

# NEWSLINE

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## School of Medicine Newsletter – September 2002 – Vol 6, No. 1

Produced by the Office of Faculty and Instructional Development

Medical College of Virginia Campus, Virginia Commonwealth University



*Believe it or not, everyone, it's fall....*

### Department Chair Search Update

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As announced earlier, **Dr. Robert Merrell plans to step down as Chair of Surgery on June 30, 2003**. The Surgery Search Committee has been formed, with **Dr. John Cardea (Orthopaedic Surgery) serving as Chairman**: Dr. Carlos Arancibia, Anesthesiology, Dr. Ellen Brock, OB/GYN, Dr. Ralph (Ron) Clark and Dr. Richard Wenzel, Internal Medicine, Dr. Tim Evans, Emergency Medicine, Dr. Susan Kornstein, Psychiatry, Dr. Tony Kuzel, Family Practice, Dr. Joseph Laver, Pediatrics, Dr. Stephanie Spottswood, Radiology, and Dr. Brian Kaplan, Dr. Neri Cohen, Dr. Marc Posner, Dr. Abelardo Deanda, and Dr. Harry Koo, elected representatives of the Department of Surgery.

We asked Dr. Merrell about his plans for next year and he gave this update. "I look forward to continuing my work with a wonderful faculty and university in my teaching and practice. My research work in distance management and telesurgery is expanding rapidly. I plan to devote much more time and attention to this work and with increased collaboration with other VCU faculty. I have also been able to expand my commitments to NASA for committee work in the coming years. In addition, I will be working with increased time on the clinical telemedicine programs of VCUHS. I am very proud of our surgery department and its accomplishments in these four years. I am delighted to pass the reins on to another and to be an energetic faculty member of a great department."

**The Family Practice Search Committee, David Cifu (Physical Med and Rehab) Chair**, has received 9 applicants for the FP Chair (8 external, 1 internal), and advertisement for the search was closed 9/06/02. The top three candidates will be interviewed in September/October.

**Ophthalmology Chair Search Committee**, with the leadership of **Dr. Richard Wenzel (Internal Medicine), Chair**, has reviewed applicants and the final candidates will be coming for second interviews in September/October.

### Welcome the SOM Class of 2006!

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On Wednesday, August 15, the medicine class of 2006 formally matriculated. Total number = 184. Here are some statistics on those applying for schools of medicine nationally and here at VCU SOM, as well as on our new MIs:

#### National Pool (all applicants nationally)

31,452 applicants, a decrease of 9%  
Average GPA 3.46, Average MCAT 27  
815 Virginians in the pool, a decrease of 10%  
Average VA applicant GPA 3.36, Avg. MCAT 27

#### VCU Pool (all applicants)

3471 applicants, a decrease of 4%  
Average GPA 3.4, average MCAT 27  
Total Virginians in our pool 723, a decrease of 1%  
Interviewed 612 applicants, 320 Virginians, 292 other  
Offered places to 394 applicants, 193 Virginians, 201 other

#### Entering Class of 2006 (those accepted and here!)

Average GPA 3.5, Average MCAT 29  
93 women (51%), 13 underrepresented minorities (7%)  
Average age 24; 53 over the age of 25 but none over the age of 35

66 undergraduate schools represented: UVa. 36, VCU 23, W&M 14, JMU & Maryland 9, Va. Tech 6, W&L, Duke & UNC-CH 4 each, Cornell, UCLA and University of California-Riverside 3 each

21 States are represented: Virginia 115, Maryland 20, California 12, North Carolina 7, New Jersey 5, Pennsylvania 4, Utah and Illinois 3, Tennessee and Texas 2.

In addition, among the new students there are 4 former Governor's School students and 10 Guaranteed Admissions through the VCU Honors Program.

## **Dr. Jan F. Chlebowski to Receive Honorary Doctorate**

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Since 1988, Dr. Jan F. Chlebowski, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the SOM, and Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics, has coordinated a program with the University of the West of England (formerly Bristol Polytechnic), in Bristol that has brought students to labs in the School of Medicine for a year's work in a research lab environment as part of their training program. A number of these students (who are the equivalent of U.S. college juniors) have ultimately returned here for their Ph.D. work and, in fact, several are in training in the SOM now.

The University of the West of England has chosen to honor Dr. Chlebowski with an honorary Doctor of Science degree at their fall commencement this November. Congratulations to Dr. Chlebowski on his work with this program, and this exciting honor!

## **Virginia Higher Education Bond Referendum impacts MCV Campus Plans**

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On November 5, 2002, Virginians will be asked to approve \$846 million in bonds for badly needed higher education projects, both for new construction and long overdue renovations for higher education in the commonwealth. It will modernize aging facilities and build new ones on Virginia's public campuses. It will do everything from upgrading classrooms to upgrading workers' skills to making up for lost ground in research and development space at our universities. It also will help our institutions accommodate the additional 32,000 high school graduates expected to enroll through this decade. Importantly, it will not raise taxes or increase student tuition and fees. Nor will it threaten Virginia's triple-A bond rating. In fact, over the next six or seven years, the activity resulting from the bond projects will generate more than \$1.5 billion in economic activity and create nearly 14,000 new jobs. For VCU, the passage of this referendum will provide almost \$77 million for critically important projects. Every public community college, college and university in every region of the commonwealth will benefit from the bond referendum.

MCV Campus Projects impacted include: West Hospital/George Ben Johnston Auditorium Renovations (schools of Allied Health Professions and Nursing), Massey Cancer Center Addition (state-of-the-art clinical research labs), Medical Sciences Building, Phase II (instructional/research space), Sanger Hall Renovations, Phase I, (instructional/research space; main building for basic courses for the health sciences schools)

For more information, check out:

<http://www.vcu.edu/bond/about.html> for the basics, and a linked page on projects

<http://www.vcu.edu/bond/projects.html> gives dollar figures on MCV Campus plans

## **Graduate School Enrollment Levels Lower**

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It appears that fall headcount for advanced degree enrollment will end up being about 325 compared with 343 at the same time last year. It is still unclear what the reasons for this decrease are, but it may be related to increased restrictions on student visa approval since 9/11/01.

## **Inova Update**

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The School of Medicine had a "Consultation Visit" with two Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) representatives at Inova Fairfax on 8/29/02: Frank Simon (American Medical Association secretary of LCME) and Robert Eaglen (Association of American Medical Colleges). The purpose of the visit was to review the accreditation issues regarding the M3/M4 program at Inova Fairfax for VCU medical students, which begins officially August 2005. The LCME, the accrediting body for undergraduate medical education programs, requires that the educational experiences at geographically separate campuses, under one School, be "equivalent" in nature. Information on the results of this visit will be reported in the next Newsline.

# VCU SOM Promotion and Tenure Awards, July 2002

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***Congratulations to the following faculty who received promotions and/or tenure this July!***

## **TENURE REVIEW (PROFESSOR)**

Stuart I. Myers, M.D.	Surgery
Steven H. Woolf, M.D., MPH	Family Practice

## **PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR WITH TENURE**

Robert S. Higgins, M.D.	Surgery
Susan G. Kornstein, M.D.	Psychiatry
Jolene J. Windle, Ph.D.	Human Genetics
Christopher M. Wise, M.D.	Internal Medicine

## **PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR (ALREADY TENURED)**

Joanne N. Bodurtha, M.D., MPH	Human Genetics
Cynthia M. Bulik, Ph.D.	Psychiatry
Chris Gennings, Ph.D.	Biostatistics
Ary S. Ramoa, Ph.D.	Anatomy
Patrick Sullivan, M.D.	Psychiatry
Kimber L. White, Jr., Ph.D.	Pharmacology & Toxicology

## **PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR (COLLATERAL)**

Velemir A. C. Luketic, M.D.	Internal Medicine
On Topaz, M.D.	Internal Medicine

## **PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WITH TENURE**

Michael Climo, M.D.	Internal Medicine
Raymond J. Colello, Ph.D.	Anatomy
Cynthia N. Cornelissen, Ph.D.	Microbiology & Immunology
Michael McVoy, Ph.D.	Pediatrics
David G. Simpson, Ph.D.	Anatomy
Dorne Yager, Ph.D.	Surgery

## **PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR (COLLATERAL)**

Diane Biskobing, M.D.	Internal Medicine
Melissa J. Contos, M.D.	Pathology
Edward J. Gill, M.D.	Obstetrics & Gynecology
Jeffrey H. Haynes, M.D.	Surgery
Edward John N. Ishac, Ph.D.	Pharmacology & Toxicology
Laurel J. Lyckholm, M.D.	Internal Medicine
Antonio E. Muniz, M.D.	Emergency Medicine
Andreas Prinz, M.D.	Internal Medicine
Margaret Roberson, M.D.	Internal Medicine
Alfred H. Rogers, M.D.	Internal Medicine
James E. Shaw, M.D., MPH	Internal Medicine
Stephanie E. Spottswood, M.D., MPH	Radiology

## **PROMOTION TO ASSISTANT PROFESSOR**

*(no peer review required; recommendation letter and curriculum vitae required)*

Mark Kapros, M.D.	Anesthesiology
Vibha Thakral, M.D.	Internal Medicine

## **AFFILIATE AND NON-PAID, VOLUNTEER FACULTY**

*(no peer review required; recommendation letter and curriculum vitae required)*

### **PROMOTION TO CLINICAL PROFESSOR**

Psychiatry: Martin N. Buxton, M.D., Renate Forssmann-Falck, M.D.

Family Practice: Charles O. Frazier, M.D., Samuel M. Jones, M.D., Susan A. Miller, M.D., Susan H Satchwell, M.D., T. Eugene Temple, M.D.

Surgery: Wyndell H. Merritt, M.D., J. Latane Ware, M.D.

### **PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE CLINICAL PROFESSOR**

Family Practice: James C. Anderson, M.D., Donn S. Cobaugh, M.D., Richard H. Hoffman, M.D., Allen B. Horne, M.D., Thomas M. Hubbard, M.D., Yvette C. Johnson-Threat, M.D., Jacob E. Jones, M.D., Daniel R. Kelly, M.D., John P. Kowalski, M.D., Shane J. Kraus, M.D., Brent R. Lambert, M.D., Thomas R. Lanyi, M.D., Joseph A. Leming, M.D., Barbara T. Lester, M.D., Michael R. Lustig, M.D., Jeff L. McLeod, M.D., James W. Miller, M.D., John F. Mills, D.O., Ellen K. Mitchell, M.D., Patrick W. Mitchell, M.D., William P. Morrisette, III, M.D., David B. Nichols, M.D., Barbara M. Prillaman, M.D., James R. Robusto, M.D., Michele A. Romano, M.D., Frank M. Sasser, Jr., M.D., Susan J. Scharpf, M.D., Alger R. Southall, III, M.D., Kirby D. Southall, M.D., Charles K. Sparrow, Jr., M.D., Randall H. Suslick, M.D.

Obstetrics and Gynecology: William E. Adkins, M.D.

Ophthalmology: Jeffrey J Zuravleff, M.D.

Orthopaedic Surgery: John F. Meyers, M.D.

Pediatrics: Bob Archuleta, M.D., David L. Arkin, M.D., Michael Blumberg, M.D., Gordon N. Kellett, M.D., Colleen Kraft, M.D., E. James Wiley, Jr., M.D.

Surgery: Joseph V. Boykin, Jr., M.D., William R. Morgan, M.D., Carroll T. Petty, M.D., Douglas S. Rowe, M.D.

### **PROMOTION TO ASSISTANT CLINICAL PROFESSOR**

Obstetrics and Gynecology: Ben Frederici, M.D., F. Keith Goodman, Beth E. Levin, M.D.

Pediatrics: John Andrako, M.D., Rhoda L. Mahoney, M.D.

Psychiatry: Henry E. Morris, DWS, Paul M. Spector, D.O.

Surgery: Eric Paul Cote, M.D., Richard W. Graham, M.D., Boyd H. Winslow, M.D.



*to Ann Setien, Dean's Office, for this information. Thanks to the SOM Promotion and Tenure Committee Members for their dedicated work in this important process.*

## **Mark Your Calendar for 4<sup>th</sup> Annual SOM Teaching Awards Program!**

The **Fourth Annual SOM Teaching Awards Program** will be held **Monday, October 21, 2002**, from **12 – 1 pm** in the MSB Auditorium with luncheon following on the Plaza. The Dean, School of Medicine, invites all faculty to come and honor your colleagues and teaching in the SOM. For more information, contact Debbie Stewart, Program Coordinator, 86591 or Carol Hampton, Associate Dean, Faculty and Instructional Development, at 86594.

## **SOM New Faculty Orientation, Monday, October 21**

Join us for this 8<sup>th</sup> annual event from **7:30am to 5pm** in the Medical Sciences Building (MSB), Rooms 104 and 105. All faculty are invited to attend, but the program is designed specifically with our newest faculty members in mind. The course will provide an introduction to the School of Medicine and the Academic Medical Center, and to the many resources available on campus in support of teaching, patient care, and research. There will be opportunities to learn about the educational environment, the healthcare enterprise, research and the promotion and tenure process at VCU.

The program is organized into "blocks" and you may attend individual blocks or the entire program. "Seasoned" faculty especially may want to attend the update on the "Clinical Enterprise," 3:55pm to 4:55pm, since The Hunter Group report is expected the end of September.

For the program brochure and registration, go to <http://www.medschool.vcu.edu/cme/index.html> or contact Carol Hampton, Associate Dean, at 828-6591 or Carole Hettema, Conference Manager, Office of Continuing Medical Education, at 828-5416.

## **Welcome to Interim Leadership at MCV Hospitals and MCV Physicians**

As you may know, on August 2, Donna Katen-Bahensky left VCU to accept a position at the University of Iowa. This left vacant her position as COO, MCV Hospitals & Clinics and, in the interim, Dr. Kontos asked The Hunter Group to provide an executive in this position as we conduct a national search.

**William (Bill) Kerr** is serving in this interim position, but his title is **Interim CEO of MCV Hospitals and Clinics**. As Mr. Kerr has had enormous academic medical center experience, we are extremely privileged to be able to acquire his expertise and assistance during this transition. Mr. Kerr currently is a Senior Vice President with The Hunter Group and is an active leader in the American Medical Colleges, the Commonwealth Fund Task Force on Academic Health Centers and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Before joining The Hunter Group, Mr. Kerr served as the Chief Executive Officer of the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) for twenty years. Mr. Kerr background extends back to Assistant Commissioner for the Department of Hospitals in New York City and service in the United States Army Military Intelligence.

In response to a Hunter Group recommendation to strengthen the faculty practice plan, **MarieAnn North** will serve as **Interim Executive Director of MCV Physicians**. With more than 15 years health care experience in physician group practice administration, she has held executive positions in managed care settings and with multi-specialty group practices. North has been CEO at Presbyterian Healthcare Associates in Charlotte, N.C., where she was responsible for the operations and finance of a nonprofit organization that employed 150 physicians. She previously worked with practice groups at the University of Pennsylvania, UCSF and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

"I am delighted that we are able to access the quality of leadership from experienced administrators, such as Ms. North and Mr. Kerr, on an interim basis," said Dr. Sheldon M. Retchin, VCUHS Chief Executive Officer and Vice President for Health Sciences, effective July 1, 2003. "They will be helpful in assisting us in implementing the recommendations from their firm."

A national search will be conducted for both positions.

*(Thanks to VCU News, University News Services for help with information for this article)*

## **New NIH Rules for Animal Care and Use Approval**

NIH has recently announced that it will follow the same "just in time" rules for Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval as it has established for IRB approval in grant applications. Applications may now be submitted with either IRB or IACUC review "pending" and will be reviewed. However full approval must be obtained by the time of award. For more information contact the IACUC chair, Dr. Susan Robinson, at [serobins@vcu.edu](mailto:serobins@vcu.edu) or Mary Noel, IACUC Coordinator, at [mmnoel@vcu.edu](mailto:mmnoel@vcu.edu) (*information provided by Dr. George Ford, Assistant Dean for Research*)

## **AD Williams Awards for July 1, 2002 Award Cycle Announced**

A. D. Williams awarded 7 research grants in the July 1, 2002 award cycle. The A.D. Williams family left a generous bequest to support medical scholarship and research at the Medical College of Virginia. Today these funds are administered by a committee including the Vice President of the Health Sciences Division of VCU and the Deans of the five schools on the MCV campus. The Committee annually allots a portion of these funds to foster and support research and faculty development. It also sponsors outstanding researcher awards, the recipients of which are chosen by the individual schools. In addition, the MCV Foundation contributes funds from endowments specifically designated for medical research or research into specific diseases or conditions. Monies from these

disease-related funds are used to support appropriate A. D. Williams research applications and are not available for direct solicitation.

For more information, including applications: <http://views.vcu.edu/adw/>

### **July 2002 Awards**

**Faculty Development Award: "Probing the Outer Vestibule Structure of the HERG Channel Using a Recombinant Peptide Toxin, BeKm-1."** Dr. Gea-Ny Tseng, Associate Professor of Physiology, was awarded \$2,500 from the A. D. Williams Trust Funds.

### **Research Grant Awards:**

**"Correlation of Proliferation of Adult Neural Stem/Progenitor Cells and Recovery from Cognitive Deficits Following Traumatic Brain Injury,"** Dr. Ann C. Rice, Instructor of Surgery, was awarded \$14,695. \$10,000 was from the Crump Trust Funds and \$4,695 from the A. D. Williams Trust Funds.

**"Effect of Emphysema on Oxygen Transport in Skeletal Muscle."** Dr. Roland N. Pittman, Professor of Physiology, was awarded \$15,000 from A. D. Williams Trust Funds.

**"Dendritic Cell-Based HIV Vaccine."** Dr. Elsie S. Mainali, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, was awarded \$10,000 from the Feamster Foundation Trust Funds and \$5,000 from the A. D. Williams Trust Funds.

**"Duration of Action of a Peri-tubation, Single Oral Application of Chlorhexidine on Oral Microbial Flora."** Dr. Mary Jo Grap, Associate Professor of Adult Health Nursing, was awarded \$14,888 from the A. D. Williams Trust Funds.

**"Candidate Gene Studies of Anorexia Nervosa."** Dr. Brien Riley, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, was awarded \$14,920 from A. D. Williams Trust Funds.

**"Trigger Films as an Aide to Developing, Enabling and Assessing Anesthesia Clinical Instructors."**, Dr. C. J. "Chuck" Biddle, Professor of Nurse Anesthesia, was awarded of \$10,551 from the A. D. Williams Trust Funds.

## **Tompkins-McCaw Library Bits and Bytes: Come See the Renovated TML!**

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Come tour the TML to see what a difference renovations can make. The first floor is being totally remodeled and will be open in its entirety early October. Many of you have already seen the finished new copy/print room, ADA-compliant restrooms and staff offices. The LIMERC educational classroom, relocated to the second floor, has already been inaugurated with instructional sessions with the new academic year. In conjunction with the renovations, sprinklers are being installed throughout the building.

**Mark your calendars and plan to attend a grand opening celebration scheduled for Wednesday, November 6, 2002.** Please check the renovations Web page for the latest information on the renovations and the grand opening at <http://www.library.vcu.edu/building/>. Check out the latest pictures of the new TML at <http://www.library.vcu.edu/tml/renovations/photogallery.html>

## **SOM Distance Education Videoconferencing Moves**

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SOM Distance Education videoconferencing has relocated from Hunton Hall to Medical Sciences Building, 1st floor, Room 103. Many videoconference distance education lectures, including lectures for the Blackstone Family Practice Residency program, will now originate from MSB, Room 103. In addition, video applications are now housed with the SOM Instructional Development and CBIL team for production of multimedia and web based curriculum.

Sanger Hall, Room 1-050, the Dean's Conference Room, has been outfitted as a small-scale electronic classroom with two-way interactive video teleconferencing. Sanger 1-050 can be scheduled for a limited number of research and administrative videoconferences.

Anyone interested in exploring videoconferencing for distance education should contact JK Stringer, Director of Video Applications and Distance Education, at 828-2821 or [jkstring@vcu.edu](mailto:jkstring@vcu.edu). For clinical telemedicine and patient consultations refer to Debbie Justis, B.S.N., VCUHS Telemedicine Clinical Coordinator, located in the Gateway Building Basement, at 828-6114 or [sebastiandb@vcu.edu](mailto:sebastiandb@vcu.edu).

## **Did you know?**

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**Marcos Irigaray**, Executive Director of Strategy and Marketing, VCUHS, and his staff, **Joseph Cirillo and Laurette Anderson-Conyard**, have moved from the Putney House to the Zeigler House at P. O. Box 980275 (1006 East Marshall Street). Their phone numbers and e-mails have all remained the same.

## **Department News**

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### **Dean's Office**

**William Gleason**, Senior Associate Dean for Finance & Administration in the SOM, has also been appointed Associate Vice President for Health Sciences for VCU. Congratulations, Bill!

**J. Dennis Hoban, Ed.D.**, Director, Education Research, **Jeanne Schlesinger, M.Ed.**, Director, Instructional Development in the Computer-Based Instruction Lab, **R. Paul Fairman, M.D.**, Professor, Department of Internal Medicine, and **Margaret Grimes**, Professor, Department of Pathology had their article, "Electrifying A Medical School Course: A Case Study as a Development" accepted for publication in the journal, [Teaching and Learning in Medicine](#).

### **Department of Biochemistry**

The Department has begun a new initiative in cellular and molecular signaling. We have recruited an outstanding assistant professor, **Dr. Charles Chalfant**, from the University of South Carolina. Dr. Chalfant's research is focused on role of ceramide in the alternative splicing of caspase 9 and Bcl-x and implications to programmed cell death.

Two biochemistry graduate students, **Mariano Scian** and **Andrea Gray**, have received NIH predoctoral training fellowships. **Dr. Mike Maceyka**, a postdoctoral fellow, received a postdoctoral fellowship from the Department of Defense to study prostate cancer cell biology.

**Dr. Sarah Spiegel**, Professor and Chair, has been awarded a number of grants recently, including a \$583,029 award from the Department of Defense to study Lysophosphatidic Acid Regulation and Roles in Human Prostate Cancer, a \$287,391 award from NIH to study Sphingolipid Metabolite, Sphingosine 1 Phosphate, and \$298,500 from The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to study Sphingosine-1 Phosphate in Mast and Airway Smooth Cell.

**Dr. R. K. Van Antwerpen**, Assistant Professor, has received a \$254,941 award from NIH to study The Structure and Atherogenicity of LDL. He has also been awarded \$33,228 from NIH in support of a Minority Predoctoral Fellowship Program and the fellow is Ms. Andrea Gray.

### **Department of Emergency Medicine**

**Dr. S. Rutherford Rose**, Associate Professor, was awarded \$138,479 from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of HRSA. These funds represent a continuation grant (year two) to support the services of the Virginia Poison Center, a nationally certified poison control center that serves central and eastern Virginia. Dr. Rose serves as Director of the Center.

### **Department of Internal Medicine**

The new **Hem-Onc Special Interest Group (SIG)** has been formed with M2 students **Meera Pahuja** and **Katherine Johnson** in charge, and Drs. Brian Kaplan and Laurie Lyckholm as faculty advisors. Please contact any of these individuals for more information!

**Steven Grant, M.D.**, the Shirley Carter and Sture Gordon Olsson Professor of Oncology, will lead an effort to develop new approaches to the treatment of chronic myelogenous leukemia and related disorders in patients who have developed resistance to Gleevec -- the tyrosine kinase inhibitor STI571. The three-year, \$389,952 project is

funded by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America and will begin in January 2003. Gleevec's approval last year for the treatment of chronic myeloid leukemia was met with excitement in the cancer treatment community. More recently, however, enthusiasm has been tempered, as investigators have become aware that resistance to Gleevec represents a major problem. Co-investigators on the grant are the **Geoffrey Krystal, M.D., Ph.D., professor, and John McCarty, M.D., associate professor, both with the Department of Internal Medicine, and Paul Dent Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Radiation Oncology.**

Additionally, Grant has become a member of the editorial boards of four journals: 1) *Biochemical Pharmacology*, 2) *Cell Cycle*, 3) *Molecular Pharmacology*, and 4) *Leukemia*. In December, he served as a member of the National Cancer Institute's Oncologic Sciences Boundaries subcommittee, which is charged with making recommendations to the NIH for the reorganization of study sections responsible for the review of all NCI grant applications dealing with cancer-related projects. Also, this summer, Grant begins a four-year term on the subcommittee D Parent Committee, which is responsible for the second level review of all cancer-related Program Project applications within the U.S.

### **Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology**

**Leo Dunn, M.D., M.S.H.A.**, Professor, received this year's ABMS Award at the American Board of Medical Specialties Annual Meeting on March 21, 2002 in Chicago. Dr. Dunn has contributed widely to initiatives to advance board certification throughout his career. For the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ABOG), Dr. Dunn has served in a variety of roles, including Examiner (1969-present), Director (1975-1978), and President from 1982-1986. He was also active on the ABOG test committee and has served as that committee's chair. On behalf of the ABMS, Dr. Dunn has served as a voting representative of the ABOG, member of the ABMS Executive Committee (1987-98), Treasurer (1989-1993), Vice-president and President-elect (1996-98), President (1998-2000) and as an ABMS representative to the Accreditation Council for GME (1994-98). During his term as ABMS President, he was a major force for and strong supporter of the goals of the Task Force on Competence. Dr. Dunn has also served as President of the American Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Dr. Dunn served as chairman of the Department from 1967-1996, and was also Chairman of the Board of the MCV Associated Physicians from 1992-1996. The Leo J. Dunn Research Chair was established at MCV/VCU upon Dr. Dunn's retirement as Chairman.

### **Department of Orthopedic Surgery**

**Max Huband, OTC**, was selected to be inducted into the National Association of Orthopaedic Technologists' Honor Society. The society is dedicated to those who have been instrumental in NAOT's formation and philosophies, and those committed to recognizing the orthopaedic technology profession.

We are pleased to announce that **Jonathan E. Isaacs, M.D.** has joined the Department as of August 1, 2002. He specializes in hand, microvascular surgery and general orthopaedics.

### **Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology**

**Robert Balster, Ph.D.**, director of the Institute for Drug and Alcohol Studies, professor of pharmacology and toxicology, and research professor of psychology, has been appointed to the Advisory Board of the Partnership for a Drug Free America. He will be advising the Partnership on scientific and medical aspects of drug abuse prevention. The Partnership for a Drug-Free America is a New York City-based non-profit coalition of communications professionals – from advertising, the media industry, public relations, research companies, actors guilds, production companies – dedicated to the prevention of drug abuse in American youth. Their primary means of doing this is through a research-based national advertising campaign created by hundreds of volunteers who comprise the Partnership.

Well known for his research on the pharmacology of drugs of abuse, Balster has received a NIH MERIT Award, which provides 10 years of grant support to leading scientists in the field. In addition to directing the 35-faculty Institute for Drug and Alcohol Studies, Balster teaches VCU students about drug abuse problems and is the editor-in-chief of a leading scientific journal, *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. He is also currently working with the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation to help develop smoking prevention programs to discourage Virginia teens from tobacco use.

**Louis S. Harris, Ph.D.**, has been installed as president of the College on Problems of Drug Dependence, the nation's largest and oldest organization for the scientific study of drug dependence and addictions. Harris is associate vice president for health sciences at VCU and the Haag Professor of Pharmacology/Toxicology in the SOM. As the fourth CPDD president from the university, Harris' one-year term will run through June 2003. His duties as president will include implementing policies established by the College's board of directors, which he will chair. He assumed his post as president at the CPDD's 64th annual meeting in Quebec City, Canada.

Harris is best known for developing the first strong analgesic with a low potential for addiction. Representing a new class of analgesics, the drug – known by its trade name Talwin – is still used today. Harris was also a leader in the field of marijuana research, receiving the first National Institutes of Health grant to study the recreational drug. A past chairman of the university's Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, Harris served for nearly 25 years on the World Health Organization's Expert Committee on Drug Abuse. He also, in the early 1980s, served as chairman of the CPDD's predecessor organization. *(thanks to Anne Forrester for this information)*

**Laura Sim-Selley, Ph.D.**, assistant professor, has been awarded the Joseph Cochin Young Investigator Award. Given annually by the College on Problems of Drug Dependence, the award recognizes early career excellence in the science of drug addiction. Sim-Selley was recognized for her research investigating how specific neurotransmitter receptors in the brain are affected by chronic exposure to drugs, particularly opiates and marijuana. With a goal of understanding how these functional changes in the brain are related to the behavioral changes that can accompany long-term use of a drug, she sees a potential for her work to impact the development of therapeutic drugs, including those to treat addiction. Sim-Selley is also known for her post-doctoral work at Wake Forest University in which she developed a technique that allows researchers to observe the activity level of the brain's receptors, a distinct improvement over previous tests that only revealed the receptors' location in the brain. This advance has proven useful in Sim-Selley's own research as well as in the research of others in the field.

The Joseph Cochin Young Investigator Award is presented annually to a young scientist by the College on Problems of Drug Dependence, the largest and oldest organization for the scientific study of drug dependence and addictions. The award was established in 1986 to recognize research contributions in any facet of the field of drug abuse. This year's presentation was made in June at the College's 64th annual meeting in Quebec City, Canada.

## **Department of Physiology**

**Dr. Gea-Ny Tseng** was honored to serve as panelist on the 2002 National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship evaluations in February. Dr. Tseng spent several days in Washington, D.C., reviewing and evaluating applications. The NSF will award fellowship support to 900 students this year based on her and other panelists' recommendations.

**Dr. Roland Pittman** was an invited speaker at the International Society on Oxygen Transport to Tissue, August, 2002, in Manchester, England

## **Department of Psychiatry**

Two of our faculty will receive Distinguished Faculty Awards at the VCU Convocation on September 5th.

**Dr. James Levenson** will be recognized by the VCU Distinguished Teaching Award and Dr. Robert Cohen by the VCU Distinguished Service Award. VCU awards four distinguished faculty awards annually. Congratulations to Jim and Bob and to Psychiatry and the SOM for this recognition.

The USMLE Step 1 scores in the behavioral sciences were clearly a full standard deviation above the national average. Congratulations to **Drs. Ike Wood and Neil Sonenklar**, and to our faculty and students.

**Brian Meyer, Ph.D.**, formerly executive director of the Albuquerque Family and Child Guidance Center in New Mexico, joined us in April as director of VTCC. Brian has a B.A., magna cum laude, from Harvard as well as his M.A. and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Duke. He has already demonstrated his skills in administrative leadership, teaching and scholarship. He will be accepting ambulatory clinical referrals soon.

**Elinore McCance-Katz, M.D.**, has joined us as Chair of our Addictions Psychiatry Division effective July 1st. She comes to Richmond from Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University in New York City, where she has most recently served as Deputy Chair, Department of Psychiatry, as well as Director of their Addiction Psychiatry Residency Program, and Director of Addiction Medicine Research for the Montefiore Medical Center in

Bronx, New York. She received her B.A. in Biology, magna cum laude, from Eastern Connecticut State University, her M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Infectious Disease Epidemiology from Yale, and her M.D. from the University of Connecticut. She brings nationally recognized expertise in teaching, research and clinical care.

**Dr. Jim Brown** has published *Environment and Chemical Toxins in Psychiatric Illness*; **Dr. Susan Kornstein** is editor of *Women's Mental Health*; **Dr. James Levenson** is editor of the *Psychiatric Clinics of North America: Psychiatry in the Medically Ill, March 2002*; and **Dr. Nirbhay Singh** is editor of *International Perspectives on Child & Adolescent Mental Health, Volume 2*.

**Dr. Bela Sood** was selected as a member of the 2002-03 Class of Fellows in the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) Program for Women. The ELAM Fellowship is a yearlong, in-depth, multifaceted learning experience focused on developing women's executive skills. She is the 5<sup>th</sup> ELAM fellow from VCU SOM.

## **Department of Radiation Oncology**

**Paul Dent, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor, spoke to the Colonial Heights Kiwanis Club in June on the importance of cancer research. A member of the Department since 1996, Dr. Dent has also been invited to speak at the Department of Defense Era of Hope meeting in Orlando in Sept. 2002 as well as at the Gordon Conference on Radiation Research in 2003.

**Paul Keall, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor, has been awarded an American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) Summer Undergraduate Fellowship Program Mentorship. The AAPM funded an undergraduate winner, Scott Winter of Trinity College in San Antonio, to work under Dr. Keall for the summer of 2002 on his project "Radiobiological Predictions for Genetic Radiotherapy". A member of the Department since 1998, Dr. Keall's other research specialties include developing techniques and procedures for the implementation of four-dimensional intensity-modulated radiation therapy (4D IMRT), improving breast radiotherapy through improved IMRT methodology, and investigating the use of Monte Carlo calculation techniques for the determination of dose distributions in typical clinical situations.

Dr Keall also recently received a National Cancer Institute R01 grant that will support \$1 million in direct costs over five years. His project entitled "4-D IMRT: Imaging, Planning and Delivery" aims to develop and implement 4-D IMRT (four-dimensional intensity modulated radiation therapy) as a new technique for accounting for tumor motion during the imaging, planning, and delivery of radiation therapy.

Dr. Keall's viewpoints regarding the potential of gene therapy to make radiotherapy more effective in the fight against cancer were published in an article that recently appeared in the Science and Technology section of *The Economist*. In the article, entitled "Radioing for help" (*The Economist*, July 20-26, 2002), Dr. Keall's calculation that the cure rate for cancer could be improved by at least 15% using a novel combination of gene therapy and radiotherapy, is noted, as are ongoing laboratory experiments in the VCU Department of Radiation Oncology. In these experiments, cancer cells are radiosensitized by blocking the function of a protein called epidermal growth factor, which encourages cells to repair themselves.

**Ross Mikkelsen, Ph.D.**, Professor, was recently awarded a four-year grant from the National Cancer Institute entitled "Radiation-induced Nitric Oxide and Cellular Radiosensitivity." This grant investigates mechanisms by which nitric oxide at physiological concentrations protects cells from cytotoxic and mutagenic reactive oxygen species generated by radiation and normal cellular oxidative metabolism. Dr. Mikkelsen was an invited speaker at the 2002 Radiation Research Society Meeting in Reno where he presented lectures on "How do cells sense reactive oxygen?" and "Oxidative and Nitrosative Modifications of Proteins".

**Dr. Rupert Schmidt-Ullrich**, Chairman, has been named Editor of the most comprehensive textbook in radiation oncology, "Principles and Practice of Radiation Oncology" to be published in its 4<sup>th</sup> edition; he is also Guest Editor of an issue of the molecular biology journal *Oncogene Reviews* on "Molecular Mechanisms of Cellular Responses to Radiation." Dr. Schmidt-Ullrich continues to serve as an appointed member of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) IRG, B-Subcommittee D for clinical program project grants; in this capacity, he chairs site visits of program project grants and participates in their scientific review as a Parent Committee member.

Dr. Schmidt-Ullrich's research on experimental genetic therapy for tumor radiosensitization is funded through NCI program project and R01 grants and is executed in collaboration with members of the Molecular Radiation Biology Division, **Drs. Ross Mikkelsen, Paul Dent and Kristoffer Valerie**. Jointly with **Drs. Theodore Chung and Danny Song** of Radiation Oncology, Dr. Schmidt-Ullrich is involved in clinical genetic radiotherapy trials at MCV Hospitals sponsored by GenVec<sup>R</sup>. Dr. Schmidt-Ullrich's lecture commitments during the coming months include invited overview presentations at major meetings in the United States and Europe, such as the 44th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Radiotherapy and Oncology (ASTRO), the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) Meeting, a Radiation Oncology Gordon Conference, and more specialized conferences on molecular radiobiology and clinical translation of new molecular targets for tumor radiosensitization.

**Dorin A. Todor, Ph.D.**, a member of the clinical physics faculty, recently received an American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant for his project, "Dual Fusion Imaging for Intra-Operative Planning, Execution and Evaluation of Brachytherapy Implants." The goal of this research is to reduce the discrepancies that occur between initial treatment plans and the actual placement of permanent seed implants in prostate brachytherapy. This will be accomplished through fusing, in real-time, 3D information on target positions by using ultrasound with 3D radioactive source positions reconstructed in real-time from fluoroscopic projections. The information gathered will allow physicians to plan and carry out optimal implants and alleviate or avoid severe complications such as urethra or rectal morbidity, biochemical failure, and the need for salvage therapy.

### **Departments of Radiology/Orthopedic Surgery**

**Sherry Elliott, MBA, CMPE**, Associate Professor and Administrator of Radiology and Orthopaedic Surgery has been elected to serve as President of the Academic Practice Assembly of the Medical Group Management Association.

### **Departments of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation**

The Department and the Rehabilitation and Research Center are continuing the observance the 50th anniversary of inpatient rehabilitation on the MCV Campus with a special display of rehabilitation artifacts.

A variety of rehabilitation artifacts (many from Tompkins McCaw Library) will be presented along side of the modern counterparts in the display case on the first floor of Main Hospital from September 13-27, 2002. The artifacts and photographs will represent a variety of disciplines and show the progress of inpatient rehabilitation services over the decades.

PM&R and the Department of Physical Therapy have IRB approval to begin a joint study on the firing patterns of hip muscles correlating surface EMG and motion sensing technology to physical exam findings. The study also hopes to look at changes in hip firing patterns in relation to prior leg injuries. **Dr. Jeff Ericksen and Dr. David Drake** (PM&R), and **Dr. Peter Pidcoe** (Physical Therapy) are the co-investigators.

**Carl LaFratta, MD**, graduate of the VCU Department of PM&R residency program, has posthumously gifted \$200,000 to the Department to promote rehabilitation research.

### **Department of Surgery**

**Charles R. Doarn, M.B.A.**, assistant professor and executive director of the Medical Informatics and Technology Applications Consortium (MITAC), was recently elected to serve a one-year term as secretary for the American Telemedicine Association (ATA).

Doarn had previously served as treasurer of the organization, which is a leading resource and advocate promoting access to medical care for consumers and health professionals via telecommunications technology. Established in 1993 as a non-profit organization and headquartered in Washington, D.C., the association is comprised of individuals, companies and other organizations with an interest in promoting the deployment of telemedicine throughout the United States and worldwide. Held this year in Los Angeles, the ATA's annual meeting is the largest telemedicine conference in the world. The June meeting attracted scientists from all over the globe, including a MITAC contingent that led breakout sessions on "Homeland Security" and "The Operating Room of the Future".

**Robert S. D. Higgins, M.D.**, Chairman and Associate Professor, Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, has been awarded a Jeffress Memorial Trust Research Grant of \$25,000. These monies will be used to fund a research project investigating thrombin-mediated inflammation response in patients during cardiopulmonary bypass.

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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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