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ON THE COVER: Writing in its many forms, rooted in the ancient healing arts, has begun to enjoy a modern-day renaissance among patients, students and faculty alike. And an increasing number of researchers acknowledge that the simple act of putting pen to paper can help people travel great distances, emotionally and physically.

HOUSESTAFF OPEN HOUSE

In July, about 200 new College of Medicine and College of Dentistry residents, also known as housestaff, started work in one of 57 different residency and fellowship training programs offered at Shands at UF in Gainesville.

To help orient them to the medical center, the Office of Housestaff Affairs held an open house June 29 in the Shands at UF Atrium to “bring everything to them for one-stop shopping,” said Sharron Wallace, coordinator of housestaff affairs and event organizer.

From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Atrium was filled with about 65 information booths to provide one-stop shopping for the new residents’ start-up needs. Everything from ID badges, personalized prescription pads, parking decals and hospital ID numbers to access codes for scrub machines, computer logins, health



PHOTO BY DWIGHT BENNETT

screens and e-mail accounts was available, along with information from the HSC libraries, bookstores, cellular phone companies, banks and various hospital and UF departments.

With all the information in one place, residents who were preparing to begin

their graduate medical education training programs signed up and signed on in one easy twirl around the Atrium.

They can only hope the remainder of their residencies will be as easy.

— Denise Trunk

Hurricane hotlines

With hurricane season upon us, the group practice administration has issued a reminder about UF clinic closings should we experience severe weather in our area.

Although UF may close, clinics will be open during regularly scheduled hours unless an explicit decision is made to close. Physicians and other providers, faculty practice clinic managers and staff, and any UF employees who staff clinics or are responsible for making appointments or taking patient calls are expected to come to work if at all possible.

The decision to close a clinic or clinics will be made by Director of Faculty Practice Clinics Kelly Kerr, in collaboration with clinic managers and medical directors when possible.

Two telephone lines have been established to provide status reports:

Clinic staff, physicians and other employees should call the Staff Hotline at 265-0900 for clinic status updates. The message will be kept up-to-date and will provide information about clinics in general and, if needed, about specific clinics.

The patient hotline is 265-0008. Patients may call this number to hear a message that will provide information on clinic closures and reopenings.

Reserving research information in cyberspace

The HSC Libraries now have electronic reserves available. Faculty may now place on EReserves items such as professor- or student-generated materials, book chapters and journal articles, PowerPoint presentations, Word documents from print or online sources, and more. Traditional hard copy reserves will remain available and are listed on the Libraries' ERes Web portal at <http://eres.hscl.ufl.edu/eres/>.

Marine lab gets new name and new building

UF's venerable Whitney Laboratory, perched on the intracoastal waterway near Marineland, celebrates its 30th anniversary with a name change and a new building.

The lab changed its moniker to The Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience to better reflect its research focus on biomedical/biotechnological aspects of human health and disease.



An artistic rendering of the new building

Construction for the new 17,650-square-foot building for the laboratory will begin in August. When the two-floor structure is complete by May 2006, it will house offices, labs, classrooms and an auditorium for its faculty, staff and students.

Using marine organisms such as sea slugs, lobsters, horseshoe crabs, jellyfish, coral and the freshwater zebrafish, Whitney investigators work to determine how the human body functions and malfunctions. Their research includes projects to discover how brain neurons are wired, what the sensitive mechanisms of vision and olfaction mean, identifying genes that cripple muscles, mapping proteins with fluorescent markers and finding a safe mosquito larvicide.

Free tours of the UF-Gator Tech Smart House

A floor that can detect a senior's fall and contact emergency services. A smart phone that acts as a remote control for all appliances and media players. See these high-tech devices and more at the UF-Gator Tech Smart House, a project of the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology for Successful Aging at the College of Public Health and Health Professions. The recently opened research/demonstration home is now open for free tours and features a state-of-the-art driving simulator and smart technologies for "aging in place" that are designed to make living easier and safer for seniors.

The UF-Gator Tech Smart House is located at 2701 S.W. 53rd Lane at Oak Hammock at the University of Florida. Please call (352) 273-6817 to sign up for a tour.

HSC colleges explore education in Brazil

The College of Public Health and Health Professions and the College of Pharmacy sent a small delegation to the Universidade De Fortaleza in Brazil on June 27 to discuss future collaboration in research and teaching. The group, led by Robert Frank, Ph.D., dean of the College of Public Health and Health Professions, toured the university's newly constructed multi medical integrated clinic. The clinic, comprising audiology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing and pharmacy departments, offers therapy and medical services to the community.

Faculty from each university met over several days to exchange ideas for ways to advance educational initiatives between Brazil and the United States. The meeting ended with an official signing of a cooperative agreement that provides for visits of faculty/students to either institution, research or teaching ventures at either institution, and the interchange of ideas regarding the development of programs at either institution. Plans were discussed for the Brazilians to reciprocate with a visit to UF in September.



Randal Martins Pompeu (left), vice rector of extension, and Carlos Alberto Batista, rector of University of Fortaleza, sign a cooperative agreement with College of PHHP Dean Robert Frank.

Health care gets creative

UF's Center for the Arts in Healthcare Research and Education is hosting its annual three-week summer intensive "The Arts in Healthcare" July 11-29.

The session explores the healing potential of the arts and will include daily workshops and instruction in the visual arts, writing, movement, music and theatre for healing, clinical experience in facilitating the arts at the hospital bedside within the Shands Arts in Medicine program, and lectures and workshops in Arts in Medicine history, philosophy and physiology, program implementation and administration, among other offerings.

The center's mission is to facilitate research, education and training in the use of the arts to enhance the healing process, to further develop career options for artists interested in the arts and health care, and to promote art and creativity as catalysts for developing healthy lifestyles.

For more information, call 265-0768.

Privacy rules!

Starting July 1, UF students, faculty, staff and other university constituents joined a growing segment of the public who are gaining more privacy rights.

The university's IT Security Team and Privacy Office have been working diligently to prepare for a new law, formerly Florida House Bill 481, which passed in the state legislature this spring.

The law requires organizations to notify clients within 45 days of a security breach if their sensitive personal information has been compromised.

Sensitive personal information is defined as a name in combination with a social security number, driver's license number or financial account number including access security code.

The UF Privacy Office maintains the privacy policy and must be notified of all UF privacy incidents. The Privacy Office manages internal communication, coordinates notifications and handles other issues regarding privacy incidents. In the case of a breach, the affected members of the public must be notified in writing or by e-mail, conspicuous posting on a website or via statewide media.

Failure to do so can result in a fine from \$1,000 per day to a maximum fine of \$500,000.

UF dentist helps solve fluoride fight in Eustis

By April Frawley Birdwell

James Rotella never wanted to be known as an anti-fluoridation crusader. He never even thought much about the fluoride added to his town's water until a few of his patients asked him about it earlier this year.

"I didn't want to create any fears in the community," said Rotella, a podiatrist and city commissioner in Eustis. "I just wanted to have a thoughtful discussion."

But when he publicly questioned whether Eustis should continue adding fluoride to its water, something the city has done for 20 years, he inadvertently stepped into a hornet's nest of controversy that has raged since the first drop of fluoride was added to a Michigan community's water 60 years ago.

Years of research have shown that fluoride prevents cavities. Experts tout the practice of adding fluoride to public water as one of the greatest health achievements of modern time. Yet fervent activists still protest it, claiming fluoride causes everything from cancer to low IQ, links experts say are unsubstantiated.

That's why when seeds of an impending fluoride debate were sown in Eustis, Scott Tomar, D.M.D., Dr.PH., a UF associate professor of dentistry in the division of public health services and research, spoke to the Eustis City Commission in May to defend a policy he believes saves teeth and money.

"It's probably the most well-researched public health measure in history," Tomar said. "It benefits virtually everybody."

Fluoridation, dental experts say, fights tooth decay, the condition that accounts for most of the country's dental costs. Fluoride is added to 67 percent of water in the country, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention actually has mentioned plans to increase that figure by 2010.

Fluoride reduces demineralization — when acids from bacteria in dental

"(Fluoride) is probably the most well-researched public health measure in history. It benefits virtually everybody."

— Scott Tomar, D.M.D.

plaque dissolve needed minerals from tooth enamel — and works best if it is already in the mouth when these acids are produced, Tomar said. This makes fluoridated water ideal for cavity fighting, because drinking water and foods processed in fluoridated communities will provide low yet constant levels of fluoride throughout the day.

Before the first community fluoridated its water in 1945, nearly everyone



PHOTO BY LISA BAIDZER

Dr. Scott Tomar, an associate professor of dentistry, spoke to the Eustis City Commission in May to support water fluoridation, a public health measure he says saves teeth and money. Commissioners voted to continue adding fluoride to the city's water after listening to Tomar and other dentists.

experienced tooth decay, said Howard Pollick, a University of California at San Francisco dental professor.

Things are better 60 years later, but tooth decay is still a problem, and for some people among lower socioeconomic levels, fluoridated water is the best dental care they receive, Pollick said.

But a quick Internet search yields more than a dozen Web sites devoted to stopping water fluoridation. Most of these sites, like The Fluoride Action Network, link to research that claims fluoride causes cancer and other diseases. Most of these articles, however, are not from peer-reviewed scientific journals, a standard for accepted and credible research today, Tomar said.

Other groups have different reasons for opposing fluoridation, like not wanting government to add anything to water or not trusting "the so-called experts," Pollick said.

"Ever since someone proclaimed the earth is round, there have been people opposed to it and there still are, even to this day," Pollick said.

Rotella voted to keep fluoridation in Eustis after listening to dentists during the May meeting, but he is skeptical.

"There are a lot of unknowns," he said. "We thought drugs like Vioxx were safe ... Is it possible that one day we're going to wake up to find (fluoride) is not safe?"

Fluoride does have one side effect. Too much of it can cause white flecks or stains to appear on teeth, called fluorosis. But this is merely cosmetic, Tomar said, and more noticeable types of fluorosis usually occur when children swallow too much fluoridated toothpaste, which has a much higher concentration of fluoride than drinking water.

But there's no credible research linking fluoride to other diseases or health problems, Tomar said.

"At those levels, it's just been found time and again to be safe," he said. "So the health concerns, I think, are not really concerns. Which is why water fluoridation remains strongly endorsed." **P**

Strep and OCD, is there a connection?

A surprising number of children have gone to bed with a sore throat only to wake up the next day with obsessive-compulsive disorder, leading some doctors

to warn that a streptococcal infection might trigger the debilitating psychiatric condition in some young patients. Doctors have labeled this phenomenon Pediatric Neuropsychiatric Autoimmune Disorders Associated with



Murphy

Streptococcus, or PANDAS. Some pediatricians have already begun placing strep-infected children on long-term antibiotic regimens in an effort to prevent OCD, a practice that worries researchers on both sides of the debate. Tanya Murphy, M.D., an associate professor in the department of psychiatry who has been studying PANDAS for 10 years, clears up some questions for the POST.



Q Does research point to connections between other bacterial infections and psychiatric disorders, or is just group A strep and OCD?

The ones that we've classically looked at have been obsessive-compulsive disorder and tic disorders, but it's thought that it can also include disorders like attention deficit disorder, separation anxiety disorders and maybe fine motor skill deterioration. But the ones that have gotten the most support have been OCD and Tourette's. A child who wakes up from being a normal straight-A student the day before to washing her hands 100 times a day and saying "I can't stop, I can't stop" is so dramatic that I think you are going to find the best association looking at the more obvious presentations. Strep has been the infection that has been the easiest to look at partly because it's easy to culture it in the pediatrician's office. Strep is the one most studied, but after following these children over time, I have also found some children have a clear-cut worsening of behavior and tics following a common upper-respiratory infection. I don't think anything does it quite as clearly or dramatically as strep, though.

Q Why is PANDAS so controversial?

Many people think that this association is just coincidental because strep is so common. Obsessive-compulsive disorder is also fairly common, about 2 percent of children have it. Probably about 20 percent or better of all children develop tic symptoms at some point. So they are fairly common disorders and maybe it's just a chance association. That's probably the biggest controversy. Another issue is the lack of a one-to-one relationship between infection and the onset of neuropsychiatric symptoms. Some children flare without evidence of strep, many children develop strep without developing any neuropsychiatric symptoms. I think we just need to research it more.

Q How effective is putting a child with PANDAS on long-term antibiotics?

We don't know yet because we haven't really studied it. We are doing a penicillin study so we can have a better answer to that question. There are clearly some children that I have seen who do much better on antibiotics, but there are also children that do worse on antibiotics. I really don't think we know enough to prescribe prophylactic antibiotics.

Q In what direction is research going right now?

There are a lot of people who don't believe in PANDAS who are very outspoken about it, but if you look at the summary of the literature that is out there, most of it is hinting that there is something going on. There is certainly enough support to warrant looking at it further. I think it will still be about five years until we have better answers, because it will take that long to do some of the bigger antibiotic trials.

Q How should these patients be treated while research is ongoing?

I always recommend standard of care treatment for all of these children. For OCD, the first thing you want to consider is doing cognitive behavior therapy, even if it's a child that has a PANDAS-type presentation. What you are giving that child is a skill to resist these symptoms even if those symptoms may be immune-triggered, but at least they have a way to fight back the OCD. **P**

Healthy state of mind

Researcher examines the relationship between psychological and physical health

By Jill Pease



PHOTO BY LISA BALTOZER

DEIDRE PEREIRA, PH.D.

The mind-body connection, while oft studied, remains mysterious. A number of studies have demonstrated that a person's thoughts and emotions can affect his or her physical health. But can the mind also influence health outcomes and mortality? That's a question psychologist Deidre Pereira, Ph.D., and others in her field hope to answer.

"There is still some skepticism about how the mind can affect clinical outcomes," said Pereira, an assistant professor in the department of clinical and health psychology in the College of Public Health and Health Professions. "I share in the skepticism about the effect on mortality because we just don't know the relationship yet. But there is ample evidence that factors such as depression, stress, sleep quality and social relationships affect neuroendocrine and immune functioning. We absolutely know this."

Pereira's clinical and research interests lie in two relatively new fields: psycho-oncology and psychoneuroimmunology.

"Dr. Pereira's research focus in psychoneuroimmunology is truly forward thinking and brings this area of study to the university," said Ronald Rozensky, Ph.D., chair of the department of clinical and health psychology. "She is building a strong program of research that will put us on the map as a health science center that excels in this field."

Psycho-oncology includes two main areas of interest — the effect of the cancer experience on emotional and physical quality of life, and how a person's psychological state can influence cancer risk and clinical outcomes. Psychoneuroimmunology is the study of the mind-body relationship and the effect of the psyche on the body's neuroendocrine and immune functioning.

In addition to her busy psycho-oncology clinical practice, Pereira is working with UF Shands Cancer Center colleagues Daylene Ripley, M.D., and Linda Morgan, M.D., to conduct research on endometrial cancer, the most common gynecological cancer and the fourth most common cancer overall among women. She is studying the relationship between psychological factors, immune functioning, stress hormones and health outcomes.

"For example, women with endometrial cancer will have hysterectomies as part of their treatment," Pereira said. "We want to find out if psychological factors influence their ability to heal after surgery."

Pereira's work in mind-body research studies began during her graduate studies at the University of Miami under the mentorship of Michael Antoni, Ph.D., a leading psychoneuroimmunology researcher. Together they studied women who have both human papillomavirus, which can be linked to cervical cancer, and HIV, which suppresses the immune system.

Their research has yielded important findings. Women in the study who were more pessimistic about their futures had worse natural killer cell functioning in their immune systems, which may impair their ability to fight viruses and the spread of tumors. Women who reported more stress had an increased risk for progression or persistence of cervical dysplasia, a precancerous condition.

Antoni and Pereira also have preliminary data suggesting that women who received group psychological therapy had a much lower risk for the progression or persistence of dysplasia.

There are countless other areas of mind-body research that have yet to be explored, Pereira said, citing that and two other aspects of her work as motivators.

"The patients I work with in the clinic or in research are very inspiring and give me the energy to do what I do," Pereira said. "It amazes me when an 80-year-old woman with cancer is eager to participate in the research, completing a two-hour interview and testing her saliva at home for stress hormones. I find that incredible."

"Also, sitting down with the research data to crunch the numbers and seeing right there on your computer screen how closely the mind and body are related is thrilling," she said. "You can't believe it. It's exciting to get your research out in the literature so you can get feedback and take your work in new directions." **P**

International programs take medical care on the road

To improve health and medical education globally, UF students and faculty work with UF partners in developing countries to provide integrated grass-roots medical outreach to those most in need of health care.

Students and faculty of the HSC colleges conduct numerous health extension and research visits each year to other nations, and, in doing so, gain a hands-on, integrated, multidisciplinary educational experience.

COLLEGE OF NURSING

Nursing students joined the annual UF interdisciplinary outreach groups that traveled to the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and the Yucatan. Baccalaureate nursing students performed health screenings for underserved patients of all ages and collaborated with local health-care personnel to improve interventions and strengthen patient education efforts.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LEIGH GREER

Nursing student Leigh Greer screens a young patient in the Dominican Republic as part of the DR HELP outreach trip.



PHOTO BY SARA WILSON

Nursing student Sara Wilson (center) is pictured with other members of the Project H.E.A.L. team in Ecuador.

This outreach was initiated by UF students, and founded on the expertise of UF faculty and the integrated and interdisciplinary structure of the HSC.

In 2005, HSC students have delivered medical care to communities in the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Haiti, Ecuador and Nicaragua. In the next three pages, we've provided a glimpse of some of the international programs that took place this year.

COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

The college sponsored three international educational and service trips to the countries of Dominican Republic, Mexico and Ecuador. While the Dominican Republic trip was not affiliated with a foreign university, the Ecuador and Yucatan, Mexico trips built on academic ties with sister institutions in other countries to broaden the educational experience of UF dental students. The college has established ongoing exchanges with Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) in Ecuador and Universidad Autónoma de Yucatan Facultad de Odontología (UADY) in Mexico.

USFQ hosted 14 dental students early March, pairing them with USFQ students to provide restorative and oral surgery treatment to about 150 patients. The December trip to the Dominican Republic included 21 dental students who were joined by three private dentists and two dental assistants. Trip participants treated more than 500 patients, many of whom were malnourished or children with HIV. The UF trip to the Yucatan included two faculty and nine UF dental students who partnered with UADY students to provide treatment to more than 400 children in largely rural and underdeveloped areas.



PHOTO BY FERNANDO SANDOVAL, USFQ

UF dental junior Jennifer Larson (left) and senior Sundeep Rawal (right) extract diseased teeth from an Ecuadorean mother as her daughter looks on. Fourteen UF dental students journeyed to Ecuador in March during Project HEAL, partnering with dental students from Universidad San Francisco de Quito in Quito, Ecuador, to provide free dental care to about 150 patients.

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

NICARAGUA

Fourth-year medical students and College of Medicine faculty traveled to Nicaragua for two weeks in February to treat patients in two of this Central American country's remote villages as part of Project Nicaragua. The 15 medical students split into two groups to set up temporary clinics in the villages of Ocotal and Matagalpa. During their stay, they provided medical care to 1,423 patients, one-third of whom were children. The students also traveled to other smaller surrounding villages and treated farm workers at a nearby coffee plantation. The group donated toothbrushes, toothpaste, children's toys, medications and vitamins to the villagers and brought stethoscopes and blood pressure cuffs to clinics in the surrounding towns. Donald Eitzman, M.D., a UF professor emeritus of pediatrics, and Larry Rooks, M.D., a UF clinical associate professor of community health and family medicine, accompanied the students on the trip.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAY POONKASEM

Elizabeth Jungst (left), Rahul Chopra, Nadia Noor, Jay Poonkasem, Jose Soberon, Dr. Donald Eitzman, Phoung Nguyen and Run Gan on their way to treat needy patients while in Nicaragua this February.



PHOTO BY PAMELA KOTHARI

Christy Milsted Cavanagh and Nasrin Aldawoodi spent some time with local children during their mission trip to Haiti.

HAITI

Students and faculty from the colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Public Health and Health Professions visited Haiti during spring break to treat patients at a hospital near the poverty-stricken country's southern border. Serge Geffrard, M.D., a University of Miami cardiology fellow, started Project Haiti when he was a second-year medical student at UF in 1996. Students have been making the trip each year since then. The 25 students, faculty and physicians who went to Haiti this year worked in a small hospital in Fond Parisienne, a medically underserved area ravaged by flooding last year. The group stayed in the Dominican Republic because of safety concerns in Haiti but traveled each day to the hospital. While in Haiti, the group saw patients of all ages and had to handle several life-threatening emergencies, such as heart failure and critical injuries, with limited equipment.



PHOTO BY PAMELA KOTHARI

Toriseju Binitie treats a tiny patient in Haiti.

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

YUCATAN

Ten veterinary students, one veterinary technician and two veterinarians, including the course coordinators from the veterinary college's Office of International Studies, visited the Yucatan to conduct a rabies vaccination campaign in the rural community of Tunkas, as well as set up a spay/neuter clinic for dogs and cats.

ECUADOR/PROJECT HEAL

One veterinary student joined students from the College of Medicine and College of Dentistry in March's interdisciplinary program.

ECUADOR/STUDENT INTERNATIONAL VETERINARY ORGANIZATION

Seven veterinary students joined a trip to Ecuador in June 2005 that combined small animal veterinary work with opportunities to work with large animal herds to learn more about foot and mouth disease.

CHILE

One veterinary student is conducting a project relating to tuberculosis and brucellosis in cattle will leave in July for the Austral University of Chile to complete her research.

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

AUDIOLOGY

Faculty and students from the Doctor of Audiology, or Au.D., program made their third annual trip to Yucatan, Mexico as members of Project Yucatan. The audiology students performed screening tests that assessed the function of the middle ear system, measured levels of hearing sensitivity, and assisted UF medical students in the cleaning and health care of the outer ear. The UF Au.D. program also donated hearing aids, hearing aid batteries, cleaning supplies and portable equipment that can be used by local, trained health-care professionals to continue long-term audiologic care in rural clinics. More than 500 children and 100 adults received care from members of the UF audiology group who collaborated with Asociacion Yucateca Pro-Deficiente Auditivo, a local organization established by parents of children who are deaf to provide hearing services and rehabilitation.



Audiology students Kristin Letlow (left), Meghan Miller and Michelle Cramer are joined by local children at a hearing screening site in Yucatan, Mexico.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Master of Public Health students joined the annual UF interdisciplinary outreach groups that traveled to the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti and Mexico. The public health students designed and implemented educational programs for small groups of clinic patients. Topics included the prevention of tuberculosis, diarrheal and mosquito-transmitted diseases, and health issues surrounding improved sanitation and infection control. The students also evaluated patient understanding and awareness of the transmission and disease process of tuberculosis.



Public health student and DR HELP team member Helena Chapman provides community education to residents of Jarabacoa, Campo Paso Bajito in the Dominican Republic on the prevention and symptoms of dengue, a mosquito-transmitted virus.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Members of the physical therapy department provided instruction to the faculty of the only physical therapy education program in Nicaragua. The UF group presented information on shoulder impingement evaluation and treatment to faculty and local clinicians at the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Nicaragua in Managua, the nation's capital. This is the UF group's third visit to Nicaragua in an effort to provide information on current physical therapy techniques and treatments. Limited access to continuing education and Spanish language textbooks has put the Nicaraguan physical therapy curriculum 10 to 15 years out of date.



Nicaraguan physical therapists receive hands-on instruction on treating shoulder impingement during a laboratory session taught by UF physical therapy faculty members Terri Chmielewski and Claudia Senesac.

Words for the wise

Mapping life's great adventures through the art of writing

By Melanie Fridl Ross

Pagers beep. Cell phones trill. Lab equipment hums. Overhead, helicopters roar to a landing. Inside trauma rooms, orders are shouted. Patients laugh. Families weep.

Every day, hordes of doctors and students and staff navigate the hallways of the Health Science Center, bustling along at hospital pace.

But listen ever so carefully, and amid the cacophony you'll hear from those who are quietly going places, too, with the scritch-scratch of a pen on paper or the quiet click of fingers tapping out stories on a computer keyboard.

In unprecedented numbers, they're trading poems and prose for prescriptions, a book for the baggage that can come with the long, often exhausting days that are part of learning and living. And they're finding the journey to health is often more than just physical, the path to becoming a health practitioner is studded with self-reflection, and the trip into the exam room to give the news — good and bad — can sometimes be handled all the better one small word at a time.

Forget the stereotype that the closest some practitioners come to composing the printed word is the barely legible prescription-pad penmanship they dash off daily. Writing in its many forms, rooted in the ancient healing arts, has begun to enjoy a modern-day renaissance among patients, students and faculty alike. And an increasing number of researchers acknowledge that the simple act of putting pen to paper can help people travel great distances, emotionally and physically.

"There's an awful lot of us who believe that the most crucial thing for success as measured by inner satisfaction and happiness in the long run — linking the passion of your heart to the purpose of our lives — is self-reflection," says Allen Neims, M.D., director of UF's Center for Spirituality and Health. "That's the heart of it for a patient writing, it's the heart of it for students writing, and it's the heart of it for a doctor or



Neims

any kind of health professional writing, because the kind of writing that seems to make the most difference really is when you take something that's going on in your life or in someone else's life and reflect on its inner significance to you.

"This need to go inside as best as we can, to be on that inner journey of reflection, leads us to a place where we're more at peace and wiser," he adds. "Go inside, the answer's there. I think reflective writing really gets at that."

MEDICINE FOR THE MIND

From reflective writing to the art of narrative medicine — the practice of chronicling patient encounters in a journalistic fashion by delving into descriptive details beyond the normal notes scribbled in a medical chart — the trend is sweeping the globe. Dozens of academic institutions have launched literary medical journals and are incorporating writing into the curricula. Web sites devoted to poetry in medicine have multiplied into the thousands.

But you don't have to go great distances to witness it first-hand. The Health Science Center has been at it

A reason to rhyme

Research is increasingly showing that writing is plain good for you, in ways that are as yet largely unexplained. The therapeutic effects aren't just psychological. They include physical benefits such as reduced use of pain medications among patients with arthritis to improved lung function among patients with severe asthma. Studies also have linked writing to positive immune system effects, fewer doctor's visits, less stress and improved grades, among other benefits.

Michelle M. Bishop, Ph.D., is working with John Wingard, M.D., deputy director of the UF Shands Cancer Center at the Gainesville campus, to study writing's effects on the quality of life of spouses or caregivers of cancer survivors who underwent bone marrow transplantation.

"What we realized from another study was that in some ways the spouses are even worse off than the survivors in terms of quality of life, even years after transplant," says Bishop, a clinical and health psychology researcher at UF. "Expressive writing may be particularly useful for people who have a restricted outlet for talking. If their primary confidante is their spouse who is very ill, they may not feel like they can share their own thoughts and

feelings; they may feel guilty if they complain. It may be that expressive writing would be a great tool to help people identify stressors and cognitively and emotionally process them."

She and Wingard are studying caregivers who write for 15 minutes once a week for four weeks. They complete questionnaires about their quality of life at the outset of the study and three months after the final writing session.

"Some of the things they've described to us so far is they found the writing to be intense but helpful, meaningful, revealing of feelings they were not aware of, and an outlet for bottled up feelings they might not feel comfortable sharing with other people," Bishop says.

Other UF research is focusing on students. In June, the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, a leading supporter of humanities in medical education, granted funds for continued teaching and evaluation of the College of Medicine reflective writing elective taught by Gail Ellison and supported by Arts in Medicine, UF's Center for the Arts in Healthcare, Research and Education, and the Maren Foundation. The course, open to first- and second-year students, is part of the Narrative Medicine program directed by

Nina Stoyan-Rosenzweig.

"In creating programs in the Maren Reading Room, one of the things I immediately felt was an important way to involve students but also to really encourage the growth of empathy in health-care professionals was to incorporate writing into the curriculum in whatever ways possible," says Nina Stoyan-Rosenzweig, the Health Science Center's archivist. "I realize the importance of writing for reflection and as a form of therapy and self-care for physicians. And the whole focus of narrative medicine is that if you understand the patient's story and see the story as a narrative, then you will focus on that and be better able to elicit information from the patient, better able to understand their needs and better able to diagnose their problem."

Goals of the writing elective include enhancing observational and listening skills, increasing self-awareness, improving physician-patient communication, and developing a healthy lifelong writing practice, Ellison says. The new grant monies will be used to evaluate the course's effects on physician-patient communication skills and physician and medical student self-care.

— Melanie Fridl Ross

Aging Gratefully

'You are old, Father William,' the young man said,
...and yet you incessantly stand on your head...'
— Lewis Carroll, Phantasmagoria, 1869

Ah! So you do look your age? Welcome it. Waive the rules:
don't grow elderly, grow old. Don't get graceful, get greedy.
Don't get delicate, get bold. Live your age with lust.

Take your teeth out if you want to. Don't cover your
bald beauty with a wig. Don't cream those creases.
Flaunt them: these highways on the map of your life.

So your skin's gotten thin? Love its wens and wrinkles:
mementos to your life's commotions. You're not so firm?
Fatness is fine: sway that elegant belly, juicy as a Botticelli.

Dance! Caper with the teenyboppers. Oil that creak,
bop that crunch. Strut that wrinkle, rap that bulge.
Link arms, you redwoods that ride down our millennium,

Your roots broadening with each weathering season. Though your
bows are bent they are harder than the stripling's green,
And their lengthening sights espy their targets plainer.

Why sit and wait on death? The future's marvelously unsure.
So turn hoary cartwheels into a hundred suns. We're all at it,
hoarding stories as we go; and there's work for us all to do.

— John Graham-Pole, M.D.

Professor of Pediatrics, UF College of Medicine
Medical Director of Pediatric Palliative Care,
Hospice of North Central Florida

since the inception of the Shands Arts in Medicine program more than a dozen years ago. Today, physicians and nurses are sharing their own poetry with patients as a way to open communication about their ailments. Other faculty members write as a form of personal expression, a way to glean greater understanding of their calling or to cope with especially difficult circumstances.

Patients themselves are increasingly encouraged to write as an outlet. For those who are gravely ill and tethered to a hospital bed for months on end, writing can help them escape to other places and happier times. Recognizing the importance of this form of self-expression, Shands HealthCare has placed two writers-in-residence in its facilities, one devoted to working with patients awaiting a heart transplant, their families and the health providers who care for them, and the other to detailing the life stories of elderly hospitalized patients.

Students are benefiting from the writing process, too. In the College of Medicine, the third-year medical clerkship requires them to keep a portfolio that includes reflective and narrative writings and to participate in related small-group discussions. A third-year medical student, meanwhile, has just published "Panacea," the university's first literary publication featuring the works of students, faculty

and staff who work in the health sciences.

Reflective writing seminars also explore the intersection of metaphor and meaning, observation and listening skills, and self-awareness. A cross-college emphasis on journaling and logging patient encounters is acknowledged as increasingly important. And similarly, many students are encouraged to keep diaries that describe their experiences on international humanitarian trips.

"I hope they are learning a lifelong practice that's useful in self-care," says Gail Ellison, Ph.D., who teaches the reflective writing elective for medical students and is the writer-in-residence at Shands at UF. "Instead of just being overwhelmed in the experience they find metaphor. The hero's journey comes up a lot in their writing. They have gone into unknown territory. One student wrote about going into the body and likening it to a jungle.

There have been explorers there before, and she had a map, but she herself had never been there."

POST-IT POEMS

John Graham-Pole, M.D., frequently finds his office becoming plastered in Post-it notes. It's his favorite way to jot down the snippets of poems that come to him during his busy days caring for children with cancer.



Graham-Pole

Other faculty members share his passion. Robert Lawrence, M.D., pens poems he sometimes shares with patients. Pharmacy researcher Issam Zineh, Pharm.D., writes and also has participated in a therapeutic writing course for heart transplant patients at Shands at UF. Nurses, following a decades-long tradition of keeping clinical logs, also are encouraged to write about their challenges and achievements on the floor.

Graham-Pole has written hundreds of poems and published four books.

He keeps a gratitude journal that he writes in every day.

"I found that writing was a way of expressing my own feelings about my work; it was really almost a safety valve," Graham-Pole says. "I work with a lot of seriously ill patients and their families, and I found the need to speak about that really for my own benefit. And in time as I discovered other physicians doing the same thing, I realized we kind of wanted to hear each other. I also would share writing with patients quite a bit and encourage them to write."

That patient voice is something he cares about deeply.

"We need to hear their stories. As the director of hospice palliative care, I spend my whole time almost basically listening to patients' stories," Graham-Pole says. "And much of my writing is inspired by the stories I hear day to day, really extraordinary stories that don't get into the medical charts."

College of Nursing Week 3: Clinical Log

Clinical this week involved more opportunities to not only talk to my own patient but other patients as well. This week was also particularly challenging for me because my patient was not engaged in our conversation. She would respond to the questions that I asked her but would not provide any additional information or start a new topic. This made it very hard for me because I had to bring up all the questions and when an awkward silence would come up I often found myself searching for the next thing to say. My patient was also very standoffish to me; I got the impression that she was suspicious and did not trust me, or my intentions.

This week I was more comfortable with talking to a patient but I need to come up with a better "plan of attack" when it comes to talking to them. When my patient this week did not respond to my questioning I found the silences to be very distracting to me because I was unable to fill the space with another question right off the bat. I also was aware that the way in which I started the conversation was probably not the best way. Towards the end of the night I went out and colored with my patient and then began talking to her and I found that she was more receptive to me and less suspicious. Maybe if I can establish some sort of relationship with them before going right into the questions I could get more out of them. This is still a hard rotation for me because I do not feel like I am making a difference. Usually at my other rotations I feel that I have made some sort of impact on my patient. That is what is so hard about psych because you want to see as a nurse some progress and in most cases that is not going to happen right away. That is what I need to think about and not feel like I am going to change the client on only one visit.

— Amanda Pavlock
Student, College of Nursing

As he began to write with regularity, often about recent experiences, other events from his years as a doctor in training and from his childhood came sweeping to the surface. Thus a poem he wrote about 10 years ago was actually about his first year as a medical intern, in 1967.

The Annals of Internal Medicine published that poem, about a “horrible experience I had as a very ‘wet-behind-the-ears’ intern,” Graham-Pole says, and writing it was “a huge help, a release, a catharsis.” He was 24, caring for a 20-year-old cancer patient at a time when virtually everybody died of the condition. He was desperately trying to restart his intravenous line.

“He was a big, big guy I remember, and it proved almost impossible to start his IV again,” Graham-Pole says. “I found myself kind of weeping really, and I was cursing him under my breath, I blamed him for having no veins. Of course they’d all been used up, you see. Then the senior resident happened along and put the IV in his foot and helped me. Years later I wrote a poem called ‘Vena Puncture,’ and the last sentence was ‘God, why this tiny vessel in this gargantuan frame?’ It was sort of like the blasphemy of blame, is what I call that really. I just couldn’t do it. The poem just popped out 33 years later.”

Graham-Pole says much of art, and certainly writing, is inspiring.

“I did write some pretty gloomy poems to begin with, but I’ve found increasingly that I can find humor in the setting of very severe or life-challenging problems, and I could certainly find inspiration and hopefully celebrate that in writing.”

And, he says, writing has just as much a role in patient care as it does in helping practitioners process difficult experiences, or in heralding happy ones.

“A mother of a patient called me at home in the

middle of the night,” Graham-Pole says. “The boy was stable, but the mother called me and started almost screaming down the phone. I didn’t know what to say so I said nothing, and gradually by my silence she found it comforting and she started to

soften. After awhile, she started to laugh. Then about 48 hours after this whole experience, this outburst of emotion leaping all over me down the

Metamorphosis on the Heart Transplant Unit

I’ve got big plans for what’s ahead. My family is going to see the United States of America. We’re going to enjoy the things that supposedly aren’t important: sitting on a park bench watching the frogs jump.

We’re going to see the day instead of trying to make it through the day. We’re going to enjoy each other...

The important thing is being here and thinking and talking about things, and the way I’ve changed my mind. I am a “metamorphosed” while I was waiting for my heart. I am a new creature along with the new heart. I want to be kinder, gentler, not vain-glorious. Not seeking things for me, but looking out for the needs of others. I just want to be a more people person. I always did like people — I think I liked talking. But when you really like being with someone, you can just sit there and be with each other and be totally content.

It’s really night and day. It was dark. Now it’s so bright. I just want to walk out of this hospital and tell people “You don’t have to get sick to do it; you don’t have to get a physical new heart; you’ve just got to change your mind.”

— Donald Ingram

Heart transplant patient

Excerpted from “In-house Wisdom,” a collection of writings by patients, faculty and staff at Shands and the HSC.

phone line, she gave me a poem, which basically must have been her first poem in 20 years. So in the middle of the night she instinctively started turning to poem making.”

Zineh, an assistant professor of pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical sciences, says writing has helped him sort out his place in the world on a personal and a professional level. Science, he says, “informs his writing,” with his poetry taking on a biological bent. About five years ago, one of his poems was published in *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association*, and his work also has appeared in other literary journals.

“On the other hand, my creative side fuels my ability to write scientific manuscripts in a way that’s not boring,” he says.

THE WRITE STUFF

The interest in writing comes at a time when effective physician-patient communication is increasingly valued and students must demonstrate competency in this area.

“Basically there’s a return to the art of medicine in the old doctor’s ‘black bag’ style,” Ellison says. “Medical schools realize that there’s more to training healthy, compassionate physicians than coursework in biochemistry and pathology.”

Writing helps students become “more conscientious and mindful of their own experience in medicine, from first-years working with cadavers to having a patient die for the first time to observing their

mentors and listening to physicians talk,” she says. “In a positive way, a lot of their writing is seeking underlying meaning in what they are doing, the ethics and social ramifications, and their own fears and doubts and strengths.”

Second-year medical student Anitha Jain says the reflective writing elective was meaningful because it placed value on writing as an emotional outlet, as an art.

“Medical school is very hard, physically and emotionally, and having this writing class was an amazing outlet,” Jain says.

Says Nicole Paulson, who took the seminar last year as a first-year medical student, “I think that so oftentimes as a medical school student you get obsessed with school and grades and things that in the long term matter but don’t necessarily

compose who you are. I think that writing really does help put things in perspective when you’re studying for hours on end, to take time out to really reflect on what you’re thinking and feeling. It allows room for growing and learning.”

Three years ago, Heather Harrell, M.D., who directs the third-year College of Medicine clerkship, began requiring students to ponder anything that has happened to them in medical

Sappho in California

We can only imagine the rubies
And pearls that were Los Angeles at night.
The plane touching down like a toe testing

The black top pool of where the city starts.
This is where it might start. We can be sure
As the swallows of San Juan Capistrano.

She doesn’t know about the swell of sea salt
That we’ve mistaken for loops of gulls
Around San Francisco. Everything grows

Wild. Everything is like a cherry.
Poets come here. No one asks them to come.
Some hate Ashbery, some love him. And she

Buries hate like two thoughts, the passive hands
Of the Pacific. Buries what is her
In the thought of a young girl, the absence

Of grace. The other, the thought of Leda
Burying a swan’s egg in a pillow.
In any case, we shouldn’t expect much

From this place. This coast will never say, “You
Have moved me.” Children will be born.
The oranges will still grow without us.

— Issam Zineh

Assistant professor of pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical sciences, College of Pharmacy

school, good or bad, and write about it. Then they meet in small groups with Harrell and Jay Lynch, M.D., a professor of oncology, to share their writing.

"It's a very difficult year for the students," Harrell says. "They're faced with a lot of life-and-death issues. I was curious about what their perspective was, and hopefully it will promote this type of reflection in the future."

Harrell says common topics include facing a dying patient for the first time, breaking bad news, and feeling rather powerless yet wanting to effect change.

"Dr. Lynch and myself, after all these sessions, come away feeling like we get more out of this than the students," she adds. "We're so impressed by the students and their thoughtfulness and their compassion. It gives us a lot of hope for the future of medicine."

In the College of Public Health and Health Professions, Stephanie Hanson, associate dean for academic affairs, has students keep a daily journal of their experiences when they take a course requiring them to shadow health-care providers.

"The purpose of the journal is for students to comment on what they are learning and observing as well as how they are reacting to the situation," Hanson says. "The goal of the latter part is to help students increase their own awareness of their values, biases and reactions to specific patient circumstances."

College of Dentistry students are encouraged to write about the humanitarian trips they take to countries such as the Dominican Republic or Mexico. And nurse researcher Jodi Irving assigns her beginning nursing students to write essays about the nursing-related artwork lining the walls of the HPNP Building in an activity designed to integrate reflections on health care and the value of the humanities.

"Nursing has a long history of doing what are called personal logs that review experiences in clinical situations and their relationship to the process of learning to be a nurse," Irving says. "I teach psychiatric mental health nursing, and a big part of our requirements for our students are to

"I don't know..."

"I don't know...," you and I are well acquainted... we danced together for hours during that last hematopathology test... and we lamented together with frustration as I angrily told you "I didn't know how to continue," and we rode around on that black cloud together... afraid to rain down on our future patients... what if I don't know a single thing when I look them in the eye? What if you and I are ripped into a twister together, Right there And I can't pull you from their embrace...?

— Anitha Jain
Student, College of Medicine

deal with their own issues of stigma and reactions to mental health and mental illness. We do use (writing) in almost all the clinical courses in our college."

In addition, nursing students who work with psychiatric patients are instructed to encourage them to chronicle their feelings, describe issues they are confronting, and write

thoughts down before

they act on them.

In the hospital setting, nurses promote similar writing exercises with patients of all kinds.

"What we unfortunately tend to focus on when you become a patient is you as an illness, and it really doesn't define an individual completely," says Tina Mullen, director of the Shands Arts in Medicine program. "What the creative writing has been doing for this adult population is giving them back a sense of their healthy self through their creative writing experiences. Some patients have been in the hospital for months and months, and the opportunity to even just wax poetically about their feelings of the beach they haven't seen or even their home and to put these things down on paper makes them very real and very tangible."

Ellison, reflecting on her role as writer-in-residence, says the stories she hears and poems she reads aloud "encompass the entire human experience; they require me to be in there laughing and crying, commiserating and demonstrating optimism — bearing witness and serving as a scribe for posterity."

"Patients write to their spouses and to each other; they express their thanks to the staff," she writes. "They tell their stories, which get posted on doors and bulletin boards, so that physicians and nurses can see the person behind the hospital gown. In turn, physicians and nurses write about their fears, foibles and silliness — giving patients a glimpse of the empathic, human side of caregivers who are too often on the run.

"As the writing program spreads, it carries a message that I reinforce with regular postings, trying to build a bridge between sick people and their families and those who devote their lives to caregiving: We are all in this together. We will all know sickness and death and suffer deep loss. We will all experience times of bliss, calmness and

sheer joy. We can all listen, witness, be with, contain, communicate, celebrate and grieve. Together." **P**

Find more writing samples at www.news.health.ufl.edu

Writer-in-residence



Ellison

Last month Gail Ellison, a writer in residence at Shands at UF, received an honorable mention in the Blair Sadler International Art and Healing Competition for the writing program at

Shands and the Health Science Center. The award was presented at the International Conference of the Society for the Arts in Healthcare, at which Ellison spoke about reflective writing in health-care settings.

As writer-in-residence at Shands at UF, Ellison has helped compile a variety of resources for patients, faculty and staff, and students, including the following:

- **In-house Wisdom: Writing by Patients, Families, Staff, and Students.** A collection of poems and essays placed in Shands and Health Science Center waiting areas.
- **Writing for the Health of It.** An 8 1/2 x 11-inch writing pad distributed to patients to encourage the kind of reflective writing that promotes health.
- **Reflective Writing in Health-care Settings.** A handbook of ideas for people who want to write with patients and staff, but don't know where to start.
- **Write-on Shands.** Small notepads designed to be placed with a pen at the bedside of each new patient.
- **Poetry & Medicine in Cyberspace.** A CD of links to Web sites where physicians, medical students and other health-care professionals share their writing, as well as programs that promote the humanities in medical education.
- **Polecats' Prattle.** A patient-inspired newsletter published on the Status One (heart transplant) unit.
- **Poetry Tents for Nurses' Week.** Selected poems placed in nurses' stations throughout the hospital and on tables in the cafeteria.

Manatee eyes could be window to health status

By Sarah Carey

For Florida manatees, the eyes may have it, say UF researchers studying whether the mammals' unusually thick tear film helps protect against disease and could be used to gauge the endangered sea cows' ability to fight stress from cold water temperatures.

Manatees depend on both natural and artificial warm water refuges like those found near coal-burning power plants to survive cold winters. As older coal-burning power plants are phased out in the next 10 to 20 years, researchers fear chronic exposure to cooler waters could weaken the large herbivores' immune system, and they could sicken or even die.



Samuelson

move into the cornea to supply oxygen because the tear film creates a barrier so thick that oxygen present in air can't penetrate it, said Don Samuelson, Ph.D., a professor of ophthalmology in the Marine Mammal Medicine program at UF's College of Veterinary Medicine.

Manatees are believed to have the thickest tear film of any sea mammal, and possibly of any animal, Samuelson said. In general, mammals produce tears to protect against infection, because the eye itself does not have immune system components.

"Through this protection against the potential for infection, the manatee is able to enter murky waters just rich with potential pathogens," Samuelson said. "For that reason, we think this very thick tear film, undoubtedly rich with antimicrobial components, serves to protect in

the formation of these manatee blood vessels, which in other species occur predominantly because of trauma or disease," Samuelson said. "So the question is, why do these mammals have such thick tears that corneal blood vessels form naturally, even in the fetus?"

Samuelson collaborated with Roger Reep, Ph.D., a UF professor of neurology, and Jenny Harper, Ph.D., a recent doctoral graduate who is now an assistant professor at Coastal Georgia Community College. Together they examined 26 eyes from 22 individual manatees and constructed 3-D images of the corneas.

"We've completed the evaluation and mapped the blood vessels, so we know where within the cornea they are located and how many there are," Samuelson said. "Our next goal is to start examining the tears and evaluate them with regard to the whole animal's health status."

He added that the recent study clearly documented the fact that these blood vessels are present, do not appear to interfere with manatee vision and appear to be a part of manatee anatomy beginning in the embryo.

"With that in mind, we are examining the tears to see what they exactly consist of, particularly with regard to the anti-infectious component," Samuelson said. "This may eventually be an opportunity to examine an individual manatee's state of health with regard to their immune system by analyzing their tears."

Tear analysis is being used in human ophthalmology and is in its early stages in veterinary medicine, he said.

Kendal Harr, D.V.M., assistant director of UF's Marine Mammal Medicine program, is collaborating with Samuelson on a large federal Fish and Wildlife Service research initiative to assess the immune



Harr

function of manatees at Homosassa Springs State Park. She is coordinating sample and data collection for the UF veterinary college as part of the project.

"We suspect that manatees' thick, mucousy tear film likely contains proteins, such as antibodies, that would prevent bacteria and other pathogens from causing disease," Harr said. "We are currently developing qualitative assays to measure antibodies in blood as well as in tear film and milk." 



PHOTO BY MIKE GARRISON

The unusually thick tear film found in manatees may one day provide clues to their health status.

By sampling manatees' tear film in addition to performing other standard tests, scientists think they might be able to more efficiently evaluate manatees' immune system function and better determine strategies for rescue, treatment and rehabilitation.

The current tear analysis project, believed to be the first of its kind, builds on work UF veterinary scientists published recently in the journal *Veterinary Ophthalmology* that described the abundance of blood vessels found in manatee corneas. Blood vessels could have a tendency to

areas that could otherwise be devastating."

Researchers speculate that tears, which can be collected without removing manatees from the water using a small, soft cotton swab, may one day be used along with or instead of blood tests to assess health status and to gauge whether the mammals were recently exposed to health threats such as red tide. Ongoing UF studies are exploring the relationship between the tear film and blood vessel formation.

"One of the findings of our earlier work was that there is absolutely no pathology involved in

Experts warn of rising death rate tied to pain patch abuse

By Denise Trunk

Drug abusers are increasingly turning to a slow-release form of a powerful painkiller for a quick and dangerous high, University of Florida researchers warn. The trend is raising alarm as the number of people dying from an overdose of the drug fentanyl, an opioid 100 times more potent than morphine, rises.

Addicts are misusing a clear patch that transfers a controlled dose of fentanyl through the skin into the



PHOTOS BY LISA BALTOZER

Dr. Bruce Goldberger in his UF laboratory.

bloodstream over the course of a few days, UF experts say. The adhesive patch is typically prescribed to treat postoperative pain or chronic pain conditions, but in some cases is being misused, often with deadly consequences.

“Because the patch is a sustained-release form of the drug, if one withdraws the 72 hours’ worth of drug and uses it in a form that it wasn’t designed to be used for, then it can rapidly result in death,” said the study’s lead researcher, Bruce Goldberger, Ph.D., director of toxicology and an associate professor in the department of pathology, immunology and laboratory medicine and of psychiatry in UF’s College of Medicine.

Patients who are prescribed the patch must be made aware of the potential dangers of misuse, Goldberger added.

Florida Department of Law Enforcement records cited in the UF study, presented this month in Orlando at the annual meeting of the College on Problems of Drug Dependence, show abuse of the patch resulted in the death of 115 people in Florida last year.

While the number of fatalities linked to the patch is still one-quarter the number associated with other drugs abused, such as methadone or hydrocodone, the number of sudden deaths from overdosing on fentanyl has been on the rise during the past few years — not just in Florida but also nationwide, researchers found.

“We have seen an increased use and abuse of the patch form of fentanyl for the past five years or so,” Goldberger said. “This is a recent finding related to the prescription of fentanyl patches.”

A clear patch attached to the skin slowly releases a powerful pain medication to the patient over a 72-hour period.



In many cases, people who died from overdosing on the drug were able to easily remove the full dose of fentanyl from the patch and take the entire three-day amount at once, either by injecting, ingesting or smoking it.

In some cases, the deceased sought a state of euphoria by applying multiple patches simultaneously.

It is not always clear from the law enforcement records where people who overdosed obtained the drug, whether from a prescription of their own or from one that had been stolen or otherwise not used according to doctor’s instructions, the group reported.

“Oftentimes we don’t know where the patch comes from. Sometimes it is from someone who had a prescription or it was purchased on the street or acquired from a friend, so it has been diverted to them,” Goldberger said.

Goldberger’s team, which includes Mark Gold, M.D., a distinguished professor with UF’s McKnight Brain Institute and chief of the division of addiction medicine, has been focused on the use and abuse of prescription drugs. In the past few years his team has seen increased abuse of methadone, and now fentanyl.

“Based on our study we’re recommending that physicians better educate their patients on the use of the patch, and, as a result, we might see lower numbers in fentanyl-related deaths in the state of Florida,” Goldberger said. **P**

Researchers create way to generate brain cells in lab

Regenerative medicine scientists at the University of Florida’s McKnight Brain Institute have created a system in rodent models that for the first time duplicates neurogenesis — the process of generating new brain cells — in a dish.

Writing in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, researchers describe a cell culture method that holds the promise of producing a limitless supply of a person’s own brain cells to potentially heal disorders such as Parkinson’s disease or epilepsy.

“It’s like an assembly line to manufacture and increase the number of brain cells,” said Bjorn Scheffler, M.D., a neuroscientist with UF’s College of Medicine. “We can basically take these cells and freeze them until we need them. Then we thaw them, begin a cell-generating process, and produce a ton of new neurons.”

If the discovery can translate to human applications, it will enhance efforts aimed at finding ways to use large numbers of a person’s own cells to restore

damaged brain function, partially because the technique produces cells in far greater amounts than the body can on its own.

In addition, the discovery pinpoints the cell that is truly what people refer to when they say “stem cell.” Although the term is used frequently to describe immature cells that are the building blocks of bones, skin, flesh and organs, the actual stem cell as it exists in the brain has been enigmatic, according to Dennis Steindler, Ph.D., executive director of the McKnight Brain Institute and senior author of the paper. Its general location was known, but it was an obscure species in a sea of cell types.

“We’ve isolated for the first time what appears to be the true candidate stem cell,” said Steindler, a neuroscientist and member of UF’s Program of Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine.

— John Pastor

Is excessive snoring keeping you up... or bringing you down?

By Lindy McCollum-Brounley

If you answer yes to having any of the following symptoms — restless nights, loud snoring or daytime sleepiness — you may be suffering from sleep apnea, a condition where the soft tissues in the back of the throat relax during sleep to obstruct breathing. Those with sleep apnea may stop breathing hundreds of times during the night, leading to frequent nighttime awakenings and subsequent daytime sleepiness.

Richard Berry, M.D., a professor of pulmonary medicine in the College of Medicine, and Charles Smith, D.D.S., associate clinical professor of operative dentistry in the College of Dentistry, collaborate to offer medical options and dental appliances that work together to result in a good night's sleep for many of their patients.

Sleep apnea affects 12 million Americans, according to the National Institutes of Health, and can have serious consequences such as cardiovascular disease and high blood pressure — not to mention separate bedrooms so sleepy spouses can rest in peace. Men, people who are overweight, and those who are overweight and over 40 are the groups most at risk for suffering from sleep apnea, but anyone, including children, can suffer from the affliction.

Fortunately, Berry and Smith can offer several options to greatly diminish sleep apnea, the most effective of which is Continuous Positive Airway Pressure. CPAP patients wear a mask while sleeping that is connected to a machine that funnels a continuous flow of air into the nose and mouth at a pressure high enough to keep the airway open.

Some patients, however, find sleeping with CPAP uncomfortable and reject it in favor of other options. This was the case of a 45-year-old woman who was referred to Berry and Smith by her primary physician. They published a report of her unusual experience in a recent issue of the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*.

The patient found herself falling asleep at her desk at work in the afternoons because her sleep apnea kept her up at night. After trying CPAP and finding it to be too uncomfortable, the patient was referred for uvulopalatopharyngoplasty, or UPPP, surgery to remove excess, fatty soft tissue from her palate.

After surgery, the patient's snoring and sleep apnea were dramatically improved, but the patient still experienced some sleep apnea five months after the surgery. Berry and Smith decided a mandibular repositioning device should be used to alleviate the patient's occasional postsurgery apnea. MRDs are dental appliances used to adjust the angle of the lower jaw, pushing it forward to keep the airway open. Smith — an international expert in the fabrication and application of MRDs to relieve sleep apnea — adjusted the MRD over the course of several weeks to achieve optimum performance, resulting in the patient reporting no afternoon napping at work three months after beginning use of the

MRD. A follow-up sleep study demonstrated the patient's arterial blood oxygenation was significantly improved during sleep as a result of the combined UPPP/MRD therapy. **P**



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLES SMITH

A dental appliance called a mandibular repositioning device, or MRD, can be fitted to sleep apnea patients to help maintain an open airway. The MRD relieves sleep apnea by pushing the lower jaw down and out, tightening soft tissues that would otherwise close during sleep to block the airway.



PHOTO BY SAM BRILL

Dr. Charles Smith demonstrates how the CPAP is fitted. The CPAP blows a continuous flow of air into the airway while the patient sleeps, preventing soft tissues from relaxing enough to close the airway.

What's your snore score?

According to the American Sleep Apnea Association, your answers to this sleep quiz will help you decide whether you may suffer from sleep apnea:

1. Are you a loud, habitual snorer?
2. Do you feel tired and groggy on awakening?
3. Are you often sleepy during waking hours, and/or can you fall asleep quickly?
4. Are you overweight and/or do you have a large neck?
5. Have you been observed to choke, gasp or hold your breath during sleep?

If you or someone close to you answers yes to any of the questions above, you should discuss your symptoms with your physician or sleep specialist.

For more information, visit the American Sleep Apnea Association at www.sleepapnea.org.

Deadly aortic disease difficult for doctors to detect

By April Frawley Birdwell



Beaver

Aortic disease kills nearly 15,000 people in the United States each year, but the rarity and complexity of this deadly disorder make accurately diagnosing it difficult for doctors in the health-care trenches, UF researchers have found.

UF surgeons who specialize in treating the disease studied the charts of 100 patients who were transferred to Shands at UF medical center with suspected aortic ailments and found that about one-quarter of them initially had been misdiagnosed, delaying treatment for some and sending others into the operating room needlessly.

The study, which appears this month in *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, suggests many doctors who do not routinely treat aortic disease have difficulty distinguishing between the two most common culprits, an aortic aneurysm and an aortic

dissection. An aneurysm is a bulge in the aorta that can rupture, while a dissection is a sudden tear in the arterial wall. “Three’s Company” star John Ritter died in 2003 after suffering an aortic dissection, drawing national attention to aortic disease.

But even a slight variance in diagnosis can mean the difference between medical treatment and emergency surgery, said Thomas Beaver, M.D., a UF assistant professor of cardiovascular and thoracic surgery in the College of Medicine and the study’s lead author.

“When you start talking about doing major thoracic aortic surgery on somebody, you really want to be sure what you’re doing and where it started,” he said. “For people who aren’t as familiar with it, it can be more challenging. There are subtle nuances.”

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 14,746 people died in 2002 from either an aortic dissection or aneurysm, but most community

doctors are not exposed to these disorders often enough to discern the subtleties between them, Beaver said. At Shands, where many patients are referred for aortic disease treatment, thoracic surgeons perform nearly 200 aortic procedures a year.

Increased education in medical schools and more continuing education for practicing physicians could improve how doctors diagnose aortic disease, the researchers suggest.

Genetics could be the best indicator right now for preventing and treating aortic disease before an aortic tear or rupture, Martin said. People with relatives who have had aortic aneurysms or dissections should be examined for signs of the disease.

“It’s a curable disease,” said Tomas Martin, M.D., a UF associate professor of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery. “And it’s much better treated on an elective basis than on an emergency basis.” **P**

Fulbright Fellow leaves lasting impression on UF colleagues

By Jill Pease



Dirk

Fulbright Fellow Judith Dirk has made remarkable strides since arriving at UF last August from Germany.

Hosted by the department of clinical and health psychology at the College of Public Health and Health Professions, Dirk has taken a number of classes, finished her thesis, developed several manuscripts for publication and become involved socially in the department, said her mentor Michael Marsiske, Ph.D., an associate professor of clinical and health psychology.

“The most amazing thing about Judith is — despite the fact that she works very hard — she also really soaked up the culture and colleagues,” Marsiske said. “She’s been a fixture at several colloquia and is known by name by people throughout the college and university. She has really made the most of this experience.”

Dirk has been working with Marsiske to examine the relationship between older adults’ daily activities and their cognition, mood and pain. She analyzed the daily activity diaries completed by a group of older adults over a 60-day period. Jason Allaire, Ph.D., of North Carolina State University, was another collaborator on the project.

“We found that the more active seniors are, the more likely they are to feel emotionally positive and to report less pain,” Dirk said. “If an older adult is experiencing positive mood, he or she will participate in more leisure activities like reading books, going to the theater and visiting with friends. These kinds of activities are important because they can help to maintain and enhance physical and cognitive skills.”

The daily activity diaries also gave Dirk a crash course on American life.

“I didn’t know what a Sam’s Club was,” Dirk laughed. “This experience has been a real cultural journey for me.”

Although Dirk will return to Germany this summer to complete her psychology degree (equivalent to a master’s) at Dresden University, she plans to make good use of e-mail to continue collaborating with UF researchers. She will soon be applying to doctoral programs in Europe and the United States, and UF is high on her list. **P**

Global Gators meet in Belgium for new developments in clinical pharmacy

The College of Pharmacy held its fifth symposium for new developments in clinical pharmacy June 4 in Leuven, Belgium. More than 50 pharmacy educators and researchers who call themselves Global Gators attended the collaborative meeting hosted by UF and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. The symposium, organized by Hartmut Derendorf, Ph.D., a UF professor and chairman of the pharmaceuticals department, is held biennially at a European university. Pharmacy researchers from Belgium, Germany, Austria, Poland, Iceland and the United States presented clinical pharmacy research findings related to drug delivery, drug quality and safety, and pharmacy education topics.

At the close of the daylong meeting, attendees were transported to a reception at the Leuven Town Hall, where Mayor Louis Tobback welcomed the educators and visitors to his city. Symposium organizers Guy Van den Mooter, Ph.D., from the University of Leuven, and Derendorf presented to the mayor a gold gator pin declaring him an honorary Global Gator. **P**



PHOTO BY LINDA HOMEWOOD

William Millard, Ph.D., (left) executive associate dean of the College of Pharmacy and Hartmut Derendorf, Ph.D., UF pharmaceuticals department chairman, along with Guy Van den Mooter, Ph.D., of the University of Leuven, present a gator pin to Leuven Mayor Louis Tobback (right).

Florida Veterinary Medicine Association Scholarships

Dr. Deke Beusse, (left), with Shale Kenney, Cathy Engel and Dr. Stephen Shores, FVMA president. Kenny and Engel received Florida Veterinary Medicine Association scholarships this year in honor of Beusse, a retired director of UF's Marine Mammal Medicine Program and a longtime member of FVMA.



PHOTO BY SARAH CAREY

UF veterinary college names 2005 Distinguished Award winners

By Sarah Carey

Large and small animal medicine were equally represented in the 2005 UF College of Veterinary Medicine Alumni Council Distinguished Awards program with the selection of a dairy reproduction specialist and a small animal internist and hospital administrator for two key awards.

The program spotlights distinguished alumni, faculty and friends of the college. This year, two awards were given: one for alumni achievement and one for distinguished service to the veterinary profession.

CARLOS RISCO, D.V.M., a member of the college's class of 1980 — its first graduating class — received the Alumni Achievement Award. Risco, a professor in the college's department of large animal clinical sciences, is an internationally recognized lecturer on dairy cattle. A board-certified theriogenologist, Risco has twice been selected Large Animal Clinician of the Year by UF veterinary students. He also received the Daniels Pharmaceuticals Young Clinical Investigator Award in 1996.

For many years, Risco has been actively involved in the college's alumni council, serving as a liaison between members of the class of 1980 and college faculty and administrators. Prior to coming to UF, Risco spent 10 years in private practice at a premier dairy practice in California.

MICHAEL SCHAEER, D.V.M., a professor of small animal medicine at the college and associate chair of the department of small animal clinical sciences, received the Distinguished Service Award. Schaeer, who also serves as associate chief of staff of UF's Small Animal Hospital, oversees the day-to-day workings of an organization that provides veterinary services to more than 10,000 companion animals a year. Prior to coming to work for UF in 1978, Schaeer worked at the prestigious Animal Medical Center in New York City.

Schaeer, who is double-boarded in veterinary internal medicine and in emergency and critical care, has received multiple Teacher of the Year and Clinician of the Year awards from UF veterinary students and was a 1994 recipient of the university's Superior Accomplishments Award. He also received UF's Blue Key Award for Distinguished Teaching in 2001.

The awards were presented May 28 at the college's commencement. **P**



PHOTO BY SARAH CAREY

Dr. Michael Schaeer (left) and Dr. Carlos Risco.

HSC Service Pin Awards

On June 2, HSC employees were recognized for their long-term commitment and dedication to the University of Florida with mementos of the university. The five-, 10- and 15-year recipients received a service pin, as did the 20- and 25-year recipients, who were also given a Gator hat and a paperweight. The 30-year recipients received the same gifts as the 20- and 25-years recipients plus a \$100 check, and the 35-year employees received the same mementos and a \$150 check.

Dentistry

15 Years

Ronda Anderson
Cynthia Bachus
Opal Fullmore
Jennifer Gollwitzer
Linda Kubitz
Patricia Matthews

20 Years

Beverly Mays
Lee Mintz
Carolyn Peragine
Mitchell Salisbury

25 Years

Jacqueline Hopkins
Gloria Pagington
Jerilynn Stillwell
Ken Tomlinson

30 Years

Joan Ridgell

Medicine

15 Years

Judith Allen
Patrick Anthony
Cynthia Batie
Mary Blundell
Alice Boyette
Elizabeth Bruce
Vince Chiodo
Linda Curry
Donna Davis
Dorothy Davis
Barbara Debarr
Margaret Dermott
Bridget Desue
Jana Dew
Laura Dickinson
Margaret Dukes
Mary Eckert
Pamela Feaster
Nigel Flinchum
Candace Fossum
Nancy Hargrove
Laurie Hartnett
Shirley Hatch
Mary Hoffman
Jessie Hoffner
Mary Hoyt
Erin Jackson
Donna Johnson
Songa Jones
Kendra Kuck
Inez Lucas
Lesley Myers
Mary Newman
Glennice Peters
David Pittman
Glenda Railey
Rhoda Reed
Lori Robinson
Vicki Sabatella
Hazel Shaw
Ronald Smith
Robbie Stringfellow
Sherri Swilley

Wendy Walters
Rebecca Wichman
Naomi Williams
Charlotte Wood

20 Years

Judith Adams
Sandra Clark
Ronald Dearinger
Kirsten Faircloth
Shirley Filer
Linda Galloway
Judith Harrell
Shirlene Harvey
Mary Heffin
Lettie Herman
Cynthia Karle
Salli Kimberly
Margo Kramer
Patricia McKey
Sharon Milton-Simmons
Deana Nance
Winston Poulton
Shirley Rushing
Imogene Seeger
Patricia Siter
Beverly Watson
Barbara West

25 Years

Faye Brown
Donna Desmond-Kuhn
Vicki Durrance
Fred Grant
Deborah Hodge
Valerie Holmes
Georgia Johnson
Mary Opel
Lynn Raynor

30 Years

Ruth Klockowski
Jerilyn Stoner
Deborah Wetherington

35 Years

Kathryn Smith

Nursing

5 Years

Kenneth Foote

15 Years

Cornelia Frazier

35 Years

Dorothy Joseph

Pharmacy

5 Years

Susan Griffith

10 Years

Laura Faux
Deborah Kemp
Janet True

15 Years

Samuel Algee
Yun-Ju He

20 Years

Gladys Kallman
Tim Vinson

30 Years

Terry Whisenant

Public Health and Health Professions

5 Years

Chiara Carmolli-Anderson
Kevin Hanson
Vera Hemphill
Mary Porumbescu
Holiday Rogers
Robin Shenk
Wendy Thornton

10 Years

Sarah Hayden
Tonia Lambert

15 Years

Diane Johns

20 Years

Jessie Runge

30 Years

Vikki Carter

Veterinary Medicine

15 Years

Judy Chastain
Sharon Hewett
Elise Lee
Danielle Mauragis
Mary Ring
Brenda Sigmon

20 Years

Jay Gilbreath
Sandra King
Brett Rice
Anthony Ross
Ana Zometa

25 Years

Debra Couch
Frances Edwards
Kathleen McCartin
Virginia Simmons

30 Years

Annie Hahn

Animal Care Services

15 Years

Angie Boykin
Joanne Gordon
Leonard McDonald



PHOTO BY EMS

Dorothy Joseph, a senior accountant with the College of Nursing, Ulysses Ellis Jr. with the Physical Plant Division and Kathryn Smith in the College of Medicine were recognized for 35 years of service.

20 Years

Alex Trapp

Physical Plant Division

5 Years

Kenneth Berry
Ayesha Britt
Donald Blair
Steven Craig
Tamiru Gebremariam
James Gibson
Gary Morrison

10 Years

Rodney Rucker
Donald Wood

15 Years

Leslie Becker
David Crabtree
Ira Cruce
Leo Gengler
Ike Smith III
Luis Vazquez
Allen Wade

20 Years

Jeffrey Fletcher
Clifford Pegler
Jimmy Singletary Jr.

25 Years

Gerald Hoyt
Earnestine Murphy
William Richardson
Mary Smith
Dorothy Strong

30 Years

Sarah Bradley
Bennie Crawford
Adell Davis
William Privett
Mae Richardson
Joann Ryles
Lewis R. Scott
James Taylor

35 Years

Ulysses Ellis Jr.

Senior Vice President, Health Affairs

15 Years

Donald David
William Peel
Dorothy Smith

20 Years

Daniel Arrington
George Barnett
Ann Case
Cassandra Jackson
Robert Lockwood
Lisa Vannocker
Kathryn Ward

25 Years

Lisa Booher
William Silk
Griffen Sundeen

30 Years

Mae O'Neal

For a complete list of winners and additional photos, visit www.news.health.ufl.edu.

2005 RESEARCH DAY AWARD CEREMONIES

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

College of Medicine Research Day's 30th annual Medical Guild-sponsored graduate student research competition was held April 27. Six students received a cash award from the UF Medical Guild based on the judges' final rankings: one Gold Medal finalist (\$1,000), two Silver Medal finalists (\$400), and three Bronze Medal finalists (\$300).



From left, SEAN KEARNS, ANN GRISWOLD, CHRISTINA NORRIS, PADRAIC LEVINGS, STEPHANIE AMICI, ANTONIO AMELIO.

Gold Medal Finalist

ANTONIO AMELIO, Genetics
Identification of a Chromatin Insulator Located within the Herpes Simplex Virus Type-1 (HSV-1) LAT Region

Silver Medal Finalists:

STEPHANIE AMICI, Neuroscience
Peripheral Myelin Protein 22 is a Novel Binding Partner for the $\alpha 6 \beta 4$ Integrin Complex in Schwann Cells

CHRISTINA NORRIS, Physiology & Pharmacology
Impact of Tumor Vascularity on Response to Radiation Treatment

Bronze Medal Finalists:

PADRAIC LEVINGS, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology

In Vitro Analysis of the Establishment and Maintenance of b-globin Locus Chromatin Structure

ANN GRISWOLD, Immunology & Microbiology
Identification of a Novel Mechanism for Ammonia Production in Streptococcus mutans: Implications for Virulence

SEAN KEARNS, Molecular Cell Biology
A More Complete In Vitro Parkinson's Model: Slice Culture Bioassay for Modeling Maintenance and Repair of the Nigrostriatal Circuit
Three faculty awards were given:

Basic Science Award

NASSER CHEGINI, Ph.D.
Department of OB/GYN

Clinical Science Award

WESTLEY H. REEVES, M.D.
Department of Medicine

Lifetime Achievement Award

RICHARD T. SMITH, M.D.
Department of Pathology

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

18th Annual Research Fair

Sixteen winning research posters were chosen from 50 entries. The winners each received \$500 to use toward travel expenses to a scientific or professional conference. They include:

Behavioral Science Category

ADAM HIRSH
Sex differences and construct redundancy of the coping strategies questionnaire – catastrophizing subscale

LINDSEY KIRSCH
Examining apathy and depression in Parkinson's Disease

MOHAN KRISHNAN
Relationships between medication levels and depressive symptoms in the active pilot study

MICHAEL J. LARSON
Cognitive control dysfunction in severe TBI: an ERP investigation

VANESSA A. MILSOM
Weight loss improves functional mobility in older obese women

MARY E. MURAWSKI
Treatment of obesity in underserved rural settings (TOURS): effects on quality of life

EVA R. SERBER
Depression and quality of life among hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy patients

UTAKA SPRINGER
Startle modulation via processing of emotional semantic knowledge conveyed by faces

DAVID A. STIGGE-KAUFMAN
Behavioral and neural correlates of working memory interference due to anxiety and affective processing

Health Services Category

KEZIA AWADZI
Adherence to breast cancer screening guidelines among women in the rural South

PRAVEEN SAXENA
Forecasting the demand for emergency department services: a comparison of three forecasting models

Rehabilitation Science Category

CHITRALAKSHMI K. BALASUBRAMANIAN
Fast walking speeds: implications for improving functional mobility after stroke

NEETI C. PATHARE
In vivo bioenergetics of the mouse hindlimb muscles following immobilization

AMY D. RODRIGUEZ
Intensive semantic treatment of anomia in fluent aphasia: preliminary data

PRITHVI K. SHAH
Loading-induced changes in the soleus muscle following incomplete spinal cord injury using magnetic resonance imaging

MICHELLE WOODBURY
Can "normal" post-stroke upper extremity reach be trained?

Faculty Leadership Award

CHRISTY HARRIS LEMAK, Ph.D.
Associate professor, department of health services research, management and policy

COLLEGE OF NURSING

Research Day

Top Honors, Graduate Research

Doctoral student **AMANDA FLOETKE**, M.S.N., A.R.N.P.
Age Differences in Self-Reported Pain Among Older Adults

Top Honors, Undergraduate Research

B.S.N. senior **KAMILA PILCICKA**
An Analysis of the Effects of Arginine on Wound Healing

COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

Third Annual UFCD Research Day D.M.D. Division

D.M. YATES, Z.T. WEN and R.A. BURNE,
Microbial Cell-Cell Interaction and Virulence Regulation by Streptococcus mutans
Department of Oral Biology

M.S./Resident Division

B. JAFARNIA, K.J. SÖDERHOLM and M. GUELMANN,
Light Penetration and Bond Strength of Magicfil™ to Primary Molars
Department of Pediatric Dentistry

Ph.D./Postdoc Division

C.M. CAMPBELL, R.R. EDWARDS, B.A. HASTIE and R.B. FILLINGIM,
Age and Sex Differences in Pain Perception: The Role of Gender Role Stereotypes

Department of Operative Dentistry, Division of Public Health Services and Research

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

18th Annual Research Showcase & Awards Recognition Day

Oral Competition – \$600 award Senior Division

KE REN

Mechanisms Underlying 7 Nicotinic Receptor Mediated Cytoprotection
Pharmaceutics

Senior Division

ALEKSANDAR TODOROVIC

Discovery of Potent mMC1R Agonists with Prolonged Activity at Human Melanocytes
Medicinal Chemistry

Junior Division – \$600 cash award

JAMES SACCO

Sulfonation of Environmental Chemicals and their Metabolites in the Polar Bear (Ursus Maritimus)
Medicinal Chemistry

Levitt Division

TOBIAS GERHARD

Potential Benefit of Nesiritide after Adult Open Heart Surgery
Pharmacy Health Care Administration

Poster Competition

Graduate Student – \$300 award

NATHALIE TOUSSAINT

Development of Brain Tumor Organotypic Cultures for Characterizing DNA Polymer/Plasmid Mediated Gene Transfer
Pharmaceutics

PREETI YADAVA

Pharmaceutics of siRNA Delivery
Pharmaceutics

Pharmacy Student – \$300 award

ANGELA HATTER

Evaluation of Novel Anti-inflammatory Activity of Sigma Receptor Ligands in Brain Immune Cells
Pharmacodynamics

STORMY UY

A Retrospective Study of Drotrecogin Alfa (activated) for the Treatment of Severe Sepsis
St. Petersburg Campus

Postdoctoral Fellow Division

\$300 award

DR. LI-QUAN WANG

Sulfotransferase 2A1 Forms Estradiol-17-sulfate and Celecoxib Switches the Dominant Product from Estradiol-3-sulfate to Estradiol-17-sulfate
Medicinal Chemistry

THIRD ANNUAL WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH DAY POSTER PRESENTATION

Best Overall Faculty Poster

RITA TORTO, Ph.D.

Central leptin insufficiency produced by ovariectomy stimulates hyperphagia and adiposity
Physiology and Functional Genomics

Best Overall Graduate Student Poster

COLLEEN MARTINEZ, B.S.

Low-intensity exercise therapy for women with peripheral arterial disease: is it beneficial, and can it be performed in community-based clinics and fitness centers?

Department of Health Education and Behavior

Best Poster on Reproductive Health

THERESA MEDRANO, M.S.

Activation of th1 pro-inflammatory cytokine expression by aryl hydrocarbon receptor (ahr) ligands in human uterine endometrial cells
Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics

Best Poster on Cardiovascular Health

RHONDA COOPER-DEHOFF, Pharm D.

Blood pressure control and cardiovascular outcomes in Hispanic women with coronary artery disease hypertension: findings from the International Verapamil-trandolapril Study
College of Medicine

Division of Cardiovascular Medicine

Best Poster on Health Behavior Research

BARBARA HASTIE, Ph.D.

Gender differences for Latinos in cancer screenings and preventive care
College of Dentistry

Public Health Service & Research

Best Poster on Cancer Research

AMAL KHOURY, Ph.D.

Predictors of breast cancer screening in African American and white women

Department of Health Services Research, Management and Policy

Best Poster on Neuromusculoskeletal Research

BARBARA HASTIE, Ph.D.

Reliability and sex differences of experimental pain responses across multiple sessions
College of Dentistry

Public Health Service & Research

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY

MEDICINE RESEARCH DAY AWARDS

Presentation, poster and publication Phi Zeta winners.

Best Platform Presentation by a Veterinary Student

KEVIN D. COLEMAN

Regulation of the transporter SNAT1 by hypoxia: A possible mechanism for neuroprotection during cerebral hypoxia-ischemia.

Best Platform Presentation by a Graduate Student

LARA R. DERUISSEAU

Recombinant adeno-associated virus containing acid-alpha glucosidase as a possible treatment for respiratory and central nervous system pathology in a mouse model of glycogen storage disease type II.

Best Platform Presentation by a Resident

LEANNE N. TWOMEY

The effect of intense exercise and excitement on neutrophil phagocytosis and oxidative burst in racing greyhounds.

Best Poster Presentation by a Veterinary Student

AMY CUDA TANIS

The role of the periaqueductal gray in mediating hemorrhagic sympathoinhibition in unanesthetized rats.

Best Poster Presentation by a Graduate Student

YANG-LING CHOU

Respiratory load perception with elevated background airway resistance: RREP with resistive background in healthy adults.

Best Poster Presentation by a Resident/ Intern

SANDRA TOU

Echocardiographic estimation of systemic systolic blood pressure in dogs with mild mitral regurgitation.

Best Clinical Research Publication of 2005 Award

JAMES WELLEHAN

His research paper on varanid herpesvirus 1 in green tree monitors was selected as best academic paper by a postgraduate veterinarian in training from the College of Veterinary Medicine.



Winners of the 3rd annual Women's Health Research Day Awards from left: AMAL KHOURY, Ph.D., M.P.H.; BARBARA HASTIE, Ph.D.; RHONDA COOPER-DEHOFF, Pharm.D.; RITA TORTO, Ph.D.; KATHLEEN SHIVERICK, Ph.D., standing in for THERESA MEDRANO, M.S.; and COLLEEN MARTINEZ, B.S.

DISTINCTIONS

DENTISTRY

IKRAMUDDIN AUKHIL,

B.D.S., M.S., has been appointed chair of the department of periodontology. Aukhil comes to UF from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Dentistry, where he served as professor of periodontology and director of UNC's predoctoral program in periodontology. The college's search committee selected Aukhil based on his clinical and administrative ability and the opportunity to create new collaborations between clinician-scientists and the college's internationally respected molecular and cell biologists. Aukhil assumes the chair from Herbert Towle, D.D.S., who has stepped down to serve as director of the periodontics residency program.



ARTHUR E. "BUDDY" CLARK, D.M.D., Ph.D., M.E.,

has been appointed chair of the department of prosthodontics, assuming the position from Arthur Nimmo, D.D.S., who stepped down as chair for personal reasons. Clark, who has served as associate chair of the department since 2001 and previously served as chair between 1991 to 1996, is a former executive associate dean of the college. Nimmo will remain on the college's faculty, concentrating his efforts on D.M.D. curriculum instruction and prosthodontic research.



THOMAS C. PORTER, D.M.D.,

clinical associate professor of community-based programs and director of the college's St. Petersburg Clinic, has been recognized as a diplomat of the American Board of Special Care Dentistry with proficiency in the areas of hospital dentistry, dentistry for persons with disabilities and geriatric dentistry.



DANIELA RODRIQUES P. SILVA, D.D.S., M.S.,

an assistant professor of pediatric dentistry, has been appointed interim director of the pediatric dentistry residency program. Silva, originally from Brazil, earned her dental degree from the University of São Paulo and her master's in pediatric dentistry from the University of Michigan. She became board-certified in pediatric dentistry in 2003. She joined UF in 2004.



MEDICINE

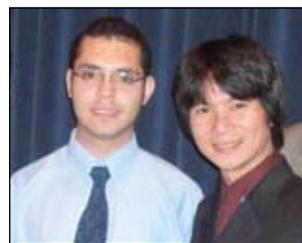
ALLISON ARTHUR, KRISTY BREUHL, MATTHEW BUTLER, KAREN CREVIER, MATTHEW CUNNINGHAM, ERIC EDWARDS, CYRUS MONROE, ALAN TESSON and BALIGH YEHIA, all third-year medical students, were selected for membership in UF's chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha in April. The students distinguished by the AOA, a national medical honor society, were eligible for election based upon academic achievement, service to the university and community, and personal character.

ALLISON BRINDLE, M.D., a co-chief resident of pediatrics, was named the Florida medical resident of the year May 20 at the Florida Medical Business Golden Stethoscope Awards.

Brindle came to the university in 2001 to complete her residency training. While here she has implemented a mortality and morbidity conference for pediatrics, developed curriculum for the advocacy and community pediatrics rotation, and improved an online teaching conference so users could access it from remote locations. Brindle has also worked with her colleagues to promote healthier choices in school vending machines.



FIRAS KOBEISSY and FANLIANG ZHANG were each honored with an Alec Courtelis Award at the International Student Academic Awards April 21.



The Alec Courtelis Award is presented to just three international students from the entire university each year to honor their academic accomplishments and community service.

Kobeissy (L) and Zhang are doctoral candidates in the interdisciplinary program in biomedical sciences. Kobeissy is completing his dissertation research in the departments of neuroscience and psychiatry. Outside of research, he organized Gainesville's first Palestinian Film Festival.

Zhang is completing his dissertation research in the biochemistry and molecular biology department. He has volunteered for the Friendship Association of Chinese Students and Scholars and for the Pride Community Center of North Central Florida.

ELOISE M. HARMAN, M.D., a professor in the division of pulmonary and critical care medicine, was honored May 20 with an Outstanding Clinician Award at the American Thoracic Society's 100th Anniversary Conference in San Diego.

It's the second year in a row Harman has received the award.

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Harman graduated from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in 1970. She stayed at Johns Hopkins to complete her residency and then moved on to Cornell University after obtaining a fellowship there. She came to UF in 1976.

Harman said she is "committed to providing excellent and compassionate patient care" and spreading her passion for clinical medicine to medical students, residents and fellows.



Neuroscientist receives Research Foundation professorship

ROGER REEP, Ph.D., a neuroscientist at the College of Veterinary Medicine and a researcher with UF's McKnight Brain Institute, has received a UF Research Foundation professorship.

Sponsored by the university's Division of Sponsored Research, the professorships are awarded to tenured faculty members campuswide for distinguished research and scholarship. The honor includes a \$5,000 salary increase each year for three years and a one-time \$3,000 award for research support.

Reep, a professor in the college's department of physiological sciences, studies spatial neglect, a syndrome that robs stroke victims of the awareness of half their world. During 20 years of research, Reep and his colleagues developed and used a model in rats that allows for the study of spatial neglect syndrome.

Reep also studies evolution of the brain and recently has focused on the manatee brain, in hopes of developing insights that can help in conservation of the protected animals.

The UF Research Foundation professorships were created by the foundation to recognize faculty members who have established a distinguished record of research and scholarship that is expected to lead to continuing distinction in their field.

Reep has been a member of the UF veterinary faculty since 1984.



PHOTO BY KRISTEN BARTLETT

— Sarah Carey

MARVIN A. DEWAR, M.D., J.D., has been appointed associate dean of continuing medical education. He replaced the interim associate dean, Floyd Pennington, June 1.

Dewar has been a faculty member in the department of community health and family medicine since 1988. He remains an associate professor in this department and also serves as vice president for affiliations and medical affairs for Shands HealthCare.

Dewar has been listed among "The Best Doctors in America" and "The Best Doctors in Florida" and has received several teacher-of-the-year awards. He also has served as a medical consultant for the Governor's Academic Task Force for the Review of the Insurance and Tort Systems. As associate dean of continuing medical education, Dewar said he would like to further improve continuing medical education at the university.

NURSING

LINDA SIGSBY, MS, RN, CNOR, an assistant professor, recently received the 2005 Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses Journal writing award. The annual award is sponsored by the Medi-Flex company and recognizes excellence in writing.



Sigsby was honored for her 2004 article "Perioperative Clinical Learning Experiences." The article described how perioperative clinical experiences for nursing students meet academic accreditation standards set by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and the National League for Nursing.

Know a person of distinction?
Please send your information to dtrunk@ufl.edu

PUBLIC HEALTH & HEALTH PROFESSIONS

SARAH COOK, a graduate student in the department of clinical and health psychology, received a \$10,000 scholarship from the AARP Scholars Program to support her research on neurocognitive predictors of older driver behavior. She works with Associate Professor Michael Marsiske, Ph.D., and the UF National Older Driver Research and Training Center.



MICHELLE HARWOOD, a graduate student in the department of clinical and health psychology, is one of three nationwide winners of the 2005 Dissertation Award, presented by the Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment. Harwood received \$2,000 to support her pediatrics research.



ALICE HOLMES, Ph.D., a professor in the department of communicative disorders, has received specialty certification for cochlear implant audiologists from the American Board of Audiology. Fewer than 25 audiologists nationwide have been awarded the certification, which verifies broad-based knowledge of cochlear implants and competency in several key areas of the implant process including counseling, device operation, troubleshooting and rehabilitation.



BILLY JEFFRIES, a student in the Master of Public Health and sociology doctoral programs, was awarded the American Public Health Association's 2005 Excellence in Abstract Submission award for student members. He also received the association's HIV/AIDS Section Student Scholarship.



Atkinson receives national diabetes award

MARK ATKINSON, Ph.D., a UF diabetes researcher, has been given the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's highest honor, the David Rumbough Award.



The annual award, established in 1974 by actress Dina Merrill in honor of her late son, David, acknowledges outstanding achievement and commitment to diabetes research and service to the foundation.

Atkinson is the Sebastian Family/American Diabetes Association professor for diabetes research at the College of Medicine and directs the Center for Immunology and Transplantation and the JDRF Gene Therapy Center for the Prevention of Diabetes and Its Complications at UF and the University of Miami.

He is an internationally recognized authority on type 1 diabetes, with particular interests in disease prediction and prevention, the role of environment in initiation of the disease, stem cells and pancreatic regeneration, and the use of gene therapy as a means to cure the disease and prevent its complications.

Atkinson was among the first to show that administering insulin to mice genetically destined to develop diabetes could thwart the errant immune system's battle to destroy insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. His published findings helped pave the way for the massive National Institutes of Health Diabetes Prevention Trial, which tested the approach in people.

He also was one of the earliest investigators of glutamic acid decarboxylase, or GAD, an enzyme generated by the insulin-producing islet cells of the pancreas. Patients with type 1 diabetes often develop autoantibodies to GAD as the immune system turns against the body's islet cells. Atkinson then helped develop a standardized way to use the presence of these GAD autoantibodies to predict diabetes.

— Melanie Fridl Ross

Educators from the Medical University of Gdansk, Poland visit the College of Nursing



JANUSZ MORYS, M.D., Ph.D., dean of the faculty of medicine at the Medical University of Gdansk and Aleksandra Gaworska-Krzeminska, dr n. med., head of the department of nursing at the Medical University of Gdansk, recently visited the University of Florida to discuss future educational collaborations with the College of Nursing. During their four-day visit, the faculty toured many areas of campus, notably HSC facilities such as the Iona M. Pettengill Nursing Resource Center and the McKnight Brain Institute, in addition to Shands at UF. The faculty at the Medical University of Gdansk welcomed Dean **KATHLEEN ANN LONG** and Eminent Scholar **CAROL REED ASH** to their campus last fall.

During their visit, Gaworska-Krzeminska was inducted as the first international member of the Alpha Theta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International, a worldwide nursing honor society.

Dr. Janusz Morys, left, Dean Kathleen Ann Long, Dr. Gaworska-Krzeminska and Alpha Theta Chapter President and UF faculty Dr. Rose Nealis after the Sigma Theta Tau induction ceremony.

LOOKIN' AT YOU



Recent graduates of the College of Public Health and Health Professions — bachelor of health science degree students Kelly Haskin (left), Ameen Baker, Claudia Mena and Lynette Guimond — were honored during graduation week at UF President Bernie Machen's annual reception recognizing outstanding students. Students were selected for their significant contributions to UF through academic, leadership or service work.



Wade Douglas, the project superintendent with the construction company Milton J. Wood, prepares a pedestrian walkway as part of a traffic detour that will reroute vehicles on Center Drive.

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Sammie Brooks, a program assistant for the Dean's Office in the College of Nursing, takes a pause to smile for the POST.



NEW DIGITS

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