

## Lazare steps down as Chancellor and Dean

*Leadership era characterized by expansion and achievement*

After more than 17 years as Chancellor and Dean—a period characterized by unprecedented progress and achievement—Aaron Lazare, MD, announced late last month that he would step aside from those roles to address a cardiac arrhythmia. During his time as Chancellor and Dean, Dr. Lazare presided over extraordinary growth on the campus, growth that has served to enhance the quality of health sciences education at UMMS. Under his leadership, the Medical School has achieved objectively ranked academic prominence and significant expansion of its research enterprise. More importantly, UMMS has proved itself a model of student-centered, faculty-guided training of the nation's future physicians. He will take a yearlong sabbatical.

"This is a bittersweet moment for me," Lazare said. "Beginning with the day I was appointed Dean, I have had an extraordinary vantage point as this institution has grown into a role as a health sciences campus of international distinction. To say that my work over the years has been professionally and personally rewarding is an utter understatement: It has been a privilege."

Coming into his position at a time of institutional instability, Lazare used the

same sensibilities he developed in his career as a psychiatrist—analysis, empathy, intellectual curiosity and vision—to lead the campus in a variety of innovative and interdisciplinary curriculum and cultural changes.

"Since Aaron Lazare stepped into the role of Chancellor and Dean of the UMass Medical School, the institution has experienced tremendous success," said University of Massachusetts

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Aaron Lazare, MD

## Flotte named Dean and Executive Deputy Chancellor

Terence R. Flotte, MD, a widely respected physician-scientist, has been named Dean of the School of Medicine and Executive Deputy Chancellor of UMass Medical School. Dr. Flotte will officially begin his new position on May 15, 2007. He was selected from a national applicant field by a search committee comprising faculty and leadership from UMMS, clinical partner UMass Memorial Health Care and the UMass President's Office. Flotte joins UMMS from the University of Florida (UF), where he was the Nemours Eminent Scholar and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics for the College of Medicine.

"I am extremely confident that Dr. Flotte will lead the School of Medicine with the same confidence, skill, perseverance and academic and medical acumen that have characterized his tenure at the University of Florida," said UMass President Jack M. Wilson, announcing the appointment. As Dean and Executive Deputy Chancellor, Flotte will serve UMMS as chief academic and administrative officer of the School of Medicine, assisting in the development and implementation of a strategic vision for the School's future. Accordingly, he will oversee all academic activities of the basic and clinical science departments, including education and research for the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

In accepting the position, Flotte said he plans to capitalize on UMMS' existing strengths, while moving ahead aggressively in other strategic areas. "I look forward to helping UMMS maintain its distinctive academic focus.

In the current era of academic health care, there is a pressing responsibility for improved systems of care, ongoing quality improvement and fiscal responsibility."

Flotte received his undergraduate degree in the biological sciences from University of New Orleans in 1982 and his medical degree from Louisiana State University School of Medicine in 1986. He served his residency in pediatrics at Johns Hopkins University, where he also completed a pediatric pulmonary fellowship and postdoctoral training in molecular virology.

As the chair of pediatrics at UF, Flotte led the department in a number of key projects, including the establishment of the Division of Cellular and Molecular Therapy that has garnered more than \$2 million per year from the National Institutes of Health and the creation of the Congenital Heart Disease Center of Excellence. Under his stewardship, the research grant revenue to the UF



Terence R. Flotte, MD

Department of Pediatrics nearly doubled and clinical revenue increased by nearly 50 percent.

An internationally known pioneer in human gene therapy, Flotte is currently investigating the use of gene therapy for genetic diseases that affect children, mainly cystic fibrosis. He is the author of more than 130 scholarly papers, and his research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

For additional information, visit: [www.umassmed.edu/dean](http://www.umassmed.edu/dean). ■

### News Makers online!

To learn what faculty experts are saying about the topics making today's local, state and national headlines, visit [www.umassmed.edu/pap/NewsMakers/](http://www.umassmed.edu/pap/NewsMakers/). When appropriate, the page will also list upcoming UMMS expert appearances in print, TV and radio venues.



## Aghababian transitions from role in Emergency Medicine

Richard V. Aghababian, MD, founding chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine, stepped down from his position as chair March 31, closing an important chapter in the history of one of UMass Medical School's and UMass Memorial Medical Center's signature departments.

Under his leadership, the department grew tremendously in clinical and academic renown, as well as in the technology and services it offers. The most visible recent sign of the department's growth was the construction of the UMass Memorial Duddie Massad Emergency and Trauma Center, one of the most sophisticated facilities in the nation.



Richard Aghababian, MD

**Under Aghababian's leadership,** the department grew tremendously in clinical and academic renown, as well as in the technology and services it offers.

"John O'Brien and Aaron Lazare should both be commended for their enthusiastic support of emergency medicine over the years and especially for having the vision and the dedication to make this incredible new facility a reality," Dr. Aghababian said.

Having guided his faculty and staff through construction and reloca-

tion, Aghababian said his new status will now allow him to devote his full efforts to serving as Associate Dean for Continuing Medical Education, a position he has held since 1992. One initiative Aghababian will oversee is an update of the information systems used to track the educational activities of the clinical system's

health care providers to better manage their recertification needs.

A graduate of the School of Medicine's first class (1974) and a faculty member since 1978, Aghababian has seen one factor remain constant throughout the years: "Mentoring is hugely important here, and we do it well, both as teachers and as clinicians. We've created an environment in which people learn from the experience of others."

Gregory A. Volturo, MD, will lead the Department of Emergency Medicine as its new chair. Dr. Volturo has had a long and active career at UMMS; a 1982 graduate of the Stritch School of Medicine at Loyola University in Chicago, Volturo trained as a resident in medicine and a fellow in emergency medicine at UMMS and has served UMMS and UMass Memorial and its member and affiliate hospitals since 1983 in various capacities with increasing responsibility. Named associate chair of the department in 1995 and vice chair in 2000, Volturo has extensive expertise in emergency department operations



Gregory Volturo, MD

in both community and academic settings. Focusing on patient satisfaction, quality performance and education, he has helped build an emergency department team with a reputation for providing outstanding patient care and training.

Reflecting on his decision to step down as chair, Aghababian said, "The time is right to give the next generation of leaders a chance to take this department even further." ■

## Nobel Laureate to deliver Commencement address

A familiar face will give the Commencement address at the University of Massachusetts Medical School's 34th Commencement exercises on Sunday, June 3, 2007. Nobel Laureate and Blais University Chair in Molecular Medicine Craig C. Mello, PhD, will speak to graduating students from the School of Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and the Graduate School of Nursing. Dr. Mello, a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator and professor of molecular medicine and cell biology at UMMS, received the 2006 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine with his colleague Andrew Z. Fire, PhD, of Stanford University, for their discoveries related to RNA interference (RNAi).



"As this year's graduates embark on their careers as researchers and clinicians, it is an especially exciting time not only for them, but also for the faculty and staff who have come to know them over the past several years as dedicated, compassionate individuals," said Mello. "It is a privilege to address the classes of 2007 at this year's Commencement ceremony."

In 1998, Dr. Fire, then of the Carnegie Institution, and Mello published findings in *Nature* that demonstrated a certain form of ribonucleic acid (RNA) could silence the expression of a gene whose coding sequence of DNA was similar to that of the RNA they tested. The RNAi mechanism they discovered destroys the gene products a virus needs to replicate itself, halting the viral infection. RNAi

has initiated new dialogue on developmental gene regulations, and it is today's state-of-the-art method by which scientists can knock out the expression of a specific gene in cells to define that gene's biological functions.

In addition to the Nobel Prize, Mello has received the Gairdner International Award, the Massry Prize and the Paul Ehrlich and Ludwig Darmstaedter Prize with Fire. Mello was elected as a member of the National Academy of Sciences in 2005, and he was also named the inaugural recipient of The Dr. Paul Janssen Award for Biomedical Research by Johnson & Johnson in 2006. He continues his RNAi-related research at UMMS and will head the institution's newly established RNAi Therapeutics Institute. ■

## achievements

■ **Jerry H. Gurwitz**, MD, the Dr. John Meyers Professor of Primary Care Medicine and professor of medicine and family medicine & community health, was one of four recipients nationally of the 2006 John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety and Quality Awards given by the National Quality Forum and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. Dr. Gurwitz was recognized for his research leading to advancements in patient safety in the United States.

■ The Worcester District Medical Society has chosen **Mary E. Costanza**, MD, professor of medicine, as Community Clinician of the Year for a career in which she has "combined state-of-the-art treatment modalities and superb clinical skills with deep compassion and devotion to both the medical and human needs of her patients." The award will be presented at the society's Annual Business Meeting this month. **Michele P. Pugnaire**, MD, associate professor of family medicine & community health and vice dean for undergraduate medical education, was also honored by the Worcester District Medical Society, selected as the orator for the 211th Annual Oration at the Annual Business Meeting. She will present *The Class of 1980: Reflections on Medical Education Then and Now*.

Following are faculty who have joined UMMS as professors or associate professors or who have been promoted to those positions, as documented by the Office of Faculty Administration.

■ **Steven A. Adelman**, MD, clinical associate professor of psychiatry

■ **Louis M. Messina**, MD, professor of surgery

■ **Melissa J. Moore**, PhD, professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology

■ **Douglas M. Ziedonis**, MD, MPH, professor and chair of psychiatry

■ **Richard M. Forster**, MD, promoted to clinical associate professor of medicine

■ **Jeffrey G. Stovall**, MD, promoted to associate professor of psychiatry and family medicine & community health

■ **Heidi A. Tissenbaum**, PhD, promoted to associate professor of molecular medicine

## First impressions

More than 100 prospective students attended the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences annual open houses, held in February and March. Four of the prospective students shared their impressions of the GSBS and UMMS.



**Pui Yee Chan**, chemistry major with a concentration in biochemistry and a minor in math at the State University of New York New Paltz; originally from Staten Island, New York.

*"I love the fact that the GSBS is attached to the Medical School and hospital. I see myself going into pharmacology, and I like to see the interaction between researchers and clinicians. I had never been to this part of the state before, and this campus has such a warm environment. Faculty members have been very open about discussing their current projects, and I feel the faculty and staff really bond with the students. You can tell that the faculty wants the students to succeed. UMMS is definitely one of my top choices."*



**Luke Gabriel**, a research associate at the University of Virginia; received his bachelor's and master's degrees in biochemistry from UMass Amherst.

*"As a student at UMass Amherst, I had visited the Worcester campus a few times, but the open house is the first chance I've had to take a good look at the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. There is definitely an excellent science system here, and I've already had several friendly and interesting discussions with faculty members. They make you feel very comfortable and they are very conversational."*



**David Truong**, 2003 Tufts University graduate looking at UMass Amherst, the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center and the University of Maryland Medical Center in addition to the GSBS.

*"Right now, I work on diabetes metabolism research at Novartis in Cambridge, and I've been interested in pursuing a graduate degree for some time. Two of my colleagues are GSBS graduates, and they always speak highly of the programs and the collaborative environment. The open house has been a great experience, and I can see first hand what my colleagues are talking about. The selection of programs within the GSBS is attractive, and everyone is excited about their research and the work of their peers."*



**Courtney O'Farrell**, majoring in biochemistry at Bates College in Maine; interested in studying gene expression and regulation.

*"I've always been interested in science, and always thought I would become a physician. I realized there was a huge need for research when my uncle was diagnosed with cancer, so I shifted gears and chose to become a scientist. The open house has given me an opportunity to speak with principal investigators and learn more about the extraordinary research that occurs at this Nobel Prize-winning institution. Faculty and students have already given me good advice for selecting a graduate program and determining my research interests by taking advantage of the summer rotations and finding a lab that makes me comfortable."*

## Chancellor and Dean steps down

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President Jack Wilson. "The history and trajectory of this institution has been nothing short of spectacular, and I believe that Aaron has been an essential component of that stellar rise."

After a brief respite to attend to his personal health and well-being, Lazare will continue to serve as the Celia and Isaac Haidak Professor of Medical Education and professor of psychiatry

at UMMS, pursuing research and writing, as well as spending more time with students as a teacher, advisor and mentor. A nationally recognized expert on shame and humiliation in the medical encounter, Lazare is the co-editor of the influential and nationally recognized textbook, *The Medical Interview*, a groundbreaking work on the fundamentals of physician-patient communication. His lat-

est book, *On Apology*, published in September 2004, examines the integral components of effective and sincere apologies and provides a deeper understanding of interpersonal and international conflicts and how we might resolve them through apology.

"I have been fortunate to serve as Chancellor and Dean during a period of remarkable expansion, accomplishment and achievement," Lazare

said. "And yet, amidst all of the change, we have remained committed to the core values and core mission envisioned by Lamar Soutter when this thriving campus was still a meadow: our commitment to health sciences education and service to the Commonwealth is more vital today than ever in our history." ■

## employees infocus

### April Employee of Distinction Award

#### Vitals

##### Phyllis L. Spatrick

Manager, Genomics Core Facility  
Molecular Genetics & Microbiology

**Year started:** 1981

**Hometown:** Worcester

#### Professionally Speaking

In 2001, April Employee of Distinction Phyllis Spatrick was appointed manager of the newly formed Genomics Core Facility, an essential, cutting-edge research resource housed in the Department of Molecular Genetics & Microbiology (MGM). Its purpose is to allow labs from across the institution to bring a powerful new analytical technique, oligonucleotide microarray analysis, into their technology repertoire. "[She] created a core facility that was a model of efficiency

and utility," said MGM Professor and Chair Allan Jacobson, PhD, who nominated Spatrick. "In short order, Phyllis provided rapid, highly accurate service to more than 30 in-house labs."

"After years of standard molecular biology bench-top techniques, the idea that we could do so much more with the technology, not just in terms of faster or more, but that we could see things we couldn't see before, was something to get excited about," said Spatrick.

Spatrick has spent 16 of her more than 25 years at UMMS in MGM, having begun as a pharmacy technician, then two years later making the move to a more challenging position as a lab tech. After an opportunity to manage her first core service, the Nucleic Acid Facility in the Department of Cell Biology, Spatrick returned to MGM with additional valuable experience.

#### Points of Pride

"It has been gratifying being able to give so much meaningful data to so many investigators, helping them move research forward," said Spatrick. Dr. Jacobson wrote, "There was no in-house expertise in this complicated, yet invaluable technique.

Phyllis mastered all aspects of the technology immediately. In short, she brought technical wizardry to the masses. Her efforts have led to numerous publications from multiple labs and millions of dollars in grant money. Moreover, numerous labs have incorporated microarray technology into their research, something hitherto impossible."



# Calendar

## information infocus

### New work-life manager joins HR team

Janet Hirsch recently joined UMMS in the newly created position of Work-Life Manager. One of Hirsch's first tasks will be to establish a comprehensive communications plan that supports accessible and centralized work-life balance information for current and prospective faculty and other employees. She'll also be called upon to conduct ongoing analyses of the work-life needs of the UMMS community and recommend innovative and cost-effective solutions, as well as identify trends and emerging work-life issues and create programs that respond to them.

Hirsch earned her BA at Trinity College and her MSW at Tulane University. She has extensive experience having worked for ten years with industry leader Work/Family Directions, a pioneer in developing work and family benefits. Hirsch also has expertise in strategic planning and has led numerous projects and committees in program development and implementation.



**Francisco Atez and his wife** are thrilled to learn that he has matched with the emergency medicine residency program at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston. Held on March 17 this year, the annual Match Day is when all fourth-year medical students from across the country discover where they'll begin their careers as doctors. At UMMS, about 90 students gathered in the Faculty Conference Room to open envelopes revealing the hospital residency program with which they had been matched. More than half of this year's Medical School graduates will be entering primary care residencies.

■ The Eighth Annual Educational Recognition Awards Ceremony will be held at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10, in Amphitheatre I. The ceremony celebrates the educational achievements of faculty and students from all three schools. A reception will follow immediately in the Faculty Conference Room and all are welcome to attend.

■ The Human Resources Workplace Learning and Performance Group is launching the Administrative Support Network (ASN) for graduates of the Administrative Support Certificate Program (ASCP). The ASN, which is modeled on the Managers Network, will provide opportunities for ASCP graduates to build on skills they developed in the certificate program as well as network and share best practices with their colleagues. Their first meeting is Thursday, April 12, from noon to 1 p.m. in Amphitheatre II. All ASCP graduates are encouraged to attend. For additional information or to register, send an e-mail to [wpl@umassmed.edu](mailto:wpl@umassmed.edu).

■ The 14th Annual Teddy Bear Clinic will be take place on Saturday, April 14, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Greendale Mall in Worcester. The free health fair for children and families in Central New England is staffed by UMass Memorial Children's Medical Center doctors, nurses and volunteers who share medical expertise and promote health and safety. Children are encouraged to bring a teddy bear or a toy they wish to have a doctor examine. For information, call 6-1650.

■ The UMass Medical School Green Team will host two events in celebration of Earth Day. On Thursday, April 26, they will hold a screening and discussion of *An Inconvenient Truth* in Amphitheatre I from 6 to 8:30 p.m. On Friday, April 27, the team will host the Earth Day Festival in the old Medical School Lobby from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This year's festival features displays and booths sponsored by local organizations, including the Worcester Department of Public Works, Wachusett Greenways, Greater Worcester Farmer's Market and Trader Joe's, among others. There will be free raffles for prizes. For information, contact Heather Strom at 6-1729 or via global e-mail.

■ The Seven Hills Symphony will hold its 2007 Spring Concert "Talking to the Hills" on Sunday, April 29, at 3 p.m. at Clark University in the Daniels Theater. The symphony's players are drawn from UMMS faculty, staff and students. Admission is \$5 for students and seniors and \$10 for adults. For information, contact Joanna Chaurette at 617-824-0333 or via global e-mail.

■ On Thursday and Friday, May 3 and 4, the Office of Community Programs, with support from the UMass President's Office, is hosting the UMass Global Health Symposium 2007, a two-day opportunity for faculty members from all five UMass campuses and international health experts to explore important issues related to global health. For more information, or to register, visit [www.ocp-map.org](http://www.ocp-map.org). Registration is free. The symposium, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days, will be held at the South Street campus in Shrewsbury.

## grants infocus

□ **Alice F. Bonner**, MS, clinical instructor in nursing: *Patient Safety Culture and Quality Outcomes in Nursing Homes: Examining the Relationship*, American Medical Directors Association Foundation, one year, \$11,590.

□ **Lucio H. Castilla**, PhD, assistant professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology and molecular medicine: *Mechanisms of Cbfb-MYH11 Mediated Acute Myeloid Leukemia*, The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, one year, \$110,000; recommended for four more years, \$440,000.

□ **Roger W. Craig**, PhD, professor of cell biology: *Scanning Electron Microscope for Core EM Facility*, National Center for Research Resources, one year, \$498,166.

□ **Anthony N. Imbalzano**, PhD, associate professor of cell biology: *Transcription Factor Function in Chromatin*, National Institute of General Medical Sciences, one year, \$364,800; recommended for three more years, \$1.1 million.

□ **Rebecca Moles**, MD, assistant professor of pediatrics: *Child Protection Program/Children's Justice Center*, Massachusetts Children's Alliance, one year, \$50,000.

□ **Katherine F. Ruiz de Luzuriaga**, MD, professor of pediatrics and medicine: *Western New England Maternal Pediatric Adolescent AIDS Clinical Trials Unit*, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, one year, \$886,491; recommended for six more years, \$3.3 million.

□ **Christopher M. Sassetti**, PhD, assistant professor of molecular genetics & microbiology: *Virulence Gene Regulation in Mycobacterium Tuberculosis*, Charles H. Hood Foundation, Inc., one year, \$75,000; recommended for one more year, \$75,000.

□ **Eric G. Smith**, MD, assistant professor of psychiatry: *Risk of Completed Suicide Among Individuals Receiving Anti-epileptics Compared to Individuals Receiving Lithium*, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, one year, \$20,000.

□ **Phillip D. Zamore**, PhD, the Gretchen Stone Cook Chair in Biomedical Sciences and professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology: *Understanding microRNA Biogenesis and Function*, National Institute of General Medical Sciences, one year, \$462,028; recommended for three more years, \$1.3 million.

□ **Jianhua Zhou**, PhD, assistant professor of medicine: *Distal Cis-Elements and Compounds that Regulate Tau Splicing*, Institute for the Study of Aging, one year, \$50,000.

focus

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Correction: The photo of Sean Collins in the March GSN insert was taken by Rob Carlin.

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