



Generating Momentum

Women Supporting Each Other in the Drive for Personal and Professional Success

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A Note from the Editor

It is summer, a time when we're ready to relax and take some time off. But the serious topic of cancer is discussed in several of this newsletter's articles, coinciding with two upcoming events at the medical school. The new *Diversity Campus Read* initiative invites the UMMS and UMMHC campuses to engage in a learning experience by reading *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* and participate in related campus activities. And, 2013 marks the 15th year for the UMass Medicine Cancer Walk.

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks is the story of a woman who was an unknowing contributor to medicine and science, when cells from her cancerous tumor were found to be able to multiply quickly and remain alive for a longer period than other cells. A cell line, called HeLa, was created for use by researchers who, at that time, were looking for a polio cure. That cell line is still in existence today. While this discovery was a great scientific benefit, it is tempered by the fact that the cells were taken without her or her family's knowledge or consent. Her story offers us lessons about scientific research, ethics, and cultural perceptions.

This year, the UMass Medicine Cancer Walk will be held on Sunday, September 29th. This event is a fundraiser for the UMass Medicine Cancer Center of Excellence. Staff from the UMMS and UMMHC campuses are welcome to take part by walking, raising funds, or simply making a donation. More information about the Cancer Walk and Diversity Campus Read is detailed in *The Gathering Place*.

Because it's summer, the skin cancer facts and tips are timely. Ovarian cancer has made the news recently, so we've got some information about that as well. On the lighter side, learn about hiking trails near you and Dr. Catarina Kiefe, Chair of the Quantitative Health Sciences Department. Enjoy!

Ask a Busy Woman

Introducing Catarina Kiefe, PhD, MD

By Kathryn DeLaughter

Research Project Director, Department of Quantitative Health Sciences



Starting a Department at one of the leading University Medical Schools in the country might classify as a 'daunting' thing to do. However, you wouldn't think so for Dr. Catarina Kiefe, Chair of the Quantitative Health Sciences Department here at UMass Medical School. Dr. Kiefe was recruited to start the department over four years ago, and moved to Massachusetts from Alabama in July of 2009. When first approached to start this new department, her first thought was, "I'm not going anywhere, I'm doing just what I want!" We are very fortunate she eventually changed her mind.

A Portugal native, she moved to the United States to pursue her doctoral degree in mathematics, and worked as an abstract mathematician for about 6-7 years before deciding to go back to school. She was ready to do something more "applied", and considered doing something in the Biological Sciences. But then somebody suggested that she go to medical school, which is exactly what she did. She received her Medical Doctorate degree from the University of California, San Francisco, and completed her residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Minnesota Hospitals and Clinics.

It is no secret that women have faced inequality in the workplace, facing lower wages, lower positions to their male counterparts, and getting passed up for promotions. Dr. Kiefe related a little bit about her personal experiences with gender inequality. Growing up in Portugal, there existed even more of a disparity in gender equality. A contributing factor into why she is a feminist today was something her uncle asked her when she was 14. "We were having a conversation about politics and he said, 'Oh, you sound very smart, but are you going to do what a woman is

really supposed to do, which is to marry and have children?'" This impacted her so significantly that for a long time she was not going to get married. Another example Dr. Kiefe recalled is when being interviewed for medical school, she expected people would ask her questions about things like, 'why, as a mathematician, did she want to go to medical school.' But nobody was worried about that. Instead, what she invariably heard was, "What does your husband think of you going to medical school?" Of course this was over 30 years ago, and our society has come far from this type of question being asked of female medical school applicants.

After medical school and residency she spent several years as a physician educator at Baylor College of Medicine and Ben Taub General Hospital in Houston Texas. She knew she never wanted to go into private practice, preferring to go to work in public health settings. After spending many years mostly teaching and overseeing residents and medical students, which she said she "enjoyed a lot", she felt drawn back to the idea that she wanted to discover things. She started thinking about doing clinical and population research, and what she really needed for that was some knowledge of statistics. She taught herself what she needed by reading books and learning how to use software and statistics in epidemiology, and then began to dabble in research.

As many professional women know, changing careers and pursuing different work settings can be a challenge and comes with a lot of uncertainty. Dr. Kiefe describes those times she decided to take the leap as "scary, and it took some courage, but I felt driven to do it." She feels very lucky because she never felt she, "had to continue

doing a job that I didn't really feel enthusiastic about." She said she feels fortunate to have the luxury of taking each of those leaps, and describes part of that luxury for her is having an extremely supportive husband. They took turns supporting each other through school, and if she "hadn't had the family situation that allowed me to do it, I don't know that I could have done it."

When asked what 'near or dear' area of research she would like to see advance, she named several. One area is "how can we get healthcare in this country to be more evidence-driven." Another area she feels strongly about is "how can we get phenomenal discoveries in basic science to actually be of human benefit." Dr. Kiefe states she is "very passionate about fairness and social inequalities", and she remains very interested in any work that will reduce social inequalities in health care.

A recently named Inaugural Cutler Chair in Biomedical Research, Dr. Kiefe states this was an unexpected appointment and she is honored to have been given this title. We are honored to have Dr. Kiefe here at UMass Medical School leading the way in research as Chair of the Quantitative Health Sciences Department. She is an example of gracious intelligence that can inspire us all.

UMatter: Got Sunblock? How to Reduce Your Risk of Skin Cancer

By Kim Canty

Director, Individual Giving, UMMS/UMass Memorial Development Office

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States. More than 2 million Americans are expected to be diagnosed in 2013 with nonmelanoma skin cancer, and more than 76,000 are expected to be diagnosed with melanoma, according to the American Cancer Society. Fortunately, two of the most common forms of skin cancer - basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma - are highly curable. Melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, develops in the cells that produce melanin - the pigment that gives your skin its color. Often caused by excessive exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays in sunlight, melanoma accounts for only 4 to 5 percent of skin cancer cases, but is responsible for most skin cancer-related deaths.

Are you at risk? Do any of these apply to you?

- Family history of melanoma
- Personal history of skin cancer
- Sun exposure. The amount of time spent unprotected in the sun directly affects your risk of skin cancer.
- Early childhood sunburns. Research has shown that sunburns early in life increase a person's risk for skin cancer later in life.
- Many freckles
- An immunosuppressive disorder or weakened immune system (such as in people who have had organ transplants)
- Smoking

How can you protect yourself?

- Wear protective clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.
- Seek the shade when appropriate, especially when the sun's rays are the strongest, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Use a moisturizer with sunscreen daily, especially for areas that have high exposure, such as your face. About 80 percent of ultraviolet radiation reaches the earth, even through clouds.
- Protect children from the sun by using shade, protective clothing, and applying sunscreen.
- Regularly use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 30 or higher on all exposed skin, even on cloudy days. Reapply every two hours and after swimming or sweating.

What sunscreen works best?

According to a 2011 Consumer Reports study, the most effective sunscreens on the market are also the least expensive. The magazine tested the ability of 22 sprays, creams and lotions to protect against ultraviolet A and ultraviolet B radiation. Exposure to UVA is linked to skin cancer, as well as aging, while exposure to UVB is associated with burning. Up & Up's Sport Continuous SPF 30 - a Target store brand - won top honors as the best buy, being one of four with top marks for effectiveness and costing just \$0.88 per ounce. Three other brands were rated highly for their broad-spectrum (UVA & UVB) protection and reasonable price: Banana Boat Sport Performance SPF 30, Coppertone Sport Ultra Sweatproof SPF 30, and CVS Fast Cover Sport SPF 30.

But don't worry, we've got you covered. The UMass Memorial Cancer Center's wide-ranging multidisciplinary team of cancer specialists provides you depth of experience in dealing with skin and other cancers. And, through the Cancer Center Clinical Research Office (CRO), the University of Massachusetts Medical School and UMass Memorial perform breakthrough research and clinical trials to improve treatment and quality of life. To learn more about skin cancer and the work of UMass, access these links:

- <http://www.umassmemorial.org/our-care/cancer-center-of-excellence/skin-cancer-overview>
- <http://www.umassmed.edu/ClinicalResearch.aspx>
- <http://www.umassmemorial.org/our-care/cancer-center-of-excellence/collaboration-results-in-breakthroughs>
- <http://www.umassmemorial.org/our-care/cancer-center-of-excellence/research-clinical-trials->

So now that you have applied your sunblock...get out there!

Hiking Trails in Massachusetts

By Amitha Vasanth

Development Researcher, UMass Medicine Development Office



It is that time of the year, the time to venture out and explore nature in the warm weather. And the best way to do it is to put on your shoes and start walking. Being in New England means one does not have to go very far. There are state parks, sanctuaries and neighborhood walking paths in most towns and there are plenty of options available based on difficulty level and trail length. Each hiking route offers an opportunity to learn about the flora, fauna and other natural and historical features of the region. So, why wait? Lace up your shoes and let's set out to explore a few near-by trails.

Mount Pisgah Conservation Area, Northborough, MA Distance – 1.75 miles Difficulty – Easy

The conservation area is spread over parts of Boylston, Berlin, Bolton and Northborough. The trail entrance, close to the Northborough-Berlin town line, is surrounded by working farms. Hike along old stone walls and woodland streams to the top of Mount Pisgah to enjoy the views of Hudson, Marlborough and Worcester Hills. Hiking and mountain biking are two primary activities on the trail.

Purgatory Chasm State Reservation, Sutton, MA Distance – 0.75 to 2 miles Difficulty – Easy to Moderate

The main trail of this hidden gem runs through huge rock formations that were formed because of the sudden release of damned up glacial meltwater near the end of Ice Age. It is a favorite spot for the rock climbers as some of the rocks are as high as 70 feet. There is also an easy trail for the less adventurous, that goes around the chasm and gives access to view the chasm and the rock climbers from above.

Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, Worcester, MA Distance – 0.2 to 4 miles Difficulty – Easy

It is difficult to imagine a wildlife sanctuary in the middle of the second largest city of New England, but that is Broad Meadow Brook, which is managed by the Mass Audubon Society. The trails pass through a variety of habitats including fields, open marshes, forests and a frog pond. The sanctuary has abundant wildlife with over 80 varieties of butterflies and a frog pond teeming with life.

Blue Hills Reservation, Canton/Lincoln, MA Distance – 1 to 9 miles Difficulty – Easy to Strenuous

Spread over 7,000 acres from Quincy to Dedham and Milton to Randolph, it provides a green oasis for city dwellers of Boston city and its neighboring towns. The Blue Hills received its names from European explorers who described the hills as having a tinge of blue when seen from the boats on the ocean. Prior to their arrival, the reservation was home to the Massachusetts tribe of American Indians.

Jamaica Pond, Jamaica Plain Distance – 1.5 mile Difficulty – Easy

Jamaica Pond is part of the Emerald Necklace park system that includes six parks in the heart of Boston extending to Brookline. Historically, the pond was home to ice cutting industry and also winter skating carnival. Today, it is a popular destination for walkers and joggers who can enjoy the views of sail boats and row boats during the summer season.

Below are links that provide information on some hiking routes in Massachusetts:

Mass Audubon Society: http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/sanctuaries.php

MA Department of Conservation and Recreation: <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/hiking.htm>

National Parks Service: <http://www.nps.gov/state/ma/list.htm?program=parks>

Hike New England: <http://www.hikenewengland.com/index.php>

Best Hiking in New England: <http://www.trails.com/toptrails.aspx?area=10047>

Whatever types of hiking routes you choose – easy or strenuous, short or long, remember the basic rules of hiking – stay on trails, do not litter, and enjoy the natural setting!

UMatter: The ‘Other’ Women’s Cancer

By Barbara Gilmartin

Administrative Manager

Office of Health Policy and Technology, Center for Health Policy and Research

When Angelina Jolie announced the news of her prophylactic double mastectomy the world collectively gasped. Initially some news outlets reported that she’d done so because her mother died of breast cancer. Often, when people hear the words “cancer” and “women” together, they immediately think of breast cancer, and many jumped to that conclusion after Jolie’s announcement. It was later revealed that her mother actually died of ovarian cancer at the age of 56, but for many that was a minor postscript to the story. Jolie carried the “faulty” BRCA1 gene, which gave her an 87% risk of developing breast cancer and a 50% risk of developing ovarian cancer. The other less reported subplot to the story was that she also plans to undergo an oophorectomy, which is removal of her ovaries.

Do you know what the color of ovarian cancer awareness is? How about breast cancer? Odds are you were able to answer the second question without hesitation. The breast cancer awareness and fundraising movements have done a spectacular job of helping women with breast cancer. Pink is everywhere, on food packaging, on frying pans, tennis balls, football player’s shoes...the list is endless. The breast cancer movement has even crossed the line, in the opinion of some; producing items like glittery “Save the Ta Ta’s” tee-shirts or “I Love Boobies” bracelets. Whether or not you feel these items cross the line, you have to admit that they’ve come a long way from a time when the word “breast” was seldom if ever heard in public, and the word ‘cancer’ was something people would only whisper.

The ovarian cancer movement (or lack thereof) lags decades behind its breast counterpart. It is difficult to imagine tee shirts with “Save the Ovaries” emblazoned in glitter on them anytime soon, but perhaps it’s time for the ovarian cancer movement to make some noise and get some attention. To put it in perspective: ovarian cancer has a five-year survival rate of 46% and received \$147 million for research in 2012, according to the National Institutes of Health. Breast cancer, on the other hand, has a five-year survival rate of 90% and received \$800 million. Clearly the breast cancer awareness movement has contributed to the increase in funding and the survival rate, and should be applauded for the progress they’ve made; however, it may be time to start leveling the playing field.

Ovarian cancer is often called the silent killer for good reason. According to the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund, the signs of ovarian cancer are vague and therefore often overlooked until the disease is in its advanced stages. These symptoms include:

- A swollen or bloated abdomen, increased girth
- Persistent pressure or pain in the abdomen or pelvis
- Difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
- Urinary concerns, such as urgency or frequency
- Change in bowel habits with new onset constipation and/or diarrhea
- Unexplained vaginal bleeding

Unfortunately women can have some of these symptoms without ovarian cancer, or can have none of these symptoms but still have the disease. Because there is no screening tool for ovarian cancer (Pap smears do NOT detect ovarian cancer) women must be vigilant about their own health. Perhaps with increased awareness and more research, survival rates for ovarian cancer will improve as they have for breast cancer. Ultimately it would be even better if there was only one “awareness” color, and all cancers could be equally funded, and just as equally eradicated.

By the way, the color of ovarian cancer awareness is teal – so now you’ll know what to look for if you’re trying to find an “I Love Ovaries” bracelet.

PWC's Dress for Success Clothing Drive and Sale

By Laura Sefton

Research Coordinator, Center for Health Policy and Research



Dress for Success is an international non-profit organization founded in 1997 to provide services that help disadvantaged women find jobs, stay employed, and thrive in employment and life. It has more than 125 locations (known as affiliates) in the United States, Canada, and almost a dozen other countries. Within Massachusetts, Dress for Success has 3 affiliates, Worcester, Boston, and Western Massachusetts. It has served over 700,000 women who are initially referred to Dress for Success by job placement or community agencies to receive professional attire to wear to job interviews. As it has grown, its offerings have extended to career development and support services.

Dress for Success relies on the financial and in-kind donations and the volunteer efforts of individuals and companies to support its activities. You may be familiar with its annual Send One Suit event, through which Dress for Success works with dressbarn® stores to collect suit donations. Or the Worcester affiliate's Ladies Night Out fundraiser, a night of food, drinks, and shopping. Many companies hold drives or sales to collect money and clothing for donation to a local affiliate.



In April, the PWC partnered with the Worcester affiliate to hold a clothing sale on the South Street campus. Tricia Ryan, committee co-chair, led the planning, partnering with Veronica Hachey, Executive Director of the Worcester affiliate. First, a call for donations went out to all campus staff for women's suits, dresses, blouses and slacks suitable for wearing to a job interview. Then a conference room was transformed into a boutique for the day so that staff could browse and purchase the donated clothing at bargain prices.

Thanks to the PWC's team efforts, this sale raised \$755 by selling 150 pieces of clothing. All money collected and the remaining clothing was donated directly to Dress for Success-Worcester. Veronica was very appreciative of the effort, noting that 'it was a great success.' Some shoppers hope the event is held again next year. Not only is it a great opportunity to get some new clothing inexpensively, the donations go to an organization that helps women in the community.

Learn more about Dress for Success and ways to get involved by visiting its national website or one of its' Massachusetts affiliates.

<http://www.dressforsuccess.org/home.aspx>

484 Main Street Suite 110, Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 796-5660 or worcester@dressforsuccess.org

989 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215
(617) 779-2177 or boston@dressforsuccess.org

140 Wilbraham Avenue (in the MCDI Building), Springfield, MA 01109
(413) 732-8179 or westernmass@dressforsuccess.org





The Gathering Place

UMass Medicine Cancer Walk – Sunday, September 29, 2013

Start, join, or support a team to raise funds that will be used by the UMass Medicine Cancer Center of Excellence for cancer research and clinical trials. For more information, call 508-856-2589, email cancerwalk@umassmed.edu, or consult their website: <http://www.umassmed.edu/cancerwalk/index.aspx>

WEST Seminars

WEST is a professional organization that promotes women in the fields of science and technology. Upcoming seminars include:

- *Personality Styles and Communication Using DiSC* on September 19, 2013
- *Design Your Relationships* on September 24, 2013
- *The Manager's Magic Potion* on October 10, 2013

See their website for more information: <http://www.westorg.org/>

Diversity Campus Read

The Campus Read is a new initiative between the UMMS Diversity Leaders and the UMass Memorial Health Care Diversity and Inclusion Office to provide a campus-wide learning experience. Borrow print or Kindle copies of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* from UMass Medical School's Lamar Soutter Library to join the Read. The initiative will include lectures, discussion groups, and films to allow for community discussion about the issues raised in the book. It will conclude this fall with a presentation during the Diversity Speaker Series.

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Correction to the Women in STEM Quiz (Spring 2013 newsletter): Option M is Susan Kare, not Kane.

## Bookshelf

The Professional Women's Committee (PWC) has purchased a number of books available for borrowing from the Lamar Soutter Library. For a complete list of publications, visit the PWC website.

## Monthly Meetings

The committee meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month from 3:30-4:30 PM. Join us in the Italy Conference Room on the South Street campus or via conference call. Contact Tricia Ryan, committee co-chair, via email at [Patricia.Ryan@umassmed.edu](mailto:Patricia.Ryan@umassmed.edu) for more information.

## Website

<http://www.umassmed.edu/Content.aspx?id=61984&linkidentifier=id&itemid=61984>

**Generating Momentum** is published 3 times a year, in Spring, Summer, and Fall.

**The newsletter is looking for contributors for upcoming newsletters. Please contact the Editor for more information.**

To view copies of previous newsletters, please visit the Professional Women's Committee website or contact the newsletter.

## Editor

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