

# Your UMass medicine

From the University of Massachusetts Medical School and UMass Memorial Health Care  
Produced by the Office of Advancement

## Gift from grateful patient funds new endowed chair in rheumatology

*Timothy and Elaine Peterson promote awareness, research of inflammatory arthritis; Jonathan Kay, MD, appointed inaugural recipient*

A GIFT FROM PHILANTHROPISTS Timothy S. and Elaine L. Peterson, of Wellesley, will create a new endowed chair at UMass Medical School. The chair, in the Department of Medicine's Division of Rheumatology, was approved by the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees at its April meeting.

Jonathan Kay, MD, professor of medicine and director of clinical research for the Division of Rheumatology, has been appointed the inaugural recipient of the *Timothy S. and Elaine L. Peterson Chair in Rheumatology*. Dr. Kay will be invested in September.

"We are so fortunate to have Tim and Elaine Peterson as committed and engaged supporters of our institution," said UMMS Chancellor Michael F. Collins. "The Petersons' gift is a wonderful display of generosity and, more importantly, a tremendous demonstration of support for our medical school. With their investment in our research enterprise, in general, and Dr. Kay, in particular, the Petersons are partnering with us to advance clinically relevant discoveries and knowledge, which, as Mr.



From right, Elaine and Tim Peterson with Dr. Jonathan Kay.

Peterson's example powerfully illustrates, have the real potential to lead to novel and more effective treatments and therapies."

Tim Peterson, who has psoriatic arthritis, said he and his wife are committed to supporting research into and awareness of inflammatory arthritis. He spent more than a

decade helping to manage Harvard University's endowment before founding Regiment Capital Advisors LLC in 1999. He retired from Regiment Capital in 2014.

"As far as Elaine and I are concerned, Dr. Kay saved my life," said Peterson, who

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## UMass Memorial Medical Center improving patient and visitor experience through extensive renovation project



Rendering of new inpatient waiting room at the UMass Memorial Medical Center - University Campus.

IN KEEPING WITH ITS VISION of becoming "the best place to give care and the best place to get care," UMass Memorial Health Care has launched a significant upgrade initiative on the Memorial and University campuses of its academic medical center in Worcester. Based on input from patients and caregivers, the project will enhance the privacy, safety and comfort of UMass Memorial patients and their families through the renovation of existing spaces as well as some new construction.

"We've listened to our patients and caregivers, looked at best practices, applied LEAN management principles, and used

**"The quality of our facilities will match the quality of our care."** —KATHLEEN HYLKA

innovative thinking and creative design to create an environment that will improve the experience of our patients and caregivers," said Patrick Muldoon, president of UMass Memorial Medical Center.

"Our two campuses currently are very different," said Kathleen Hylka, director of strategic space planning at UMass Memorial

and a member of the project leadership team. "The Memorial Campus has buildings that date back to the 1930s, while the University Campus opened in the mid-1970s. We want to standardize across both campuses, and upgrade and refresh the spaces cost-effectively without tearing all the walls down."

Improvements will be made to individual patient rooms on both campuses as well as to existing care units and waiting areas. New care spaces—including a dialysis unit, a critical decision/observation unit and an intermediate care unit—will be incorporated into the University Campus.

Notable changes to public areas of the Memorial Campus will enhance how patients and visitors traverse the building. Modernized, streamlined pathways will connect directly to a dynamic new atrium. This space will feature an ornamental staircase and skylights that will both physically and visually connect the ground floor and the first floor, and a new seating area with an inviting fireplace that will provide a comforting and welcoming atmosphere. Elevator lobbies will be upgraded with improved lighting and more vibrant, synchronized signage for easier navigation.

Thoughtful design details for upgraded patient rooms on both campuses include more

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## Walking the walk

*UMass Memorial leads the way in joint replacement quality outcomes*

UMASS MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER has earned national recognition as both a clinical and thought leader in joint replacement.

“We deliver care that’s at the highest decile, by any metrics you care to use,” said David Ayers, MD, the *Arthur M. Pappas, MD, Chair in Orthopedics*, and chair and professor of orthopedics & physical rehabilitation.

Along with being in the top 10 percent in quality orthopedic care, UMass Memorial’s joint replacement program features remarkably low rates of complications, length of stay, 30-day readmissions and surgical-site infections. At the same time, the Medical Center documents exceptionally high rates of patient satisfaction, reflecting the consistently well-coordinated, patient-centered care provided. And, in some cases, this care can be, on average, 20 percent more cost-efficient—a notable consideration in today’s value-focused health care environment.

These impressive quality metrics have earned UMass Memorial designation as a Blue Distinction Center for Knee and Hip Replacement, testament to the clinical effectiveness and low complication rates. UMass Memorial Medical Center has also earned the Blue Distinction Center+ (plus) designation for the efficiency of the joint replacement services it delivers.

Also setting UMass Memorial apart is the FORCE-TJR (Function and Outcomes Research for Comparative Effectiveness in Total Joint Replacement) and Quality Improvement registry, a comprehensive national database of total joint replacement surgical and patient-reported outcomes.

“We won a highly competitive \$12 million grant to create the FORCE-TJR registry, which is helping determine best practices by analyzing outcomes of more than 30,000 joint replacements nationwide to date,” said Dr. Ayers.

UMass Memorial is using this data to advance its own joint replacement program—producing quality outcomes among the best in the country—as well as to share findings with

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Office of Advancement  
UMass Medical School | UMass Memorial Health Care  
333 South Street  
Shrewsbury, MA 01545  
[www.umassmed.edu/advancement](http://www.umassmed.edu/advancement)

To learn more about supporting medical research, patient care and medical education initiatives at UMass Memorial Health Care and UMass Medical School, please contact us at 508-856-5520 or [giving@umassmed.edu](mailto:giving@umassmed.edu).

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## Media spotlights ‘Fist-bump Kid’ at UMass Medicine Cancer Walk & Run kickoff

WHO CAN FORGET LIAM FITZGERALD, of Northborough? He is the adorable boy who stole hearts when he “fist-bumped” the Boston Bruins back in 2014. The pediatric cancer survivor was back in the spotlight with his mother, Christine Fitzgerald, on Thursday, June 16, at a breakfast to kick off the campaign for the 18th annual UMass Medicine Cancer Walk & Run, which will take place on Sunday, Sept. 25. MassLive, CharterTV3 and WCVB-TV covered the campaign kickoff.

Fitzgerald shared the story of how Liam, who has Down syndrome, was diagnosed at age 3 with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. She explained how one day he was limping and several days later he could not walk. She credited UMass Memorial Medical Center, where Liam was treated, for its great doctors and cutting-edge research.

“Just knowing that he’s cancer-free is a new

lease on life,” Fitzgerald said. “Thinking about what the local community is doing to fight cancer, we want to be a part of that fight.”

Liam, 10, and his mom will participate for the first time in the UMass Medicine Cancer Walk & Run to raise money for cancer research. One hundred percent of the funds go toward supporting clinical trials, research and patient care at the UMass Medicine Cancer Center. More than \$8 million has been raised since the walk began in 1999. This year, supporters hope to raise an additional \$450,000—\$30,000 more than last year.

For more information on the UMass Medicine Cancer Walk & Run, go to: [www.umassmed.edu/cancerwalk](http://www.umassmed.edu/cancerwalk).

View a video of Christine Fitzgerald’s comments at the campaign kickoff here: <http://bit.ly/fist-bump-cancer-walk>. ■

# UMASS MEDICINE CANCER WALK & RUN

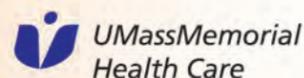
Let’s pick up the pace. >>>>

Sunday, September 25, 2016

**REGISTER TODAY**

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Proceeds benefit the UMass Medicine Cancer Center



## Worcester Pipeline Collaborative celebrates 20 years

*UMass Medical School and Worcester Public Schools partnership reaps education and workforce rewards*



UMMS School of Medicine student Marian Younge

In 1996, UMass Medical School made a commitment to encourage under-represented and disadvantaged students to pursue careers in biomedical research, biotechnology and health care professions. Through a partnership with local public schools, the Worcester Pipeline Collaborative was launched, and 20 years later, is celebrating its success.

“We have built critical mass over the years in terms of the number of youth we are reaching and the way they are becoming employed,” said Robert Layne, MEd, director of outreach

programs. “Program outcomes have been encouraging. We are data driven, and we are seeing results.”

Approximately 5,000 Worcester Public Schools students participate in numerous program opportunities. Structured activities include mentoring, job-shadowing, tutoring, clinical observation, research internships, after-school science programs, visiting scientist programs, a speaker’s bureau and family engagement.

Through these activities, students learn to set high expectations for themselves, as they participate in rigorous K-12 mathematics and science curricula, and develop language skills required to enter competitive collegiate programs. Students also become academically prepared to pursue biomedical research, biotechnology and health careers in Massachusetts. Many students who have participated in these programs over the years have gained employment at UMass Medical School and clinical partner UMass Memorial Health Care, or gone on to graduate school—some close to home at the UMMS School of Medicine, Graduate School of Nursing and Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.



Robert Layne, MEd, director of outreach programs (left), and Deborah Harmon Hines, PhD, professor of cell & developmental biology and vice provost for school services at the WPC 20th anniversary celebration with Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty.

Marian Younge entered the Worcester Public Schools at age 10 when her family came to Worcester from Ghana. Now a School of Medicine student, the North High School graduate credits her involvement in the pipeline for influencing her decision to pursue a career in medicine, and for helping her gain admission to Tufts University and UMass Medical School.

“As the oldest child and first person in my family to travel this path, I appreciated all the help I got from this program,” said Younge.

Now she is paying it forward as a volunteer with the collaborative. Medical students Michael Buckner, Kayla Elliot, Jessica Long and Younge were awarded a 2016 MLK Semester of Service Award at UMMS for their community

service project “Young Men of Today: Medical Professionals of Tomorrow” at North High. It is an enrichment program that assists young men of color in the Worcester area get started in health care careers.

A 20th anniversary celebration for the pipeline was held on April 28 at UMMS.

“I love that I get to meet students of all ages who are interesting, talented and eager to learn about careers in health care, biotechnology and biomedical research,” said Layne. “We see students and families in the community who, years later, still remember their Worcester Pipeline Collaborative experiences. That some of these students end up at UMass Medical School is icing on the cake.” ■

## Gov. Baker lauds UMass Medical School graduates at 43rd Commencement

*New doctors and advanced practice nurses first in state to obtain advanced opioid safe prescribing training*



Gov. Charlie Baker

UMASS MEDICAL SCHOOL awarded 227 degrees—including MD, PhD, master of science and doctor of nursing practice, as well as post-master’s certificates—at its 43rd Commencement on Sunday, June 5. The newly minted doctors and advanced practice nurses were also recognized as first in the state trained in opioid safe prescribing and pain management in the wake of the national opioid epidemic.

“Opioids are a quiet killer, surrounded by despair on one side and loneliness on the other. Through the leadership of our governor, focus has been galvanized to this challenge and our

campus has responded with intensity and determination,” Chancellor Michael F. Collins said in his remarks to the graduates of the School of Medicine, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and the Graduate School of Nursing. “As the state’s public medical school, we have a special responsibility to act and we have accepted the governor’s challenge. You are the first classes to have experienced content-focused education and training directly as a result of this initiative.”

Gov. Charlie Baker echoed those sentiments in his keynote address, applauding UMMS for its efforts to swiftly add the new training to its curriculum.

“This place was an early supporter, led by the chancellor and others, on some of the more controversial reforms that we proposed last year to deal with the aforementioned opioid epidemic that’s been gripping the commonwealth,” said Gov. Baker, who was given a Chancellor’s Medal. “And in particular to the graduates of this year’s medical

school, I want to tell you how pleased I am that you graduated, all of you, having passed the core competency in pain management and opioid therapies and prescribing.”

Last year, Baker called on UMMS to work in collaboration with Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders, Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel, MD, MPH, and the other Massachusetts medical schools to define core competencies to create a new standard for all graduating medical school students. This year’s School of Medicine and Graduate School of Nursing graduates were the first in the state to receive the 10 core competencies recommended by the governor’s working group. They took part in an intensive, hands-on training in opioid safe prescribing and pain management. This first-of-its-kind, simulation-based program builds upon classroom learning using a series of encounters with standardized patients, who portray a full range of interactions with patients, in settings commonly experienced in the

day-to-day practice of medicine.

Baker also credited UMMS for its work with the late Gov. Paul Cellucci, his friend and former boss, to create the UMass ALS Cellucci Fund to advance the ground-breaking research into ALS by UMMS researchers. Finally, he noted the success of the School of Medicine in primary care.

International financier and philanthropist Dermot Desmond, and Claire Pomeroy, MD, MBA, president of the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, received honorary degrees. Desmond chairs the RESPECT organization, which works to improve the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. Dr. Pomeroy serves as the chief executive of the Lasker Foundation and is responsible for advancing its mission to “improve health by accelerating support for medical research through recognition of research excellence, public education and advocacy.” This support was extended to UMass Medical School when Victor R. Ambros, PhD, was presented the 2008 Lasker Basic Medical Research Award.



Renderings and a photo of proposed elevator wayfinding at the UMass Memorial Medical Center - Memorial Campus showcase the use of color and large, easy-to-read graphics.

From rendering to completion, a semi-private room on the University Campus.

## Medical Center renovation project Continued from page 1

private, hotel-like spaces that feature inspiring, original artwork, soothing colors complimented by wood-grain accents and softer flooring, as well as even easier access to charging stations for personal mobile devices. Quiet rooms, purposefully placed observation windows and lighting control will ensure nighttime privacy; select patient rooms will feature circadian lighting, which simulates natural light.

The redesign will also make the work environment more efficient for caregivers by utilizing materials and finishes that are easier to clean and maintain; improving storage to reduce clutter; and incorporating ceiling lifts in all patient rooms for patient and staff safety. Nurse stations will be restructured into team areas to provide adequate meeting space for care teams to plan patient care. These upgrades will ensure

compliance with all building and regulatory codes, including those of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

In all, approximately 150 patient rooms at the Memorial campus and 164 patient rooms at the University campus will be upgraded. In addition, multiple waiting rooms at both locations are being redesigned to provide various activity zones for watching television, conducting family conversations and reading; counters for laptop use will also be included.

This renovation project began last summer with refurbishment of the West 3 Medical-Surgical Unit at the Memorial Campus, and is expected to be a six-year effort. How does a busy medical center undertake such a major project without disrupting patient care?

“It’s a challenge, but that’s why the duration

of the project is as long as it is,” Hylka said. “For example, at high-census times like flu season, we won’t be doing work in patient rooms. And we’re working with our contractors to have them preassemble as much material as possible off site, reducing on-site installation time.

“Ultimately, we’ll create more functional spaces that balance aesthetics with improved safety, cleanliness, comfort and efficiency for the people who give and receive care,” she continued. “The quality of our facilities will match the quality of our care.” ■

Numerous naming opportunities for this renovation project are available. For more information, please contact Martin Richman in the Office of Advancement: 508-856-5520.

## Implementation of Epic electronic health record system at UMass Memorial making great strides



AS PART OF ITS VISION to become one of the top 10 academic health care systems in the country, UMass Memorial Health Care will implement Epic—the industry’s leading electronic health record system—across all its entities in October 2017.

Epic, which was selected by UMass Memorial providers and staff, has the potential to improve efficiency and communication among caregivers, the quality and safety of patient care, and the overall patient experience. Having this one-patient, one-record system means that a patient will have a single electronic health record that captures all of the care received at UMass Memorial, enabling anyone involved in the patient’s care to

easily access the information.

The benefits of moving to the Epic system also include:

- Built-in safety checks: Alert messages appear if the patient is allergic to a medication that has been ordered or will interact with another medication. Alerts will guide caregivers toward safe care and best practices.
- Automatic reminders for preventative screenings.
- MyChart, an easy-to-use and secure internet patient portal: Patients can access their test results, view medications, schedule an appointment with their primary care providers, communicate with their doctors and more.

Providers and staff will also benefit in many ways:

- Access to patient information on smartphones and tablets allows for quick action anywhere, anytime.
- Enhanced communication about patients across the continuum using Epic’s In Basket and routing capabilities.
- Easy access to medical information from other health care systems that use Epic.

From the selection of Epic to the system’s design and implementation, UMass Memorial physicians, nurses, pharmacists, administrators and finance employees have been integrally involved. In January and February, 374 design sessions were attended

by nearly 1,500 caregivers from across the organization. These sessions enabled providers and staff to review the Epic system and make decisions that are driving its configuration at UMass Memorial.

A number of infrastructure improvement projects, including upgraded data centers, network enhancements and new user devices, are also underway in preparation for the Epic implementation. This will ensure that the Epic system will have a state-of-the-art foundation on which to operate. Although a monumental undertaking, the Epic system will undoubtedly help UMass Memorial caregivers deliver the highest quality patient care possible. ■

# “Research method of the year” coming to UMass Medical School

*The Massachusetts Facility for High-Resolution Cryo Electron Microscopy—first-of-its-kind in New England—will open by year’s end*

HIGH-RESOLUTION CRYO ELECTRON MICROSCOPY, or cryo-EM, dubbed the “research method of the year” by *Nature*, is coming to UMass Medical School (UMMS). The Massachusetts Facility for High-Resolution Cryo Electron Microscopy will open by year’s end on the UMMS Worcester campus.

Cryo-EM is a breakthrough technology for visualizing the detailed structure of cells, viruses and proteins at near-atomic resolution. It has broad applications in structural biology and drug design, offering unprecedented potential to advance treatments and cures for conditions including viral and bacterial infections, Alzheimer’s disease and diabetes.

“We are acquiring a technology that is transforming science. The ability to see inside the cell at the level and detail that cryo-EM makes possible opens new windows into the world of biology,” said Jean King, PhD, associate provost for biomedical research, director of the Center for Comparative Neuroimaging, and professor of psychiatry, radiology and neurology.

The facility—the first-of-its-kind in New England—will feature two state-of-the-art cryo-EM systems that will be used by a consortium of academic and commercial partners. One system is being acquired in collaboration with Harvard Medical School, supported by a grant of \$5 million from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC). The other \$4 million system will be paid for by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI).

“I was enamored that one piece of equipment could help both basic scientists and translational scientists make fundamental discoveries that



Newly appointed director of the high-resolution cryo electron microscopy facility at UMMS, Chen Xu, PhD (center) is pictured at a welcome reception with (from left) C. Robert Matthews, PhD; George Witman, PhD; Celia Schiffer, PhD; Jean King, PhD; Andrei Korostelev, PhD; and Roger Craig, PhD

can translate into treatments,” said Dr. King. “The applicability across our multidisciplinary groups was immediately apparent. We knew we had to find a way to bring cryo-EM here. Our dedicated team and collaborators worked tirelessly to make that happen.”

The facility will be run under the direction of physicist and materials scientist Chen Xu, PhD, who is internationally recognized for his cryo-EM expertise.

Dr. Xu brings 30 years of electron microscopy and 15 years of cryo-EM experience to UMMS. With extensive knowledge of both single-particle and electron tomography cryo-EM techniques, he has contributed to the development of software for automated microscope operation and the electron detectors that are currently revolutionizing the field.

“Dr. Xu is a pioneer in the field. He helped develop the technology and wants to make even greater improvements in the coming years,” said Andrei Korostelev,

“We are acquiring a technology that is transforming science. The ability to see inside the cell at the level and detail that cryo-EM makes possible opens new windows into the world of biology.”

—JEAN KING, PhD

PhD, associate professor of RNA therapeutics and biochemistry & molecular pharmacology. Dr. Korostelev is a structural biologist and one of the original proponents for bringing cryo-EM to UMMS, along with Brian Kelch, PhD, assistant professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology, and Celia Schiffer, PhD, professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology and director of the Institute for Drug Resistance. “If the current standard is to record one image every three minutes, Xu will say that’s not fast enough and expensive instrument time should be spent more efficiently. He’s constantly thinking about

things like that.”

The admiration is mutual. “We have the team here, from top to bottom,” said Xu, gesturing at those assembled to welcome him at a reception on March. 1. “Our vision is to advance science with a top-of-the-class operation for scientists locally, nationally and internationally.”

Other academic partners, in addition to Harvard Medical School, for the facility are UMass Amherst, UMass Dartmouth, UMass Lowell, Boston University, Hampshire College and Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Initial commercial partners include AbbVie, Novartis and Pfizer. ■

## Gift from grateful patient *Continued from page 1*

has been under Kay’s care for more than a decade. Initial treatment for his inflammatory arthritis by other doctors was unsuccessful. “For many months and years, I dreaded getting out of bed. The pain was debilitating. Ever since I went on Dr. Kay’s protocol, the pain has been manageable.

“Because of all the ads on TV, there is a misconception that you can take an over-the-counter pill and relieve all arthritis pain,” he continued. “Well, I can tell you, that is not the kind of arthritis we’re talking about. This disease, this level of pain, is debilitating. Our goal is to support research and to raise awareness of arthritis.”

Thanks to an earlier gift from the Petersons, Kay and colleagues at UMMS are in the second year of a clinical trial examining the response

of bone to rheumatoid arthritis and spondyloarthropathies, a group of diseases that affect primarily where tendons and ligaments insert into bone. Kay is leading the clinical study, working collaboratively with Ellen M. Gravalles, MD, the *Myles J. McDonough Chair in Rheumatology* at UMMS and chief of rheumatology at UMass Memorial Medical Center, whose laboratory will analyze the blood and tissue samples.

“I am very grateful to Tim and Elaine Peterson for their generous support of our institution, of my work and of our research in rheumatology,” Kay said. “My colleagues and I deeply appreciate their commitment to furthering scientific understanding of inflammatory arthritis.” ■

## New endowed chairs to be invested on Sept. 14, 2016

Each fall at the Investiture ceremony, UMass Medical School honors members of its faculty who have been appointed to named chairs and professorships, and the generous donors who made these appointments possible. The newest endowed chairs bring the total number of endowed chairs and professorships at UMMS to 45.

*Arthur F. Koskinas Chair in Neuroscience*  
Recipient: Joel D. Richter, PhD

*Timothy S. and Elaine L. Peterson Chair in Rheumatology*  
Recipient: Jonathan Kay, MD

*Worcester Foundation for Biomedical Research Chair (third)*  
Recipient: Katherine A. Fitzgerald, PhD

**For event information, visit:**  
[www.umassmed.edu/universityevents](http://www.umassmed.edu/universityevents).

## NOTABLE GRANT IN...

### EXAMINING GENETICS OF TYPE 1 DIABETES



RESEARCHERS AT UMASS MEDICAL SCHOOL are working to identify new genetic insights into the basis of type 1 diabetes, thanks to a \$575,000 grant from the American Diabetes Association. John P. Mordes, MD, professor of medicine, has assembled a team of investigators to translate their earlier animal genetics work to humans and the human genome.

“Recent research has shown that one specific T cell receptor (TCR) gene is critical to type 1 diabetes in rats,” Dr. Mordes said. “Knowing if comparable TCR genes confer HLA-specific susceptibility to type 1 diabetes will make genomic prediction of type 1 diabetes much more accurate.”

Mordes’ early study of the immunology of juvenile diabetes led him to become more intrigued by the genetics of this autoimmune disease, leading to studies he has exclusively focused on for 20 years in close collaboration with Elizabeth Blankenhorn, PhD, professor of microbiology & immunology at Drexel University College of Medicine.

To complete the next phase of his research, which will involve advanced DNA sequencing of more 600 diabetic and 1,200 non-diabetic individuals, Mordes has assembled a team of investigators, including Jeffrey A. Bailey, MD, PhD, professor of medicine, and postdoctoral fellow Özkan Aydemir, PhD, of UMMS.

Mordes said they will be using state-of-the-art methodology developed, in part, by Dr. Bailey called molecular inversion probes to attempt to identify human genes comparable to those that he has studied in the animal models.

“It was a natural collaboration . . . something we’ve been working on for a long time,” said Dr. Bailey, adding that he is grateful for the grant to help fund the research that involves complex genetics and regions of the genome that are usually ignored.

“The work he and Dr. Blankenhorn have done is really phenomenal,” Bailey said. “It could lead to a treatment, whereby if you could knock out the specific T cells you could really stop the disease.”

To complete the study, the team requires DNA samples from people with and without type 1 diabetes. Two researchers will supply the human DNA samples: Janelle A. Noble, PhD, of Children’s Hospital of Oakland Research Institute, and Åke Lernmark, PhD, of Lund University in Sweden.

“With these samples, we hope to provide new genetic insights into the fundamental basis of type 1 diabetes,” Mordes said.

## Chief of Cardiac Surgery Jennifer Walker, MD

*An achievement-filled first 18 months, an ambitious vision for the future*

WHEN JENNIFER WALKER, MD, was appointed chief of the UMass Memorial Medical Center Division of Cardiac Surgery and surgical director of the Heart and Vascular Center at the end of 2014, she became part of an elite group of female chiefs of cardiac surgery at U.S. academic medical centers.

“Being a woman in cardiac surgery has always been a bit of an anomaly,” said Dr. Walker. “There are 10,000 to 15,000 men in the field, and just over 200 women. But to be chief of a division, gender doesn’t matter. It’s more about leadership skills and being a good surgeon. This position was simply the next logical step in my career.”

Walker joined UMass Memorial from Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), where she was director of cardiothoracic resident education (she completed her own cardiothoracic surgery training at MGH and Boston Children’s Hospital). In 2009, she became director of MGH’s cardiac surgical simulation laboratory, receiving numerous excellence in teaching awards.

Walker has continued to rack up notable achievements in her first 18 months at UMass Memorial.

“We’ve maintained our three-star rating—the highest designation—from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons; our patients continue to do outstanding; and we’ve grown and diversified the number of cases we do,” she said, noting that the division is recruiting more surgeons to meet the demand.

“We also recruited Dr. William Hoffman, former head of the cardiothoracic ICU at MGH, to run our cardiac ICU and train

other intensivists or physician assistants (PAs),” she continued.

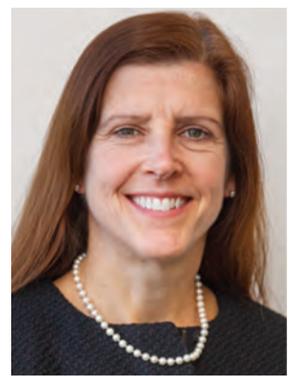
Looking ahead, Walker’s priorities are training the next generation of cardiac surgeons and improving awareness of women’s heart issues.

“When I was at MGH, we had a women’s heart health program. Through a donation from a family who’d lost someone to heart disease, we were able to fund many projects to educate both physicians and patients,” Walker said. “There’s a women’s cardiac program here at UMass Memorial, and there’s tremendous potential to expand it.”

She also wants to launch a cardiac surgical simulation lab to hone trainees’ skills before they operate on patients, and develop a cardiothoracic center in conjunction with vascular surgery.

“There’s so much potential for growth and donors are instrumental in making it happen,” she said. “Their support enables us to do the work, present the data, earn more national recognition that helps with recruitment—all the things that help a center thrive and, ultimately, take care of more patients.”

If you would like to support women’s heart health initiatives and/or state-of-the-art cardiac surgery simulation training at UMass Memorial, please contact the Office of Advancement at 508-856-5520. ■



Pictured left to right, Sarah Connor, NP, Care Mobile Program Manager; Nardy Vega, Care Mobile outreach liaison; Rafael Gonzalez, Care Mobile coordinator; Jamie Russell, RDH, Care Mobile Dental Program coordinator; and Joseph Petty, mayor for the City of Worcester.

### Care Mobile recognized for commitment to community

The mission of the UMass Memorial Care Mobile is to reach medically underserved populations, including those who are uninsured, underinsured or not connected to health care. The program provides on-the-spot medical and preventive dental services at 11 community sites and 19 schools in Worcester and connects impoverished children and families to primary care. On June 25, Care Mobile staff participated in the New Life Church Health and Safety Fair in Worcester’s Main South neighborhood where Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty presented them with an award from the church for the program’s long-standing commitment to reaching vulnerable populations. The Care Mobile, a UMass Memorial Community Benefits program, serves more than 3,000 patients annually.

### Walk *Continued from page 2*

other institutions so they can optimize their own care and improve patient outcomes.

“The success we’ve had in joint replacement is now being applied to other areas of orthopedics,” said Ayers, noting that his research team has launched similar registries for the Spine, and Hand and Upper Extremity Centers. Shoulder replacements were recently added to the FORCE-TJR registry as well.

In addition, the Department of Orthopedics & Physical Rehabilitation was recently awarded a \$6.5 million grant from the federal Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute

(PCORI) to use FORCE-TJR data to give joint replacement patients individualized risk assessments and predict their outcomes based on this information.

“Currently, we provide general risk factors, but with this PCORI-funded analysis, we can give patient-specific information based on their personal medical and orthopedic condition,” Ayers said. “It’s really exciting.”

For more information about joint replacement at UMass Memorial or to schedule an appointment, call 1-855-UMASS-MD or visit [www.umassmemorial.org/ortho](http://www.umassmemorial.org/ortho). ■





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## NEWS BRIEFS

■ In March, **Shields Health Care Group and UMass Memorial Health Care announced that patients now have access to a state-of-the-art magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner at the imaging center located at 214 Shrewsbury Street.** This newest wide-bore 3T MRI from General Electric (GE) is the most advanced scanner available for clinical use. It provides physicians with the finest level of detail and improved image quality for better patient diagnoses, while enhancing the patient experience.

■ **Shlomit Schaal, MD, PhD, has been appointed chair of the Department of Ophthalmology at UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center.** Dr. Schaal, who starts in the fall, is leaving her post as a clinician-scientist specializing in the cutting-edge medical and surgical treatment of complex vitreoretinal diseases at the University of Louisville.

■ **Robert Baldor, MD, senior vice chair and professor of family medicine & community health, is the 2016 recipient of the Allen Crocker Health Services Award.** The distinction is presented each year to a clinician who most exemplifies a total dedication to excellence and an unyielding

belief in the worth and dignity of the lives of individuals with disabilities, characteristics to which Dr. Crocker devoted his career. The award is given by the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services.

■ **On June 20, UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center welcomed Larry Rhein, MD, MPH, as an associate professor of pediatrics and a member of the Neonatology and Pediatric Pulmonary divisions within the UMass Memorial Children's Medical Center.** Dr. Rhein will assume the role of chief of neonatology on Oct. 1.

■ **UMass Medical School autism advocate Elaine Gabovitch, MPA, has been reappointed to her fourth term as Act Early Ambassador to Massachusetts by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** to promote the early identification of developmental delays. An instructor in family medicine & community health and a faculty member in the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities program at UMass Medical School's Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center, Gabovitch will serve a two-year term. She is also state team leader for the Massachusetts Act Early Program.

■ **UMass Medical School's Graduate School of Nursing Dean Joan Vitello,**

**PhD, has been appointed by Gov. Charlie Baker as a member of his special commission to study the incorporation of safe and effective pain treatment and prescribing practices into professional training for future health care providers.** Dr. Vitello was sworn in at a ceremony at the State House on Thursday, June 30. She is the sole nursing representative on the special commission for student training in pain treatment. Vitello joins representatives from the state's schools of medicine; the Massachusetts Pain Initiative; the Massachusetts Hospital Association; the pharmaceutical industry; the Massachusetts Association of Physician Assistants; and two at-large members on the special commission. Their recommendations are anticipated by the end of the year.

■ **For the sixth year in a row, UMass Memorial Medical Center's University Campus has received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines® (GWTG) Gold Plus-Stroke Quality Achievement Award** for demonstrating its commitment to being one of the top hospitals in the country for providing aggressive, proven stroke care. To achieve this, the University Campus accomplished 85 percent or higher adherence to all GWTG indicators for 24 months. In addition, this year the Memorial Campus

was once again awarded a GWTG silver award for achieving the 85 percent adherence for 12 months.

■ **UMass Memorial Health Care has been recognized for its work to reduce school absenteeism, hospitalizations and emergency department use among children with poorly controlled asthma.** America's Essential Hospitals, a national group representing hospitals committed to high-quality care for all people, including the vulnerable, awarded UMass Memorial the association's 2016 Gage Award for Population Health, which recognizes activities that improve delivery, access or value for specific populations in the recipient's community and, as a result, improve health outcomes.

■ **Joyce A. Murphy, MPA, executive vice chancellor of UMass Medical School's Commonwealth Medicine division, has been elected clerk of the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare Board of Directors.** The Schwartz Center is a national nonprofit leader in the effort to bring compassion to every patient-caregiver interaction. Murphy was appointed to serve on the Schwartz Center's Board of Directors in October and previously had served on its Leadership Council.