Interventional Cardiology Group Joins CUMC

By Matthew Daugherty

A world-renowned group of cardiologists specializing in interventional cardiology joined the faculty at Columbia University Medical Center in August.

As part of the Division of Cardiology at Physicians & Surgeons Department of Medicine, the group will launch an expanded program in Cardiac Interventional Therapy (CIVT).

The combined research and clinical program is expected to spur medical and technological discoveries that could greatly improve the lives of patients with heart disease.

“The cardiovascular arena is one of the most rapidly advancing in clinical innovation,” said Gerald D. Fischbach, executive vice president and dean. “This team has had a huge impact on the way patients with heart disease and other vascular conditions are treated. CUMC offers these physicians a large and diverse research community in which to combine the discoveries of new biology with breakthroughs in clinical research on new medical devices and surgery techniques.”

The group’s groundbreaking work in minimally invasive cardiac procedures—including angioplasty to open blocked arteries, atherectomy to remove calcified plaque in the arteries and the use of stents to keep open an area of blockage—has led to advances that enable early diagnosis and treatment of cardiac and vascular disease.

Their discoveries have allowed patients with serious heart disease worldwide to be treated without surgery or lengthy hospital stays.

The program’s leadership team includes Jeffrey Moses, director of CIVT, Martin Leon, associate director of CIVT, Gregg Stone, director of research and education for CIVT, and Victor Yock, president of the Cardiocascular Research Foundation (CRF), a nonprofit group founded in 1990 by Leon that conducts cardiovascular clinical trials.

Moses has conducted more than 12,000 angioplasties and cardiac interventions since 1985. He has also had a major leadership role in clinical studies that demonstrated the effectiveness and safety of drugcoated coronary stent placement. He has developed a number of minimally invasive procedures.

The CIVT group is moving to Columbia from a practice currently associated with Lenox Hill Hospital.

The interventional cardiologists will have the opportunity to participate in government-funded large-scale clinical trials and collaborate on cross-disciplinary studies involving cell therapy, human genetics, and drug development at Columbia.

As part of CUMC’s faculty, the group will help educate leading specialists in an important area of medicine that can improve patient care and early diagnosis of diseases that are among the most common causes of death in the industrialized world.

New York-Presbyterian Hospital will provide catheterization laboratories and a number of other clinical facilities.