

ADVANCING TREATMENT OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES

The Division of Cardiovascular Diseases has witnessed phenomenal growth in patient care, teaching and research. Arriving at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) in 2009, division director Buddhadeb Dawn, MD, saw great potential for a transformation. Today, 35 cardiologists, 17 fellows, nurses, and support personnel in the cardiovascular division and Mid-America Cardiology (the clinical operation of the program) provide top-notch cardiovascular care in the region. The program is ranked 24th in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report* for cardiology and heart surgery. That the program has been ranked in the top 50 for six consecutive years attests to the exceptional quality of work that has been sustained through the years.

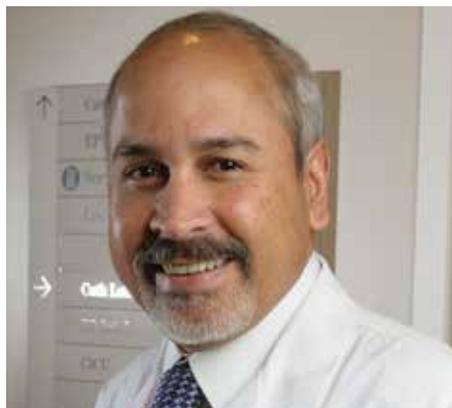
In the 2012 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, the program was noted for advanced technologies. With a state-of-the-art hybrid suite, the cardiovascular team offers several advanced therapies, including percutaneous valve interventions and robotic cardiac surgery. And with a cutting-edge navigation system, the electrophysiologists can perform advanced EP procedures without exposing patients to undue radiation. These facilities also provide excellent training grounds for fellows, who are well prepared to practice cardiology of the future.

Although advances in patient care come largely from biomedical research, only a few short years ago, there was no in vivo basic cardiovascular research at KUMC—or in the Kansas City region. This changed dramatically when the Cardiovascular Research Institute (CVRI) was founded in 2009. Today, physicians and scientists in the CVRI advance knowledge by engaging in basic cardiovascular research, numerous clinical trials, as well as translational studies. The major areas of research include cardiac repair with adult stem cells, protection of the heart against heart attacks, and innovative interventional approaches for valvular heart disease and atrial fibrillation. Ample research opportunities for fellows offer a balanced academic

cardiovascular training. Grant funding has increased tenfold, and the division is prominent at national and international conferences. As a result of these accomplishments, the standing of the KUMC cardiovascular program is rapidly rising among national peers.

Another highly exciting development in the area of cardiovascular stem cell research is the recent approval of senate bill 199, which enables the creation of the Midwest Center for Stem Cell Therapy at KUMC. This new center will facilitate the conduct of clinical trials with various adult stem cells for a multitude of diseases in patients in Kansas and the adjoining states. For clinical grade cell processing, a new modular GMP facility is currently under construction in the basement of the Lied building. The center will also organize various learning programs and conferences to enhance the understanding of adult stem cell biology. When fully operational, this center will be uniquely geared to bring cutting-edge adult stem cell therapy to the people in the Midwest.

This success is a direct result of hard work, collaboration, and dedication from an outstanding team of physicians, fellows, nurses, and other members, who are unwaveringly committed to all-around excellence. And for Dr. Dawn, it has been tremendously rewarding to watch the program blossom. **“When a group of talented and motivated individuals truly love what they do every day, the program shines,”** he says. **“We are so proud of what we have been able to achieve as a team.”**



Buddhadeb Dawn, MD

