

# NEWSLINE

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School of Medicine Newsletter – March 2001 – Vol. 4 , No. 3

Produced by the Office of Faculty and Instructional Development

Medical College of Virginia Campus, Virginia Commonwealth University

## **LCME Site Visit A Success**

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The Site Visitors have come and gone (March 4-8) leaving us with very encouraging words. The official report will arrive in June of this year, but they were lavish in their praise of faculty commitment to the academic goals, of the students' enthusiasm and loyalty, of the collegiality that exists to an unusual degree among all of us, and of the innovative programs that we have in place. They advised us to be mindful of the LCME standards as we fashion our affiliation with INOVA. They felt more teaching space was needed and a stronger curriculum reporting structure would help to expedite our vision in this area. Finally, they will express their recommendation to the LCME that careful monitoring of the VCU Health System be carried out to encourage its continued support of the School's academic missions.

My thanks go to each and every one of you for making our School one of which to be proud. To those of you who led the work groups, served on the work groups, and discussed your thoughts with the Site Visitors, I give special "kudos." Drs. Kontos and Trani should be recognized for their strong support. The lion's share of the work fell to Jim Messmer and Joan Barrett; we will owe them our gratitude for the unsolicited comments from the LCME team, "This was a logistically perfect site visit and one of the best we have ever done!"

## **Gateway Building Update**

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The project substantial completion dates are as follows:

Ground Floor Lobby/Main Entrance and 1st Floor: 9/9/01; 4th, 6th and 7th Floors: 11/01;

3rd Floor Phase I: anticipated 12/1/01; Basement: anticipated 2/1/02.

Move-in dates are planned for 2 months after the substantial completion dates. The two floors marked above as "anticipated" are because drawings for these areas have not yet been issued. Floors 2, 5 and 3 Phase II are currently shell floors. Construction for these areas will be completed sometime in the future when the work is authorized.

The departments that occupy the floors currently are listed below.

Basement- Imaging Center, Minimally Invasive, and Telemedicine  
Ground Floor - Lobby, Community Resource Library, Food Vendor  
1st Floor - Outpatient Testing, Admitting, Patient Relations, and Lab Area  
2nd Floor - Mammo/Radiology and Echo Tee Lab  
3rd Floor - EP Lab and EP Recovery  
4th Floor - Endoscopy/Bronchoscopy and Dialysis  
5th Floor - Short Stay/Early Admit  
6th Floor - Pathology  
7th Floor - Transplant and Pulmonary Function Lab (*Thanks to Matthew Hufnagle for this information*)

A food vendor has not yet been selected. A faculty dining area was recently discussed at a VCU faculty meeting. "I asked the Gateway Project Team to find a space for a faculty gathering area, and they did. It will be located on the first floor and will provide a convenient area for faculty members to dine together or hold meetings," said Dr. Eugene P. Trani, President and Chair of the VCU Health System Board.

### **University Faculty Awards – SOM Nominees**\_\_\_\_\_

The School of Medicine Nominating Committee recommended the following faculty to be nominated for the University Distinguished Faculty Awards. Congratulations to these individuals, whose nominations will be considered along with those from other Schools.

University Award for Excellence: Dr. Walter Lawrence, Department of Surgery  
University Award for Scholarship: Dr. Lindon Eaves, Human Genetics  
University Award for Service: Dr. Paul Wehman, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
University Award for Teaching: Dr. Graham Patrick, Pharmacology and Toxicology

### **John C. Forbes Graduate Student Honors Colloquium**\_\_\_\_\_

Everyone is invited to the Student Forum on Thursday, March 15, 12:30 - 5pm, Sanger 1-044 and Presentation of Awards on Friday, March 16, 3p.m., MSB Auditorium. Guest speaker, David G. Thomassen, Ph.D., Program Coordinator, Office of Biological & Environmental Research, U.S. Department of Energy, will be speaking on "Genomic Medicine: The Promises & The Pitfalls." A reception will immediately follow in MSB 104/105.

### **New Core Research Facility**\_\_\_\_\_

The Massey Cancer Center and Virginia Commonwealth University are pleased to announce the opening of the L.T. Christian III Transgenic Mouse Core Facility, under the direction of Jolene J. Windle, Ph.D. The purpose of this core is to provide VCU investigators an efficient and economical means for producing transgenic and knock-out mouse models. Services include pronuclear DNA injection for transgenic mouse production, and embryonic stem cell electroporation, screening and blastocyst injection for knock-out mouse production. In addition, the core will offer a number of related services, including mouse line rederivation for elimination of pathogens and consultation on methods related to transgenic mouse use. Please contact Dr. Jolene Windle at (804) 828-5843 or [jjwindle@hsc.vcu.edu](mailto:jjwindle@hsc.vcu.edu) for additional information.

## **SOM Admissions Update**

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Over the past several years there has been a drop in the applicant pool that seems to cause a lot of concern amongst faculty and a lot of jubilation amongst applicants who think it means it will be easier to get in to medical school. For example, both nationally and at our school, the applicant pool for 2001 is down 10% from 2000. Overall, our pool has dropped from a high of over 5300 in 1995 to the current total of 3631 this year. However, it should be kept in mind that in 1990 the pool was 2088. We are still in a position where we interview over 600 candidates each year for 170-180 slots. Interestingly, for most of the years that this drop has occurred the GPA and MCAT scores of the incoming class have continued to rise, so concerns about quality seem to be a non-issue. The matter that is of greater concern to most medical schools is the continuing drop in minority applicants. In 2001, the minority applicant pool is down another 5% nationally and at VCU. Continuous efforts to attract more minority applicants do not seem to be paying off at the level we had hoped.

Another item that seems to be of interest is the in-state/out-of-state mix of students. There is no legislated mandate in Virginia, but both UVA and VCU have maintained an out-of-state percentage somewhere from 30-35%. There are a variety of reasons for maintaining a certain level of students from out of state. Our school, for example, once considered accepting only in-state applicants. Since the state sets tuition targets for each school, we had to consider the financial impact of such a decision. We found that tuition for each student would be in excess of \$20,000 per year if we did not have out-of-staters paying a higher tuition. Since it seemed wise to keep in-state costs lower, the decision was made to try to balance the in-state and out-of-state students to keep tuition costs at a more reasonable level for VA residents. The students themselves feel that the other reason for having a good mix of people from all over the country is the diversity they bring to the class. The experience of dealing with people from widely differing backgrounds, religions, ethnicities and cultures has had an extremely positive impact on our students. They realize that they will be dealing with very diverse patient populations and that the experience early on in their education is invaluable. *(Thanks to Dr. Cynthia Heldberg, Associate Dean for Admissions, for this article)*

## **Electrifying the Curriculum Update**

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The progression toward a web-enhanced curriculum continues with the establishment of a model based upon the M2 Respiratory course. This is due in part to the hard work of the course directors, Drs. Paul Fairman and Margaret Grimes, and the collaborative efforts of the Computer Based Instruction Lab (CBIL) and the Curriculum Office. The Respiratory syllabus was first made available on the web for the Fall 1999 semester. The web syllabus provided the following features: learning objectives linked to relevant content, interactive quizzes at the end of select lectures, pathology and radiology images placed within lectures, audio breath sounds of respiratory conditions, glossary of key terms, and other additional features. Students still received a traditional paper syllabus.

After evaluating the course in 1999, students were concerned about inconsistencies between the paper syllabus and the web version. This problem was resolved for the Fall 2000 semester by printing the paper syllabus directly from the web version using Microsoft FrontPage 2000 software. Also, a search engine feature was added in the second revision of the web version, which allows the reader to search key terms throughout the syllabus. Students reported these features very helpful: the pathology and radiology slides imbedded in the text; the interactive cases at the end of select lectures, and the learning objectives linked to the relevant content within lectures (especially during preparation for the exam). Students asked for more cases to be developed and placed within the web syllabus and asked why all courses were not set up with a similar web syllabus.

Student evaluations of the web syllabus were overwhelmingly positive for the Fall 2000 course. Also, utilization of the web increased considerably for the Fall 2000 version. Evaluations reported that students spending more than 11 hours on the web syllabus increased from 39 to 68 percent.

The Curriculum Office has been working with the course directors (Drs. Robert Leshner and Alan Towne) of the M-II Central Nervous System (CNS) course to develop a web syllabus based on the Respiratory course model. The web syllabus was made available to the students in the Spring 2001 semester. CBIL will continue developing interactive case vignettes and multimedia clips of select movement disorders to further enhance the CNS web syllabus. Other M1 and M2 courses currently under development are Foundations of Clinical Medicine and M2 Behavioral Sciences. The web syllabi are password accessible from the Electronic Curriculum Web Site: <http://www.curriculum.som.vcu.edu> *(Thanks to Robby Reynolds for providing this information)*

## **McGuire VAMC Selected as One of Only Six Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Care (PADRECC) Centers in the US\_\_\_\_\_**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has created six new centers specializing in research, education and clinical care and committing more than \$30 million to support the centers over the next four years. McGuire VAMC was selected as one of only six Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Care centers (PADRECC). Each PADRECC center will conduct many types of research including basic biomedical, rehabilitative, health services delivery and clinical trials. The hallmark of the PADRECC project is a multicenter research study that will evaluate the effectiveness of a new surgical intervention to control the debilitating impact of severe Parkinsonism. "Deep brain stimulation" involves the insertion of a small battery operated electrode into the deteriorated part of the brain controlling muscle movement. When the electrode is turned on, the damaged part of the brain is partially restored, resulting in improved motor control and coordination. Dr. Kathryn Holloway, a neurosurgeon at both McGuire VAMC and VCU, is one of the leading experts in deep brain stimulation in the US.

The McGuire PARDECC has also received funding to develop and evaluate several clinical care and educational protocols. Dr. David Cifu, Chief of the Department of PM&R at both McGuire and VCU, will evaluate the results of a structured outpatient exercise program. Dr. Helen Filmore will head a cutting edge research effort in an attempt to develop a cure for Parkinson's Disease. Dr. Filmore and colleagues grow brain stem cells in a laboratory setting using adult brain tissue. Dr. Warren Felton, VCU Professor and Chief of the Department of Neurology at McGuire VAMC, will develop and deliver educational programs for clinical personnel, Parkinson's disease patients and their family members. Dr. Vincent Calabrese, Director of the McGuire PADRECC stated, "It is an honor for McGuire to be selected as a center of excellence that can serve the many veterans who are afflicted with this devastating disease." The award is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished by synergism between McGuire VAMC and VCU School of Medicine.

## **Women in Medicine Professional Achievement Award Announced\_\_\_\_\_**

The 2001 WIM Professional Achievement Award was presented to Dr. Michelle Whitehurst-Cook, Associate Professor of Family Practice, on Friday, March 2, during the 9th Annual WIM Pathways to Leadership Conference, held at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond. The annual award was first established in 1993 and acknowledges special contributions and accomplishments of women faculty in the SOM. The 14 women nominated this year included: Drs. Linda Costanzo, Physiology; Marcella Fierro, Legal Med; Chris Gennings, Biostatistics; Margaret Grimes, Pathology; Lindsey Grossman, Pediatrics; Kathryn Holloway, Neurosurgery; Anne-Marie Irani, Pediatrics; Lisa Kaplowitz, Int. Med.; Kathryn Kerkering, Pediatrics; Susan Kornstein, Psychiatry; Mary Nettleman, Int. Med.; Eileen Segreti, Ob-Gyn, and Sandra Welch, Pharmacology/Toxicology. Over 250 participants from Virginia and 8 other states attended the Conference to address "Changing the Chilly Climate." The conference is presented by the 3 Virginia medical schools, the Medical Society of Virginia, and the Richmond Academy of Medicine.

*(Thanks to the VCU Office of Continuing Medical Education for their excellent conference management)*

## **SOM Faculty Receive VCU Faculty Mentoring Awards for Instructional Technology\_**

The VCU Faculty mentoring initiative is designed to assist selected faculty in developing the means to enhance instruction through technology for their own classes and to extend their knowledge and skills to serve as mentors for other faculty. Faculty selected for the program receive laptop computers and special assistance from the VCU Instructional Development Center (IDC) in finding effective ways to use technology in their teaching. Congratulations to James H. Johnson, Ph.D., Department of Anatomy, and to Helen Ragazzi, M.D. and Suzanne Lavoie, M.D., Department of Pediatrics, for being selected to participate in this program.

## **Department News\_\_\_\_\_**

### Department of Emergency Medicine

Dr. Nora Klinker participated as an Alumni Scholar faculty member at the 2001 Harvard Macy program for Physician Educators. The Program is designed to facilitate the latest in projects for medical education programs, and draws participants from around the world. Dr. Klinker attended the program as a scholar in 1999 to develop a CD Rom based Emergency Medicine Curriculum.

Dr. Gloria Kuhn, Associate Professor and Director of Faculty Development for the Department of Emergency Medicine at MCVH, has had an article published in Annals of Emergency Medicine entitled "Circadian, Rhythm, Shift Work and Emergency Medicine," January 2001.

### Department of Medicine

Tom Kerkering, M.D., Professor of Infectious Disease, spent January 19<sup>th</sup>-January 27<sup>th</sup> in Cuba, where he led a delegation of Infectious Disease Specialists from across the USA. The purpose of the trip was to learn how the Cuban Infectious Disease Specialists deal with HIV/AIDS, Dengue and other tropical diseases; how the embargo is effecting the health and nutrition of the Cuban population; and how their system of neighborhood family physicians to tertiary referral hospitals functions.

### Department of Microbiology and Immunology

Dr. Cynthia Nau Cornelissen, Assistant Professor, has been awarded a new RO1 grant from the National Institutes of Health for \$1,400,000 entitled "A molecular study of the gonococcal transferrin receptor." These studies may lead to the development of a safe and effective vaccine for the prevention of gonorrhea.

Dr. John G. Tew, Professor, will chair a session and give an overview at The 11th International Congress of Immunology this coming summer in Stockholm, Sweden. The Congress brings together immunologists from all over the world to cover main areas within the rapidly growing fields of basic and applied immunology. Only internationally well known professors will chair the sessions of the Congress. Dr. John G. Tew also chaired a session of the 10th International Congress of Immunology in 1998. He is the recipient of the University Award of Excellence in 2000.

### Department of Pathology

**Pathology Labs Relocate:** After years of planning, three major laboratories will relocate to new and enlarged space. The Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory moved into 6000 square feet of newly renovated space on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Clinical Support Center in January. This move nearly tripled the amount of space devoted to this cutting edge technology and will move VCU clearly into the forefront nationally as a provider of nucleic acid based clinical testing. In November, Surgical Pathology, Cytopathology and Transfusion Medicine will move into the new Gateway Building, nearly doubling the amount of space devoted to anatomic pathology. These moves will also place most of our medicine services closer to the patient locations that they serve.

**Pathology Honor Society Inductees:** Each year, the Department recognizes those students scoring in the top 10% on the Pathogenesis exam by inducting them into the Pathology Honor Society, a national honorary association sponsored by the College of American Pathologists. This year's student honorees: David Pastel, Erika Woodson, Elisabeth Ashley, Katie Shew, Jon Moussally, Kathleen Powis, Nira Colyn, Todd Bruno, Eric Lyders, Gaelyn Eaton, Vartan Tashjian, Hugh Colvin, Liz Zarkin, Casey Gray, Julia Graves, Jeremy Moore, Devi Chakravorty.

**Faculty Notes:** After serving for more than twenty years as Chairman of the Division of Surgical and Cytopathology and Medical Director of the Surgical Pathology Services, Dr. William "Jack" Frable has decided to relinquish these administrative responsibilities. He will remain a full-time Professor of Pathology with clinical and teaching responsibilities in surgical pathology and cytopathology. Dr. Frable will continue to occupy the Saul Kay Endowed Chair in Diagnostic Pathology.

On 1/1/01, Celeste N. Powers, MD, PhD, became Chair of the Division of Surgical and Cytopathology. She will continue in her role as the Medical Director of Anatomic Pathology Services, where she has served since 10/99.

Also effective 1/1/01, Margaret Grimes, MD, became Medical Director of the Surgical Pathology Service, which includes Accessioning, Gross Room, Core (Histology) Lab, Transcription, and the Specimen Archives.

Michael J Kornstein, MD, left his position as Professor of Pathology and Director of the Special Studies Laboratory on 1/18/01. Dr. Kornstein will join Clinical Laboratory Consultants in Richmond. We wish him the very best in his new endeavor.

Kristen Atkins, MD, has accepted a full-time faculty position at the academic rank of Assistant Professor in the Division of Surgical/Cytopathology. She is currently a cytopathology fellow here in the Department of Pathology. Her new position will commence on 4/1/01 upon the completion of her fellowship program.

John B. Cousar, Jr., MD, joined our faculty on 1/3/01 as Clinical Professor in the Division of Clinical Pathology. Dr. Cousar earned an international reputation at Vanderbilt University in the field of Hematopathology, and we are delighted to benefit from his clinical and teaching experience.

Shawn E. Holt, PhD, Assistant Professor of Pathology and Human Genetics, was recently awarded a two-year, \$100,000 research grant from the Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation. The grant is titled "Therapeutic Strategies for the Prevention and Treatment of Breast Cancer Using Telomerase."

**Web Page Wins Honorable Mention:** The newly redesigned Pathology web page won recognition with an "Honorable Mention for Best Departmental Web Page" at the Pathology Informatics Conference, sponsored by the U. of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Oct, 2000. Katherine Stevenson, M.Ed., Educational Practitioner, presented her electronic poster "Using the New to Revitalize and Capitalize on the Best of the Old."

### Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology

Dr. Joseph Borzelleca, Professor Emeritus, is being honored with the Life Achievement in Science Award by the Science Museum of Virginia. Dr. Borzelleca's work assisted in the development of a treatment for poisoning by the pesticide Kepone.

### Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health

Dr. Jack O. Lanier has been invited to be the keynote speaker at two 2001 national conferences: the first presentation will take place on April 4th for the Northeast Regional Leadership Public Health Institute annual meeting at the Rensselaerville Institute in Albany, New York. The second presentation will take place on June 7<sup>th</sup> for the American Hospital Association Institute for Diversity in Chicago, IL.

Dr. Lanier has also been involved in planning a multidisciplinary outreach and education effort known as the Decade of Behavior (2000-2010). Lanier is one of 16 distinguished behavioral and social scientists providing leadership on the National Advisory Committee, which seeks to focus the energy of the behavioral and social sciences on meeting societal challenges like health, safety, and education. One development of the initiative is "FundSource," a searchable database for research funding in the behavioral and social sciences. For more information, log onto [www.decadeofbehavior.org](http://www.decadeofbehavior.org).

The Department has nominated the following MPH students for the awards indicated: Nominee for the VCU Award of Excellence: Ann Eischeid; Nominees for the Gates Millennium Scholars "Leaders for America's Future" Award: Bettye D. Stanley, D.O., Lisa R. Robinson.

Dr. Adefolaju F. Olufuwa, a Preventive Medicine resident and MPH student, is to present at the 59th Annual Meeting of the Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine in Savannah, GA in April.

### Department of Psychiatry

Researcher Xue Zhong Liu, M.D., Ph.D., is to be part of an international team that clones the gene responsible for Usher Syndrome. The disease causes deafness and blindness.

Dr. Sandy Barker, Inpatient Division, met recently with U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher for an update on the health benefits of companion animals. Dr. Barker is one of only 3 researchers across the country who met with the surgeon general in this regard.

Our child fellowship program received 5 full years' accreditation this year from the American Counsel of Graduate Medical Education.

Dr. David Ross, Chief Resident Dr. Mehrul Hasnain and Inpatient Division Chair Dr. Anand Pandurangi were published in the February, 2001 issue of Psychiatric Services for their article on Subspecialty Training in Schizophrenia.

Dr. Dean Parmelee, Chair, Child and Adolescent Division, was selected on behalf of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and its Committee on Medical Student Education as recipient of the 11th Annual Nancy C.A. Roeske, M.D. Certificate of Recognition for Excellence in Medical Student Education.

Drs. Cheryl Al-Mateen and Susan Kornstein were selected for the inaugural class of Grace Harris Institute Leadership Program. The program was designed to prepare VCU's current and emerging leaders for enhanced leadership and the next phases of their careers.

Drs. Cynthia Bulik and Ken Kendler co-authored an article on "I Am What I (Don't) Eat: Establishing an Identity Independent of an Eating Disorder" in the Nov. 2000 issue of the American Journal of Psychiatry. Dr. Kendler was also first author of a paper entitled "Sexual Orientation in a U.S. National Sample of Twin and Nontwin Sibling Pairs," published in the same journal.

Mary Ellen Olbrisch, Ph.D., of our Consultation/Liaison Division, presented an invited paper at NIH at a living donor transplantation conference.

### Department of Surgery

The Residency Review Committee of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery has provisionally reaccredited the cardiovascular surgery residency program. The accreditation is contingent upon submission of appropriate case volumes and experiences of the current residents after the completion of the first year of training in July, 2001. Accreditation runs effective January 2001 to the Fall of 2003.

At the invitation of Kosova's leadership in Medicine, from 1/1 to 2/6/01, Dr. Ronald C. Merrell, Stuart McGuire Professor & Chairman, and Director of the Medical Informatics and Technology Applications Consortium (MITAC), and Dr. Rifat Latifi, Asst. Professor & Director of Education and Distance Learning at MITAC & President of Kosova Foundation for Medical Development, visited Kosova in pursuit of establishing an International Virtual e-Hospital and a Telemedicine network in Kosova. They met with high-level officials including representatives of the World Health Organization, the Dept. of Health of Kosova, the Medical Association of Kosova, the Dean of the Medical School of the University of Prishtina, the Director of Hospital Directories of Kosova and the Kosova Protection Corps, Medical Battalion in Prishtina. After two days of intensive meetings, on 2/4/01 in Prishtina they signed a memorandum of understanding for the implementation of the International Virtual e-Hospital of Kosova.

Drs. Rifat Latifi and Ronald C. Merrell's book entitled "Nutritional Support in Cancer and Transplant Patients" was published this month by Landes Bioscience.

Welcome to Stuart I. Myers, M.D., FACS, as Professor of Surgery in the Div. of Vascular Surgery and Vice Chairman for Education. Dr. Myers obtained his M.D. in 1976 from Washington University SOM in St. Louis, MO. He comes to VCU from Temple Univ. Med. School, where he was Chairperson of the Dept. of Surgery for five years. Dr. Myers is married to Dr. Patricia A. Lowry, a pediatric radiologist who will also be joining our faculty. They have two children, a 13-year-old son and an 8-year-old daughter.



In the last NEWSLINE announcing Dr. Thomas Mulligan's appointment as the new Associate Chief of Staff for Geriatrics and Extended Care, his faculty rank was incorrectly listed; he is a full Professor of Internal Medicine. We regret the error.



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Newsline is designed to better inform the faculty about activities and plans affecting the School of Medicine and to encourage open communication. So much that happens is a moving target, so we'll do our best. Send comments and questions and we'll try to find the folks who know the answers (if they'll tell us...) You can submit items for the newsletter to Kathy Kreutzer, Box 980565 or e-mail [kkreutzer@vcu.edu](mailto:kkreutzer@vcu.edu).

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*Thanks to all those who have provided information for this newsletter*

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