

# Past, Present and Future of CAPER

Randall Brand, MD  
Professor of Medicine  
University of Pittsburgh

# Origins of CAPER

- Midwest Multicenter Pancreatic Study Group first met in 1994 with the **goal of fostering collaborative research to impact on the clinical management of patients with pancreatic diseases**

David Whitcomb (Pittsburgh)

Charles Ulrich (Cincinnati)

Larry Gates (Kentucky)

Stephen Martin (Pittsburgh)

- At PancreasFest in 2006 there was recognition that the group had expanded outside of Midwest (in large part due to NAPS2) so renamed North American Pancreatic Study Group (NAPSG)

# PancreasFest 2006

- Decided we needed a formal organization to address major unmet needs in the field of pancreatology
  - Foster clinical translational research
    - Share SOPs/lessons on running multi-center studies
  - Educate junior faculty and trainees
  - Develop future leaders in pancreatology
    - Opportunities to serve on committees
    - Present research ideas (mentoring)
    - Speak/Present at a major international meeting (Pancreasfest)

# Process of Becoming a Formal Organization

- During Pancreasfest 2006
  - Michelle Anderson and I were nominated to be Secretary/Treasurer and President of NAPSG by Dave Whitcomb
  - We were then assigned the task of creating bylaws and looking into incorporating organization as a 501c
- Changed name in 2009 to CAPER



# What is a CAPER?

- *Capparis spinosa*, the **caper bush**, is a perennial winter-deciduous species that bears rounded, fleshy leaves and large white to pinkish-white flowers. A *caper* is also the pickled [bud](#) of this plant.



Collaborative Alliance for Pancreatic Education and Research  
Successfully incorporated in December of 2009

# Key Individuals to Launch CAPER



David Whitcomb



Michelle Anderson



Patter and Tom Birsic



Cordy Glenn

# Original Mission Statement

- Facilitate the collaboration of clinical, translational and basic science research of pancreatic diseases and to support scientifically rigorous multi-center studies in pancreatic diseases;
- To educate and train researchers interested in pancreatic diseases;
- To increase knowledge regarding pancreatic diseases.



# Created Committees and Board

- First formal meeting at PancreasFest 2010
- Original Board of Directors- Tom Birsic (chair), Vicki Hall, Agi Hirshberg, Ed Purich, David Whitcomb
- Committee Chairs:
  - Tim Gardner (Communication Chair)
  - Wahid Wassef (Education Chair)
  - Santhi Vege (Meeting Chair)
- Michelle Anderson (Secretary/Treasurer)
- Carm Campbell (Administrative Support)



# Accomplishments in first year: 2010-2011

- Website
- GI academy 2010
  - Highlights the support of CAPER by so many individuals
- Supported PancreasFest
- Developing mentorship program
- Hired an Executive Director: Patter Birsic

# Top 10 reasons to join CAPER

1. Triple membership: also have membership to International Association of Pancreatology (IAP) and European Pancreatic Club (EPC)
2. Electronic subscription to Pancreatology
3. Recognition of your work /accomplishment by others in the field
4. Access to Mentors for junior members
5. For senior members, ability to serve as a mentor for individuals who are eager to do pancreatic research

# Top 10 reasons to join CAPER

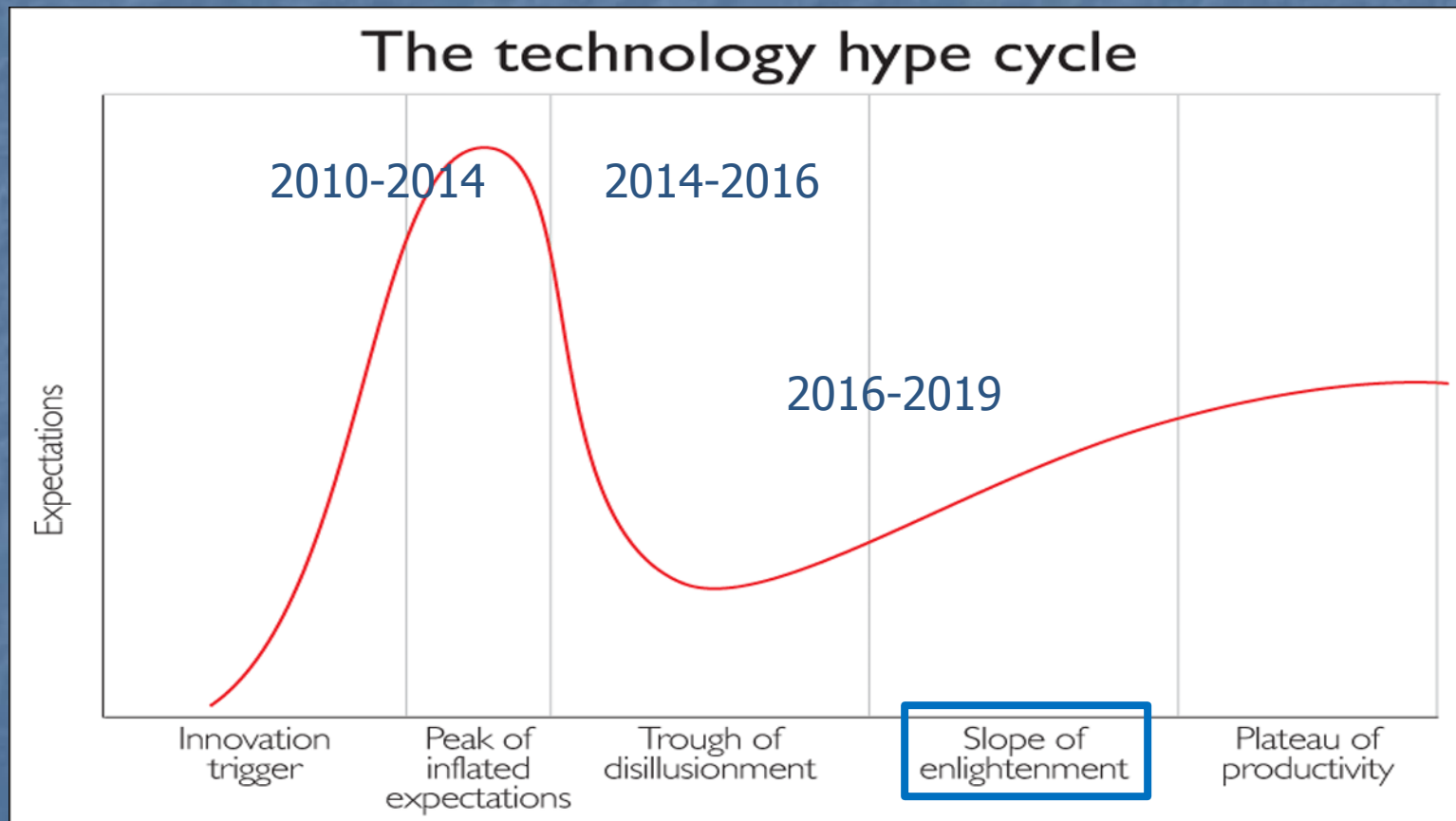
6. Assistance with clinical study design
7. Assistance with recruiting enthusiastic sites for multicenter studies
8. Speaking opportunities at CAPER sponsored programs: GI Academy, PancreasFest
9. Leadership experience
10. It's a cool name!!!



# Past Presidents

- 2010-2012 Randall Brand
- 2012-2014 Michelle Anderson
- 2014-2016 Wahid Wassef
- 2016-2018 George Papachristou
- 2018-2020 Walter Park
- 2020-2022 Greg Cote

# Status of CAPER



# Challenging Times

- Volunteer organization
- Not engaging junior faculty and trainees
  - Despite support of travel scholarships by Ed Purich
- Turnover of administrative support
- Development of Consortiums like CPDPC, PCDC along with existing EDRN



# Slope of Enlightenment

- PancreasFest 2016- During Board of Director meeting addressed future of CAPER
- Felt we should proceed but needed to hire a group to provide administrative support and management services
  - Identified and hired PACE effective Sept 30,2016

# Accomplishments

- Refined mission statement: “The Collaborative Alliance for Pancreatic Education and Research’s (CAPER) mission is: (a) to facilitate the collaboration of researchers of pancreatic diseases and to support scientifically rigorous multi-center studies in pancreatic diseases; (b) to educate and train healthcare providers in pancreatic diseases; (c) and to increase public health awareness regarding pancreatic diseases.”
- Restarted GI Academy- third consecutive year
- CAPER Pancreas Scholars
- Expand membership
- Expanded Board of Directors
- Apprentice Study



# Top Accomplishment: Trainee Committee



Peter Lee

Venkata Akshintala

*Empowering clinicians and researchers  
to improve digestive health*





# Mentoring



John Cello, UCSF



Eamonn Quigley, UNMC



Margaret Tempero, UNMC



Henry Lynch, Creighton



Thank you for this honor!!