

August 15, 2019

Huge T Suite magnet arrives and captures everyone's attention

A 7.2-ton 3T Skyra Magnet from IMRIS was delivered by crane, July 24, for the new T Suite surgical operating theater.

"The theater is like nothing else in the world," said Dr. Chen, "and will improve the way multidisciplinary surgical teams can help their patients."



The T Suite is a \$13 million commitment by Fairview Health Services and the U of M that will bring the latest in intra-operative technologies, including high-field magnetic resonance imaging, laser thermal ablation, advanced angiogram capacity, and the latest generation endoscopy and minimally invasive surgery in a connected four-room arrangement.

"Our neurosurgeons can hardly wait to treat all sorts of conditions in the new suite," added Dr. Chen, during an interview with Fox 9 news.

Correction from the previous issue:

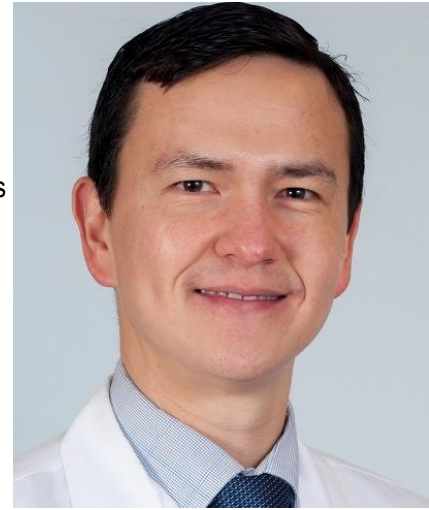
Updated list of department speakers for NeuroSafe 2019

Instead of Dr. Do, Dr. Khan will speak about what patients can expect when they search the Internet concerning brain aneurysms.

We are excited to welcome our newest faculty member!

Neurosurgeon Andrew Venteicher, MD, PhD, has officially joined the Neurosurgery Department and the U's Masonic Cancer Center. He will lead the Center for Cranial Base Surgery, which focuses on diagnosis and comprehensive treatment of patients with tumors and cerebrovascular lesions along the base of the brain, pituitary gland, and brainstem.

In addition to traditional cranial approaches, Dr. Venteicher specializes in new minimally invasive and endoscopic endonasal approaches designed to avoid injury to normal brain structures during surgery.



On the research side, Dr. Venteicher is part of a new initiative between the U's Medical School and the Masonic Cancer Center that is using single-cell genomics to explore how brain tumors grow, evolve, and resist treatment. "His single-cell genomic studies laid the foundation for our understanding of brain tumors," noted Dr. Chen in the Medical School announcement about the new faculty member's arrival.

"These cutting-edge methods allow us to study heterogeneity among tumor cells and identify pathways that might represent novel therapeutic targets in brain cancers," Dr. Venteicher explained. "I am particularly excited to join the collaborative clinical and research environment at the U as part of the Brain Tumor Program, where labs with mutual interests in brain tumors will colocalize with a goal toward multidisciplinary collaborations."

He earned undergraduate degrees in mathematics, biochemistry, and economics, and a Master's in chemistry from the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Venteicher then attended Stanford for both his MD and PhD, trained at the Harvard Medical School for his neurosurgery residency, and was selected for a prestigious cranial base and cerebrovascular fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh.

He already has many publications/presentations under his belt and received funding for several research projects.

When not at work, Dr. Venteicher enjoys spending time with his wife Emma and their two girls Evelyn (2 years) and Eloise (5 months).

Time is running out to meet our Step Up intern

Since June 17, 2019, high school senior Kao Chang has been interning with the Neurosurgery Department, working 20 hours a week. She is part of the Step Up Youth Employment Program that connects Minneapolis youth ages 14-21 with internships at nearly 200 companies, public agencies and nonprofit organizations across 17 industries.

"I've been doing Step Up since my freshman year," said Kao. "If I were to apply for a similar internship outside the program, I would have slim chance of getting it. Step Up has opened doors for me, allowing me to have different jobs instead of flipping burgers."



Thanks to Step Up, Kao worked as a medical administration intern last summer at Hennepin Health in Minneapolis. During her current internship with the Neurosurgery Department, she is performing administrative tasks such as helping ensure that physicians' schedules have no conflicts.

Kao is also assisting with NeuroSafe 2019, just before her internship ends on August 17. Her ultimate goal is to become a surgical nurse, following in her sisters' footsteps.

In her spare time, Kao loves taking photographs of family and friends. She is also captain of the volleyball team at Patrick Henry High School in Minneapolis.

Lifetime achievement of faculty member celebrated during recent meeting

Dr. Haines was honored during the June 2019 Annual Meeting of the Neurosurgical Society of America (NSA) held in Alberta, Canada. He was given the prestigious NSA Medal, which is awarded to "an individual who, in the opinion of the membership, most significantly influenced the clinical practice of neurosurgery through personal achievement."



"About 20 years ago," Dr. Haines explained, "the Society created this medal to honor someone who they felt had made a significant contribution to the practice of neurosurgery rather than to just the science." He added that the medal isn't restricted to members of the Society. "It's available to anyone in the world," Dr. Haines said. "In 2013, for example, it was given to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell because of the actions he was taking regarding chronic traumatic injuries in his sport."

Consistently elevating quality

A fiercely humble man who was genuinely surprised to win the award, Dr. Haines said he felt he needed to explain himself during his acceptance speech. "It's hard to know if what I've been trying to do to advance neurosurgery throughout my career could be this recognizable," he said to the audience. "I haven't invented a new procedure that works really well. I haven't done great basic science research. I haven't patented a device that everyone uses. My emphasis has been on a consistent effort to elevate the quality of clinical research across the board."

Dr. Haines came by his passion for research quality before he even became a neurosurgeon. "In freshman year in college, I was introduced to the concepts of quantitative sociology, which was very unusual for an introductory course," he said. "When I went to medical school, one of my professors was Dr. Larry Weed, who invented the problem-oriented medical record."

"What I began to understand from those two experiences was that the information we collected about the clinical practice of neurosurgery was more like sociological data, such as income and gender, than scientific data, such as the milliequivalents of sodium that crossed certain membranes," Dr. Haines explained. "And the methods of analysis were different for each kind of information. Neurosurgery hadn't tumbled to that."

This realization led to Dr. Haines' interest in randomized clinical trials. When he won the Van Wagenen Fellowship, he went to Oxford University in England. "They had a large clinical trials center and worked on refining research techniques. The six months I spent there learning about clinical trials became the research focus for the rest of my career."