

DEVELOPMENTS

From the University of Massachusetts Medical School and UMass Memorial Health Care
Produced by the UMass Medical School Office of Public Affairs and Publications for the UMass Medical School/UMass Memorial Development Office

Thank You for Giving

We live in a time of great promise for human health, and one challenged by the economics of medical care and research.

UMass Memorial Health Care and UMass Medical School play vital and multifaceted roles in the community—offering comprehensive and innovative care; educating future physicians, nurses and pioneering researchers; transforming how we treat and cure disease; augmenting the regional and global economy; and finally, providing for the most critical needs of our local community.

With your partnership, we have reached an extraordinary moment in our history and are on our way to becoming one of the finest academic health sciences centers in the country. As we move forward with our transformative aspirations, however, the reality is that fulfilling our goals—and even sustaining the performance we are so proud to have achieved—comes at no small cost.

Every leading academic health sciences center builds and sustains excellence with the commitment of generous benefactors. Around the country, communities have come together to embrace and support their academic health sciences centers. Philanthropy is as essential a component to our success as our groundbreaking research, our lifesaving care, our nationally recognized education programs and our exemplary community service.

We have been inspired by your generous support and recognize the challenging choices you face when you make your philanthropic decisions. We ask you to reimagine the power of your generosity. Your role in forging the path that will change the future of medicine is now more important than ever.

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CHANCELLOR, UMASS MEDICAL SCHOOL
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR THE HEALTH SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

John G. O'Brien
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Physician-scientist Named Cancer Center Director

MICHAEL L. BLUTE, MD, a physician-scientist with local ties, joins UMass Memorial Health Care and UMass Medical School as director of the Cancer Center of Excellence, professor of surgery and interim director of the Division of Urology in the Department of Surgery. A widely recognized leader in treating urological cancers and a member of the world-renowned Mayo Clinic Cancer Center, Dr. Blute will advance clinical cancer care and clinical and translational research in his new joint institutional roles.

“Michael’s ability to articulate a vision for cancer care, research and outreach fits perfectly with our goal of creating and implementing a comprehensive care and research environment that will benefit the patients and providers of central New England and augment the significant research achievements already in place,” said Terence M. Flotte, MD, dean of the School of Medicine, and provost and executive deputy chancellor of UMass Medical School.



Michael Blute, MD

Blute specializes in urinary tract reconstruction in bladder cancer patients; the localization and clinical significance of tumor suppressor genes in prostate cancer; and pioneering surgical techniques in advanced renal cancer. His research has been funded by the National Cancer Institute, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, and the American Cancer Society.

A native of Central Massachusetts and one of four doctors in his family, he graduated from St. John’s High School and the College of the Holy Cross before matriculating at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and the Creighton University School of Medicine. He returns to Worcester from the Mayo Medical School, where he has been on the faculty since completing his residency there in 1987. He previously served as chair of urology, and was most recently the Dr. Anson L. Clark Professor of Urology. ■

NIH Expert to Lead Diabetes Care and Research



David Harlan, MD, PhD

DAVID M. HARLAN, MD, PhD, the diabetes branch chief at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health, is joining UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial as director of the Diabetes Center of Excellence and division chief of diabetes; he will also be the associate director of the Diabetes and Endocrinology Research Center.

Dr. Harlan expects to

quickly focus on three significant goals: to build a patient-centered clinical care system that provides the most up-to-date therapies while

the University of Michigan and his medical degree from Duke University; he completed his internship and internal medicine residency at Duke University Medical Center,

“Understanding diabetes sufficiently well to cure the disease is the driving factor in my professional efforts, and it has led me here to UMMS and UMass Memorial.”

—DAVID M. HARLAN, MD, PhD

also exploring new methods of treatment; to build on the strengths of the basic science research already underway and expand investigation into autoimmune disease; and to promote translational research and bring promising laboratory advances safely into clinical trials. “Understanding diabetes sufficiently well to cure the disease is the driving factor in my professional efforts, and it has led me here,” said Harlan.

He received his undergraduate degree from

as well as a fellowship in endocrinology.

“The breadth of work underway [at the Medical School and Medical Center] is impressive,” Harlan noted. “There’s a brilliant scientific base and fertile ground for using current and future therapies. The leadership is obviously committed to driving the science to improve the care delivery system, and I am eager to help make it happen.” ■

Visit to Travel Clinic Worth the Trip

PATIENTS TAKING TRIPS to faraway places where medical risks may be a concern can turn to the UMass Memorial Travel Clinic for pre-travel guidance. "I am a return customer," said Holly Jarek, vice president of the Seven Hills Pediatric Center in Groton. "The clinic provides a one-stop shop for vaccines and travel planning."

Last year, Ms. Jarek went to Vanuatu, a remote island in the South Pacific, to visit her niece on a Peace Corps mission. This year, she joins members of Worcester-based Seven Hills Foundation and Clark University students for a joint venture in Sierra Leone, West Africa. "All you have to do is tell the clinic staff where you are going, and they take care of everything for you."

The popular clinic schedules 45-minute counseling sessions for about 120 patients each month. They include those traveling for adventure, business, medical and religious missions, and study abroad, as well as local immigrants visiting their native countries. "I'm constantly researching the health risks of specific locations," said Mary Beth Martella, nurse practitioner at the clinic.

Staff members discuss patients' medical histories, itineraries, recommended immunizations and tips for reducing potential health and safety risks. Following consultations, patients are given immunizations if needed. "Our role is to educate patients about avoiding common risks like altitude sickness and travel-associated diarrhea. We also discuss serious health risks such as yellow fever, malaria, HIV and hepatitis B when necessary," said the clinic's Medical Director Richard Glew, MD, professor of medicine.

A travel health specialist should be visited at least six weeks before planned travel in case vaccines are required. Call 508-334-5481 to schedule an appointment.



David Geist, MD, (right) discusses patient test results with colleagues Dori Goldberg, MD, (left) associate professor of medicine, and Mohs surgery fellow Jason Givnan, MD, as they analyze the skin tissue microscopically.

A Precise Surgery to Cure Skin Cancer

WITH ITS VERY HIGH CURE RATE of 96 to 99 percent, Mohs surgery is the most effective treatment for common skin cancers, including basal and squamous cell carcinoma. Offered at the UMass Memorial Dermatology Clinic, the surgical technique is frequently used for cancers in cosmetically sensitive areas such as the face, neck and scalp, and for aggressive tumors.

Mohs surgery is performed in stages to preserve as much healthy skin as possible. The tumor is removed along with a thin rim of normal skin. Next, the specimen is processed in the lab and edges are checked microscopically by the Mohs surgeon to ensure all cancerous cells are removed. If any tumor is left, additional samples are taken and examined. Once all cancer is removed, the skin is repaired. "The average tumor requires two to four stages to remove. We take as little normal tissue as possible and attempt to leave the smallest scar," said Professor of Surgery Mary Maloney, MD, director of dermatologic surgery and division chief of dermatology at UMass Medical School.

Mohs surgeons are also trained in facial reconstruction and discuss with patients repair options depending

on wound size, shape and location. In most cases, the skin is repaired the day of the surgery using stitches. Some cases require a skin graft or flap to provide the best results. "Patients are pleasantly surprised by their Mohs surgery experiences," said David Geist, MD, assistant professor of surgery. "They can sit up and take a break between stages. After leaving our clinic, patients do not lose sleep wondering what their test results and prognosis will be."

James Fallon, a longtime Mohs surgery patient, added, "The Mohs surgery team takes the time to get to know their patients. They are like a second family to me." ■



Helping Cancer Patients Navigate Their Care



Debra Maddox, RN, OCN, (right) clinical coordinator of the Patient Navigator Program, is a valuable resource for patient Beverly Havens and her husband, Ronald, and is a central contact person for questions relating to lung cancer education and treatment.

"YOU HAVE CANCER" are three words no one wants to hear. For even the strongest individuals, understanding the life-altering changes this diagnosis brings is difficult. Navigating numerous appointments, tests and treatments adds to the stress of having the disease. To help ease this transition, the UMass Memorial Cancer Center of Excellence introduced the Patient Navigator Program in the Multidisciplinary Lung Clinic.

With the goal of improving the patient experience, Clinical Coordinator Debra Maddox, RN, OCN, serves as a central contact person for lung cancer patients with questions about education, medical or surgical issues,

and other concerns. "Newly diagnosed patients initially need six to eight procedures done immediately as part of their diagnostic workup to determine the best treatment options," she explained. "To make it easier for the patient, all of the disciplines involved with care come to the patient in one appointment rather than having three or four visits."

Auburn resident and lung cancer patient Beverly Havens counts on guidance and support from Ms. Maddox. "She makes me feel like I'm her only patient, not a number," said Mrs. Havens. "She is there to calm me down and prepare me for what is going to happen. Deb is a gem and keeps my family informed."

"We are lucky to have a great team in the clinic," said Maddox. "The patient navigator system builds trust among providers, patients and their families and improves patients' overall experience with UMass Memorial."

Plans are underway to offer patient navigators in other UMass Memorial cancer clinics. ■



Organized by dedicated volunteers, the **Winter Ball** is the first joint, volunteer-driven philanthropic event of its magnitude for our academic health sciences center. Celebrating the partnership between UMass Memorial Medical Center and UMass Medical School, the gala was held on December 11, 2009, at Mechanics Hall in Worcester. Guests included, from left to right, UMass Medical School Chancellor Michael Collins, MD; event co-chairs Peter Paige, MD, vice chair and clinical associate professor of emergency medicine, Paula Paige, clinical quality data manager for the UMass Memorial Heart and Vascular Center of Excellence, Tom Manning, deputy chancellor for Commonwealth Medicine at UMass Medical School, and Nadine Reinold, senior academic administrator for emergency medicine; and UMass Memorial Health Care President and CEO John O'Brien.

Angel Fund Supports ALS Research

WHEN PROFESSOR AND CHAIR of Neurology Robert J. Brown Jr., MD, DPhil, came to UMass Medical School last year, he brought with him the Cecil B. Day Laboratory for Neuromuscular Research, along with substantial support for the laboratory's work from the Angel Fund. Established in 1997 exclusively to support research and scientific investigations at the Day Laboratory in the fight against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), the Angel Fund is the



Fund has raised a record-breaking \$1.2 million over the past two years, providing continuous direct support for investigations by Brown and the Day Lab team. "We identified Dr. Brown as a brilliant scientist who brings an unparalleled level of compassion to his work," said Angel Fund President Rich Kennedy, who has also lost family members to ALS. "What makes the Angel Fund unique is that it has no overhead and is completely member-supported and run, with 100 percent of funds raised going directly to Dr. Brown's research," added Ann Hadley, the fund's director of development.

Founded in 1983 by Brown, an international leader in the quest to cure neuromuscular diseases

"What makes the Angel Fund unique is that it has no overhead and is completely member-supported and run, with 100 percent of funds raised going directly to Dr. Brown's research." —ANN HADLEY, *the fund's director of development*

legacy of Ginny Delvecchio, a former patient of Dr. Brown's who subsequently died from familial ALS, as had her mother and brother before her.

An enormously successful grassroots organization, the Angel

including ALS—also known as Lou Gehrig's disease—the Day Laboratory is renowned for its groundbreaking investigations and has been a beacon of hope for Angel Fund families. While the cause of most cases of ALS is not known, approximately 10 percent are, like those of the Delvecchios, inherited. In 1993 Brown discovered the first gene linked to familial ALS, and earlier this year his team discovered a new gene whose mutations cause this form of the disease. Most recently, Day Lab investigators identified a genetic variant that substantially improves survival of individuals with ALS.

CORRECTION

The School of Medicine student in the photo accompanying the Alumni Phonathon article in the September issue of *Developments* was incorrectly identified. The student in the photo is Kendall Johnson, not Karen Billmer. Both women were enthusiastic (and successful!) callers.



Rich Kennedy (left) and Robert Brown, MD, DPhil, at an Angel Fund celebration

"Our program continues to have two parallel components: studies of the causes of ALS, and programs to test new ALS therapies. We have made considerable progress in both," said Brown. "We are lucky to have

the dedicated members of the Angel Fund working with us. All of us in the ALS research program remain deeply grateful for their wonderful support." ■



Pink—Lighting the Way to a Cure

More than 200 guests lit votive candles in honor or memory of those whose lives have been touched by breast cancer, and listened to a panel of physicians and survivors discuss the latest in breast cancer research and treatment at the sixth annual "Pink—Lighting the Way to a Cure" on October 8, 2009.

Surgeon Dedicated to Providing Quality Care Locally

IN ADDITION TO ALL HIS REQUISITE diplomas, surgeon Justin Maykel, MD, has adorned his office walls with two framed certificates that mean just as much to him: a teaching award from medical students and a Champions of Excellence Award from UMass Memorial Health Care. "These remind me that what I do affects the lives of others, that I can make a difference," he said.

A Central Massachusetts native, Dr. Maykel believes advancing his career at UMass Memorial was the best decision of his life. Returning to Worcester in 2005 after fellowship training at the University of Minnesota, he was appointed division chief of colon and rectal surgery within a year. "This institution had a vision and commitment from its leaders, and it

offered me a unique opportunity to help build a world-class program."

Maykel has nurtured the division's growth by ensuring the highest quality of care in Central Massachusetts. As the division serves more patients and its reputation expands, Maykel can point to other successes. "We made minimally invasive procedures the division's routine approach to colon and rectal surgery. We enrolled our patients in national clinical trials. And we started a fellowship training program for tomorrow's surgeons."

Having already recruited two surgeons from the University of Minnesota—"They helped train me!"—Maykel next plans to recruit a female surgeon. "Much of the care we provide is sensitive and some of our patients prefer to be treated by a

woman," he explained. "All of us share the same goal when it comes to patient care. What fulfills us is comforting our patients as they move from point A to point B. We bring all of our clinical and research knowledge to their care. Our team provides patients with all of the options."

Maykel and his colleagues are also committed to disease prevention, with outreach efforts including the first colonoscopy screening program for employees at UMass Memorial and the first colon cancer educational symposium for the greater patient community. "We want to improve cancer screening, especially in our underserved population—the people who often escape our reach."



Minimally Invasive Gallbladder Surgery Available at UMass Memorial

A MILLION NEW CASES of benign gallstones are diagnosed in the U.S. each year. Fortunately, most are fully cured with surgery, called cholecystectomy, to remove the gallbladder. Cholecystectomy is one of the most common surgeries in the United States, with more than 500,000 performed annually. For some gallstone patients, single port laparoscopic surgery can be a desirable alternative to traditional laparoscopic cholecystectomy.

“A quicker recovery was important to me, because I live in Europe and also had a vacation scheduled in two weeks.”

—KATIE MCCORMICK

“Single port laparoscopy is an innovative minimally invasive surgical technique that leaves patients with only one small scar hidden in the belly button, versus the typical four scars in the abdomen resulting from standard laparoscopic gallbladder removal,” explained Hongyi Cui, MD, PhD, associate director of the UMass Memorial Medical Center Acute Care Surgery Service. Dr. Cui, assistant professor of surgery at UMass Medical School, is the first surgeon in Central Massachusetts to use this novel technique for gallbladder removal, with UMass Memorial one of a limited number of hospitals offering the procedure nationwide.

As with traditional laparoscopic procedures, single port laparoscopy patients typically go home the same day as the surgery and recover quickly. “The most striking difference is that virtually no scar can be seen several weeks after surgery,” said Cui. “Many of my patients are body-conscious and they are very happy with the outcome.”



“A quicker recovery was important to me, because I live in Europe and also had a vacation scheduled in two weeks,” said Katie McCormick, for whom Dr. Cui used the single-port procedure. “Almost exactly two weeks after

my surgery, I got the okay to travel. I have had no issues since, and I no longer have pain when I eat fatty foods.”

To learn whether single port laparoscopic cholecystectomy is an option, call 508-334-0545. ■

Katie McCormick is ready to set sail after a quick recovery from gallbladder surgery performed at UMass Memorial by Hongyi Cui, MD, PhD (pictured above, right).

A Novel Way to Support Biomedical Research

“A LITTLE BIT EXTRA” is how Joanne Meisner describes her request of UMass Memorial Medical Center patients who’ve agreed to participate in the Conquering Diseases Biorepository Core, a new resource established at UMass Medical School to bank blood samples for biomedical research. The Biorepository Core is a collaborative effort of UMass Memorial Medical Center and UMass Medical School that collects a small amount of extra blood during patients’ usual care.

While it just recently began asking patients to donate samples,

the Biorepository Core is poised to quickly expand and capture a tremendous amount of information that will further understanding of the disease process. By creating an infrastructure that bridges the hospital and medical school information systems, the project captures a substantial amount of clinical information derived from patient-supplied samples. As of September, researchers were able to search records—completely de-identified to protect patient privacy—that include 122 million clinical facts.

Using a carefully monitored strategy that requires patients’ express consent to having their samples used in future research, the Biorepository Core is designed to fit seamlessly into UMass Memorial’s routine practice. The feedback from members of the community has been very positive, said Meisner, project manager for the initiative. “Many patients and their families have heard about research at the Medical School and they are genuinely interested in being a part of it.” ■



Children’s Medical Center Starlight Celebration

Guests at the UMass Memorial Children’s Medical Center Starlight Celebration offer a standing ovation to Kathy and Mark Campbell and their daughters, fraternal twins Ashley and Emily, who have been patients of the UMass Memorial Children’s Medical Center (CMC) since their premature birth six years ago. Kathy spoke at the dinner on October 3 about the exceptional care her daughters have received over the years, especially Ashley, who was diagnosed with leukemia at the age of three. The Starlight Celebration raises funds to support the family-centered care of the CMC. Among those in attendance at the event, to the right of the Campbells, were Marianne Felice, MD, physician-in-chief of the CMC and chair and professor of pediatrics at UMass Medical School; and members of the Development Council, Dr. Shirley and Mr. Robert Siff, benefactors of the **Robert M. and Shirley S. Siff Chair in Autism**; and Nancy Edman Feldman, parent of a School of Medicine alumnus.

Groundbreaking is a Foundation for the Future

SEPTEMBER 17, 2009 marked the beginning of a new era in life sciences discovery with the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Albert “Albie” Sherman Center, the \$400 million state-of-the-art research and education facility to be constructed on the northeast side of the UMass Medical School campus in Worcester. Slated for completion in 2012, the center will be home to some of the most visionary bench and translational research underway today, and will strengthen the Medical School’s competitive position as a leader in the life sciences.

Named by the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for Albie Sherman, longtime vice chancellor for university relations at UMass Medical School, the center will foster interaction and collaboration among scientists and promote innovation and synergy across disciplines. Speakers at the ceremony included Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, Massachusetts Senate President Therese Murray, Worcester City Manager Michael O’Brien and Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) President Susan Windham-Bannister, among others.



Albie Sherman chats with Susan Windham-Bannister at groundbreaking ceremonies for the Sherman Center.

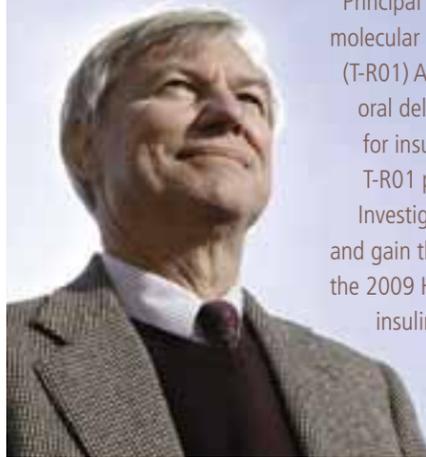
Just days later, on September 23, the MLSC approved \$90 million in funding for the Sherman Center, an important recognition of the institution’s positive economic impact on the commonwealth. Construction and operation of the facility is expected to have an estimated \$1 billion statewide economic impact, with construction supporting approximately 6,000

jobs and generating more than \$760 million in economic activity during the building of the center. When fully operational, the Sherman Center is projected to support 1,600 jobs and generate \$264 million in annual economic activity throughout the state.

“At a time when other institutions are scaling back or putting off plans to expand, UMass Medical School is making

this bold move to maintain the momentum we have generated over the last decade as we’ve created a life sciences powerhouse here in Worcester,” said Michael F. Collins, MD, chancellor of UMass Medical School and senior vice president for the health sciences for the University of Massachusetts. “When completed, the Albert Sherman Center will further enhance the Medical School’s ability to attract researchers, physicians, faculty, students and industry partners who will together bring forward the research and medical breakthroughs to conquer disease.” ■

NIH Support, International Recognition for Diabetes Researcher



Principal investigator Michael P. Czech, PhD, UMass Medical School chair and professor of molecular medicine, has been awarded a five-year, \$6 million Director’s Transformative R01 (T-R01) Award from the National Institutes of Health. He will pursue a novel approach to oral delivery of RNA interference (RNAi) to suppress the genes in immune cells responsible for insulin resistance and inflammation associated with type 2 diabetes. The new T-R01 program provides an opportunity that is unmatched by any other NIH program. Investigators propose bold new ideas that may require significant resources to pursue, and gain the flexibility to work in large, complex teams. Dr. Czech has also been awarded the 2009 H.C. Jacobaeus Prize for his pioneering research into the underlying mechanisms of insulin resistance in type 2 diabetes. Recognizing outstanding research linked to diabetes, the H.C. Jacobaeus Prize has been awarded since 1939 by the Novo Nordisk Foundation of Denmark in support of scientific and humanitarian purposes.

Student’s Family Supports Anatomy Lab



Charles Psoinos (center) with parents Joan and George Psoinos

MEDICAL EDUCATION is a family affair for George and Joan Psoinos: son Charles is a member of the School of Medicine Class of 2011, and they have provided generous support to the institution with a \$100,000 gift directed toward the recently completed renovations of the Medical School’s human anatomy laboratory.

Having always supported their son’s interests, George and Joan consider supporting the school a logical extension of that encouragement, as Charles has transitioned from a child who

knew at a young age that he wanted to be a doctor, to an adult who is making his dream a reality. “When good things come your way, we believe you should give back,” explained Joan, noting that UMMS was Charles’ first choice and that his decision to attend has proven a good one. George, a general contractor, and Joan, a homemaker, have only praise for their son’s medical education. “He loves UMass Medical School and is very happy there!”

The anatomical study that takes place in the laboratory

during medical students’ first-year human anatomy course is one of the foundational experiences of medical training, and the lab is an essential resource for many other members of the Medical School community. For example, residents from departments including surgery and orthopedics & physical rehabilitation practice surgical techniques in the lab, and faculty employ it for elements of the curriculum such as demonstrating techniques of physical examination.

Renovations feature a redesign of the space to accommodate the school’s growing class size, improved lighting and state-of-the-art technology to enhance the educational experience. Wall-mounted computers at every lab station integrate clinical imaging into the year 1 experience, as well as expand the laboratory’s use during the clinical years 3 and 4. “We like the fact that the laboratory benefits many at the Medical School,” said Joan. “We are pleased to see the impact of our gift and are planning further support.” ■

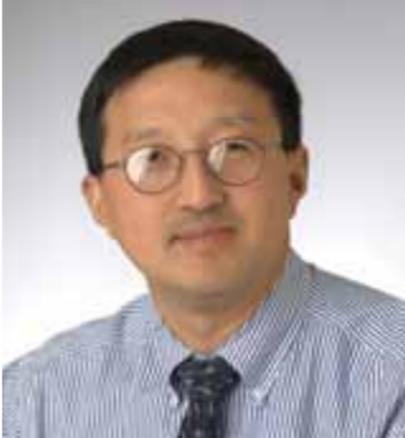


Alumni Reunion 2009

Class of 1974—the first graduating class of the School of Medicine—alumni **Richard Aghababian, MD**, of Southborough, associate dean for continuing medical education and founding chair and professor of emergency medicine, (left) and **Leonard Finn, MD**, of Needham, family physician with Needham Family Practice, share a moment at their 35th reunion on October 17. Members of the classes of 1974, ‘79, ‘84, ‘89, ‘94, ‘99 and ‘04 gathered for tours of their transformed campus, heard a school update from Senior Associate Dean for Educational Affairs Michele Pugnaire, MD, and attended a cocktail reception to reconnect with classmates.

NOTABLE GRANTS IN...

HIV/AIDS



Shan Lu, MD, PhD

UMASS MEDICAL SCHOOL CONTINUES TO figure prominently in the search for an HIV vaccine. Two new, five-year grants totaling \$18 million from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) will fund projects building on earlier **investigations into the induction of protective antibody responses against human HIV** by principal investigator Shan Lu, MD, PhD. "Finding an effective preventive AIDS vaccine will help break the transmission cycle of HIV in the world and offers hope for the millions of people suffering from this deadly disease," said Dr. Lu, professor of medicine and biochemistry & molecular pharmacology.

"We hope to uncover new biological insights into the production of promising HIV vaccine candidates by targeting the most vulnerable part of the virus," he explained. The project "Induction of neutralizing antibodies targeting CD4-binding region of HIV-1 Env," funded through a \$10 million grant from NIAID's HIV Vaccine Research and Design grant program, will explore the development of protective antibodies targeting the area of the virus that binds to human immune cells. The second project, "Optimization of HIV vaccine for the induction of cross-reactive antibodies," an \$8 million grant funded under NIAID's Integrated Preclinical/Clinical AIDS Vaccine Development grant program, will research the use of a cocktail of multiple viral antigens to develop the next generation of HIV vaccine formulations. Recently tested in a Phase I clinical trial at UMass Medical School, this approach was found to be effective in producing promising immune responses against HIV antigens in healthy volunteers.

"Both studies will produce valuable insight and knowledge into the development of vaccines against HIV as well as other emerging infectious diseases," said Lu. "UMass Medical School has developed a leading research program in immunology, infectious diseases and vaccines. These grants are the result of this long-term investment in a highly competitive area."

Walk to Cure Cancer

On **September 13**, thousands of walkers converged on the UMass Medical School campus to participate in the 11th annual Walk to Cure Cancer. Among those whose efforts helped to raise funds for lifesaving research and care at the UMass Memorial Cancer Center of Excellence were members of Local 1445 of the United Food and Commercial Workers, one of the founding teams and a flagship sponsor of the Walk.

Stimulus Grants: \$38.7 Million and Counting

UMASS MEDICAL SCHOOL INVESTIGATORS have received \$38.7 million in stimulus grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) investment of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. All told, 80 grants have been awarded to clinical and research faculty with more in the pipeline.

To receive funds, scientists needed to demonstrate that their research would focus on specific knowledge gaps, scientific opportunities, new technologies, data generation or research methods. Examples of UMass Medical School projects that received ARRA funding from the NIH include:

\$771,000 to Victor Ambros, PhD, the *Silverman Chair in Natural Sciences* and professor of molecular medicine, to study the genetic and molecular mechanisms underlying the developmental regulation of microRNA expression in *C. elegans* in order to advance new treatments.

\$3.6 million to Robert Brown, MD, DPhil, chair and professor of neurology, to develop a platform for the full genome sequencing that will identify rare genetic variants that underlie both sporadic and familial forms of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis to refine diagnosis and treatment.

\$800,000 to Maryann Davis, PhD, associate professor of psychiatry, to develop prevention interventions and service delivery models for young adults experiencing severe mental illnesses, leading to increased treatment retention.

\$1 million to Job Dekker, PhD, associate professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology and molecular medicine, to explore the relationships between regulatory elements and gene expression, leading to new insights into the mechanisms that underlie regulation of disease genes.

\$3.6 million to Robert Finberg, MD, the *Richard M. Haidack Professor of Medicine* and chair and professor of medicine and professor of molecular genetics & microbiology, to study innate immune responses associated with the herpes simplex virus.

\$1.3 million to Stephenie Lemon, PhD, assistant professor of medicine, to determine the effectiveness of a worksite intervention program, called Step Ahead, aimed at reducing weight gain compared to a self-directed, print-materials only control group.

\$600,000 to Celia Schiffer, PhD, professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology, to develop anti-viral drugs for HIV treatment that are less susceptible to drug-resistant strains of the disease.

For a full list of projects, please visit report.nih.gov/recovery/arragrants.cfm.



HEALTH ADVICE

Staying Active in Winter Requires Extra Effort



“KEEPING ACTIVE IN THE WINTER is one of the hardest things to do, especially during the cold months in New England,” said Brian Busconi, MD, chief of sports medicine and arthroscopy for UMass Memorial and associate professor of orthopedics & physical rehabilitation, family medicine & community health and pediatrics at UMass Medical School. “But you can take part in many winter sports despite the cold as long as you take certain precautions.” Whether skiing, shoveling, ice skating or running, winter sports and activities require more preparation to stay injury free.

Keep your body warm – A 15- to 20-minute warm-up including stretches will loosen your muscles and help prevent injury (see below for sport-specific warm-up stretches). Wearing insulating clothing is also essential to prevent muscles and blood vessels from contracting to conserve heat and to keep blood flowing to your arms and legs.

Keep dry – Make sure you have proper footwear to keep your feet dry to avoid blisters and keep skin tissue from freezing. Keep a spare set of moisture-wicking clothing handy to reduce cooling during breaks.

Keep your skin protected – Be aware that sunburn can occur even on cold and cloudy days. Apply broad-spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen to exposed skin. Wear eyewear with UV protection.

Keep hydrated – Drink plenty of water and avoid alcohol. While it may make you feel warmer, alcohol actually reduces your body temperature.

The UMass Memorial Sports Medicine Center is recognized throughout the region for its high-quality diagnostic, treatment, rehabilitation and sport-specific conditioning programs for athletes and active individuals of all ages. Founded by Professor of Orthopedics & Physical Rehabilitation Arthur Pappas, MD, former medical director for the Boston Red Sox, the center offers a team of fellowship-trained sports medicine specialists in Worcester, Westborough and Milford. **For more information, call 888-244-6094.**

Sport-specific Stretches



Skiing

Do 10 to 15 squats. Stand with your legs shoulder width apart, knees aligned over your feet. Slowly lower your buttocks as you bend your knees over your feet. Stand up straight again.

Sledding

Do knee-to-chest stretches to fight compression injuries caused by repetitive bouncing over the snow. While sitting or lying on your back, pull your knees to your chest and hold for up to 30 seconds.

Skating

Do several lunges. Take a moderately advanced step with one foot. Let your back knee come down to the floor while keeping your shoulders in position over your hips. Repeat the process with your other foot.



Calendar of Events

Development Council Winter Meeting

Thursday, February 25, 4 p.m.

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SCHOOL, Worcester
Goff Learning Center

Development Council members will hear leaders of the Musculoskeletal Center of Excellence present an overview of the vision for the center and highlights of treatment breakthroughs and research underway.

UMass in Florida

Join alumni and friends for “One-Day UMass,” a day of wide-ranging seminars from outstanding faculty experts that will be presented on both coasts. Additional activities will include the annual Red Sox game and a reception at the Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach.

“One-Day UMass” and Mar-a-Lago reception in Palm Beach
Tuesday, March 16

“One-Day UMass” in Naples
Thursday, March 18

Boston Red Sox vs. Baltimore Orioles in Fort Myers
Saturday, March 20

For details, call 508-856-5520 or e-mail events@umassmed.edu

Annual Parents Dinner

Thursday, March 25, 6 p.m.

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SCHOOL, Worcester

This annual gathering offers parents of School of Medicine (SOM) students the opportunity to meet and speak with each other, and hear from a member of the faculty. The Parents Association will also host a silent auction in support of the SOM Medical Education Fund.

For more information, contact Diana Tsotsis in the Office of Parent Relations at 508-856-1593 or e-mail diana.tsotsis@umassmed.edu

BE WELL: A Lecture Series to Promote Your Health and Wellness

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SCHOOL, Worcester
March—topic and date to be announced

Skin Cancer

Wednesday, April 28

Women’s Health

Wednesday, May 19

Free and open to the public, these popular one-hour community lectures continue in the spring. Experts from the University of Massachusetts Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center will share information that can be used to improve individual health and help those caring for others.

For more information about the BE WELL lecture series, including specific locations and times, call 508-856-5520 or e-mail events@umassmed.edu

Second Year Oath Ceremony

Thursday, April 8, 6 p.m.

MECHANICS HALL

321 Main Street, Worcester

The School of Medicine Class of 2012 will gather together to reflect on the ethical and professional responsibilities of becoming a physician. The Second Year Oath Ceremony includes an address by a speaker invited by the class, followed by students’ recitation of the oath that they have written.

For more information, contact Lanny Hilgar in the Office of Public Affairs at lanny.hilgar@umassmed.edu or 508-856-2000

School of Medicine Alumni Reunion

Saturday, May 1

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SCHOOL, Worcester

Celebrating the School of Medicine Classes of ‘75, ‘80, ‘85, ‘90, ‘95, ‘00 and ‘05.

Alumni are encouraged to visit the alumni online community at www.NetworkUMass.com/Medical to reconnect with classmates and friends and begin plans to celebrate together at reunion.

To help reach out to classmates to generate excitement about Reunion 2010, and for more information, contact Diana Tsotsis in the Office of Alumni Relations at diana.tsotsis@umassmed.edu or 508-856-1593

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NEWS BRIEFS

■ **UMass Memorial has become a leader in helping uninsured residents in Central Massachusetts obtain health coverage.** With its successful Insure Your Health Campaign, UMass Memorial is in the top three health care systems in the state for helping people enroll in free or low-cost health insurance programs under the state's mandated health insurance law, helping more than 1,000 people obtain health insurance during September alone.

■ **The Medical Center is one of only six hospitals in Massachusetts to achieve the highest national performance levels in cardiovascular care, once again ranking in the Thomson Reuters Top 100 Hospitals for Cardiovascular Benchmarks for Success.** This award comes on the heels of UMass Memorial being named the number one hospital in New England for surviving a heart attack for the second year in a row, according to a recent report by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

■ **Advanced cardiovascular care is now provided at Clinton Hospital by physicians from the UMass Memorial Medical Center Heart and Vascular Center of Excellence.** Rishi Vohora, DO, cardiologist, sees patients in the Ambulatory Care Center and a team of cardiologists also provides inpatient consultations. In addition, Clinton Hospital offers upgraded diagnostic testing including digital echo, EKG, stress tests, pacemaker interrogations, nuclear stress testing and Holter monitoring.

■ **Catherine DuBeau, MD, is the new clinical chief of geriatric medicine for UMass Memorial.** Dr. DuBeau is an internationally recognized expert in urinary incontinence and lower urinary tract disorders in the senior population. Also professor of medicine, family medicine & community health, and obstetrics & gynecology at UMass Medical School, DuBeau is focused on patient-centered care and systems issues in urinary incontinence treatment and on medical education surrounding urinary incontinence.

■ **UMass Memorial is one of just 30 U.S. hospitals to be awarded the prestigious Gold Medal in organ donation from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** for improving donation rates, increasing the number of organs donated per individual donor to 3.75 or higher, and expanding clinical processes for recovering organs. Coinciding with the award is the launch of an additional organ donor registry available to Massachusetts residents. Learn more at www.donatelifenewengland.org.

■ **The American Cancer Society has awarded a five-year, \$728,000 grant to Jennifer Tseng, MD, MPH, to study ways to determine whether the standard of care for patients with localized pancreatic cancer can be improved** by having chemotherapy and radiation prior to surgery, rather than surgery first. Dr. Tseng, associate professor of surgery and cancer biology, has built the pancreatic cancer treatment and research program at the Medical School to improve survival and quality of life for pancreatic cancer patients.

■ **UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial are "Growing Green."** Visit the new sustainability Web site at www.umassmed.edu/growinggreen to learn more about the institutions' ongoing efforts to reduce energy consumption, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, expand recycling and other measures that collectively limit the carbon footprint of the campus.

Contact Information:
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