

Collins appointed interim chancellor

Michael F. Collins, MD, has been named University of Massachusetts senior vice president for health sciences and interim chancellor of UMass Medical School. Chancellor of UMass Boston for the last two years, Dr. Collins was appointed to direct university-wide health sciences efforts and charged with advising University of Massachusetts President Jack M. Wilson and the Board of Trustees on strategic initiatives to further the university's efforts in the Commonwealth's critical life sciences endeavors. As an extension of this important leadership role, Collins was named to the interim UMMS position (pending Board approval), where he will provide direction to the campus' continuing efforts to distinguish itself as the Commonwealth's premier academic health sciences center.

“Dr. Collins is an accomplished leader and experienced manager who is primed to help UMass Worcester continue to realize its potential as a Massachusetts leader...”

Jack Wilson, President

“Dr. Collins is an accomplished leader and experienced manager who is primed to help UMass Worcester continue to realize its potential as a Massachusetts leader in research, medical, biomedical sciences and nursing education, and public service,” Wilson said.

Collins will work closely with newly appointed UMMS Dean and Executive Deputy Chancellor Terry Flotte, MD. As dean, Dr. Flotte serves as the campus' chief administrator for the School of Medicine and as chief academic officer

for the campus.

As interim chancellor, Collins will primarily direct the campus' external outreach, focusing on expanding and enhancing relationships with the community, the legislature and the philanthropic community. In addition, he will provide guidance for institutional advancement and fund-raising initiatives and administrative oversight and leadership for UMMS enterprise operations, including Commonwealth Medicine and the Massachusetts Biologic Laboratories.

Collins will also provide oversight for information services, human resources and finance and campus operations.

As chancellor of UMass Boston, Collins oversaw an institution renowned for its diversity and access to excellence. He managed a budget of \$176 million and led an academic community of more than 800 full- and part-time faculty.

Prior to joining UMass Boston, Collins served as president and chief executive officer of Caritas Christi Health Care System from 1994 to 2004. Under his leadership, Caritas Christi became the second-largest health care system in New England, generating more than \$1.1 billion in annual revenues. From 1994 to 2001, Collins also served as president of St. Elizabeth's Medical Center in Brighton, a university academic medical center affiliated with Tufts University School of Medicine.

Collins held faculty positions at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and at Tufts University School of Medicine. He is a 1977 graduate of the College of the Holy Cross and a 1981 graduate of Tufts University School of Medicine. ■



Michael Collins, MD

Lochrie honored with Erskine Award

Jane Lochrie, MD, associate clinical professor of medicine, has received numerous honors for her work as both a clinician and medical educator. Last month, she added one more when the Central Massachusetts YWCA presented her with the 2007 Katherine F. Erskine Award in Medicine & Science at its annual Tribute to Women.

Named in honor of Worcester native Katherine F. Erskine, a two-time Central Massachusetts YWCA president who advocated for women for more than 80 years, the annual awards are given to women in five professional areas—Arts and Humanities, Business and Law, Community/Social Service and Government, Education, and Medicine and Science—whose achievements have improved life in their community, especially for women and girls.

A UMMS alumna, Dr. Lochrie is guided by the philosophy that “health care is a right, not a privilege.” Lochrie has helped establish and run free health clinics, including the Fallon Clinic M. Elizabeth Fletcher Women's Health Center and the clinic at St. Anne's Church in her hometown of Shrewsbury. She sees free clinic patients weekly, in addition to treating

patients at her Fallon Clinic internal medicine practice and training future physicians as site coordinator for the third-year internal medicine clerkship at Saint Vincent Hospital. “I have always enjoyed teaching, especially at the third and fourth-year levels where so much is new to students,” she said. She teaches second-year students as well, conducting the physical diagnosis course at the hospital.

Lochrie was a registered nurse, then a nurse practitioner before attending medical school. Her special interest is in women's health; a major motivation to establish the Green Island clinic along with Annie Abraham, MD, assistant professor of medicine, was to educate women about, as well as diagnose and treat, their unique health issues.

Currently vice president and president-elect of the Worcester District Medical



Jane Lochrie, MD

Society (WDMS) where she has served in various capacities for many years, Lochrie was honored with the WDMS A. Jane Fitzpatrick Community Service Award in 2000, granted annually to recognize a Central Massachusetts health care professional for contributions to improve the health and well-being of the community above and beyond usual professional duties. “If you want to see things get better, you need to participate to make things happen,” said Lochrie. ■

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/. When appropriate, the page will also list upcoming UMMS expert appearances in print, TV and radio venues.





Tariq Rana, PhD, and colleagues are optimistic about their development of new systemic agents that are able to silence disease-related genes in clinically acceptable and therapeutically affordable doses.

“... our exciting results demonstrate

that these newly designed nanoparticles can be used to deliver siRNA to silence disease-related endogenous genes.”

Tariq Rana, PhD

Breakthrough in delivery of RNA interference

RNA interference (RNAi) is an exceptionally promising tool in the effort to better human health, recognized as such with the awarding of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine to its co-discoverers, Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator and Blais University Chair in Molecular Medicine Craig C. Mello, PhD, and Andrew Fire, PhD, of Stanford University. A fast and efficient method to silence individual gene expression that is being used in labs across the world to assess gene function, RNAi is also a potential therapy for a range of genetic disorders and diseases.

The development of RNAi therapeutics, however, has faced several challenges, among them the identification of chemically stable and effective silencing sequences and the creation of a mechanism by which RNAi can safely be delivered to humans. Now, UMMS Professor of Biochemistry & Molecular Pharmacology Tariq M. Rana, PhD, and colleagues report on a breakthrough—the development of new systemic agents that are able to silence disease-related genes in clinically acceptable and therapeutically affordable doses that require a small amount of RNA drugs without causing undesirable toxic and immunogenic effects.

In “Design and Creation of New Nanomaterials for Therapeutic

RNAi,” published in *ACS Chemical Biology*, Dr. Rana, who also serves as director of the UMMS Program in Chemical Biology, describes the design and creation of interfering nanoparticles, or iNOPs. Comprising two subunits—a nanoparticle-based delivery agent and a chemically modified short interfering RNA (siRNA), which can program RNAi in cells—the iNOPs were able to silence an endogenous gene found in the liver, resulting in the lowering of the total plasma cholesterol in the tested animal models. Further, iNOP treatment was non-toxic and did not induce an immune response.

While enthusiastic about the breakthrough, Rana cautions that additional studies are needed to fully deter-

mine the safety of the nanoparticles. “One concern about applying nanotechnology in biology and medicine is its safety. Nanomaterials used to deliver a drug could cause undesired effects. Further investigations in this area are essential as we move forward,” he explained. “Still, our exciting results demonstrate that these newly designed nanoparticles can be used to deliver siRNA to silence disease-related endogenous genes. The low dose of siRNA required in our studies to achieve therapeutic effects provides great hope for developing RNAi-based therapies in the near future to cure diseases caused by proteins that cannot be targeted by conventional drugs.” ■

Accelerating treatment with state-of-the-art image guidance



New England Center for Stroke Research Director Matthew J. Gounis, PhD, assistant professor of radiology, reviews angiograms that were acquired with the new Philips Xper Allura FD20 flat panel angiography system in the new CI³.

Last month, UMass Medical School (UMMS) and UMass Memorial Health Care officially opened the Center for Innovative Imaging & Intervention (CI³) at UMMS to develop advanced imaging and image-guidance for the next generation of disease diagnosis and treatment, while accelerating the translation of scientific advances into clinical application through multidisciplinary collaboration.

“Today, biomedical imaging is recognized as playing a vital role in our understanding of the basic mechanisms of disease and its detection and clinical management. The rapid advances in medical imaging technology and interventional radiological procedures have revolutionized the practice of medicine,” said Krishna Kandarpa, MD, PhD, professor and chair of radiology.

During the CI³ grand opening on May 3, UMMS faculty members expert in the field of biomedical imaging discussed the future of imaging and intervention. The event included presentations on imaging physics, molec-

ular imaging, advanced magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and interventional technology, as well as a panel discussion focusing on effective bench-to bedside translation. CI³ will be home to the New England Center for Stroke Research and the new Advanced Magnetic Resonance Imaging Center.

Through a partnership with Philips Medical Systems of Andover, Mass., CI³ will allow scientists and clinicians who are experts in imaging and interventional technologies to respond to clinical needs with state-of-the-art multi-modality imaging and guidance technology that combines flat-panel angiography with MRI. The new 3T Philips Achieva MRI will support a broad range of MRI and spectroscopy applications.

“With the establishment of CI³, I envision an exciting future for medical imaging and image-guided interventions. New medical imaging technologies will be developed and, in turn, they will minimize the invasiveness of interventional procedures,” said Dr. Kandarpa. ■

achievements

■ **Jeffrey D. Bernhard, MD**, professor of medicine and physiology, has been elected to corresponding membership in the Austrian Society of Dermatology.

■ **Steven B. Bird, MD**, assistant professor of emergency medicine, has been selected by the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine as a recipient of the SAEM Young Investigator Award in recognition of demonstrated promise and distinction in emergency medicine research.

■ The Massachusetts Medical Society and Alliance Charitable Foundation have awarded a 2007 International Health Studies grant to **Emma Burbank-Schmitt, SOM '07**. The grants are awarded annually to help defray the cost of pursuing international medical studies that focus on underserved populations.

■ In its third annual Worcester UniverCity Partnership Awards, the Colleges of Worcester Consortium, Inc. honored **Cristina Gioioso, SOM '09**; **Michelle St. Fleur, SOM '09**; **Charles Strom, SOM '09**; and **Jorge Tello, SOM '09** for their work to promote healthy lifestyle choices with underserved youth at the Center for Healthy Kids in the Great Brook Valley housing community.

■ The Massachusetts Thoracic Society presented **Richard S. Irwin, MD**, professor of medicine, with the society's highest honor, the Henry D. Chadwick Medal, given for outstanding and meritorious contributions in the field of pulmonary medicine.

■ **Aaron Lazare, MD**, the Celia and Isaac Haidak Professor of Medical Education and professor of psychiatry, was the featured speaker at the 2007 Massachusetts Medical Society Annual Oration Program, “Apology in Medical Practice: An Emerging Clinical Skill” that took place at the society's annual meeting.

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:

Manuel E. Baldeon, MD, PhD, MSc, adjunct associate professor of medicine

George Abraham, MD, MPH, promoted to clinical associate professor of medicine

Peter Whittaker, PhD, promoted to professor of emergency medicine and anesthesiology

Zuoshang Xu, MD, PhD, promoted to professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology and cell biology

Common ground unites three schools

Last fall, the Student Body Councils agreed to enhance communication and interaction between students enrolled at the School of Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and the Graduate School of Nursing by approving the formation of the Three Schools Committee.

“Among the three schools, there was a desire to improve interactions between all UMMS students. The medical, nursing and graduate students always see each other around the campus, but they never really have an opportunity to work together,” said Julianne Oberle, a first-year nursing student and first chair of the committee. “We will all work together in our professional lives, so it makes sense for us to begin working together here as we pursue our education.”

The committee comprises 12 members, four students from each school; throughout the year, a member from each school takes over as chairperson. Currently, committee members are working with the Faculty Council to create a governance document that defines the committee’s role in the institution. “As the process continues, we anticipate more involvement in implementing academic, social and charitable programs for all UMMS students,” said Tim Rooney, SOM ’10, committee member and former chair. “The committee is aiming to be included in institution-wide issues and to have an active role in making recommendations and suggestions on matters that affect the entire

student population.”

While carefully planning its role at UMMS, the committee is actively involved in creating opportunities to bring students together and to complement the institution’s mission. Earlier this year, members hosted a panel discussion on pandemic flu, which featured Daniel H. Libraty, MD, associate professor of medicine; Richard T. Ellison, MD, professor of

“...the committee is dedicated to bringing the UMMS schools and students together through academic and social programs related to education, research and public service.”

Andrew Coles, GSBS Student

medicine and molecular genetics & microbiology; and Sandra Leiby, MS, instructor in nursing whose clinical practice interest lies in volunteer and disaster nursing. Their discussions highlighted the connections between the roles of researchers and clinicians and the relevance of basic science and clinical applications in the real world. “Although the panel covered different phases of a pandemic flu, all of the students found the discussion

interesting,” said Andrew Coles, current committee chair and a PhD student in the lab of Stephen N. Jones, PhD, associate professor of cell biology and cancer biology. “Because we spend so much time in the labs, we don’t have the opportunity to see how our work is applied in the field. This panel discussion really bridged that gap.”

Future plans for the committee include advising on how students can participate in the University’s efforts in translational science and how University resources can be better uti-



Current and former Three Schools Committee chairs, left to right, are Tim Rooney, SOM ’10; Julianne Oberle, first-year nursing student; and Andrew Coles, GSBS student.

ahead of us, the committee is dedicated to bringing the UMMS schools and students together through academic and social programs related to education, research and public service,” said Coles.

Current Three Schools Committee members include: SOM students Julia Anderson, ’09, Katherine Callaghan, ’09, Timothy Rooney, ’10, and Wynne Morgan, ’09; GSBS students Siobhan O’Brien, Andrew Coles and Edward Paek; and GSN students Angela Sabol, Shawna Steadman and Julianne Oberle.

For more information on the Three Schools Committee, e-mail ThreeSchoolsCommittee@umassmed.edu. ■

Lasser named UMass Memorial Medical Group interim president

Daniel Lasser, MD, MPH, professor and chair of the department of family medicine & community health and associate dean for Commonwealth Medicine, has been asked by UMass Memorial Health Care President and CEO John O’Brien to serve as interim president of the UMass Memorial Medical Group upon the departure of Bruce Meyer, MD, MBA. Dr. Meyer, who was chair of the department of obstetrics & gynecology and president of the Medical Group, recently

took the position of vice president for medical affairs and associate dean and executive director of the Faculty Practice Plan at University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas.

Lasser is also senior vice president for UMass Memorial Primary Care System Integration. In order to dedicate the time necessary to fulfill his new responsibilities, Lasser will take a leave of absence from Commonwealth Medicine. ■

employees infocus

June Employee of Distinction Award

Vitals

Kim Departie

Administrator, Center for AIDS Research

Year started: 1982

Hometown: Uxbridge

Professionally speaking

“Kim is an unsung hero of the Medical School,” wrote June Employee of Distinction nominator Mario Stevenson, PhD, the David J. Freeland Professor of AIDS Research and professor of molecular medicine and molecular genetics & microbiology. As administrator to Dr. Stevenson, who is also director of the UMMS Center for AIDS Research (CFAR), Kim Departie has been instrumental in helping CFAR secure more than \$7 million in grant funds over the past year.

“To put this achievement in perspective, the research programs of some 70 investigators are supported, in one way or another, by the National Institutes of Health-funded AIDS Center grant. Such awards are extremely important to the institution and its research programs,” according to Stevenson. “Because of Kim’s efforts, AIDS programs at the Medical School will continue to be supported.”

Departie’s path to her current responsibilities began when she started her career at UMMS 25 years ago supporting the AIDS Clinical Trial Group, then under the direction of Neil Blacklow, MD, professor *emeritus* of medicine. She was promoted to executive assistant for Francis Ennis, MD, professor of medicine and director of the Center for Infectious Disease and Vaccine Research (CIDVR). The administrative expertise Departie gained at CIDVR prepared her for Stevenson’s lab when her position began three years ago.

Points of pride

“It’s been a good year. Everything submitted has been funded,” said Departie of another multi-project cooperative agreement U19 grant from the NIH as well as the CFAR grant. Beyond her grant

management skills, Departie loves to write and is pleased Stevenson relies on her to prepare much of his correspondence, which gives him time to concentrate on the science and raising funds.



Calendar

infocus

information

Expanded care benefit

Effective July 1, 2007, all non-unit UMMS employees, students, graduate students and residents will have access to backup child or elder care on short notice and at a subsidized rate. For more information, call the UMMS Work-Life Manager at x6-2958.

South Street campus

UMass Medical School recently completed the purchase of the former Maxtor property located at 333 South Street in Shrewsbury.

Known to the UMMS community as the South Street campus, the facility houses the Office of Technology Management, the Graduate School of Nursing Graduate Entry Pathway and a segment of the UMMS Information Services department. UMMS Financial Services and the Budget Office also moved to South Street last month. The UMass President's Office also occupies roughly 90,000 square feet of the complex.

The South Street campus will be used to fill current and future space needs, including the opportunity to consolidate and provide expansion space for Commonwealth Medicine programs located in separate facilities in Worcester and Shrewsbury (Commonwealth Medicine moves will take place over the summer). Some school administrative and support departments that do not require a physical location on the University Campus will also move to the South Street campus in the coming months.

Courier service to and from South Street will take place three times per day. Directions to the South Street campus can be found at www.umassmed.edu/about/directions.

■ Beginning Tuesday, June 5, the Lamar Soutter Library's Artist in Residence series will feature an exhibit of artwork by Peter Grigg, PhD, professor and interim chair of physiology. Dr. Grigg's selected cloisonné enamels will be on display in the library through mid-July. For information, contact Nancy Harger at x6-3334 or via global e-mail.

■ UMMS staff who will reach employment milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 years of continuous service by Dec. 31 can view a variety of appreciation gifts provided by Sharfman's Jewelers on Wednesday, June 20, from noon to 2 p.m. in the cafeteria at Century Drive and Thursday, June 21, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the old Medical School Lobby. Letters of notification will be mailed to eligible employees prior to these dates. If you are unable to attend either showing, photos of the gifts will be available for viewing on the intranet at inside.umassmed.edu/hr/awards. For information, call x6-6097.

■ The Walk to Cure Cancer Kick-off Breakfast will be held Thursday, July 19, at the Aaron Lazare Medical Research Building on the University Campus. Registration is at 7:30 a.m.; continental breakfast and speaker's program will follow from 8 to 9 a.m. Teams will receive all the materials they need for gathering pledges for the Sept. 23 event on the UMass Medical School campus. For information, contact Sylvia Ciarlo via global e-mail or visit www.walktocurecancer.com.

■ Now through Friday, Nov. 9, you can help the environment by donating your old books, videos, CDs and LPs. The UMMS Green Team is hosting a book and media drive—everything is accepted, even textbooks and encyclopedias. Donations can be dropped off in the collection container in the parking lot behind the right side of Biotech 5 at 381 Plantation Street across from University Campus.



ID badge Update and Schedule

The ID badge exchange for **employees*** takes place in the old Medical School Lobby. **Students** will receive their new badges when they renew their parking permit.

For additional information, visit inside.umassmed.edu/parking and click on news & updates.

* Individuals who park in the Clinical Lot will receive an e-mail message from the Office of Parking and Access Control when their badges are ready to be picked up in Room HA-531.

June
Tuesday/Thursday,
6:45 – 9:30 a.m.

June 5 and 7: Level 4 Old Garage
June 12 and 14: Unreserved, last name "A"
(also 2:30 – 4 p.m.)
Exchanges will resume the week of July 10.

July
Tuesday/Thursday, 6:45 – 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 – 4 p.m.

July 10 and 12: Unreserved, last name "B"
July 17 and 19: Unreserved, last name "C"
July 24 and 26: Unreserved, last name "D"
July 31 and Aug. 2: Unreserved, last name "E-F"

grants infocus

□ **Job Dekker**, PhD, assistant professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology: *Structural Annotation of the Human Genome*, National Human Genome Research Institute, one year, \$582,000; recommended for two more years, \$1.1 million.

□ **Curtis K. Deutsch**, PhD, lecturer in psychiatry: *Craniofacial Research Program*, The Simons Foundation, one year, \$119,996.

□ **Thomas J. FitzGerald**, MD, professor and chair of radiology oncology and professor of radiology, obstetrics & gynecology and pediatrics: *Quality Assurance Review Center*, National Cancer Institute, one year, \$1.4 million; recommended for four more years, \$6 million.

□ **Michael R. Green**, MD, PhD, Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator, the *Lambi and Sarah Adams Chair in Genetic Research*, and professor of molecular medicine, biochemistry & molecular pharmacology and surgery: *Analysis of the Role of the 24p3/24p3R Proapoptotic Pathway in BCR/ABL-Induced Myeloproliferative Disease Using a Murine Model of Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia*, USA Med Research ACQ Activity, 19 months, \$162,500.

□ **Donald J. Hnatowich**, PhD, professor of radiology: *Improved Tumor Radiotherapy by MORF Pretargeting*, National Cancer Institute, one year, \$240,825; recommended for four more years, \$963,300.

□ **Y. Tony Ip**, PhD, associate professor of molecular medicine, biochemistry & molecular pharmacology and cell biology: *Host-Microbe Interaction in Drosophila Gut*, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, one year, \$203,125; recommended for one more year, \$243,750.

□ **Sandra H. Mayrand**, MBA, director of the UMMS Regional Science Resource Center: *Intel Math Initiative Pilot Program*, Intel Foundation, one year, \$95,000.

□ **William J. McIlvane**, PhD, professor of psychiatry: *Optimizing Discrete-Trial Procedures for ASD Children*, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, one year, \$217,500; recommended for one more year, \$181,250.

□ **Joel D. Richter**, PhD, professor of molecular medicine: *CPEB and Cell Senescence*, National Institute on Aging, one year, \$333,125; recommended for four more years, \$1.3 million.

□ **Mary Rusckowski**, PhD, research associate professor of radiology: *Bacterial Specific Oligomers for Infection Detection Through Imaging*, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, one year, \$234,375; recommended for one more year, \$203,125.

□ **Christopher M. Sassetti**, PhD, assistant professor of molecular genetics & microbiology: *Targets for Short-Course TB Therapy*, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, one year, \$203,125; recommended for one more year, \$243,750.

□ **Eva Szomolanyi-Tsuda**, MD, research assistant professor of pathology: *Polyomavirus Infection in Immunodeficient Mice*, National Cancer Institute, one year, \$261,056; recommended for four more years, \$1.04 million.

□ **Mario Stevenson**, PhD, *the David J. Freeland Professor of AIDS Research* and professor of molecular medicine and molecular genetics & microbiology: *Preclinical Development of HIV-1 Vif Antagonists*, National Institute of Mental Health, one year, \$1.2 million; recommended for four more years, \$4.6 million.

Cellular Co-Factors of HIV-1 Infection, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, one year, \$365,625; recommended for four more years, \$1.5 million.

□ **Zuoshang Xu**, MD, PhD, professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology and cell biology: *Silencing Mutant SOD1 in Vivo for Treatment of ALS*, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, one year, \$228,164; recommended for one more year, \$178,403.

focus

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