

# focus

## Gov. Patrick discusses Life Sciences Initiative at UMMS

Governor Deval L. Patrick held a meeting at UMass Medical School on Oct. 31 to discuss the Life Sciences Initiative and the life sciences bill currently making its way through the Massachusetts legislature. Gov. Patrick was joined by Massachusetts Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Daniel O’Connell, Worcester City Manager Michael O’Brien, University of Massachusetts President Jack Wilson, University of Massachusetts Senior Vice President for the Health Sciences and UMMS interim Chancellor Michael F. Collins, Dean of the School of Medicine and Executive Deputy Chancellor Terence R. Flotte and Craig C. Mello, PhD, Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator, the *Blais University Chair in Molecular Medicine* and professor of molecular medicine. Patrick and Secretary O’Connor shared their detailed proposal for the life sciences initiative with UMMS leaders and area legislators prior to a press conference.

The UMMS community was invited to the gathering to hear about the bill, which has enormous implications for UMMS and Central Massachusetts. The \$1 billion investment in the life sciences that Patrick has proposed over the next ten years includes capital funding, increased representation on the Massachusetts Life Sciences Board and incentives for life sciences companies. The University of Massachusetts can play a prominent role in achieving the goals of the initiative, with funds going toward development of an international stem cell registry and stem cell bank and

an RNAi Advanced Therapeutics Center at UMMS.

In discussing the Life Sciences Initiative, Patrick said, “The life sciences are a powerful economic engine for this Commonwealth, but regional, national and global competition is fierce. For the sake of our economy, for the sake of healing and for the sake of our future, we must be willing to invest in this industry, and I will continue to join with all stakeholders to ensure that Massachusetts becomes and remains the global leader in life sciences.” ■



Gov. Patrick on a recent visit to UMMS

“The life sciences are a powerful economic engine for this Commonwealth...”

Governor Deval L. Patrick

## Campuses to go tobacco free May 27, 2008

To promote health and reduce the risks of exposure to second-hand smoke among employees, patients, visitors and staff of UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center, on Tuesday, May 27, 2008, UMMS and UMass Memorial will go tobacco free: smoking and the use of all tobacco products will be prohibited on school and medical center properties and grounds, including parking facilities.

The Tobacco-Free Initiative was announced on November 15—the 30th anniversary of the American Cancer Society’s Great American Smokeout—by Dean of the School of Medicine and Executive Deputy Chancellor Terence R. Flotte and UMass Memorial Medical Center President Walter H. Ettinger Jr. The new policy is in keeping with both institutions’ shared mission to improve the health of residents of Central New England.

“This is a milestone in the history of these two institutions and in the history of public health in Central Massachusetts,” said Dr. Flotte. “We have a responsibility to create a healthy environment for our patients, employees, students and visitors, and we’re committed to doing just that.”

A key component of this plan is the commitment of UMMS and UMass

Memorial to provide the energy and resources necessary to make this policy successful. “As health care professionals, we recognize how difficult it can be to quit, and that’s why we’re placing such an emphasis on resources like smoking cessation counseling and nicotine replacement,” added Dr. Ettinger.

More than simply prohibiting the use of all tobacco products on campuses, the initiative breaks new ground in the range of resources devoted to encouraging smoking cessation and the support available to individuals who wish to quit. A variety of smoking cessation counseling and services, including low- or no-cost nicotine replacement therapy, will be offered to all staff, students, patients and visitors who do smoke. Medical staff will be urged to prescribe nicotine replacement therapy to nicotine-dependent



patients upon admission and to refer both inpatients and outpatients to smoking cessation resources like Quitworks, a free telephone counseling service of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. A new Smoking Cessation Consultation service will be available to help patients begin to quit smoking or use nicotine replacement therapy when on campus for health care.

A team of nearly two dozen Medical School and Medical Center physicians, employees and smoking cessation experts have been meeting for more than a year to plan a workable and successful tobacco-free campus policy. Extensive commu-

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### Get in Focus

Have a story idea, a faculty, student or staff achievement, or a campus-wide event for the calendar?

Send it to the *Focus* editor at [focus@umassmed.edu](mailto:focus@umassmed.edu)

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## Houghton recognized as one of nation's top young scientists

UMMS Associate Professor of Medicine JeanMarie Houghton, MD, PhD, was recognized as one of the country's most talented rising scientific stars in a White House ceremony applauding the 2006 recipients of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) on November 1. The PECASE is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on outstanding scientists and engineers beginning their independent careers. Granted to a select group of professionals each year, the awards recognize those who show exceptional potential for leadership at the frontiers of scientific knowledge. Dr. Houghton is just the second UMMS PECASE recipient—Associate Professor of Medicine Neal S. Silverman, PhD, received the award in 2005.

"I feel very fortunate to have been chosen for this award," said Houghton. "It is such a meaningful

Institutes of Health puts not only in the work of my lab but also in the Medical School as a whole, affirming that this is the right kind of work happening at the right place."

A member of the Medical School faculty since 2001, Houghton is broadly interested in the contribution of stem cells to cancer. In 2004, Houghton and colleagues published striking findings in *Science* that provided a fundamentally different view of the origins of gastric cancers, identifying an unexpected link between stomach cancer and bone marrow-derived stem cells. The PECASE was granted based upon the strength of a



JeanMarie Houghton, MD, PhD

**"It is such a meaningful validation** of our work to have our ideas and ambitions recognized at the national level."

JeanMarie Houghton, MD, PhD

validation of our work to have our ideas and ambitions recognized at the national level. It demonstrates the faith the government and the National

recent research proposal that builds upon these findings.

"Dr. Houghton's achievements demonstrate the important role played by clinician-scientists who are able to take care of patients while pursuing ground-breaking research studies," said Chair of Medicine Robert W. Finberg, MD, the *Richard M. Haidack Professor of Medicine*. "Her observation

that normal stem cells that migrate to an area of chronic infection can develop into cancer cells, has already had a major impact on our thinking about the nature of the development of cancer. Her studies on the plasticity of stem cells and the effect of the environment will lead to new approaches to preventing and treating cancer in the near future." ■



Walter Ettinger Jr., MD, MBA

## Ettinger appointed associate dean for clinical and population health research

In an important step forward for UMMS efforts to broaden translational research, UMass Memorial Medical Center President Walter H. Ettinger Jr., MD, MBA, has been appointed Associate Dean for Clinical and Population Health Research. Dr. Ettinger will be a key leader in the development of the vision for clinical and population health research across UMMS and in close collaboration with UMass Memorial Medical Center, where he will continue to serve as president.

"In recent months, Dr. Ettinger has played a principal role in efforts to bridge our clinical care and clinical research enterprises," said Dean of the School of Medicine and Executive Deputy Chancellor Terence R. Flotte. "With his continued expertise and input, we look forward to an accelerated pace of progress in the development of a broad agenda in clinical and translational research in order to have a positive impact on the health of communities and populations."

Working with other faculty and administrators, Ettinger will help to shape the submission of the UMMS Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) application to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Through the CTSA program, the NIH has challenged academic medical centers to accelerate the pace at which research findings are integrated into clinical practice. UMMS aims to become a national leader in creating the ideal environment to foster interdisciplinary research to enhance the public's health.

Specifically, Ettinger will focus on "T2" projects. As defined by the NIH, T2 is that part of the research continuum that moves the data and insights gained from clinical trials to clinical practice. ("T1" research focuses on the transfer of knowledge from the laboratory or bench to clinical trials.) T2 research seeks to develop strategies for the establishment and implementation of new technologies, improvements in practice, evidence-based guidelines, and new and effective models of care.

"We have a unique opportunity to develop translational research across the Medical School and Medical Center by supporting the efforts of our exceptional faculty and staff. It's a privilege to work with Dr. Flotte, Vice Chancellor for Research John Sullivan, MD, and the other leaders in the Medical School in this endeavor," Ettinger said. ■

## achievements

■ **Romolo J. Gaspari**, MD, assistant professor of emergency medicine, was one of nine recipients nationally of the 2007 American College of Emergency Physicians National Faculty Teaching Award. Dr. Gaspari accepted the award for dedication and innovation in teaching at the recent Fellow Convocation and Awards Ceremony at the Scientific Assembly in Seattle.

The Worcester District Medical Society honored two UMass Medical School faculty members at their Fall District Meeting. **Wayne B. Glazier**, MD, clinical assistant professor of surgery, was awarded the 17th Annual Dr. A. Jane Fitzpatrick Community Service Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions made beyond professional duties to improve the health and well-being of others. **Guenter L. Spanknebel**, MD, associate professor of medicine, received the 2007 Worcester District Medical Society Career Achievement Award for demonstrated compassion and dedication to the medical needs of patients and/or the public and significant contributions to the practice of medicine.

■ **Stephen O. Heard**, MD, professor and chair of anesthesiology and professor of surgery, received the Donor Champion Award from the New England Organ Bank for his tireless advocacy of organ donation. UMass Memorial Medical Center also received a Medal of Honor from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recognizing excellence in identifying and recovering organs for transplant during 2006. (See related picture on page 4.)

■ **Henry Tulgan**, MD, clinical professor of medicine and associate dean at Berkshire Medical Center, has been named the recipient of the Robert Razskowski, MD, PhD, ACCME Hero Award. With this a newly established award, ACCME (Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education) recognizes individuals who have provided exemplary and long-term volunteer service to the ACCME.

**Correction:** Hong Zhang, PhD, assistant professor of cell biology, received an Ellison Medical Foundation New Scholar in Aging Award in 2006 for his research *Genetic Analysis of Senescence in Mammalian Aging*. An article in the November issue of *Focus* about Ellison award recipients omitted his name and achievement. We apologize for the error.

## Igniting a passion for science

Kathryn Lipson, GSBS '08, has been fascinated with science since she was a very young age, and last month she jumped at the chance to share her enthusiasm with high school students visiting the Museum of Science in Boston.

"This was an opportunity I couldn't turn down," said Lipson. "It brought my two passions—research and increasing students' interest in science—together."

Lipson and researchers from Children's Hospital, Harvard University and Massachusetts General Hospital were invited to discuss lung cancer, diabetes, smoking and epilepsy as part of the Museum's Health Awareness Month in November. Susan Heilman, PhD, GSBS '07, an education associate in the Current Science & Technology Department at the Museum, recalled Lipson's diabetes research and believed she would be an appropriate speaker on the topic.

"I wanted someone who would be able to present their own diabetes research to the public in a non-academic setting. I've known Kathryn for several years, and she was the ideal choice," said Dr. Heilman. "She's well-spoken and animated, but most of all, she is able to get people excited about science."

A graduate student in the lab of Fumihiko Urano, PhD, MD, assistant professor of molecular medicine,

Lipson chose to focus her graduate research on diabetes because of the annual increase in the number of people who are affected by the disease, which is caused by an absolute or relative deficiency of insulin that is essential for lowering blood sugar. She said one in three people born in 2000 will be affected by diabetes—either they or someone they know will be diagnosed with the disease. "Even today, the general public doesn't know much about diabetes, and it really is an epidemic," said Lipson.

The lead author of a *Cell Metabolism* paper on IRE1, a newly discovered enzyme that could control the production of insulin and blood sugar levels, Lipson shared information about diabetes and discussed her current research during her presentation at the Museum of Science. She, along with Dr. Urano and other researchers, have identified drugs that can control IRE1 activity and protect insulin-producing pancreas cells from cell stress. By triggering the enzyme, these drugs could increase the capacity of pancreatic cells to produce insulin and control diabetes, but Lipson warned



GSBS student Kathryn Lipson spoke to high school student about her love of science and her research at the Museum of Science in Boston.

that if IRE1 is activated too much, it can harm pancreatic cells and reduce the amount of insulin produced. "The ideal drug would cause only mild activation of IRE1," she said.

Lipson, who was interviewed by New England Cable News and appeared during its "Sci-Tech Today" segment prior to her lecture, presented to an audience of nearly 50 people, 40 of whom were high school students. Afterwards, she stayed to speak with students one-to-one about diabetes and her research.

"It's important to keep high school

**"It brought my two passions—research and increasing students' interest in science—together."**

Kathryn Lipson

and undergraduate students interested in science, and it's necessary for them to have role models who are passionate about science," said Lipson. "I feel extremely lucky to have had this opportunity to speak with young adults and light a spark of interest in science and research." ■

You are cordially invited to a  
**Holiday Reception**

Friday, December 14, 2007  
3–5 p.m. and 10–11 p.m.  
Faculty Conference Room

Hosted by  
**Michael F. Collins, MD**  
Interim Chancellor  
UMass Medical School

**John G. O'Brien**  
President and CEO  
UMass Memorial Health Care

## employees infocus

### December Employee of Distinction Award

#### Vitals

##### John Cruz

Senior Research Scientist  
Center for Infectious Disease and Vaccine Research  
**Year started:** 1979  
**Hometown:** Shrewsbury

#### Professionally Speaking

With almost 30 years of experience, December Employee of Distinction John Cruz is the most senior professional staff scientist in the Center for Infectious Disease and Vaccine Research (CIDVR). First hired as a research technician in the biochemistry department, he moved to the CIDVR as laboratory manager in 1986. "It would be difficult to overstate John's role in the operation of the CIDVR," wrote nominator Alan Rothman, MD, professor of medicine. "The productivity and quality of the work has been widely admired by industry and

academic groups while winning plaudits from regulatory and quality assurance/quality control reviewers, helping the Center win both federal government and industry contracts."

Cruz was in charge of everything from ordering and stocking supplies to radiation and chemical safety when the CIDVR opened with about half a dozen people in a single laboratory. As the Center has grown to its current size of more than 40 scientific staff members, including research faculty, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows throughout 12 laboratories, Cruz has played an ever more prominent leadership role, in particular as the supervisor of the Center's Clinical Trials Laboratory. In addition to contributing at the research bench and training other members of the technical staff, Cruz has done much of the writing of the laboratory's Standard Operating Procedures.

He attributes his long tenure in CIDVR to the department's innovation and values of collaboration and respect for each

contributor. "There are always new things to learn, with everyone helping further each other's research," he said.

#### Points of Pride

Cruz finds the clinical trials research he has been focused on since 2001 especially rewarding. The lab has conducted assays of virus-specific cellular immunity for more than a dozen clinical trials of vaccines for poxviruses, HIV and West Nile virus, among others. "Projects lead to tangible results in the form of vaccines that, not to overstate it, truly help mankind," he explained. He is also gratified to be named as an author on numerous CIDVR publications.



# Calendar



## UMass Memorial Medical Center received the Department of Health and Human Services Medal of Honor

for organ donation from the New England Organ Bank at a Nov. 9 ceremony. Pictured (left to right) are Lisa Glasheen, MSW, LICSW, a UMass Memorial Organ Transplant staff social worker; Gail Smith, a liver and bone marrow transplant recipient; and Jeffrey Stoff, MD, professor of medicine and chief of Renal Medicine and Transplant Medicine at UMass Memorial. Since the life-saving transplant, Smith has become an advocate for organ and tissue donation; she spoke at the award ceremony about her gratitude for the people and programs at UMass Memorial. Stephen Heard, professor and chair of anesthesiology and professor of surgery, was also honored (see "Achievements" on page 2).

■ Interim Chancellor Michael F. Collins and UMass Memorial Health Care President and CEO John G. O'Brien will host the annual Holiday Reception on Friday, Dec. 14, from 3 to 5 p.m. and 10 to 11 p.m. for all University campus employees, students and volunteers. The reception will take place in the Faculty Conference Room and the new Medical School Lobby.

■ Beginning Monday, Dec. 17, an exhibit of artwork by UMass Worcester students will be on display in the Lamar Soutter Library on the first floor. The exhibit will remain on display for six weeks.

■ Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to donate to the UMMS Toys for Tots drive through Thursday, Dec. 20. New, unwrapped toys may be dropped off in designated boxes located in the Medical School, Hospital, LRB and parking garage lobbies. Boxes are also conveniently located in the main lobbies at other UMMS campuses.

■ The Office of Medical Education, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities, is sponsoring a free reading and discussion group, "Literature & Medicine: Humanities at the Heart of Health Care." The group will read and discuss works of fiction, poetry and nonfiction that explore the intricate nature of relationships among caregivers, as well as with patients and their families. Humanities scholar Patrick Ireland, PhD, associate professor of English at the College of the Holy Cross, will lead the group discussions. All books (on loan) and other reading materials will be provided, as will a light supper. The monthly sessions will be held from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Medical School on the following Wednesdays: Jan. 16, Feb. 13, March 19, April 16, May 14 and June 11. Space is limited; the applicant deadline is December 21. For additional information or to apply, contact Fernanda Gama at x6-5487 or via global e-mail.

## Tobacco free

*continued from page 1*

communications including signage, information sessions in both English and Spanish, and physician guidelines to make staff, students, patients and visitors aware of the policy are an integral component of the initiative. And for the first time, managers and department heads at UMMS and UMass Memorial will receive extensive training to help them communicate, support and enforce the policy among their staffs.

With its commitment to tobacco-free facilities,

UMMS and UMass Memorial join a growing number of health care institutions who are responding to the well-documented health risks of smoking and secondhand smoke. "This is something other hospitals have done successfully," said Gregory Seward, MSHCA, LSW, who with Project Manager Lisa Beittel, will be coordinating the resources for the tobacco-free initiative.

*Related links*

Press release: [umassmed.edu/news/2007/tobacco-free.aspx](http://umassmed.edu/news/2007/tobacco-free.aspx)  
[www.Quitworks.org](http://www.Quitworks.org) ■

## grants infocus

□ **Steven B. Bird, MD**, assistant professor of emergency medicine: *Use of an Organophosphorus (OP) Hydrolase for Acute OP Poisoning*, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, one year, \$234,063; recommended for one more year, \$203,125.

□ **Alexei Bogdanov, PhD**, professor of radiology: *MR Signal Amplification for Receptor Imaging*, National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering, one year, \$360,985; recommended for three more years, \$1 million.

□ **Maryann Davis, PhD**, assistant professor of psychiatry: *Adaptation of Multisystemic Therapy for Transition Age Youth*, National Institute of Mental Health, one year, \$250,673; recommended for two more years, \$469,416.

□ **Chyke A. Doubeni, MD, MPH**, assistant professor of family medicine & community health: *Understanding Racial and Ethnic Differences in Survival from Colorectal Cancer*, National Cancer Institute, one year, \$141,539; recommended for four more years, \$566,156.

□ **Gerald S. Gleich, MD**, assistant professor of family medicine & community health: *Practice Improvement in the Treatment of Chronic Pain Through Team and Systems-Based Care*, Department of Health and Human Services Residency Training in Primary Care, Health Resources and Services Administration, one year, \$120,115; recommended for two more years, \$191,408.

□ **Jean A. King, PhD**, associate professor of psychiatry: *Imaging Nicotine-induced Behavioral Sensitization with fMRI*, National Institute on Drug Abuse, one year, \$317,500; recommended for four more years, \$1.3 million.

□ **Paul Mak, PhD**, research assistant professor of surgery: *Phytoestrogens and Prostate Cancer Prevention*, National Cancer Institute, one year, \$81,250; recommended for one more year, \$81,250.

□ **William J. McIlvane, PhD**, professor of psychiatry: *Stimulus Control in Mental Retardation*, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, one year, \$724,999; recommended for four more years, \$2.9 million.

□ **Gerald A. Schwarting, PhD**, professor of cell biology: *Migration of Early Olfactory Neuronal Progenitors*, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, one year, \$333,901; recommended for two more years, \$666,385.

□ **Neal S. Silverman, PhD**, associate professor of medicine: *Inhibiting the Inhibitor: Small Molecule Screening with Small Pox N1L*, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases; one year, \$203,125; recommended for one more year, \$243,750.

□ **Gary S. Stein, PhD**, the *Gerald L. Haidak, MD*, and *Zelda S. Haidak Professor of Cell Biology* and chair of cell biology: *Program Project Grant: Bone Cell Structure and Gene Expression*, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, one year, \$1.4 million; recommended for four more years, \$5.6 million.

□ **Gyongyi Szabo, MD, PhD**, professor of medicine: *Ethanol's Role in Mediation of Monocyte Suppression*, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, one year, \$48,750; recommended for two more years, \$97,500.

□ **William E. Theurkauf, PhD**, professor of molecular medicine: *Mitotic Response to DNA Damage*, National Institute of General Medical Sciences, one year, \$46,389; recommended for two more years, \$231,316.

□ **Heidi A. Tissenbaum, PhD**, associate professor of molecular medicine: *Glenn Award for Research in Biological Mechanisms of Aging*, Glenn Foundation for Medical Research, one year, \$50,000.

□ **Robert T. Woodland, PhD**, associate professor of molecular genetics & microbiology: *Immunodeficiencies that Impair Lymphocyte Survival*, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases; one year, \$162,500.

focus

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