Molecular Cardiovascular Biology



Division Data Summary

Research and Training Details	
Number of Faculty	9
Number of Joint Appointment Faculty	1
Number of Research Fellows	21
Number of Research Students	13
Number of Support Personnel	18
Direct Annual Grant Support	\$4,676,640
Direct Annual Industry Support	\$5,000
Peer Reviewed Publications	49

Significant Publications

Combs MD, Braitsch CM, Lange AW, James JF, Yutzey KE. **NFATC1 promotes epicardium-derived cell invasion into myocardium.** *Development*. [Research Support, N.I.H., Extramural]. 138(9):1747-57. May, 2011.

During development, epicardial cells on the surface of the heart invade the myocardium to form the coronary blood vessels and fibrous connective tissue. Michelle Combs, a graduate student in Dr. Katherine Yutzey's lab, discovered that the transcription factor NFATc1 is required for the myocardial invasion of epicardial cells. Studies in mice and chicken embryos demonstrate that loss of NFATc1 in epicardial cells prevents myocardial invasion, thus inhibiting the development of the coronary vessels and fibrous connective tissue of the heart. The invasion of myocardium by epicardial-derived cells is likely mediated by the NFATc1 downstream target gene cathepsin K, that encodes an extracellular matrix-degrading enzyme. Recently, epicardial cells have been identified as a source of regenerative cells in cardiovascular disease. Therefore, manipulation of the NFATc1 pathway could be exploited to promote the invasion or investment of progenitor cells in diseased hearts.

Goonasekera SA, Lam CK, Millay DP, Sargent MA, Hajjar RJ, Kranias EG, Molkentin JD. **Mitigation of muscular dystrophy in mice by SERCA overexpression in skeletal muscle**. *The Journal of clinical investigation*. [Research Support, N.I.H., Extramural Research Support, Non-U.S. Gov't]. 121(3):1044-52. Mar, 2011.

The Molkentin laboratory published a paper in The Journal of Clinical Investigation this past year in which they identified an entirely novel strategy for treating muscular dystrophy. Mice engineered to overexpress the protein SERCA in skeletal muscle showed substantial protection from mutations that normally lead to muscular dystrophy. Dr. Molkentin and colleagues also showed a gene therapy approach whereby transfer of the SERCA gene in skeletal muscle immediately corrected disease due to a Duchenne-like mutation in mice. These results suggest novel approaches to mitigate the underlying molecular defects that initiate skeletal muscle and cardiac cellular necrosis in muscular dystrophy by enhancing SERCA activity and/or expression. The laboratory is currently working on novel SERCA activating drugs that could also be employed to treat this disease in the near future.

Heineke J, Auger-Messier M, Correll RN, Xu J, Benard MJ, Yuan W, Drexler H, Parise LV, Molkentin JD. CIB1 is a regulator of pathological cardiac hypertrophy. *Nature medicine*. [Research Support, N.I.H., Extramural

Research Support, Non-U.S. Gov't]. 16(8):872-9. Aug, 2010.

This paper from the Molkentin laboratory identified a novel regulatory pathway that functions through the intracellular phosphatase calcineurin to regulate how the heart hypertrophies in response to disease inducing stimuli. The protein CIB1 was shown to modulate calcineurin signaling at the plasma membrane, and inhibition of CIB1 function reduced cardiac hypertrophy through calcineurin. This research suggests novel treatment angles for reducing pathological manifestations to the heart in response to disease inducing states.

Hinton RB, Adelman-Brown J, Witt S, Krishnamurthy VK, Osinska H, Sakthivel B, James JF, Li DY, Narmoneva DA, Mecham RP, Benson DW. Elastin haploinsufficiency results in progressive aortic valve malformation and latent valve disease in a mouse model. *Circulation research*. [Comparative Study Research Support, N.I.H., Extramural Research Support, Non-U.S. Gov't]. 107(4):549-57. Aug, 2010.

This paper describes a mouse model of latent and progressive aortic valve disease. Elastin (*Eln*) haploinsufficiency was induced by gene targeting. *Eln* null mice died in the perinatal period due to severe arterial obstruction, but the *Eln* haploinsufficient mice ($Eln^{+/-}$) had normal longevity. Valvular intersitial cell activation and TGFb receptor 1 downregulation is at least in part responsible for the pathogenesis in this model, resulting in hyperproliferation and maladaptive extracellular matrix remodeling. The valve cusp histopathology of the *Eln*^{+/-} mice mimics the findings of human degenerative aortic valve disease, thus these

mice thus have the potential of contributing to the development of novel therapeutics for patients with aortic valve disease.

Division Highlights

Joshua Waxman, PhD

The Waxman lab's recent work has focused on factors that affect cardiac progenitor specification and indicates that cardiac and forelimb progenitors interact, helping to direct each ones' development. Specifically, we have found that retinoic acid signaling acting on forelimb progenitors impacts fibroblast growth factor signaling, which acts on cardiac progenitors. Together, these interactions allow proper specification of these different fields. We think elucidating these interactions will allow us to understand developmental syndromes that result in both heart and forelimb defects.

Division Collaboration

Human Genetics » Teresa Smolarek, PhD; Sarah Zimmerman, PhD

Study of microarray abnormalities in patients with cardiovascular malformations, funded by a grant through the March of Dimes.

Allergy and Immunology; Gastroenterology » Marc Rothenberg, MD, PhD; Philip Putnam, MD; James Franciosi, MD, MS, MSCE

TGF beta dysregulation: understanding the relationship in patients with eosionophilic esophagitis and connective tissue abnormalities.

Biomedical Informatics » Bruce Aronow, PhD

Use of systems biology to identify genetic regulatory networks for cardiomyopathy.

Faculty Members Jeffrey Robbins, PhD, Professor Executive Co-Director, The Heart Institute

Associate Chair of the CCHMC

Endowed Chair for Molecular Cardiovascular Biology

Research Interests Mechanisms of Normal and Abnormal Cardiovascular function

James Gulick, MS, Instructor

Research Interests Molecular interactions between certain cardiac contractile proteins and how such interactions can be altered by mutations that are associated with cardiomyopathies

Jeanne James, MD, Associate Professor

Director, Mouse Echocardiography Core

Research Interests Manifestations and etiologies of misfolded protein response and echocardiography

Zaza Khuchua, PhD, Associate Professor

Research Interests Congenital cardiac disorders caused by inborn errors in mitochondrial energy-producing enzymes, and model systems to study molecular mechanisms of these diseases

Marjorie Maillet, PhD, Instructor

Research Interests Understanding signaling pathways that lead to heart disease

Jeffery Molkentin, PhD, Professor

Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator Research Interests Molecular pathways that underlie heart disease and muscular dystrophy

Stephanie Ware, MD, PhD, Associate Professor

Director of Research and Development, Associate Medical Director, The Heart Institute Diagnostic Laboratory Co-Director, Cardiovascular Genetics

Research Interests Genetics of pediatric heart disease

Joshua Waxman, PhD, Assistant Professor

Research Interests Molecular Genetics of Heart Development

Katherine Yutzey, PhD, Professor

Research Interests Heart development and disease mechanisms

Joint Appointment Faculty Members

D Woodrow Benson, MD, PhD, Professor

Cardiology

Research Interests Genetic basis of pediatric heart disease

Trainees

- Federica Accornero, PhD, University of Turin, Italy
- Mannix Auger-Messier, PhD, University of Sherbrooke, Canada
- Md. Shenuarin Bhuiyan, PhD, Tohoku University, Japan
- Caitlin Braitsch, BS, Xavier University
- Adam Burr, BS, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- Ashley Cast, BA, Augustana College
- Santanu Chakraborty, PhD, Miami University
- Michelle Combs, BS, Quincy University
- Robert Nathan Correll, PhD, University of Kentucky
- Jason Cowan, MS, University of Miami
- Enrico D'Aniello, PhD, Marine Zoological Station Anton Dohrn, Italy

- Jennifer Davis, PhD, Univeristy of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- Tracy Dohn, BS, Wittenberg University
- Petra Eder, PhD, University of Graz, Austria
- John Elrod, PhD, Albert Einstein College of Medicine
- Ambrose Goonasekera, PhD, University of Rochester
- Manish Gupta, PhD, University of Cincinnati
- Mary Lee, MS, Ball State University
- Jason Karch, BA, Dakota Wesleyan University
- Izhak Kehat, PhD, Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, Isreal
- Jennifer Kwong, PhD, Weill Medical College of Cornell University
- Ruijie Liu, PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
- Jeffrey Lynch, PhD, University of Alberta, Canada
- Patrick McLendon, PhD, Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University
- Timothy Mead, BS, University of Dayton
- Diana Nardini, BS, College of Mount St. Joseph
- Ariel Rydeen, BS, University of Minnesota
- Arunima Sengupta, PhD, Miami University
- Mardi Sutherland, BS, University of Massachusetts, Boston
- Muhammad Tariq, PhD, Quaid-I-Azam University, Pakistan
- Jop van Berlo, MD, PhD, University Hospital Maastricht, Netherlands
- Davy Vanhoutte, PhD, University of Leuven, Belgium
- Elaine Wirrig, PhD, Medical University of South Carolina
- Erin Wissing, BA, DePauw University

Division Publications

- Acehan D, Vaz F, Houtkooper RH, James J, Moore V, Tokunaga C, Kulik W, Wansapura J, Toth MJ, Strauss A, Khuchua Z. Cardiac and skeletal muscle defects in a mouse model of human Barth syndrome. *The Journal of biological chemistry*. 2011; 286:899-908.
- Bolli R, Stein AB, Guo Y, Wang OL, Rokosh G, Dawn B, Molkentin JD, Sanganalmath SK, Zhu Y, Xuan YT. A murine model of inducible, cardiac-specific deletion of STAT3: its use to determine the role of STAT3 in the upregulation of cardioprotective proteins by ischemic preconditioning. *Journal of* molecular and cellular cardiology. 2011; 50:589-97.
- 3. Breitbart A, Auger-Messier M, Molkentin JD, Heineke J. **Myostatin from the heart: local and systemic actions in cardiac failure and muscle wasting**. *American journal of physiology. Heart and circulatory physiology*. 2011; 300:H1973-82.
- 4. Chakraborty S, Wirrig EE, Hinton RB, Merrill WH, Spicer DB, Yutzey KE. Twist1 promotes heart valve cell proliferation and extracellular matrix gene expression during development in vivo and is expressed in human diseased aortic valves. *Developmental biology*. 2010; 347:167-79.
- 5. Ch'en IL, Tsau JS, Molkentin JD, Komatsu M, Hedrick SM. Mechanisms of necroptosis in T cells. *The Journal of experimental medicine*. 2011; 208:633-41.
- 6. Chen X, Nakayama H, Zhang X, Ai X, Harris DM, Tang M, Zhang H, Szeto C, Stockbower K, Berretta RM, Eckhart AD, Koch WJ, Molkentin JD, Houser SR. Calcium influx through Cav1.2 is a proximal signal for pathological cardiomyocyte hypertrophy. *Journal of molecular and cellular cardiology*. 2011; 50:460-70.
- 7. Combs MD, Braitsch CM, Lange AW, James JF, Yutzey KE. **NFATC1 promotes epicardium-derived cell invasion into myocardium**. *Development*. 2011; 138:1747-57.

- 8. Czosek RJ, Haaning A, Ware SM. A mouse model of conduction system patterning abnormalities in heterotaxy syndrome. *Pediatric research*. 2010; 68:275-80.
- Eder P, Molkentin JD. TRPC channels as effectors of cardiac hypertrophy. *Circulation research*. 2011; 108:265-72.
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- Goonasekera SA, Lam CK, Millay DP, Sargent MA, Hajjar RJ, Kranias EG, Molkentin JD. Mitigation of muscular dystrophy in mice by SERCA overexpression in skeletal muscle. *The Journal of clinical investigation*. 2011; 121:1044-52.
- 16. Harper MT, Molkentin JD, Poole AW. Protein kinase C alpha enhances sodium-calcium exchange during store-operated calcium entry in mouse platelets. *Cell calcium*. 2010; 48:333-40.
- 17. Heineke J, Auger-Messier M, Correll RN, Xu J, Benard MJ, Yuan W, Drexler H, Parise LV, Molkentin JD. **CIB1 is a regulator of pathological cardiac hypertrophy**. *Nature medicine*. 2010; 16:872-9.
- Hinton RB, Adelman-Brown J, Witt S, Krishnamurthy VK, Osinska H, Sakthivel B, James JF, Li DY, Narmoneva DA, Mecham RP, Benson DW. Elastin haploinsufficiency results in progressive aortic valve malformation and latent valve disease in a mouse model. *Circulation research*. 2010; 107:549-57.
- 19. Hinton RB, Michelfelder EC, Marino BS, Bove KE, Ware SM. A fetus with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, restrictive, and single-ventricle physiology, and a beta-myosin heavy chain mutation. *The Journal of pediatrics*. 2010; 157:164-6.
- 20. Hinton RB, Yutzey KE. Heart valve structure and function in development and disease. Annual review of physiology. 2011; 73:29-46.
- 21. James J, Robbins J. Signaling and myosin-binding protein C. *The Journal of biological chemistry*. 2011; 286:9913-9.
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- 26. Lincoln J, Yutzey KE. Molecular and developmental mechanisms of congenital heart valve disease. Birth defects research. Part A, Clinical and molecular teratology. 2011; 91:526-34.
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- 34. Spicer RL, Ware SM. **Tumors of the Heart**. *Nelson textbook of pediatrics*. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier/Saunders; 2011: 1 online resource (p.).
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Chen X. Enhanced basal contractility but reduced excitation-contraction coupling efficiency and betaadrenergic reserve of hearts with increased Cav1.2 activity. American journal of physiology. Heart and circulatory physiology. 2010; 299:H519-28.

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- 46. Wirrig EE, Yutzey KE. Transcriptional regulation of heart valve development and disease. Cardiovascular pathology : the official journal of the Society for Cardiovascular Pathology. 2011; 20:162-7.
- 47. Wissing ER, Millay DP, Vuagniaux G, Molkentin JD. Debio-025 is more effective than prednisone in reducing muscular pathology in mdx mice. Neuromuscular disorders : NMD. 2010; 20:753-60.
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Grants, Contracts, and Industry Agreements

Grant and Contract Awards

Annual Direct / Project Period Direct

¢22 000

BRAITSCH, C

Tbx18 Regulation of Epicardial-Derived Cell Proliferation, Migration and Differentiation in Cardiac Development American Heart Association 07/01/00 06/20/11

	07/01/09-00/30/11	\$23,000
CORRELL, R		
Regulation of Cardiac Gene Ex National Institutes of Health	pression by the L-type Calcium Channel, CaV1.2	
F32 HL 097551	09/07/09-09/06/12	\$50,474
DAVIS, J		
The Non-Hypertrophic Role of	Calcineurin in Regulating Cardiac Structure-Function	
National Institutes of Health		
	12/15/08-12/14/11	\$52,154

The Role of Bax and Bak in Necrotic Cell Death American Heart Association

	07/01/10-06/30/12	\$23,000
		φ20,000
KHUCHUA, Z		
The shRNA-Mediated Tafazzin Kno Barth Syndrome Foundation, Inc.	ckdown Mouse Model	
Barth Syndrome Foundation, Inc.	01/01/10-12/31/11	\$16,361
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KRISHNAMURTHY, V		
	henotype in a Mouse Model of Aortic Valve Disease	
American Heart Association	07/01/09-06/30/11	\$23,000
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MAILLET, M		
	ease in Cardiac Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy	
National Institutes of Health R21 HL 097186	04/15/10-03/31/12	¢105.000
R21 HL 097186	04/15/10-03/31/12	\$125,000
MOLKENTIN, J		
Calcium as a Molecular Signal in th	ne Heart	
National Institutes of Health(Temple l	Jniversity School of Medicine)	
R01 HL 089312	08/15/07-06/30/12	\$239,303
Cardiac Hypertrophic Intracellular	Signaling Pathways	
National Institutes of Health	00/04/00 40/04/40	¢050.000
R01 HL 062927	02/01/09-12/31/13	\$250,000
Molecular Pathways Controling Ca National Institutes of Health		
R37 HL 060562	07/01/08-06/30/13	\$250,000
Thrombospondin 4 Regulates Adap		\$200,000
National Institutes of Health		
R01 HL 105924	01/01/11-12/31/11	\$315,000
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ROBBINS, J		
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National Institutes of Health(Universit P01 HL 059408	02/01/10-01/31/15	\$356,105
Nikon A1 Confocal Microscope	02/01/10-01/31/13	φ550,105
National Institutes of Health		
S10 RR 027014	07/01/10-06/30/11	\$388,205
Signaling Processes Underlying Ca		+,
National Institutes of Health		
P01 HL 069779	01/11/08-12/31/12	\$1,219,260
SENGUPTA, A		
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VAN BERLO, J		
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American Heart Association 07/01/09-0	06/30/11	\$23,00
The Function of Notch1 in Heart Valve Development American Heart Association		
R01 HL 094319 07/01/09-0	06/30/11	\$308,21
Notch Signaling in Heart Valve Development and Disease National Institutes of Health		
YUTZEY, K		
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March of Dimes National 02/01/11-0)1/31/13	\$69,32
Illumination of Mechanisms Controlling Atrial Cell Forma	tion	
R00 HL 091126 07/15/10-0	05/31/13	\$163,36
Elucidation of Molecular Networks Required to Limit Car National Institutes of Health	diac Cell Number	
WAXMAN, J		
06/01/10-0)5/31/13	\$93,86
March of Dimes		
Burroughs Wellcome Foundation(University of Cincinnati) 1008496 07/01/09-0 Genetic Causes of Congenital Heart Defects	06/30/14	\$75,00
Uncovering Novel Genetic Causes and Risk in Congenita	I Heart Disease Patients	
R01 HL 088639 04/01/07-0		\$250,0
National Institutes of Health		
Role of the Embryonic Node in Cardiac Development and	l Congenital Heart Disease	