

Summer academy named after Eugene and Ruth Roberts

by *Chung So and Alicia Di Raddo*

City of Hope's program for aspiring young scientists has been named the Eugene and Ruth Roberts Summer Student Academy in honor of the couple.

Eugene Roberts, Ph.D., director emeritus of neurobiochemistry, first created City of Hope's summer program for high school and college



Thomas Brown

Ruth and Eugene Roberts

students about 30 years ago. Now, a major gift from the Robertses has endowed the program, assuring it will continue for countless future students.

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Researchers point to tissue density as key part of breast cancer risk assessment

by *Pat Kramer and Alicia Di Raddo*

Using measurements of a woman's breast density, as well as her family history, age and other similar factors, may improve the ability to predict a woman's risk of developing breast cancer over today's standard risk-assessment models.

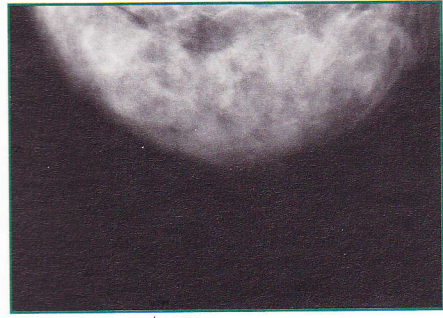
City of Hope researchers and their colleagues from the University of Washington and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center recently reported these findings based on a sample from a study of more than 13,000 women considered at high risk for breast cancer. The researchers are investigating ways to determine women's true risk of developing cancer so that women and their physicians can take better steps to prevent it.

Research has shown that women with certain patterns of dense breast tissue may have as much as a six-fold higher risk of developing breast cancer as other women, explained City of Hope's Melanie Palomares, M.D., assistant professor of medical oncology and population sciences and the study's lead author.

Breast density can be observed through mammography and may be a measure of breast cell proliferation. Researchers believe the more breast cells multiply over a lifetime, the greater the breast cancer risk.

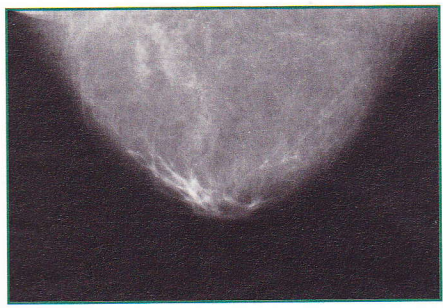
At the same time, health professionals today rely on other noninvasive clinical tools to predict a woman's breast cancer risk. One commonly used tool is the Gail model, which incorporates age, family history, childbearing history, previous breast biopsies and similar factors into a formula to calculate risk.

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Courtesy of Melanie Palomares

Breast tissue density can range widely. Mammography shows highly dense tissue, left, as well as tissue of low density, right.

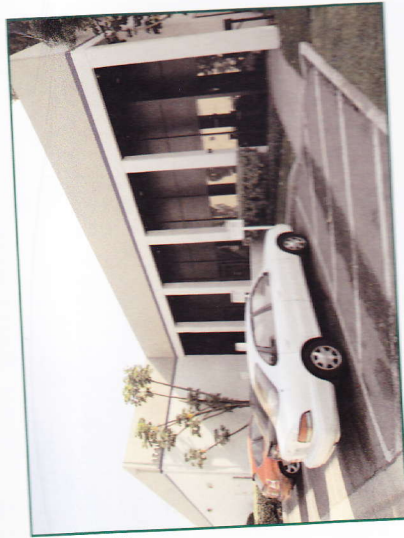


Shuttle service begins

by Alicia Di Rado

City of Hope has begun a bus service to shuttle staff members between the Duarte campus and the new Flower Building nearby.

Trams accommodate 10 passengers and make six stops on the campus before heading to the Flower Building, located just northeast of campus. City of Hope purchased the Flower Building,



Markie Ramirez

The Flower Building

located at 1710 Flower Avenue in Duarte, to house new laboratory facilities for the institution's expanding research programs.

Service is available Monday through Friday and runs from 9 a.m. to 5:20 p.m. The bus travels counter-clockwise around the campus and completes the route about every 20 minutes.

The first shuttle leaves its stop in front of the cafeteria on Ben Horowitz Drive at 9 a.m. and arrives at the Flower Building at 9:05 a.m. The last shuttle leaves the Flower Building at 5:05 and arrives near the Visitor Center at 5:10 p.m.

The driver will take a morning and afternoon break, as well as a 30-minute lunch break from 1:05 p.m. to 1:35 p.m., resulting in three pauses in service. Just prior to each break, the driver will drop off any

Raffoul to lead respiratory care and related services

by Pat Kramer

Tracy Raffoul, R.R.T., M.H.A., today joins City of Hope as the new director of respiratory care, diagnostic cardiology and the neurology laboratory.

Raffoul previously directed respiratory care services for Glendale Adventist Medical Center. Prior to that, she was director of respiratory care and the neuro-vascular lab at San Antonio Community Hospital.

Throughout her career, Raffoul has served in administrative roles. She has led teams focusing

Courtesy of Tracey Raffoul



Tracey Raffoul

on patient assessment and continuum of care as well as patient and family education. She also has been a member of committees focusing on bioethics, contract labor, policies and procedures and other topics.

Raffoul is a registered respiratory therapist, certified respiratory therapy technician and certified pulmonary

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Mammography: Breast density is linked to breast cancer risk

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Palomares and colleagues compared risks determined using both the Gail model and breast density to understand the significance of each of the factors incorporated in the Gail model.

They found that breast tissue was significantly denser in women with a 15 percent or greater lifetime risk of breast cancer, as determined by the Gail model, compared to women with less than a 15 percent risk. For comparison, the average woman has a lifetime risk of 12.5 percent. Each factor in the Gail model corresponded to some of the risk increase associated with dense breast tissue.

But a striking 7 percent of the women deemed at high risk through mammographic density could not be explained by any of the risk factors currently included in the Gail model. Other factors must be at play, Palomares said.

"We found that when the two were correlated, the Gail model could not explain all the relationships between mammographic density and breast cancer risk," Palomares said. "This shows the importance

of including mammographic density in future settings of breast cancer risk and prevention."

This also widens implications for prevention. Many of the factors that influence breast density, such as hormone replacement therapy, diet and weight, can be changed through lifestyle choices. These factors are not part of the Gail model.

If women gain a better idea of the breast cancer risk they face, they may be more encouraged to improve the risk factors they can control, Palomares said.

In the future, more research must be done to improve how health professionals and researchers access digital mammograms and read breast density, Palomares said.

The group's study was published in the July issue of *Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers & Prevention*. Women in the study were part of the National Surgical Breast and Bowel Project Breast Cancer Prevention Trial's site in Washington and were enrolled between 1992 and 1997. The National Cancer Institute funded the research.