

# Your UMass medicine

From the University of Massachusetts Medical School and UMass Memorial Health Care  
Produced by the Office of Advancement

## UMass Medical School faculty appointed to endowed chairs

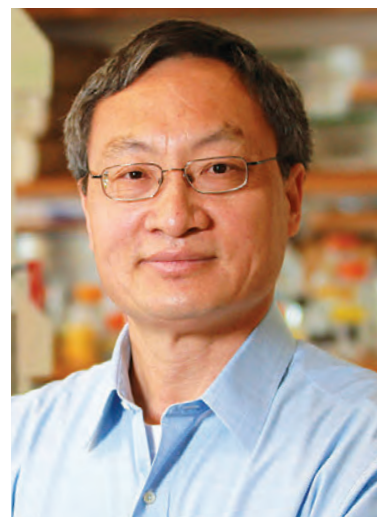
*Newly funded posts supported by Maroun Semaan, UMass ALS Cellucci Fund; existing chairs filled with deserving faculty*

UMASS MEDICAL SCHOOL WILL INVEST THREE FACULTY MEMBERS into newly endowed chairs and three more to existing endowed chairs, according to a vote by the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees at its April 12 meeting.

“We are fortunate to have the support of so many philanthropic leaders who believe in our mission and limitless potential to improve the health and well-being of the commonwealth, the nation and the global community,” Chancellor Michael F. Collins said. “These actions bring to nearly 50 the number of endowed chairs at UMass Medical School.”

Two of the newly endowed chairs are thanks to the generosity of Maroun Semaan, the co-founder and longtime director and president of Petrofac Group. Through his foundation, Semaan has made a gift, bearing his name, to establish the chairs for deserving members of the UMMS faculty. The Maroun Semaan Foundation supports philanthropic activities in the fields of education, health care and social welfare.

“Mr. Semaan has shared with me that it is ‘a special privilege to support the leading research’ at our medical school and that the



From left, Mark D. Johnson, MD, PhD; Marian Walhout, PhD; and Fen-Biao Gao, PhD.

‘need to develop cures, new treatments and a deeper understanding of what contributes to human health is critically important. Over time, this work will prove to be a great equalizer for humanity as people around the globe, regardless of status, will reap the benefits of new therapies and biomedical advancements,’” Chancellor Collins said.

Mark D. Johnson, MD, PhD, the founding chair of the Department of Neurosurgery, will be the inaugural holder of the *Maroun*

*Semaan Chair in Neurosurgery*, in recognition of his achievements as a physician-investigator working to develop innovative approaches to treating neurological diseases and disorders through outstanding education, research and care.

Marian Walhout, PhD, professor of molecular medicine and co-director of the Program in Systems Biology, has been appointed the inaugural recipient of the *Maroun Semaan*

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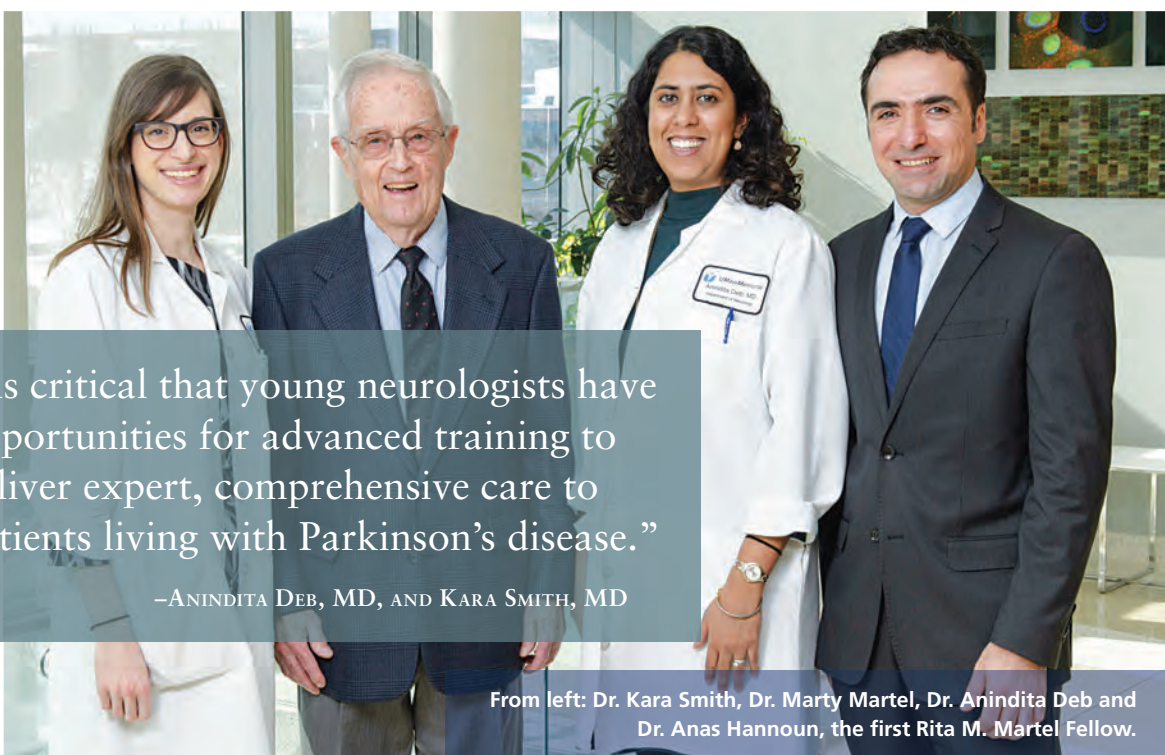
## Retired dentist honors late wife with gift to support Parkinson’s disease research at UMMS

WHEN RITA MARTEL DIED FROM COMPLICATIONS DUE TO PARKINSON’S DISEASE the day after her 87th birthday in October 2015, her husband Maurice (Marty) Martel, DDS, knew just how he wanted to honor her life and their 60 years of marriage: by backing Parkinson’s disease research at an institution he has supported for years, in the hopes that it may someday help people like Rita.

“There’s not a vaccine or anything available today to change the course of Parkinson’s, only medication to help manage symptoms, which can be hard to figure out,” Dr. Martel said. “With the research they’re doing at UMass Medical School—not just in the lab but at the bedside—I’m confident that eventually we’ll see a solution.

“I originally got involved in supporting biomedical research at the Medical School through the former Worcester Foundation for Biomedical Research, which merged with UMMS around 1998,” he said. “Since then, I have been a longtime member of the Hudson Hoagland Society, which supports basic science research there.”

Immediately following Rita’s death in 2015, Dr. Martel and his family requested that memorial gifts made in her name be directed



“It is critical that young neurologists have opportunities for advanced training to deliver expert, comprehensive care to patients living with Parkinson’s disease.”

—ANINDITA DEB, MD, AND KARA SMITH, MD

From left: Dr. Kara Smith, Dr. Marty Martel, Dr. Anindita Deb and Dr. Anas Hannoun, the first Rita M. Martel Fellow.

toward Parkinson’s research at UMMS. When he learned the following year that he could transfer some of his retirement monies there as well, Dr. Martel decided to increase his personal support.

“My accountant informed me that I could direct up to \$100,000 of my IRA each year—

tax-free—to a charitable organization,” said Dr. Martel.

This type of distribution may be excluded from the IRA owner’s income, resulting in lower taxable income.

“I’d been self-employed all my professional

*continued on page 3*





Dr. Lawrence Rhein, UMass Memorial NICU

## Neonatology at UMass Memorial focused on providing ever-improving care for patients in and out of the NICU

AT THE UMASS MEMORIAL CHILDREN’S MEDICAL CENTER (CMC) NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (NICU), outstanding clinical care is just the start. In the last year, new initiatives to help fragile infants and their families are making a difference in and out of the NICU.

“Our neonatology program fills an important role in the greater Worcester community, and we’re excited to build on its legacy of excellence,” said Lawrence Rhein, MD, MPH, who joined the CMC in October 2016 as chief of neonatology. He came from Boston Children’s Hospital and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, where he served as an attending physician in neonatology and pediatric pulmonology.

One of the first initiatives Dr. Rhein spearheaded is a comprehensive multi-disciplinary follow-up program for NICU patients.

“Our aim is to coordinate follow-up care so families of these fragile children can avoid multiple visits to the hospital to see various providers,” he said. “In addition to a nurse practitioner and me, our team includes a nutritionist, a social worker and a respiratory therapist. Plus, we pull in any other subspecialists the patient may require. That way, the family only has to make one visit to see everyone involved in their child’s care. Parents appreciate it a great deal.

“In the past, NICU graduates didn’t receive as close follow-up care,” he continued. “Through our research, and research from other centers, we’ve learned that enhanced follow-up—even for former premature patients—can improve outcomes. We are trying to build the premier follow-up program for former preemies in the country.”

Another new initiative is a free monthly music therapy program. Staffed by volunteers, it was launched in October 2016.

*continued on page 3*



## UMass Memorial surgeons on leading edge of new surgical treatment for rectal cancer

COLORRECTAL SURGEONS AT UMASS MEMORIAL ARE AMONG THE MOST EXPERIENCED in the nation when it comes to an advanced technique for treating rectal cancer, and they perform the highest volume of these procedures in all of New England.

This innovative technique is called transanal total mesorectal excision (taTME), and it is becoming the preferred procedure in a growing number of rectal cancer cases.

“The traditional open surgical approach for removing rectal tumors has long been considered the gold standard, but it has limitations, including a big abdominal incision,” said Justin Maykel, MD, chief of the Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery. “While we’re always looking to do things less invasively, laparoscopy isn’t ideal for certain patients, and robotics lengthens operative time and increases costs.

“So taTME solves many of these problems,” he continued. “Working with industry, we’ve developed instruments that enable us to operate through a natural orifice from the bottom up. We can see better and it allows patients to recover faster.”

It also makes a minimally invasive approach available to more patients who otherwise wouldn’t be candidates for laparoscopy, including those who have had prior pelvic surgery, are obese or have large tumors.

Patient outcomes to date are equivalent to the more invasive approach. However, taTME has a “steep learning curve,” according to Dr. Maykel.

“It’s a complicated operation,” he said.

“But we are one of the early adopters here at UMass Memorial, and one of the reasons we’ve been successful is that we’ve taken a team approach, with two teams of surgeons operating simultaneously.”

Because of UMass Memorial’s expertise, Dr. Maykel is in demand nationwide as a teacher of the taTME technique. He was co-director of the first taTME instructional course at the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons in Los Angeles last year, and served as an instructor in a course sponsored by Florida hospitals. Surgeons also travel to UMass Memorial to observe the team in the operating room, and Dr. Maykel and Karim Alavi, MD, MPH, director of UMass Memorial’s Colon and Rectal Surgery Fellowship, travel to other sites to proctor surgeons who are learning the technique.

“Our goal is to make UMass Memorial a destination site for innovative surgical procedures, and taTME is a perfect example of why people may want to travel to take advantage of the experience we’ve accumulated,” said Dr. Maykel.

Philanthropy played an important role in innovations like taTME.

“A grateful patient, who wants to remain anonymous, funded a research position in our division. A big part of that job is related to taTME, tracking outcomes as we go along—with patient safety as our number-one priority,” said Dr. Maykel, who is also the *Gladys Smith Martin Chair in Oncology* at UMass Medical School. “It is one way donations can support cutting-edge approaches to treating diseases.” ■

## UMASS CANCER WALK & RUN

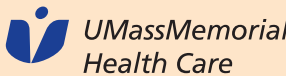
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# Girl on a mission

Local 8-year-old directs her birthday gifts to patients at UMass Memorial Children’s Medical Center

EMPATHY IS A COMPLEX EMOTIONAL CAPACITY. To get a good definition, you could ask neurologists, behavioral researchers or even evolutionary scientists. They all have theories. Or you could ask young Rylie, who is 8 years old and wise beyond her years.

In fact, Rylie just turned 8 last November and, in anticipation of that occasion, her mother Tara asked her what she wanted for her birthday.

“She said that she really didn’t need anything and that she would rather donate to a charity,” Tara said. “I was so proud of her.”

Just that much would make for a smile-inducing story but there is more to this tale. Rylie wanted to learn about the organizations she might choose to support. Still a few weeks short of actually turning eight, Rylie wanted to conduct due diligence research.

“We talked for days about which charity she would support,” Tara said. “I gave her lots of ideas and she would go to bed at night

deliberating pros and cons of each one. When she woke up in the morning, she had questions. In each case, she wanted to know who was going to be helped and would her gift make a difference.”

Rylie found her answers when she met with Kayla Gagne, a Child Life Specialist at UMass Memorial Children’s Medical Center (CMC).

“We were struck by the fact that Rylie didn’t know any children who had been hospitalized or who had a serious medical condition. She just seemed to understand how she would feel if she was in that situation: lonely or scared or just not feeling well,” said Gagne. “When we brought up the importance of small comforts such as stuffed animals, Rylie got that immediately.”

With that, Rylie’s research was complete—and she had a mission.

“Rylie has many stuffed animals of her own and she loves them all,” Tara said. “She has a favorite, though: a brown bear named Radar that she’s had since she was born.”

“She said that she really didn’t need anything and that she would rather donate to a charity.”

—TARA (RYLIE’S MOTHER)

Understandably, Rylie thoroughly enjoyed picking out each of the animals herself.

“She had a blast doing that, imagining for each choice the different child who would receive it.”

In early December 2016, Rylie and Tara embodied Dr. Doolittle, arriving at the CMC toting a cartful of animals to be distributed to pediatric patients. Rylie didn’t want a lot of fanfare, however.

“Rylie is, by nature, a very shy child and she didn’t want the attention,” said Tara. “In fact, when someone told her that her



From left: Child Life Specialist Kayla Gagne; UMass Memorial Children’s Medical Center Physician-in-Chief Mary Lee; stuffed animal donor Rylie and her mother Tara.

picture and story would ‘make her famous,’ she worried about that briefly.”

Just a few minutes later, however, Rylie said that if her story might make other people do something similar, that would be okay.

Although Rylie didn’t meet any of the children who received the stuffed animals, Tara did show her a photo of a little girl hugging the horse she had picked out.

“When she saw that little girl beaming, she was beyond happy.”

That is because empathy isn’t just feeling sad when another person is sad. It also means feeling happy when another person is happy. Rylie is very wise indeed. ■

## Retired dentist honors late wife *Continued from page 1*

life and had a traditional IRA,” he said.

His financially astute wife, who had supported him through dental school at Northwestern with her work as a physical/occupational therapist, had established the IRA when Dr. Martel set up his dental practice in Holden.

“We were both oriented to frugality, so I regularly put money toward my retirement,” said Dr. Martel, who had also been a member of the faculty at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine. “Through the magic of compounding interest, it worked out very well for me; 20 years out of dental practice, I’m still living on my IRA very comfortably.”

“Based on my interest in biomedical research, how Parkinson’s disease affected Rita and having a very successful financial plan, I couldn’t think of a better place to direct that money than to UMass Medical School.”

In September 2016, Dr. Martel met with several UMMS scientists—including Robert H. Brown Jr., DPhil, MD, the *Leo P. and Theresa M. LaChance Chair in Medical Research*, and chair and professor of neurology—who presented a proposal for funding a movement disorders fellowship.

“It is critical that young neurologists have opportunities for advanced training to deliver expert, comprehensive care to patients living with Parkinson’s disease,” said Anindita Deb, MD, and Kara Smith, MD, assistant professors of neurology and neurosurgery at UMMS and fellowship co-directors in the Parkinson’s Disease and Movement Disorders Center. “This fellowship will enable a highly qualified candidate to develop expertise in Parkinson’s clinical management and pursue new directions in clinical research.”

“There are still so many unknowns in this neurological disease,” said Dr. Martel. “There are similarities to ALS—Lou Gehrig’s disease—and there’s a lot of ALS research at UMass Medical School under Dr. Brown, which is encouraging.”

Based on the compelling case made by

Drs. Deb and Smith, Dr. Martel decided to direct \$100,000 of his IRA to establish the Rita M. Martel Fellowship in Parkinson’s Disease.

“I’m pleased to do this in Rita’s memory,” he said. “I hope it will inspire others to support Parkinson’s research, too.” ■

## Neonatal *Continued from page 2*

“Our NICU graduates often end up socially isolated out of concern for infection,” Dr. Rhein said. “The music therapy program provides developmental stimulation in a safe space here at the Medical Center. We welcome all NICU graduates under 3 years old to participate.”

There also is a renewed “atmosphere of investigation” in neonatology at the CMC, with several physician-initiated, patient-centered research projects underway as well as involvement in national studies.

“We are active participants in continually learning how to take better care of babies,” Dr. Rhein continued. “While we’re launching programs to help families today, investigation will help us to take even better care of babies in the future.”

In addition, the NICU—the only Level III facility in the region—has increased its complement of nurse practitioners to enable faster transfer of critically ill newborns from referring hospitals.

“We improved staffing, which now allows us to immediately dispatch our transport team even more quickly,” said Dr. Rhein. “When it comes to newborn resuscitation, precious minutes matter, so getting our team on-site to support our community colleagues sooner makes a big difference in outcomes.

“We are committed to the families in Central Massachusetts and we strive to deliver ever-improving care,” he continued. “We rely on the community to help us do this, and we’re grateful for their support.

“It’s a good investment, because it’s something that comes back to the community in terms of better care for these fragile little patients and their families.” ■

## NICU music therapy program—made possible by people like you!

The NICU music therapy program mentioned in this article was made possible by the generosity of a grateful family: The Roemers, whose son, now 8 years old, was born at 27 weeks and spent 60 days in the NICU at UMass Memorial. The family held a charity event—Rob’s Automotive Poker Run—in September 2016. This was the second year the event was held in support of the NICU and NICU families.

Interested in supporting us by organizing a community fundraising event? Contact Katie Friend, Community Event Coordinator in the Office of Advancement: 508-856-8554, [katie.friend@umassmed.edu](mailto:katie.friend@umassmed.edu).





“I saw in UMass Medical School a great opportunity for collaborating in research at a world class institution with great scientists.” –Dr. SCHAAL

# Methods for detection of diabetic retinopathy developed at UMass Medical School

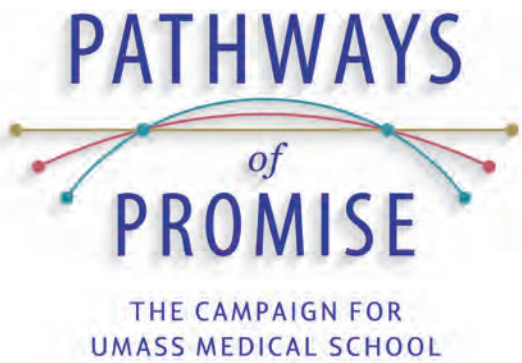
## Early detection key to retaining vision

DIABETIC RETINOPATHY DISEASE is the most common cause of vision loss among people with diabetes and the leading cause of vision impairment and blindness among working-age adults, according to the National Eye Institute. Shlomit Schaal, MD, PhD, chair and professor of ophthalmology at UMass Medical School, a retina surgeon and a clinician–scientist, believes that early detection is critical to preventing blindness. She is focused on research to develop automatic algorithms that allow better

identification of microscopic changes in the retina that may indicate the beginning of disease. “Our lab is focused on developing novel methods for automatic detection of changes in the retina that occur as result of diabetes,” said Dr. Schaal, who is also chair of the Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Services at UMass Memorial Medical Center. “The ability to detect early changes in the retina in diabetic patients carries the promise to improve patient

care and to reduce health care cost.” Diabetic retinopathy occurs as a result of chronically elevated blood sugar levels. The tiny blood vessels in the retina are damaged as a result of diabetes. Patients with early stages of diabetic retinopathy often do not have any symptoms, and can see quite well until the disease has progressed and their vision is affected. “The challenge is to convince people to see an eye doctor, when they do not experience any visual symptoms. However, diabetic retinopathy may be present despite normal vision,” Dr. Schaal said. “Our automatic algorithm is based upon machine learning, and could be used in the future in primary care physicians’ offices, eliminating the need to schedule a visit with an eye doctor if the report is normal.”

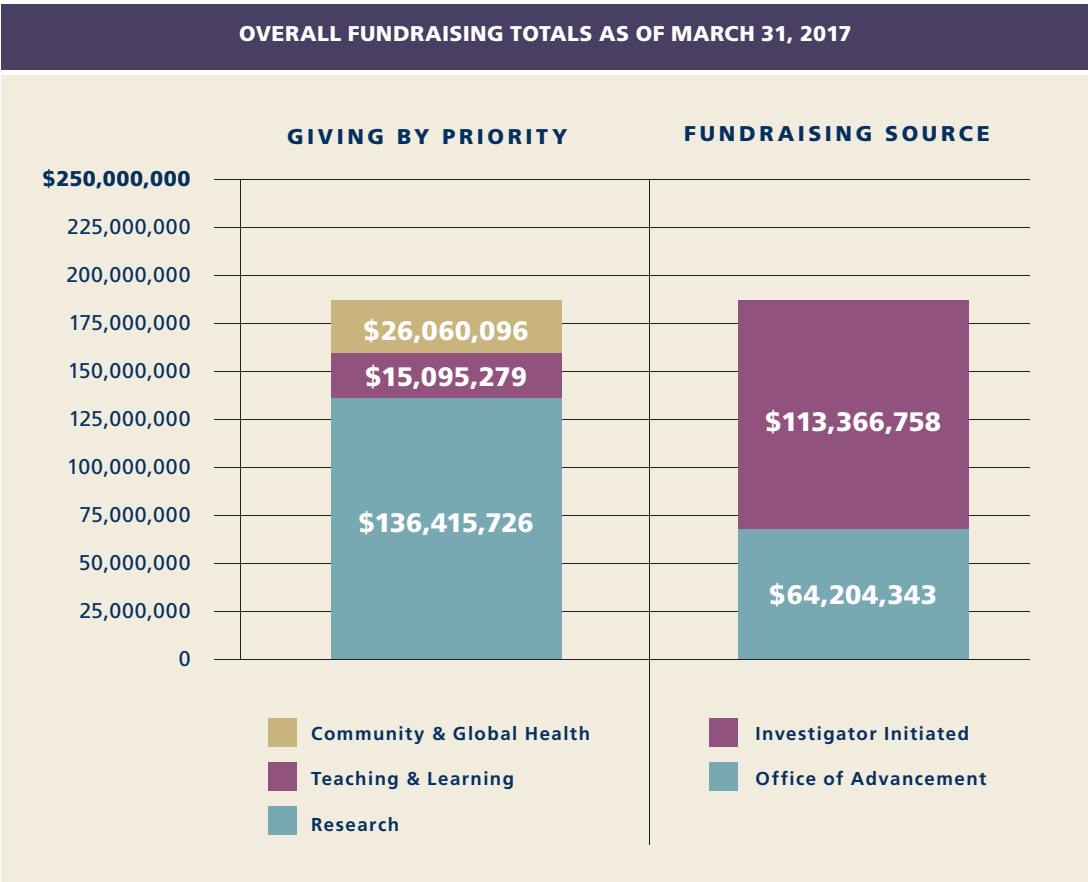
Working in collaboration with bioengineers to analyze images of scans of the retina, Dr. Schaal and colleagues at the University of Louisville, where she previously worked, developed an algorithm for the early detection of subtle changes in the retina of diabetic patients. Dr. Schaal came to UMMS and UMass Memorial in fall 2016. “I saw in UMass Medical School a great opportunity for collaborating in research at a world class institution with great scientists,” she said. Dr. Schaal is also encouraged by the ability to collaborate with gene therapists in the Horae Gene Therapy Center to develop new treatments for eye diseases. ■



*Pathways of Promise, the campaign for UMass Medical School, represents an unprecedented opportunity for you to take part in creating a better, healthier future for the people of the commonwealth and beyond. It supports three vital areas: research, teaching and learning, and community and global health. And, because of the generosity of so many, we are more than halfway to our goal.*

### Here are some fundraising highlights:

- Since 2012, donors have established 17 new endowed chairs, allowing some of the school’s most renowned faculty members to pursue innovative and trailblazing research.
- A \$7.5 million grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation enabled UMass Medical School to rapidly respond to the Ebola crisis in Liberia.
- Grateful alumna Diane Riccio, PhD’03, and her husband, Dan Riccio, made a \$1 million gift to the UMass ALS Cellucci Fund, which supports the vital ALS research of Robert H. Brown Jr., DPhil, MD. It is the largest alumni donation ever to UMMS.
- Aspiring future doctors got a boost from School of Medicine alumni, who collectively raised \$1.3 million between 2012 and 2016 for financial aid.



In supporting this effort, you, too, can make a difference in the lives of others. For more information, visit [www.umassmed.edu/campaign](http://www.umassmed.edu/campaign).



# UMass Medical School, Baystate Health celebrate launch of regional campus

Officials tour new 6,300-square-foot educational space in Springfield

OFFICIALS FROM UMASS MEDICAL SCHOOL, BAYSTATE HEALTH, UMASS AMHERST AND THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD gathered in December 2016 in Springfield to celebrate the official launch of the Medical School’s first regional campus in Western Massachusetts.

The new facility, called UMass Medical School-Baystate, signifies the commitment of the state’s only public medical school to medical education throughout the commonwealth, UMMS Chancellor Michael F. Collins said.

The new 6,300-square-foot educational space will be located on the top floor of the Pioneer Valley Life Sciences Institute building on Main Street in Springfield. The facility will include classrooms, a kitchen, offices and support facilities. Students will start attending classes in the new facility in August 2017.

In addition to the new campus, the Medical School has created a curriculum track focused on training primary care doctors in both urban and rural community health. The Population-based Urban and Rural Community Health (PURCH) program signifies the continuing institutional commitment to developing

future primary care physicians, Chancellor Collins said.

To create more opportunities for future physicians and in response to the shortage of primary care physicians nationwide, UMMS has increased the number of students it accepts each year for its medical degree program to 162 slots. Of those, 25 will be designated for the PURCH program. Hundreds of applicants, several of whom are from Western Massachusetts, have indicated an interest in participating in the program, according to Dean Terrence R. Flotte.

“We know in medicine that where you train is, quite likely, where you will practice. Students who will go to Worcester for their sciences and then come to Baystate for their clinical experience will, hopefully, train in this area and have a much greater likelihood of practicing here,” said Chancellor Collins.

Mark A. Keroack, MD, MPH, president and CEO of Baystate Health, called the launch a historic day for Baystate Health and the city of Springfield, remarking that the partnership with UMMS helps to cement the medical center’s commitment to medical education.

The partnership will create



Chancellor Collins (second from left), Dr. Keroack (foreground) and Dean Flotte (far right)

“We know in medicine that where you train is, quite likely, where you will practice. Students who will go to Worcester for their sciences and then come to Baystate for their clinical experience will, hopefully, train in this area and have a much greater likelihood of practicing here.”

—CHANCELLOR COLLINS

an Institute for Integrated Health Care Delivery Research as a collaborative effort between UMMS and its Department of Quantitative Health Sciences, Baystate Health and UMass Amherst’s School of Public Health and Health Sciences. The partner institutions are exploring the creation of an MD/MPH program, building on the Amherst campus’s recent moves to increase

its presence in Springfield. The partnership is expected to increase the availability of clinical trials for patients in Western Massachusetts with the establishment of a new Center for Clinical Trials, which will offer opportunities across the Baystate Health system for patient participation in such trials and use the findings to drive advances in delivery of the latest cutting-edge therapies to patients. ■

## New patient beds enhance comfort and safety

THE HOSPITAL BEDS ON INPATIENT UNITS across UMass Memorial Medical Center’s Memorial and University campuses have been replaced with new state-of-the-art beds customized to the needs of medical/surgical, intensive care, mental health, bariatric, and labor and delivery patients.

In addition to facilitating a good night’s sleep, each of the more than 700 beds includes standardized safety features to reduce the risk of patients falling and developing pressure ulcers. These include:

- An integrated scale, giving staff the ability to weigh patients in their beds.
- A choice of three bed exit alarms and the number of side rails that should be up based on each patient’s safety needs, along with a system that confirms that the bed settings are in compliance with the patient’s individualized safety plan.
- The ability to convert the mattress to a low air loss surface in real time for patients at risk for pressure ulcers.

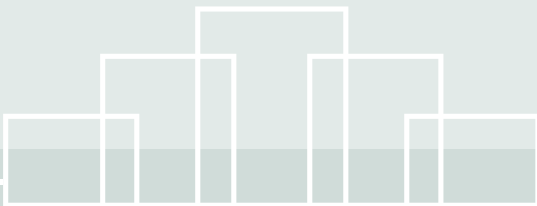


“This is a significant upgrade that improves patient care, safety and the overall patient experience,” said Lisa Gillum, RN, Memorial Campus associate chief nursing officer and member of the bed replacement team. “Not only do they provide greater comfort for patients, they also give staff additional tools to improve patient safety.”

Installation of these new beds is part of MC 2020: *Centered on Care*, a modernization project for the Memorial and University campuses of UMass



Memorial Medical Center that will enhance the privacy, safety and comfort for patients and families. ■





## NOTABLE GRANT IN...

### ALS, GENE THERAPY RESEARCH

A \$2 MILLION GRANT FROM THE ALS ASSOCIATION to the ALS ONE-Massachusetts Partnership will support, in part, research at UMass Medical School run by internationally recognized amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) researcher Robert H. Brown Jr., DPhil, MD.

The funding will aid Dr. Brown, the *Leo P. and Theresa M. LaChance Chair in Medical Research*, chair and professor of neurology, and a member of the ALS ONE leadership team, and colleagues at UMMS as they develop two gene therapy strategies to silence the production of toxic RNA and proteins from the mutant gene that is the most common cause of inherited ALS. In one program, scientists will study the use of a viral vector to deliver an RNA to reduce expression of the gene. In the other, CRISPR/Cas9 gene editing will be studied to digest the offending gene enzymatically.

The ALS ONE-Massachusetts Partnership was launched in 2016 between four institutional leaders in ALS treatment development: UMass Medical School, Massachusetts General Hospital, ALS Therapy Development Institute and Compassionate Care ALS. The new funding is in addition to \$2 million from ALS Funding a Cure and \$2 million from ALS ONE to support projects to help find treatments and a cure for ALS.

"The collaboration among these distinguished centers of ALS research will help accelerate the development of meaningful new approaches to treatment," said Lucie Bruijn, PhD, MBA, chief scientist for the ALS Association and a member of the ALS ONE board. "We are gratified to be able to help these partnerships bring their expertise to bear on this important goal, and are excited by the potential they represent."

Kevin Gosnell, who died in August from complications of ALS, founded ALS ONE in January 2016 to expedite progress toward finding a treatment for ALS by 2020 while improving care immediately. His vision continues with these new funding commitments. The ALS ONE partnership has already placed resources, expertise and dedicated teams into a powerful coordinated team with aligned goals. The team also has the ability to move ideas and products quickly from inception to trial and from idea into care practice.

Nazem Atassi, MD; James Berry, MD; and Merit Cudkowicz, MD, will build a regional ALS clinical trials network for rapidly and efficiently bringing the most promising new therapeutic ideas to trials in people with ALS. They will also build a translational pipeline that includes the development of new lab tests and imaging tools for testing treatment efficacy and initiate clinical trials of new potential treatments that target inflammation in ALS.

Finally, the group will expand its efforts to move care beyond the clinic to improve patient access to multidisciplinary ALS care at home and access to research studies. Compassionate Care ALS will work with ALS ONE partners and other providers to ensure coordinated communication between all ALS care professionals and ALS clinics so up-to-date technology, timely research information and nursing resources are available to ALS patients.



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December 2, 2016

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## NEWS BRIEFS

■ **UMass Medical School ranked the best in New England for primary care education by *U.S. News & World Report***—higher than eight other New England medical schools, including Harvard University and Brown University.

■ **UMass Memorial Medical Center received platinum award for transplant donor services.** Our University Campus was awarded a certificate of recognition by Health Resources and Services Administration for our participation in the Workplace Partnership for Life and Hospital Campaign. We are one of only three hospitals in Massachusetts to receive the highest level of recognition for excellence in hospital development initiatives around organ and tissue donation awareness and registration.

■ **Sara G. Shields, MD, clinical professor of family medicine & community health and a physician at the Family Health Center of Worcester,** has been honored by her peers of the Worcester District Medical Society as the district’s 2017 Community Clinician of the Year, an award recognizing her professionalism and contributions as a physician. She will receive the award at the district’s annual meeting April 12.

■ **Pediatric trauma surgeon Michael Hirsh, MD, is being honored by the Massachusetts Medical Society as the 2017 recipient of its Men’s Health Award.** The award recognizes an individual who has advanced the cause of men’s health in the commonwealth. He will receive the award at the society’s Men’s Health Symposium on June 15.

■ **On March 10, the Health Policy Commission approved the affiliation between the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and UMass Memorial Medical Center.** The agreement, for adult medical oncology, formalizes the relationship between the two hospitals and makes us the first academic medical center to join the Dana-Farber Cancer Care Collaborative.

■ **UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center have conferred departmental status on the medical specialty of dermatology, creating the Department of Dermatology.** Mary Maloney, MD, professor of medicine and director of dermatologic surgery, will serve as interim chair.

■ **Five caregivers from UMass Memorial Medical Center recently were recognized by the March of Dimes for their outstanding dedication to our patients.** Nominated by their peers for going above and beyond, the award winners were: Lisa Audette, RN, NICU nurse manager, who was named March of Dimes Manager of the Year; Kimberly Barranikov, RN, and Malisa Frakes, RN, who both received the March of Dimes NICU Staff Award; and Denise Mangini, RN, and Anne Weaver, RN, who were both finalists for the March of Dimes Nurse of the Year Award.

■ **In December 2016, UMass Medical School was recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with the Energy Star Combined Heat and Power Award** for the superior performance of its combined heat and power (CHP) systems. UMMS relies on CHP to help power the Worcester campus, which hosts more than 7,300 employees and 2,900 visitors daily. This award recognizes the Medical School’s third and most recent CHP expansion: the addition of a 7.5 MW natural gas-fired combustion turbine generator. The expanded power plant generates up to 90 percent of the campus’s electricity needs. Because the plant’s electrical output is responsible for less carbon pollution

than grid-supplied electricity, the facility receives substantial payments through Massachusetts’ Alternative Portfolio Standard program. The plant reduces the facility’s cost of energy services by approximately \$3 million annually.

■ **The Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services selected UMass Memorial Health Care as one of six state organizations to pilot an accountable care organization (ACO) model for MassHealth members.** The ACO pilot provides a path from the current traditional fee-for-service reimbursement model for delivering care to MassHealth patients to a value-driven ACO model. The initial participants are UMass Memorial Health Care hospitals, UMass Memorial Medical Group and Community HealthLink. “We are excited about this opportunity to work with MassHealth in this transitional year to receive and share valuable data, and to provide input into the design of a full MassHealth ACO scheduled to begin in 2018,” said John Greenwood, president, UMass Memorial Accountable Care Organization and senior vice president of population health.