

October, 2009

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### Greetings from the Chair

As you know from my email on Tuesday and our last faculty and staff meeting yesterday, UMass Memorial Medical Center has made the decision to close the Neuropsychiatric Disabilities Unit, 8 South. We are all incredibly grateful for the amazing work of our faculty and staff on that unit. They are dedicated, compassionate, and talented. I will not repeat all the details of the email (please check if you did not read), but know that Alan Brown, Bill O'Brien, Anna Wolanin and many others have demonstrated outstanding leadership and management. Please contact us if there are further questions. Also know that we are very dedicated to this patient population, and we are already in the process of developing a more comprehensive service for Central Massachusetts that will include two dedicated inpatient unit beds, enhanced consultation service, and increased outpatient and community outreach.

We also have good news to share. We are providing **free depression screenings** to recognize the National Depression Education and Awareness month. On October 21, we anticipate a wonderful **Psychiatry Research Day** on "Wellness and Mindfulness in Psychiatry." We are happy to welcome our keynote speaker, Dr. Josephine Briggs, director of NIH's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine. Registration is closed but all are invited to the poster session (4-5:30 p.m., Medical School Lobbies). **Learning and Working during the Transition to Adulthood Center** will be funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)! Thanks to the team for the excellent work. The Katz family generously donated funding to support Dr. Jean Frazier's research "Hormonal Influences on Frontolimbic Neuromaturation in Girls with Bipolar Illness." We have also received a number of **ARRA grants**. Please read more in this newsletter and join me to congratulate our colleagues!

*Doug*

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### Calendar

October is National Mental Illness Awareness and National Depression Education and Awareness Month

**Oct 12:** Columbus Day. Holiday for Medical School and Hospital employees.

**Oct 21:** Psychiatry Research Day

**Nov 5:** Psychology Day

**Nov 18:** Open house of the new Women's Mental Health Clinic

**Mar 1, 2010:** DMH Centers for Excellence Research Conference—UMMS Campus

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## Headlines

**Learning and Working During the Transition to Adulthood Center** at CMHSR will be funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). This new research and training center will be a wonderful addition to the UMass, Massachusetts DMH, our partner universities and agencies, and the nation. This Center could also be helpful for the UMass CTSA and other community partnership activities. Together with the Portland State University with a complimentary center, it will be well poised to lead the field by launching strong research and dissemination in the transition age youth and young adult field that will, no doubt, have a positive impact on services for this important and vulnerable group of young people. The funding agency **NIDRR** provides leadership and support for a comprehensive program of research related to the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities.

**NIH American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants awarded**, including:

**RC1 Grants:**

**CHUCK LIDZ PhD** – The Blurring of Treatment and Research in Clinical Trials: Two problems. National Institute of Nursing Research

**MARYANN DAVIS PhD** – Treatment Retention Strategies in Transition Age Youth. NIMH

**SCHAHRAM AKBARIAN MD, PhD** – Epigenetic Markings in Developing and Diseased Prefrontal Neurons. NIMH

**Bill Fisher PhD** – Evaluating Effectiveness of a Statewide Public Mental Health Re-entry Program. NIMH Subaward

**RC2 Grant:**

**JEAN FRAZIER MD** – Creating a Pediatric Imaging-Genomics Data Resource. NIMH Subaward

**ARRA Administrative Supplement:**

**SCHAHRAM AKBARIAN MD, PhD** – on his R01 Epigenetic Changes in Frontal Lobe of Schizophrenics. NIMH

**R21 Grants:**

**GILLES MARTIN PhD** – Synaptic Plasticity, Ethanol and Backpropagating Action Potentials in The Nucleus Accumbens. NIAAA

**ANDREW TAPPER PhD** – The Role of Nicotinic Receptors in Nicotine Withdrawal. NIDA

**ANDREW TAPPER PhD** – Ethanol Regulation of Neuronal Nicotinic Receptor Expression in Reward Circuitry. NIAAA

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## Recognitions

Our **Department of Psychiatry** collectively raised over **\$4700** for the 2009 NAMIWalks event. Congratulations, everyone! Way to go!

**BARRY FELDMAN PhD, LICSW** quoted in the *Telegram and Gazette* on suicide prevention. "Steps can be taken to prevent suicide." Read the [article](#). Dr. Feldman was also quoted in *DMH Connections*, "State Launches New Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention". Read the [article](#).

**JEAN FRAZIER MD** to serve as a member of the Neural Basis of Psychopathology, Addictions and Sleep Disorders Study Section, Center for Scientific Review through Jun. 30, 2015. Members are selected by the Department of Health and Human Services on the basis of their demonstrated competence and achievement in their scientific discipline as evidenced by the quality of research accomplishments, publications in scientific journals, and other significant scientific activities, achievements and honors.

**SUN KIM RN, PhD** featured in [Boston Korea](#). Her research project "Tobacco Dependence Treatment for Asian (Korean) Americans" led to the opening of a smoking cessation class at the China Trade Building office located in Boston. Many Korean smokers continue to smoke despite their knowledge of its negative effects on health due to the addictive nature of nicotine. The project urges smokers to get professional assistance for tobacco dependence, improving their chances to successfully quit smoking.

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## Announcements

UMass Medical School to implement **UMass Medicine Cares**, a searchable, online and interactive database designed to catalog individual outreach activities. For more information, please contact Jim Leary, associate vice chancellor for the Office of Community Affairs, or Gladys McRell, administrative coordinator for the Office of Community Affairs, at 508-856-4400, or follow this [link](#) to get started.

### October

Career Development and Research Office sponsored workshop entitled **Evaluation Research: Issues, Methods, and Opportunities** presented by Bill Fisher PhD, Professor of Psychiatry, Center for Mental Health Services Research, **Oct. 14**, 1:30-3 p.m., Rm. S6-310. Please RSVP to [Paula Nims](#). Deadline for registration is Oct. 12.

**Project Management Learning Group "Kickoff" Meeting** to be held **Oct. 19**, 2:30-4:30 p.m. in room S2-321. All are welcome to attend. Please RSVP by Oct. 15 to [Diane George](#).

**Mindfulness In Psychiatry** has been established as a new Academic Interest Group. Carl Fulwiler MD and Fernando deTorrijos TTS MBSRS invite you join this Department of Psychiatry sponsored AIG. The first meeting will be held **Oct. 16**, 12-1PM in Biotech One Conference Room. Please RSVP to [Paula Nims](#).

**2nd Annual Medical Education & Research Seminar Series** to begin **Oct. 22** and will be presented by the Division of Research & Evaluation Professionals. Sessions are open to all UMMS faculty, professionals, and staff. Please see [listing](#) of seminars for dates and topics.

**Parents Apart** two-day, five-hour seminar to be held **Oct. 26-27**, 5:30-8PM. The two-day seminar is specifically designed to assist parents in understanding the impact of divorce on children and provide them with the skills and tools necessary to lessen this impact. For more information, please click [here](#).

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## Global

Alternative medicine workshop series by internationally celebrated **Qigong and Traditional Chinese Medicine** master, Professor Zhixiang Gao, from Beijing, China. The last workshop of the series "Qigong and Traditional Chinese Medicine in Enhancing Brain Functions: Getting Smarter, Delaying Aging, Sleeping Better, Recovering from Addictions, and Treating Neurological Disorders" will be held this Friday. Co-hosts include UMMS-China Program, UMMS Office of Global Health and UMass China Institute. Read the details and Professor Gao's bio [here](#).

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## People



**ANDRÉ VILLANUEVA** is a resident in Clinical Psychology from San Pau & Santa Creu's Hospital in Barcelona. He's here to learn more about Jon Kabat-Zinn's mindfulness universe with Dr. Fernando deTorrijos as mentor. André believes it is the research outcome and personal experiences of clients and professionals that made our Worcester campus famous for using mindfulness to cope with stress. "Mental health professionals from all over the world are coming to Worcester to get genuine knowledge about this new phenomenon. I'm really glad to be here engaged in this great opportunity to learn the best way to serve people looking for this kind of help," said André.



**AURALYD PADILLA** is a visiting fourth medical student from Puerto Rico interested in pursuing a Residency in Psychiatry. She came to UMass drawn by the great variety of electives it offers and to get a closer look into the program. Last month she took the Child and Adolescent Sub Internship and is currently taking the Mindfulness in Psychiatry elective. She intends to explore and learn this practice in an effort to gain knowledge of some tools to offer to her patients so that they can feel in more control of their situations and to visualize their conditions in a different way. "I believe the techniques and tools I am learning in this elective will be of great help for me, to improve my skills as a doctor," commented Auralyd. She's grateful for all the opportunities and experiences she has had at UMass and hopes to become part of the psychiatry program in the near future.

**JAY PATEL MD** will be leaving UMass effective February 1, 2010. He has decided to make a big change and pursue a wonderful opportunity to move to a private practice career in the Lake Area Psychiatry (LAP) group of Lake Charles, Louisiana. He will focus on his clinical expertise providing both inpatient and outpatient services. We will all greatly miss him in his many key roles for the Department, including invaluable teacher, researcher, and clinician. He has single-handedly transformed our Grand Rounds into the best one in the nation. Please read the separate announcement from Dr. Doug Ziedonis for more details about his departure.

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*UMass Psychiatry Connections is published by the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.*

*To submit an item for publication or to be added to the distribution list, e-mail [Jennifer.Wu@umassmed.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Wu@umassmed.edu).*