease, type 1 diabetes, and MS. He cofounded Neurocrine Biosciences, Bayhill Therapeutics now named Tolerion, Nuon Therapeutics, Transparency Life Sciences, and Atreca.

Karen Block, Ph.D. Dr. Karen Block, RAC-GWVI Designated Federal Officer (DFO), is a nationally and internationally recognized expert in the field of molecular mechanisms driving human disease with focus on the role of oxidative stress in carcinogenesis, cancer-drug resistance, and diabetes-induced organ damage. Academically, Dr. Block was an Associate Professor of Medicine who served as an Executive member of the Cancer Therapy and Research Center and Associate Director of Shared Resources at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and was a health research scientist with the VA since 2005. Her career is balanced with solid independent National Institutes of Health and VA funding achievements, publication of scientific manuscripts in high impact factor journals, authorship of expert review articles and book chapters, participation in and chairing of grant reviews and University programs as well as steering committees, and performance of site visits in addition to training clinician- and non-clinician-scientists. She joined the Office of Research and Development in Washington D.C. in 2016.

Marsha Turner, M.S.Ed. Marsha Turner, RAC-GWVI Acting Managing Director and Alternate Designated Federal Officer, has extensive experience in clinical and coordinated research initiatives with career focus on chronic unexplained medical conditions and stress-related disorders. Ms. Turner is currently working with the Gulf War Research Resource at the Cooperative Studies and Epidemiology

Center (CSPEC) in Durham, North Carolina and has coordinated research initiatives within the VA since 2011. She has a strong interest in improving quality of life for families living with chronic health conditions.

RAC-GWVI MEETING PRESENTERS

Victoria Davey, Ph.D., M.P.H. Dr. Victoria (Vicky) Davey is Associate Chief Research and Development Officer for Epidemiology and Public Health in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Davey has been with VHA since 1999 in various roles in public health and environmental hazards policy, research, and administration. Dr. Davey did extensive work in establishing a population health approach for care of Veterans with HIV and hepatitis C and prevention programs for those at risk of bloodborne viral diseases. She worked with other Federal agencies on seasonal and pandemic influenza prevention and mitigation planning and programs from 2005–2010. As Chief of Public Health for VA from 2010–2014, she led divisions in women's health, emergency management, population health, clinical public health, occupational health, public health surveillance, and post-deployment health, including a program on epidemiologic research. Currently in the Office of Research and Development, Dr. Davey is a Principal Investigator of studies on current health of and mortality of Vietnam Veterans and is a Co-investigator on OIF/OEF and Gulf War epidemiologic studies. She is a subject matter expert on public health, infectious disease epidemiology, and post-military deployment health issues for the Office of R&D. Dr. Davey received an AB from Smith College, a BS from Boston University, and an MPH from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (infectious diseases epidemiology). She received a PhD from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences/Graduate School of Nursing with a dissertation on computational modeling of influenza pandemics.

Theresa Gleason, Ph.D. Dr. Theresa (Terri) Gleason is the Director, Clinical Science Research and Development Service, Office of Research and Development, VA Central Office, Washington, D.C. Dr. Gleason has a distinguished research career of nearly twenty years VA service. Prior to her appointment, she held a variety of leadership assignments: (Acting) Deputy Chief Research and Development Officer; (Acting) Director, Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development Service; (Acting) Director, Clinical Science Research and Development Service; Senior Program Manager, Transformational Initiative; Program Manager, Clinical Trials; Research Lead for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Senior International Forum of Veterans Administrations, Program Manager Career Development; and Portfolio Manager Behavioral and Psychiatric Disorders Research. Dr. Gleason possesses a PhD in Cognitive Neuropsychology, George Washington University, and a Master of Philosophy, George Washington University, Washington D.C.

Keith Hancock. Mr. Keith Hancock is the Deputy Executive Director, Policy, Procedures, Pre-Discharge and Interagency Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration. He currently serves as a Legislative Policy Analyst with the Veterans Benefits Administration, Compensation Service. Over the last 25 years, he has served as a claims adjudicator and manager in the field and has served in various capacities within VBA Central Office. Some of his current duties include writing legislative proposals and congressional testimony and developing policies and procedures for environmental exposures. Mr. Hancock was born and raised in Asheboro, North Carolina, currently lives in Portland, Oregon, and served as a U.S. Air Force Pararescueman from 1985 to 1993.

Drew Helmer, M.D., M.S. Dr. Drew Helmer, Deputy Director, Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness, and Safety (IQuESt), Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, Houston, Texas, is an expert in post-deployment health, the impact of combat deployment on the health and well-being of military service members. He was the Director of the War Related Illness and Injury Study Center (WRIISC) at the VA New Jersey Health Care System and Associate Professor of Medicine at Rutgers

University New Jersey Medical School from December 2011 to August 2019. Dr. Helmer obtained his medical degree at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and his Masters of Science in Health Policy and Management at the Columbia University School of Public Health. Trained as a general internist, from 2001–2007, Dr. Helmer was the medical director at the WRIISC and a VA Health Services Research and Development Career Development Awardee while at VA New Jersey Health Care System. From 2007–2011, Dr. Helmer worked at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston, Texas, where he was the lead clinician for Post-Deployment Health in Houston and for the South Central Veterans Integrated Service Network, Associate Director of Research for PrimeCare, and Assistant Director of the "Neurorehabilitation: Neurons to Networks" VA Rehabilitation Research and Development Traumatic Brain Injury Research Center of Excellence. In addition to caring for Veterans and educating providers about post-deployment health, Dr. Helmer studies healthcare utilization and outcomes important to deployed Veterans including chronic pain, exposure concerns, depression and suicidal ideation, mild traumatic brain injury, and sexual health concerns. He has published more than 80 peer-reviewed articles and a book for a lay audience on these topics.

Stephen Hunt, M.D., M.P.H. Dr. Stephen Hunt, National Director of the Veterans Health Administration Post- Deployment Integrated Care Initiative, provides national leadership in support of integrated post-combat care clinics in VA medical centers. For over three decades he has provided care for and conducted clinical research on combat veterans from World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Gulf War (Desert Shield/Desert Storm), and the Iraq and Afghanistan Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and New Dawn (OND) conflicts. His Gulf War Veterans Clinic at VA Puget Sound, established in 1994, was designated as the best practices approach to clinical care for Desert Shield/Desert Storm Veterans and was featured frequently in presentations to groups such as the Institute of Medicine, RAND Corporation, Research Advisory Committee, and various Congressional groups and committees. This clinic was later adapted and renamed the Deployment Health Clinic, to provide care and support for Veterans returning from the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts. Designated as best practices approach to post-deployment care, this model was rolled out in 2008 as the VA Post-Deployment Integrated Care Initiative. Within 18 months, 84% of VA facilities had integrated care platforms for Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Dr. Hunt is the Registry Physician at VA Puget Sound, providing evaluations and care for Veterans with exposures to Agent Orange, ionizing radiation, and other toxic environmental agents related to military service. He is involved in clinical care, research, education, and outreach related to health concerns of combat veterans locally, state-wide, and at the national level. Dr. Hunt is a Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine in the Occupational and Environmental Medicine Program.

Tobias Marton, M.D., Ph.D. Dr. Tobias Marton received his BA in molecular and cellular biology at UC Berkeley and his MD and PhD in neuroscience at UC San Diego. He then completed his psychiatry residency at UC San Francisco and conducted research as both a resident and as an NIMH-funded Fellow examining the role of the medial prefrontal cortex in attention using a mouse model system. He developed a strong interest in brain stimulation techniques and novel treatments for treatment refractory depression and subsequently joined the clinical faculty of UCSF and San Francisco VA. He works on the ECT (electroconvulsive therapy) services of both UCSF and SFVA medical centers and also founded and currently directs the San Francisco VA rTMS clinic. In 2017 he founded and currently directs the Ketamine Clinic at San Francisco VA, one of only a small number of clinical ketamine programs in the VA system. He has provided intravenous ketamine treatments to over 60 Veterans with over 900 infusions and has an active and growing program of research in this area, including both clinical and neuroscience-based inquiries and publications. He is also working with VA leadership on the VA-wide clinical implementation of recently FDA-approved intranasal esketamine.

Melissa McDiarmid, M.D., M.P.H., D.A.B.T. Dr. Melissa McDiarmid is the Medical Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs Surveillance Program for the Depleted Uranium Exposed Cohort and the Toxic Embedded Fragment Surveillance Center at the VA Medical Center, Baltimore. She is also Professor of Medicine, Epidemiology and Public Health and Director of the University of Maryland School of Medicine's Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. Dr. McDiarmid received her BA degree from the University of Maryland Baltimore County, in Biological Sciences; her MD from the University of Maryland at Baltimore; and her MPH from The Johns Hopkins School of Public Health where she also completed fellowship training in Occupational Medicine. She is board-certified in Internal Medicine, Occupational Medicine and Toxicology. Dr. McDiarmid has authored numerous journal articles and book chapters on occupational and environmental medicine topics related to Gulf War environmental exposures, healthcare workers, medical surveillance and management, reproductive hazards, and occupational cancers.

Dawn Provenzale, M.D., M.S. Dr. Dawn Provenzale is the Director of the VA Cooperative Studies Program Epidemiology Center in Durham. She is a Gastroenterologist with a background in Epidemiology and Health Services research. She is the Study Chair of CSP 585 (the Gulf War Era Cohort and Biorepository) and co-Chair of CSP 2006, an MVP based study on the Genomics of Gulf War Illness. Dr. Provenzale is a Professor of Medicine at Duke University and the Director of the GI Outcomes Research Group. Her research focuses on the development of risk stratification algorithms and their implementation to improve health outcomes.

Paula Schnurr, Ph.D. Dr. Paula Schnurr is Executive Director of the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. She helped found the Center in 1989 and previously served as Deputy Executive Director. She is a Professor of Psychiatry at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth and Editor of the *Clinician's Trauma Update–Online*. She received her PhD in Experimental Psychology at Dartmouth College in 1984 and then completed a post-doctoral fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth. Dr. Schnurr is Past-President of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies and is a fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science. She previously served as Editor of the *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. Dr. Schnurr has won a number of awards for her research and contributions to the field of traumatic stress studies. She is an expert on methods of psychotherapy research and was part of the workgroup that expanded the CONSORT reporting guidelines for non-pharmacological interventions. She has conducted a number of clinical trials of PTSD treatment, including three large multi-site trials funded by the VA Cooperative Studies Program. Her Cooperative Study of Prolonged Exposure for female veterans, which was the first study of treatment for PTSD in this population, led to a national initiative to train VA providers in the Prolonged Exposure. She currently is conducting a VA Cooperative Study comparing the effectiveness of Prolonged Exposure and Cognitive Processing Therapy.

####