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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE UF



Meet **Dr. Guzick**

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On the Cover

Certain highly specialized UF programs in Gainesville and Jacksonville have become hot spots for patients from across the country and globe. In this month's issue of The POST, we highlight a few of these programs and explore how health tourism is affecting patients. Cover illustration by Josh Clark.



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Use a home computer?

READ THIS!

UP FRONT



Attention those of you who use personally owned computers to access HSC networks or servers: as of July 1, you are responsible for configuring your computer with security controls. This means taking measures like using strong passwords, having up-to-date antivirus software and not installing peer-to-peer software. For a computer security checklist and attestation form, visit security.health.ufl.edu. Users who are unable to implement the required security controls are advised not to use personally owned computers to access the HSC network and servers.

"Overall, the average user who uses a home computer or a personally owned laptop to download and store HSC restricted data must obtain authorization from their dean, director or department chair to continue to do so and must ensure their computer meets certain minimum security requirements," said Colleen Ebel, chief of information security for the HSC. "We expect there to be a minimal number of people who actually need to store restricted information on home computers or personally owned laptops."

Ebel said the rule is different for users who only intend to access e-mail or other restricted data through a Web browser. In this case, users' access method must be approved by their unit information security manager. E-mail programs and browsers copy what you are viewing on the hard drive, putting UF at risk. Ebel said you need to consult with your unit ISM to advise you of an appropriate and secure access method. — *Jessica Metzger* 

Post it

WAY TO GO, MOM!

Jessica Cotes' family had reason to cheer May 1. Her mother, Luby Bojorge; sister, Maria Jose Contreras; husband, Julio Cotes; and the couple's 11-month-old daughter, Cassandra, all celebrated as Cotes received her doctor of pharmacy degree along with nearly 300 classmates at UF's commencement services. Cotes commuted from the family's home in Miami to attend the UF College of Pharmacy St. Petersburg distance campus. For the occasion, Cotes' great-grandmother made a matching cap and gown for the baby, who was born during her mother's final year of pharmacy school.



ATTENTION SPORTS MOMS AND DADS:

Say your son is a linebacker on the high school football team or your daughter is the star goalie on the soccer team. He or she suffers a concussion after a brutal hit on the field. What happens next? Do they go to practice the next day? Play the next week? Actually, they should stay off the field for a month because of the risk of developing a brain hemorrhage, but how many parents know that? And what about how to prepare a teenager for competition or what types of foods they need or how much fluid they should drink before, during and after a game? Often parents and teens just aren't equipped with the information a student-athlete needs to be healthy and successful, says John Ross, M.D., a UF professor emeritus of pediatrics. That's why the UF College of Medicine department of pediatrics and the Children's Miracle Network are holding a free information seminar for parents, athletes and coaches on Aug. 29. The session will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Hilton UF Conference Center and will feature talks on sports issues such as training and conditioning, injury prevention, overuse and orthopedic injuries, head and spine injuries, nutritional requirements for athletes and more, as well as a free lunch for participants. Speakers include experts from the UF College of Medicine, the UF College of Pharmacy, the UF College of Health and Human Performance and the Florida Athletic Association. To register for the free event, visit www.sportsmedicinejamboree.com.



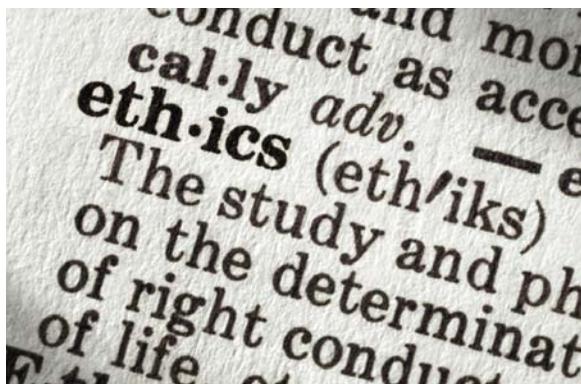
PHOTO BY SARAH KEWEL

INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE STAR

All that time spent in an HSC lab after her Eastside High School classes ended for the day has paid off for Muna Oli. Oli recently nabbed second place in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair for the project she worked on in the lab of McKnight Brain Institute neuroscientist Brent Reynolds, Ph.D. Oli's project, which she worked on in both Reynolds' lab and in a College of Engineering lab, focused on the effects of injecting gold nanorods into brain tumor cells and then shooting them with an infrared laser. Beyond its merits as a science fair project, Reynolds thought Oli's work could turn out to be a promising approach for treating glioblastoma. Oli's project was one of 98 in the health and medicine category at the international fair. Oli was one of four participants who received second-place honors. Three received the first-place award.

ETHICS UPDATE

The College of Medicine released a Policy on Industry Conflicts of Interest/ Industry Academic Relations in May. The policy regulates interaction between representatives of companies who make pharmaceuticals and medical devices and the college's faculty, staff, students and residents. Under the policy, members of the college community are prohibited from accepting gifts from industry representatives and must receive permission to participate in educational opportunities hosted by the industry. College employees must report "the disclosure of outside activities and financial interests," the policy states. To view the policy, visit www.med.ufl.edu/admin/conflict-of-interest-policy-may09.pdf.



Looking back, stepping forward

By Douglas J. Barrett

My wife, Macky, has always accused me of thriving on change, of being energized by times of insecurity and transition. “When are you going to finally settle down?” she teases.

Those of you who know that I’ve spent all 29 years of my academic career right here at the University of Florida might think I’m actually more a creature of habit. But the fact is I really don’t do well sitting still. Every six or seven years, I’ve found myself wearing a new hat. Now it’s time to don yet a new one.

Why do I thrive on change? Because I view it as a positive. The insecurity that comes with change helps us appreciate what is good about the way things are but be impatient to improve that which could be better. It’s about laying strong foundations, then taking our belief in a better tomorrow and acting on it.

The famed composer Gustav Mahler once said the real art of conducting consists in transitions. Together we have worked hard to position the Health Science Center for success and for taking the necessary next steps. Mahler set out to greatly expand the scope of the symphony. We have set out to build on the breadth of the academic medical center, and that brings us to a pivotal transition of our own. The challenge going forward will be to accelerate the integration of various components of the health center system into a more powerful partnership that bridges our missions, values and finances.

That vision is more than just a concept. It exists in bricks and mortar. The physical environment of the Health Science Center has undergone a robust expansion, and not one of these new buildings is devoted solely to a single college or a particular department. Rather, they are designed to foster collaborative partnerships.

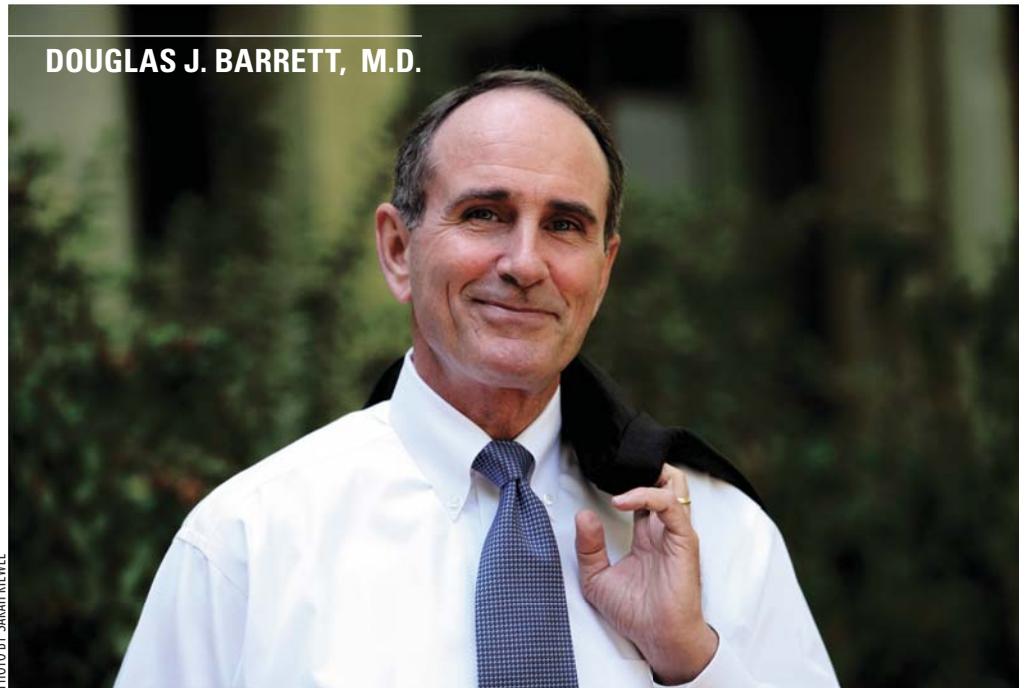
And the important work and care provided in our buildings are helping us make our mark.

Public Health and Health Professions’ recent accreditation was a home run ball. Achieving an almost unblemished accreditation visit on the very first try speaks to the creativity and the uniqueness of what they’ve put together.

Construction of the College of Veterinary Medicine’s new Small Animal Hospital, the cornerstone of the Veterinary Education and Clinical Research Center, continues, and the associated expansion of clinical services is positioning us to be the best on the planet.

The College of Pharmacy is leading the nation in the development of distance delivery education programs, and several new graduate opportunities will broaden career paths to graduating pharmacists and other health professions competing in a declining economic marketplace, through unique collaborations with strong education and research partners who share a common vision of patient-centered health care.

DOUGLAS J. BARRETT, M.D.



The College of Dentistry has emerged as one of the top five dental schools in the country, and it’s now the second-highest NIH-funded dental school in the United States.

The College of Nursing’s Bachelor of Science in Nursing program is widely regarded as one of the strongest in the Southeast, and its professional graduate programs are consistently ranked in the top 10 percent of *U.S. News & World Report* graduate nursing programs. The college also is a leader in transitioning from a focus on advanced specialty programs to the new professional Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Out of that will come an even better trained and more highly skilled nursing workforce.

The College of Medicine clearly continues to be an innovator in medical education. The research arena is also poised for great expansion, especially as the Cancer Center continues to grow and the new hospital comes on line this November.

So it’s a great time to hand off the baton to my successor, Dr. David Guzick. His experiences at Pittsburgh and Rochester have taught him well what a truly integrated academic health center looks like, and he has the personal leadership skills and character required for success.

This is a time of both challenge and opportunity. A focus on broader integration and closing the gaps between research discoveries and application to patient care on the one hand and between student education and safe, quality health-care delivery on the other are vital. Doing so isn’t only good for us. It’s good for Florida. It’s good for our students. And it’s good for our patients.

Finally, a personal note of thanks to each of you. Thanks for your dedication to our mission. Thanks for doing what you do so well each and every day. And thanks for your continued commitment to making the Health Science Center a great place. *Editor’s note: On July 1, Douglas J. Barrett, M.D., stepped down as senior vice president for health affairs. He is succeeded by David Guzick, M.D., Ph.D.* 

The new guy in town

Dr. David Guzick
answers our questions



By Melanie Fridl Ross

On July 6, UF President Bernie Machen (left) welcomed a new leader to the HSC. David Guzick, M.D., Ph.D., stepped into the roles of UF senior vice president for health affairs and president of the UF&Shands Health System. Guzick, an internationally known reproductive endocrinologist, comes to UF after serving as dean of the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. Barely settled into his office, Guzick recently took the time to tell *The POST* about his goals, the challenges ahead and his love for the song stylings of Sheryl Crow.

During your interviews and your time here so far, what intrigues you about UF, the HSC and Shands?

I thought that The Gator Nation was mainly a slogan, but everyone in this town lives and breathes The Gator Nation. I'm intrigued by the idea of reaching a Gator Nation sense of identity and a similar level of pride, excitement and commitment to excellence in the colleges and hospitals that make up the Health Science Center and the UF&Shands Health System as a whole. If this can be achieved, we will surely be national champions in health care and health sciences.

What are your major goals for your first year in Gainesville?

For the faculty and staff in the colleges that make up the Health Science Center on the one hand, and for Shands administration and staff on the other hand, the major goal is to change the mindset and culture from "us and them" to "we." A personal goal is to develop enough strength and flexibility to be 10 yards closer to my sons off the tee. Staying within the speed limit in the 20 mph zones of the campus would also be nice.

What are your plans for integrating UF and Shands into a more cohesive unit?

We will begin a comprehensive strategic planning process across the Health Science Center and UF&Shands Health System. In this process, we plan to be inclusive of faculty, staff, students and others in the colleges and the health system, and we will also reach out to alumni and friends for their ideas and support. In addition, we will establish daily meetings of the health science and health system leadership to learn about all of the nuances of important issues that arise in real time and to make timely decisions that maximize benefit to the academic health center as a whole based on all information available from all sources. Also, the administrative infrastructure across the HSC and Shands — communications, legal, finance, space, development, planning, etc. — will be unified to function in a "we" mode in all decision-making.

What do you believe are the biggest challenges facing us right now?

There are both internal and external challenges. Internally, "We have met the enemy ... and he is us." That is, the biggest challenge is the culture change required to get from "us and them" to "we." If that can be accomplished in combination with a commitment to excellence, the extraordinary resources and structural advantages of the University of Florida will be greatly facilitative. On the other hand, developments on the state and federal level involving the financing of health care, education and research, which reflect both the global economic downturn and the desire for health-care reform, will present ongoing challenges for years to come.

What's something about you people would be surprised to know?

That I like to work out to the music of Sheryl Crow. **P**



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEVEL

Dr. Peter W. Stacpoole visits with two research study participants, Nicolas Cimmino, 14, (center) and Gregory Cimmino, 16, along with research nurse coordinator Bonnie Coats and premed students Alex Cruz and Jack Bullock.

What is the CTSA?

- The nearly \$26 million Clinical and Translational Science Award will enhance research and training efforts that speed the translation of scientific discoveries into medical advances for patients
- UF is one of 46 medical research institutions nationally that are part of the prestigious CTSA consortium. Membership will be capped at 60 by 2012.
- The grant will support multidisciplinary research in a wide range of fields through a partnership of several entities both within the university and the wider community.
- UF's grant is coordinated by its Clinical and Translational Institute, which also has \$23 million in support from the UF Office of Research and \$70 million in commitments from the College of Medicine

Science in the *fast* lane

UF gets nearly \$26 million to speed scientific discoveries to patient care

By Czerne M. Reid

UF will receive nearly \$26 million over five years to speed the transformation of scientific discoveries into medical advances for patients.

In winning the competitive National Institutes of Health's Clinical and Translational Science Award, UF joins a prestigious national consortium of medical research institutions, whose membership will be capped at 60 by 2012. UF is the only university in Florida to get the award, which will be geared toward accelerating scientific discovery, enhancing medical care, producing highly skilled scientists and physicians and fostering partnerships with industry, university officials announced July 14.

The grant will support multidisciplinary research in a wide range of fields such as biomedical informatics, gene therapy, aging, nanotechnology and infectious diseases.

Awardees are poised to become much more competitive than other institutions by offering stronger research programs in addition to basic medical training, securing more NIH funding and attracting and retaining skilled faculty. And the community benefits — every \$5 million in annual research funding leads to about 100 new jobs and \$20 million in incremental business activity, according to

estimates from the nonprofit Families USA organization. “Lots of things can happen with this grant that might not have happened — or happened as well — without it,” said Peter Stacpoole, M.D., Ph.D., director of UF's Clinical and Translational Science Institute and the grant's principal investigator.

The CTSI, a partnership of several entities both within the university and in the wider community, will coordinate the grant, administered through the NIH's National Center for Research Resources. The CTSI also is supported by \$23 million from the UF Office of Research and \$70 million in commitments from the College of Medicine.

“This award is an endorsement of UF's leading-edge research efforts and its contributions to health-related fields,” said Win Phillips, D.Sc., UF's vice president for research. “The strong research efforts of UF faculty will provide the foundation for enhanced translational and bench-to-bedside research leading to contributions to health care that is the focus of this highly competitive program.”

The impact of the resulting discoveries will extend beyond academia to industry, government and the nation. In addition, discoveries that are developed commercially can generate royalty streams for the university.

“By attracting external funding, whether from federal agencies such as NIH or CDC, or from foundations or industry, new dollars come into Florida from outside the state — this leads to new jobs

and a ripple effect in the local economy,” said David Guzick, M.D., Ph.D., UF's senior vice president for health affairs and president of the UF&Shands Health System. Guzick was principal investigator on the University of Rochester's CTSA grant, presented in the first set of awards in 2006.

By incorporating 12 of the university's colleges, the largest health-care system in the Southeast and the nation's largest two-division Veterans Affairs health system, the CTSI seeks to transform how scientific research is carried out, by emphasizing broad collaborations.

The partnership comprises UF's Gainesville and Jacksonville campuses, including the colleges of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health and Health Professions, Veterinary Medicine, Fine Arts, Journalism and Communications, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Engineering, Health and Human Performance and Agriculture and Life Sciences; as well as the Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences with its 67-county network of extension programs, which will engage citizens in educational activities and participatory research. Shands HealthCare and the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System also help to extend the institute's resources and services across the state.

“We'll use those as ways to engage the community and make the CTSI a statewide resource,” Stacpoole said. “It's a truly fundamental — from the roots up — transformation of how we do research and training.” 



The newly named School of Physician Assistant Studies graduated its 2009 class in June.

School's in for physician assistants

UF elevates P.A. program to 'school' status

By Christine Velasquez

Forty years ago, Vietnam War veterans returned home attempting to start new lives as civilians. Among them were medics who looked for a way to turn their skills into a living and ultimately created the demand for a new profession.

UF supported the new physician assistant profession and, eventually, helped set the pace for public medical schools around the nation.

On June 12, just days before the commencement ceremony for 59 physician assistant students, the profession saw another milestone set by UF's College of Medicine; the board of trustees approved the elevation of the P.A. program to the School of Physician Assistant Studies.

"This reflects a tremendous need and demand for physician assistants in the health-care systems of our state and the nation," said College of Medicine Interim Dean Michael L. Good, M.D., during the graduation ceremony June 20.

UF's first P.A. program began in 1972 in collaboration with Santa Fe Community College. The 30 students enrolled were awarded with an associate degree after two years of study. The program would find a permanent home at UF just five years later and P.A. graduates were awarded a bachelor of science degree.

"UF has been a trailblazer in moving the profession to the forefront, answering the growing demand for P.A.s as health-care reform and spending became top national issues," said Wayne D. Bottom, P.A.-C., M.P.H., associate dean and director of the School of Physician Assistant Studies, who has led UF's P.A. program for 27 years.

Bottom saw UF's program through instability as it moved from the College of Allied Health Professions (now the College of Public Health and Health Professions) back to the College of Medicine in 1993, and he was thrilled a year later when the Florida Legislature earmarked funding to double enrollment to 60 students per class. The program was upgraded to the master's degree level in 1996.

Today, the School of Physician Assistant Studies remains a 24-month-long master's program that includes 12 months of coursework and 12 months of clinical rotations. Currently there are 145 P.A. programs nationwide. UF is the only public university in Florida to offer P.A. studies as a graduate program.

According to labor statistics, this elevated designation as a school parallels the demand for physician assistants. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports new job opportunities for physician assistants will grow by 50 percent in the next six years, making it the fastest-growing occupation in the nation.

"The ability of our P.A.s to work collaboratively with the M.D. faculty allows us the ability to provide state-of-the-art care for our patients," said Christopher E. Forsmark, M.D., a professor of medicine. "P.A.s are essential to the smooth functioning of our clinical enterprise and to our delivery of high-quality care." **P**



Accreditation accomplished

By Sarah Carey

The UF College of Veterinary Medicine has been granted a full seven-year accreditation renewal by the American Veterinary Medical Association's accrediting council.

The council gave the college "substantial compliance" for its adherence to the AVMA's curriculum standard. Council members noted that certain changes needed to be made within two years for full compliance designation in that area.

"In light of current and anticipated decreases in state funding, the curriculum committee must work with faculty and administration to define overarching curricular learning objectives," the council noted in its report, adding that the college also needed to develop a separate method for students to evaluate their courses.

The college's dean, Glen Hoffsis, D.V.M., noted that progress had already been made toward the curriculum objectives with the faculty assembly's recent passage of recommendations from its curriculum committee to reduce the number of required clinical rotations.

Hoffsis congratulated fellow administrators, faculty and staff for their hard work in making this achievement possible.

"We are very pleased to be fully accredited by the AVMA Council on Education," Hoffsis said. "Achieving full accreditation is a collegewide endeavor that involves the hard work and cooperation of the entire faculty, staff and administration. The very positive nature of the council's report speaks to the excellent program we deliver."

UF's College of Veterinary Medicine admitted its first class of students in 1976 and is one of only 28 accredited veterinary colleges in the country. **P**

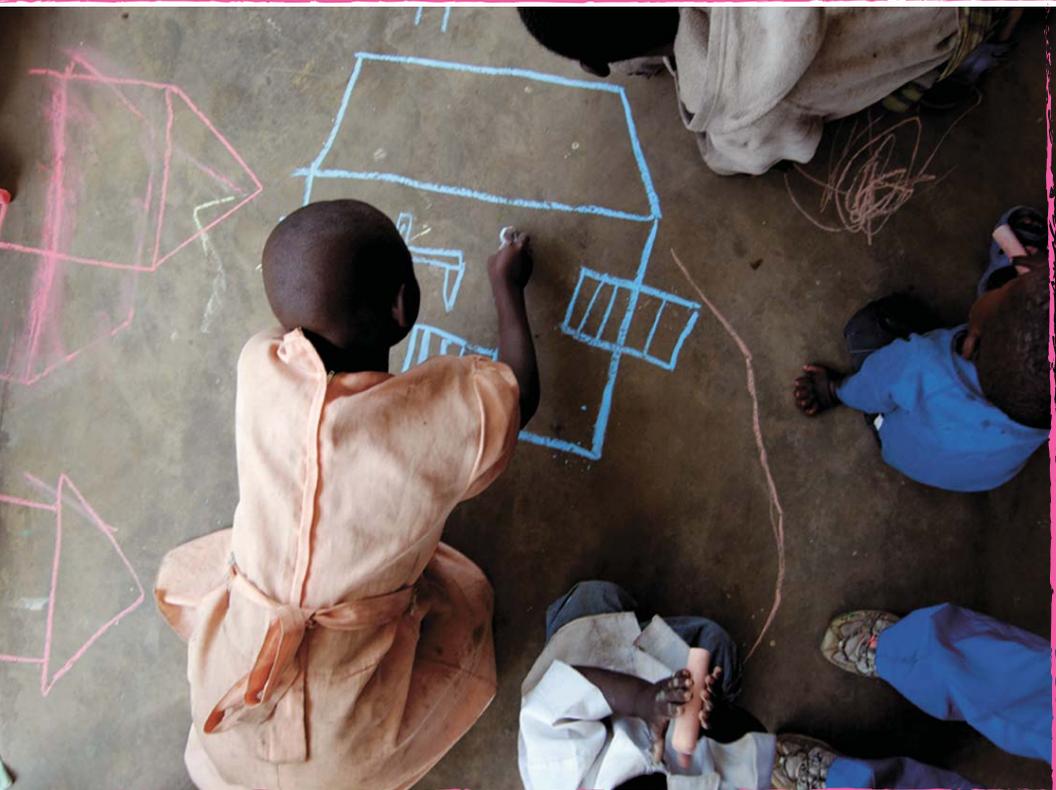


PHOTO BY STEPHANIE TYLER

Remembering Beauty

UF students, faculty help Rwanda genocide survivors heal through art

By Jessica Metzger

For UF photography major Stephanie Tyler, the memory of simply painting a pretty mural on a villager's home in Rugegero, a genocide survivor village in Rwanda, will stay with her forever. Tyler, 22, remembers a survivor who came home from work and inspected the mural.

"He told us that he will forget everything when he looks at the house," Tyler said. "It was things like that inspiring us to keep going."

Over spring break, 13 people visited Rugegero for two weeks, bringing more than 2,600 pounds of medical and art supplies, said Jill Sonke, director of the UF Center for the Arts in Healthcare Research and Education.

Nearly 1 million people in Rwanda died in 1994 during the genocide, which lasted less than 100 days. The focus of the trip was to help survivors using art to bring back some semblance of serenity and teach important health-care issues.

"The clinics are not busy, people are not using health care like they should be," Sonke said. "There is a big effort to connect the village to health care."

Under the government's insurance plan in Rwanda, health care costs just \$2 per person. Sonke said one of the group's goals was to have all 500 people in the village covered. Through the group's efforts, that became a reality.

For the AIM for Africa Rwanda project, CAHRE combined the efforts of Shands HealthCare and the UF College of Fine Arts. The project in Rugegero was also built on partnerships with the Barefoot Artists, Red Cross of the Rwandan Western Region and a filmmaker from the United Kingdom.

Together, they designed a multifaceted project that included health education, a theatre project and a project for videotaping the genocide survivors' stories. These videos will become permanent installations at the Genocide Museum, Sonke said.

At an initial village meeting in Rugegero, more than 150 people came to share their stories, Sonke said. A performance based on these stories was presented in July at UF.

International Fine Arts for Healing, a student organization part of CAHRE, had eight students on the trip to Rwanda. Each brought their own art and theatre talents, such as drawing portraits at patients' bedsides, helping to paint murals on the walls of clinics and on villagers' houses, teaching doll-making or performing skits, poems and vignettes.

"It was a very different experience from volunteering at Shands," said Tyler, IFAH's current president. "It was a more raw experience. You can't speak the same language, so it's all through art."

Tyler recalled painting star-shaped wood boxes with two women in the hospital. Because the women had not painted before, Tyler had to teach them basics such as thinning out paint and mixing primary colors.

"They were amazed by how yellow and red make orange," Tyler said.

The group also painted murals. Some provided health care information on the food pyramid and breastfeeding education and used theater to educate villagers about topics such as women's empowerment and domestic abuse, HIV/AIDS prevention and personal hygiene, said Teniece Johnson, a theater graduate student.

For Johnson, one of the best parts of the trip was meeting female survivors who were in a sewing co-op. All of the women had sore backs and hands from sewing, basket-weaving and manual labor. Johnson said they helped nurses teach the women massage, forming a big group circle to include everyone.

"But it was an intense experience, especially running your hands over scars," Johnson said. "You can't help but wonder, is this from a machete?"

Tyler said the arts seemed to serve as a distraction for the villagers. One man told her that in a country that has forgotten what beauty is, the group was reminding them about beauty.

Sonke said many of the links between the arts and healing are just beginning to be explored.

"Within the past 30 years, the health sciences have begun to recognize the roles the arts can play to help caregivers address emotional and spiritual needs, as well as physical needs," Sonke said.

Both students were reluctant to leave the village and feel eager to return to Rugegero.

"Falling in love with these children, and then remembering about the genocide was emotional and overwhelming," Tyler said. "These are some of the happiest people. It was hard to fathom that something like that could happen." **P**

To see more pictures from HSC international outreach trips, visit our slideshow gallery at www.news.health.ufl.edu and click on "Featured Slideshow."

WATERWORLD

How UF has become a hot spot for marine mammal medicine

By Alyssa LaRenzie

The UF College of Veterinary Medicine is sitting in the splash zone.

Though located a few hours from the coast, the college's Marine Mammal Program has become a hub for the research, care and teaching of marine mammal medicine.

The program started in 2000 when a state grant focusing on manatee research made funding possible. The manatee remains a central focus, but the program has since expanded to include dolphins, sea lions, seals and whales. The Marine Mammal Program is part of UF's Aquatic Animal Health Program, which serves Florida's aquaculture and fisheries-related industries.

When a 21-year former Sea World veterinarian arrived in 2006, the Marine Mammal Program took off. Mike Walsh, D.V.M., assistant director of the Aquatic Animal Health Program, brought knowledge of a wide variety of animals — and a desire to teach.

"If I can give (the students) the information that I've learned," Walsh said, "they'll start off better, quicker, faster and accumulate more information so that by the time they retire, they should be further up on our knowledge base. Hopefully each generation can improve on that."

Students have the opportunity to learn about marine mammals while earning their degrees, something most other veterinary schools don't offer.

The SeaVet clinical course, required to obtain Aquatic Animal Health certification, gives students the opportunity to explore what it would be like to be a marine animal veterinarian. In one week during the summer, experienced veterinarians from places such as Sea World and Disney World — as well as UF staff — share their knowledge. Students this June also participated in a hands-on manatee lab and swam with dolphins.

Because the UF vet school has the only dedicated marine mammal program worldwide, many experts work together at UF, said Hendrik Nollens, Ph.D., a clinical assistant professor.

"There is a structure for and an interest in marine animal work here that draws in people like me, and it actually brings us together," Nollens said.

Nollens, who specializes in dolphin, seal and sea lion medicine, works alongside a sea turtle researcher at UF in the Marine Animal Disease Laboratory. Known to its researchers as the MAD Lab, the lab tests samples to discover and learn more



Students worked with manatees during the College of Veterinary Medicine's recent SeaVet course, part of the Marine Mammal Program.

about diseases of marine animals.

A former Ph.D. student in UF's Marine Mammal Program, Nollens coordinates research with the U.S. Navy Marine Mammal Program in San Diego and UF.

Though inland Gainesville may seem like an odd spot to study marine mammals, the university structure and central location makes the program stronger.

"If we were located on the coast, that would be helpful in terms of proximity," Walsh said. "But it wouldn't give us the right framework for actually bringing along the next generation of health researchers for wild populations. So it's actually a natural fit."

To expand, the program has partnered with several organizations, including the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Geological Services. For example, the FWC handled the recent entanglement of a right whale on the east coast, but UF faculty had the drug knowledge to properly sedate the large animal so workers could free it. Groups like USGS give UF the opportunity

for contact with marine mammals.

UF also has its own presence on the ocean at the Whitney Lab for Marine Bioscience. Located on St. Augustine Beach, the lab is known for its marine animal research, much of which could one day benefit human health.

Whitney Laboratory Director Peter Anderson, Ph.D., was one of the founders of the UF Marine Mammal Program, working to get an academic setting for research. He hopes the program will expand at Whitney, when a marine animal health facility opens there.

Walsh hopes to grow the program, too, to include more conservation efforts, to make the SeaVet course the pride of the program and to reach out to other organizations.

His partner at USGS, biologist Robert Bonde, noted the importance of the UF Marine Mammal Program's mission.

"It's not just because we want to be better doctors, and we want to protect manatees, and we want to be able to treat them better," Bonde said. "We want to help those animals through troubled times." **P**

Darius goes Gator

UF screens movie about Duchenne muscular dystrophy

By April Frawley Birdwell

Four years ago, Darius Weems saw the ocean for the first time. He saw the Grand Canyon, too. Every stretch of highway, motel or restaurant outside of his hometown, Athens, Ga., was a discovery, actually.

Before Weems, then 15, and a group of his friends loaded into an RV and headed to California, he had never been outside of Athens. But the trip wasn't just about seeing the country, his friends laying a track on the beach so he could reach the ocean. It was about raising awareness about a disease that took Weems' brother's life at 19; a disease that will eventually take his life, too.

Weems has Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a genetic disease that causes a person's muscles to degenerate over time. The disease almost exclusively affects

boys and is always fatal. Most who have it rarely live past their 20s.

chance to educate a new generation of kids, most of whom have never heard of Duchenne or its most famous advocate, Jerry Lewis. Weems raps about it in the movie.

On Sept. 10, the UF College of Public Health and Health Professions will screen "Darius Goes West," the movie that chronicles Weems' trek across the country and details what life is like for families facing the disease. The cast and crew will take questions after the movie, which will be shown at 7 p.m. at the Phillips Center for the Performing Arts.



Darius Weems, here with his friends and the crew who made "Darius Goes West," visited the Grand Canyon during his trek across the country to raise awareness about Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

do something that not only fulfills many dreams for Darius but also brought attention to this really devastating disease and shows, really, how one person can make a difference."

About one of every 3,500 to 6,000 boys has Duchenne, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A genetic snafu — sometimes inherited, sometimes spontaneous — prevents them from producing the protein dystrophin, Senesac said. Without it, muscle can't keep up with life's wear and tear. Eventually, muscles degenerate, including the heart.

Gainesville native Dale Ginder, 7, was 5 when doctors discovered he had Duchenne.

"We just thought he was clumsy. He

After her son's diagnosis, Ginder learned about "Darius Goes West" from a friend who knew someone with Charley's Fund, a charity that raises money for Duchenne research. From each \$20 DVD the moviemakers sell, \$17 goes to Charley's Fund.

"They do something on a grand scale we could never do, and that is educate people about what it is," Ginder says.

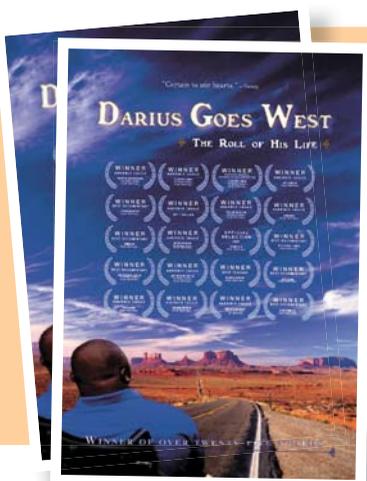
Ginder and her husband arranged a screening of the movie in December. Senesac and Duchenne researcher Krista Vandeborne, Ph.D., chair of physical therapy, saw the movie then, and an idea was born.

Aside from the screening — which will feature the crew, Albert and Alberta, the Gator cheerleaders and a few "Gator greats" — the PHHP group is also holding an educational series across campus and throughout the community to raise awareness about Duchenne.

PHHP's public health program will hold a seminar series this fall with a Darius theme. The seminars will focus on Duchenne, as well as other disability issues, said Mary Peoples-Sheps, Ph.D. Part of the movie showcases the obstacles Weems faces as they trek across a country not created with wheelchairs in mind.

Now 19, Weems has spent the past few years traveling to raise money and promote the cause. Recently diagnosed with congestive heart failure, he isn't traveling as much but is still committed to his cause.

"I do not want people to worry about me, I'm fine," he said in a recent blog on his Web site. "I do not want them to cry, get down or worry about my situation. I just want people to continue helping me carry on my story and cure this disease." **P**



Darius Goes West:

7 p.m. Sept. 10

Phillips Center for the Performing Arts

Duchenne muscular dystrophy educational series:

Sessions are available to any group and can be tailored to fit the audience. Generally, sessions are 20-25 minutes long and feature a faculty member and a parent. To schedule, e-mail Dononvan Lott at djlottpt@phhp.ufl.edu. For more information on Darius Goes West, visit www.dariusgoeswest.org.

boys and is always fatal. Most who have it rarely live past their 20s.

The friends left Athens with a mission — to make it to California and get on the MTV show "Pimp My Ride" in hopes of having Weems' wheelchair customized, filming their journey along the way. For Weems, appearing on the show was a

"It was such an inspirational movie, not just looking at the fact that Darius has Duchenne," said Claudia Senesac, Ph.D., P.T, a clinical assistant professor of physical therapy in the College of Public Health and Health Professions and chair of the group bringing the movie here. "These young people banded together to

reached all his developmental milestones. There were no red flags," said Lelia Ginder, Dale's mother and a member of the group bringing "Darius Goes West" to UF. "He went out for soccer the year he was in kindergarten. It was obvious something was wrong when we compared him to his peers on the field."

Open up and . . . read a book

UF Pediatrics 'reaches out' to kids through reading

By Alyssa LaRenzie

Eleven-month-old Kofi Boateng sits crying on his mother's lap in a pediatric checkup room. Alyssa Gamble, M.D., enters the room, greets the two and opens the pages of a colorful book that immediately grabs Kofi's attention.

At this clinic, reading is standard practice.

UF Pediatric Primary Care is one of more than 4,000 centers nationwide that sponsors Reach Out and Read, a program that provides books to children between 6 months and 5 years. The program is in place at UF pediatric clinics at the Gerold L. Schiebler Children's Medical Services Center and at Haile Plantation.

"It's an easy way to help encourage the parents to read to their children and start to talk with them about language development really early on," said Gamble, a senior pediatric resident.

At the start of each visit, the doctor selects a book from a shelf — pre-organized to fit each of the 10 normal wellness-checkup ages — and gives the book to the child to take home. The goal is to encourage parents to read aloud to their children.

The book can also be used as a steppingstone during the visit not only for doctors to discuss the importance of reading to children but also to assess a child's basic developmental skills, said Donald Fillipps, M.D., the medical director for Reach Out and Read at UF.

At the CMS center, more than 3,000 books are given out to children each year. From board books with one word per page to a Spanish-language "Where the Wild Things Are," the bookshelf in the center is always stocked and ready for reading.

Reach Out and Read targets children from lower-income families because research shows that children in poverty are less likely to be read to or to have books at home, said Linda Carlson, R.N., coordinator of the center's program. About three-quarters of pediatric patients at the CMS center qualify for Medicaid.

The money used to purchase the books comes entirely from donations, such as a recent mini-grant awarded by The Friends of the Library. Though it's not part of the national program requirements, this center uses donations to provide gently used books in the waiting and exam rooms for siblings of patients to read or take home.

With enough donations, words are never in short supply at the pediatrics center.

"Our goal is to expose children to books so when they go to kindergarten, they love books," Carlson said. "And if we've done that, we've done a big thing." **P**



Dr. Bryan Gamble reads to patient Tatiayena Huff, 2, as part of the Reach Out and Read program.



SHERIFF SADIE DARNELL

Breaking the glass ceiling

Sheriff Sadie Darnell speaks to HSC Women's Group about overcoming gender issues

By Jessica Metzger

Sheriff Sadie Darnell wanted to be a truck driver when she grew up. In a way, she said, she is one. She considers the Alachua County Sheriff's Office a big rig, and she's at the wheel.

Darnell spoke to the UF HSC Women's Group May 12 about breaking through the glass ceiling and becoming the first woman to hold the office of sheriff in Alachua County.

Darnell graduated from UF with a degree in psychology and decided to go into law enforcement. She worked days, supporting herself through the police academy. But when she first began working shifts at the Gainesville Police Department, she faced discrimination.

"Nobody wanted me on their shift. They didn't see I would be of any value. Women were not accepted in law enforcement," Darnell said. "They would do silly things like hide my hat or gear just to be annoying. But it got more serious when I would go on calls and they would refuse to back me up, or they would take their time getting there, trying to send the message to me that 'You're not wanted here, go away, give up,' that sort of thing. And I just became more determined about it."

Darnell said her experiences with discrimination have served her well. Because she knows what it feels like, she said she won't tolerate it in the agency. Darnell developed a code of ethics that she administered one-on-one to all the shifts.

She said it serves as a reminder for law enforcement to respect the constitutional rights of all people, that everyone has a role in the community.

Rebecca Pauly, M.D., associate vice president for health affairs, equity and diversity, invited Darnell to speak because she thought Darnell's experiences could provide a different perspective to the group.

"I think there are insights she provided about career barriers, and ideas and techniques to navigate the course that are similar to health professions," Pauly said. "I'm very pleased Sheriff Darnell found time to come and share with us so openly." **P**

Beyond fillings and floss

Dentistry professors save lives through hospital work



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

Pediatric dentist Dr. Marcio Guelmann works on a patient at Shands at UF.

By Laura Mize

When you think about doctors saving lives, dental surgeons might not be the first who come to mind.

But College of Dentistry faculty members working at Shands at UF play a vital role in the care of patients with serious — sometimes even life-threatening — conditions.

These dentists do everything from treating emergency room patients with traumatic mouth injuries to fighting oral infections. In addition to working at Shands at UF, some also treat patients at the recently renovated Shands Children's Surgical Center at Ayers Medical Plaza. The job requires the dentists to rotate on-call duties and sometimes respond to situations in the middle of the night.

M. Franklin Dolwick, D.M.D., Ph.D., a professor and chair of the department of oral and maxillofacial surgery and diagnostic sciences and head of hospital dentistry at Shands, said maintaining good oral health is key to preventing small problems from becoming big ones.

"Just this week we had a patient that could possibly die from a dental infection," said Dolwick in mid-May, "and those are the kind of things that people don't appreciate (about hospital dentistry)."

Dolwick said the woman, who also has diabetes, neglected her oral health. But hospital dentists are able to save many patients with dental infections.

"We treat infections of the jaw, which sometimes can be life-threatening," Dolwick said. "We do some cancer surgery ... We take out teeth. We do a lot of dental implants. We do a lot of jaw

reconstruction for patients who have had parts of their jaw removed for various tumors and so forth. So the oral surgery service itself is very active in the hospital."

For some patients, hospital dentistry is a proactive service, one that concentrates on eliminating problems before they begin. Prepping patients before they receive a transplant or undergo other major surgery is an important part of these dentists' jobs.

"They're going to go through really complicated, difficult, complex surgeries," Dolwick said. "You certainly don't want them, at some point after a heart transplant or a heart-valve replacement, being compromised with infection because they had a bad tooth that wasn't taken care of."

Along with oral surgery, pediatric dentistry is one of the busiest disciplines in hospital dentistry at Shands. Within the college's department of pediatric dentistry, eight of the nine faculty members work in hospital dentistry.

Several factors determine whether a child will receive care in a regular dental clinic or at a hospital, said Marcio Guelmann, D.D.S., an associate professor and chair of pediatric dentistry. These factors include the "amount of treatment (necessary), the behavior of the child, how complex the medical history is, the number of visits and the travel distance," he explained.

"And then we will decide if this is suitable to be done in the clinic under sedation, or (if) the best environment will be in the operating room."

Pediatric dentists also treat adult patients with mental or physical disabilities.

When necessary, pediatric dentists work with other specialists to coordinate treatment of young patients to avoid putting them under general anesthesia multiple times.

"If a child has a need to go to a procedure in ENT, for example, at the same time this child has severe decay, we try to coordinate to do the procedure together," Guelmann said. "There is a lot of very good collaboration between the subspecialties in pediatric medicine and our department."

College of Dentistry faculty members are part of a craniofacial team that treats cleft lip and palate patients, too. Plastic surgeons repair the children's lips and palates, but dentists do pretty much everything else.

"Orthodontists of course do the orthodontic treatment, the pedodontists do the children's dentistry for those kids and then oral surgery does the alveolar bone grafts and the corrective jaw surgery that's necessary," Dolwick explained.

Dolwick said the way oral surgery meshes so many different things together is what drew him to the profession in the first place.

"For me, it gets into the whole challenge of working in the discipline that really integrates medicine and dentistry and the basic sciences and care of people." 

Got soap?

Soap-sniffing technology encourages hand washing to reduce infections, save money



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

By Czerne M. Reid

Call it a Breathalyzer for the hands. Using sensors capable of detecting drugs in breath, new technology developed at UF monitors health-care workers' hand hygiene by detecting sanitizer or soap fumes given off from their hands.

By reminding workers to clean their hands, the system could help reduce hospital-acquired infections and save millions of dollars now spent to treat them.

The trademarked system, called HyGreen, logs, down to the second, the frequency of hand cleaning and contact with patients in a database that clinical supervisors can review immediately.

This is the first system that enables real-time monitoring of hand washing.

"This isn't big brother, this is just another tool," said Richard J. Melker, M.D., Ph.D., a UF College of Medicine anesthesiology professor who developed the technology along with professors Donn Dennis, M.D., and Nikolaus Gravenstein, M.D., of the anesthesiology department, and Christopher Batich, Ph.D., a materials science professor in the College of Engineering. "A hospital worker never wants to be responsible for someone getting sick or dying from an infection acquired in the hospital."

HyGreen is now being tested in the Neuro Intensive Care Unit at Shands at UF, and was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology in June.

Here's how it works: The health-care worker squirts sanitizer gel or soap into his or her hand before passing it under a wall-mounted sensor. A wireless signal from a badge worn by the worker activates a green light on the hand-washing sensor. When the worker enters a patient room, a monitor near the bed detects the status of the badge and flashes green if the person has clean hands. If the person has not washed, or too much time has passed between washing, the badge will give a gentle "reminder" vibration.

Close to 2 million hospital-acquired infections occur each year and more than 250 related deaths occur each day in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Studies have shown that up to half of all hospital-acquired infections might be prevented if health-care workers washed their hands according to CDC guidelines.

"Something has to be done about hand washing," said Lennox Archibald, M.D., a UF professor of infectious diseases and the Shands at UF epidemiologist leading the evaluation of Hygreen. "Otherwise the bugs are going to win." **P**



RICHARD J. MELKER, M.D.

RESEARCH



The right to know

New campaign encourages women with disabilities to get breast cancer screenings

By Jill Pease

For June, a cancer survivor, the breast cancer screening process was an "ordeal." June was born with cerebral palsy, which makes remaining still for mammograms difficult. In the beginning it was hard to communicate her needs to health-care providers.

"So I finally found a provider who would listen to me," June said. "Once I found him I stayed with him for many years."

June is one of four breast cancer survivors with physical disabilities who share their stories in the new public health campaign, The Right to Know. A team from the Florida Office on Disability and Health at UF will lead the campaign in Florida. Designed to fill the need for breast health education materials targeting women with disabilities, The Right to Know was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and will be launched initially in four states.

"The ultimate goal of the campaign is to encourage women with physical disabilities to get regular breast cancer screening in order to increase early cancer detection and potentially save lives," said Eva Egensteiner, M.A., C.P.H., the campaign project manager in the UF College of Public Health and Health Professions.

Women with physical disabilities are significantly less likely to receive breast cancer screening than women without disabilities, according to a study in the *Journal of Cancer Causes and Control*.

The Right to Know campaign materials, available in English and Spanish, include posters, fliers, print advertisements, audio files and a tip sheet with information on how women with physical disabilities can prepare for a mammogram. The UF team has also developed specific information to help Florida women with disabilities navigate through obstacles and get screenings.

The Right to Know campaign will run in Florida through 2012. For more information or to request the free materials, please visit rtk.php.ufl.edu or call 352-273-5102. **P**



Family's behavior key in treating disease in children

By April Frawley Birdwell

For most parents, soothing a child's anxiety is just part of the job. But for a parent whose child has obsessive-compulsive disorder, soothing anxiety and helping with behaviors linked to the disease could lead to more severe symptoms, UF researchers say.

Often, parents of children with OCD will help their children complete rituals related to their obsessions and compulsions, such as excessive bathing or checking

things like door locks, according to findings recently published in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. These accommodations can be anything that makes the symptoms of OCD less impairing, from reassuring a child that his hands are clean and his baby brother is OK to even doing his homework for him or buying objects that make the child feel safe.

"Parents do that because that is what a parent whose child doesn't have OCD would do," said Lisa Merlo, Ph.D., a UF assistant professor of psychiatry and the lead author of the study. "If your child is upset, you try to comfort them. But what we know is, for patients with OCD, if they get an accommodation, that reinforces the OCD to them."

About one in 200 children and teenagers in the United States have OCD, according to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.

The study included 49 children between 6 and 18 with OCD and their families who came to UF for a type of treatment called cognitive-behavioral therapy. This form of therapy involves exposing children to their fears and teaching them better ways to respond and cope. Therapists teach parents how to deal with their child's OCD, too.

Prior to the start of the 14-session therapy, the researchers gauged how severe each child's condition was and compared it to how many accommodating behaviors parents reported. They found that the more severe the child's OCD, the more the child's family seemed to indulge OCD behaviors.

"You would think if parents are helping, the kids would be less impaired," Merlo said. "But what we are seeing is that it snowballs and makes it worse and worse."

After the treatment, researchers noticed a significant decrease in how often families were assisting children with OCD behaviors and rituals. Children whose families had the biggest decrease in these accommodations also had the biggest improvement in their OCD symptoms, Merlo said. **P**



LISA MERLO, PH.D.

The brain connection

Nervous system may be culprit in deadly childhood disease

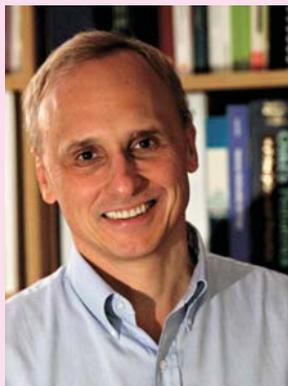
By John Pastor

Brain may win out over brawn as the primary cause of breathing problems in children with a severe form of muscular dystrophy known as Pompe disease.

Researchers at the Powell Gene Therapy Center at UF have discovered that signals from the brain to the diaphragm — the muscle that controls breathing — are too weak to initiate healthy respiration in mouse models of the disease.

The discovery for the first time shifts responsibility to the nervous system for the severe breathing problems experienced by infants with Pompe disease, a rare genetic disorder that causes extreme muscle weakness. Children born with the disorder usually die before age 2.

"For years what we have thought is principally a muscle disease may actually be caused by problems with signaling between the spinal cord and the muscle," said Barry Byrne, M.D., Ph.D., a UF pediatric cardiologist, a member of the UF Genetics Institute and director of the Powell Gene Therapy Center. "As we've treated children with this disease, we found many of them have become



BARRY BYRNE, M.D., PH.D.

ventilator-dependent, so we went back to the laboratory and found that a significant part of the respiratory deficit is in the spinal cord and not in the diaphragm alone."

Published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the findings also have a bearing on motor neuron diseases, a group of incurable brain disorders that destroy cells that influence essential muscle activity such as speaking, walking, breathing and swallowing. Notable among these is ALS, technically known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or, more commonly, Lou Gehrig's disease.

Although many laboratory discoveries never advance to the point where they can be confirmed in patients, scientists will be able to evaluate whether there is indeed a neural aspect to Pompe disease in a clinical safety study of a gene therapy in six infants with the disorder.

The clinical trial, which will begin this summer at UF, had previously advanced on its merits as a therapy for breathing problems in a group of patients who have very few treatment alternatives.

Children with Pompe disease cannot produce the enzyme acid alpha-glucosidase. Without the enzyme, sugars and starches that are stored in the body as glycogen accumulate and destroy muscle cells, particularly those of the heart and respiratory muscles. **P**

Waiting-list worries

Live kidney donors often a better option for many older patients

By Czerne M. Reid

Almost half of kidney transplant candidates older than 60 who are put on the waiting list for a deceased-donor organ will die before getting a transplant, according to new findings from UF, the Cleveland Clinic and Case Western Reserve University.

Wait times to receive a deceased donor kidney transplant have increased over the years, but this study is the first to define and quantify what this wait time means for older patients. Researchers suggest that some candidates should consider live-donor options rather than wait for deceased-donor organs to become available.

The findings give firm data that can guide patients in making decisions, and policymakers in allocating donated organs.

“If someone knows that they have a 10 percent chance of dying before transplantation, they might consider it differently than if they know they have an 80 or 90 percent chance,” said Jesse Schold, Ph.D., an assistant professor of medicine and first author of the paper, published in the *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*. “Understanding what these survival estimates are may provide a more objective and useful basis for evaluating donor options for this population.”

The researchers suggest that some patients need to ask their doctors about their chances of surviving to receive a transplant, and, once they decide, to speed through the steps necessary to get on the waiting list. It can take several months for patients to go from primary care provider referral to a transplant center and through the medical tests and additional steps involved in getting their name on the list.

“Older patients must be referred for transplantation sooner than they are now, and they need to be guided through the process of pursuing live donor kidney transplantation,” said Harvard transplant psychologist Jim Rodrigue, Ph.D., director of behavioral health services and research in the Transplant Institute at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. “The older population is least likely to pursue a live donor transplant and is less likely to have healthy living donors available.”

That’s because the older people get, the older their siblings and peers become, with potentially more medical problems than when they were younger. And older patients tend to say they do not want to burden their adult children, other relatives or friends by asking them to be live donors.

About half of the more than 500,000 people in the United States who have end-stage renal disease are older than 60. In medically eligible patients, kidney transplantation is associated with a better survival chance than dialysis.

The UF team examined data from the national Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients for almost 55,000 candidates older than 60 who were listed for a single-kidney deceased-donor transplant from 1995 through 2007. They used statistical models to estimate the time to receive a transplant and time to death after getting on the list.

Although overall about half of the over-60 group was projected to die before transplant, different subgroups had even higher likelihood of dying before a transplant.

Long-standing racial disparities are borne out by the data, with black patients having a higher probability than white patients of dying before a transplant: Sixty-two percent of black patients older than 60 will likely die before getting a transplant.

“That is an important finding because African-Americans are substantially less likely than whites to receive a live donor transplant, regardless of age,” Rodrigue said. “For those who are over 60, this is simply more bad news.” **P**

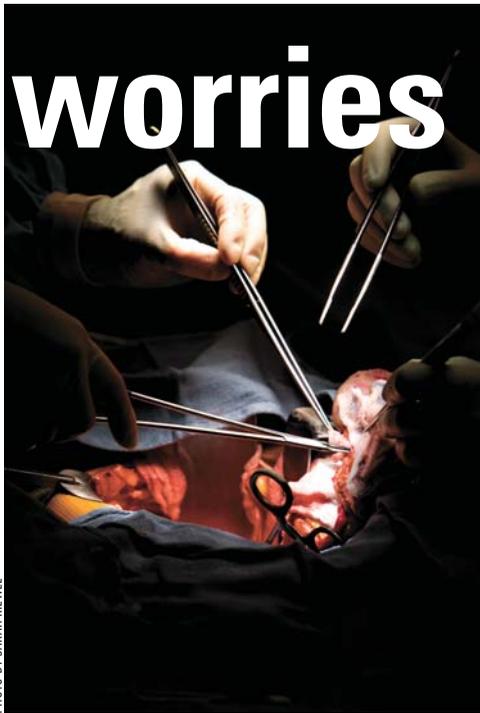
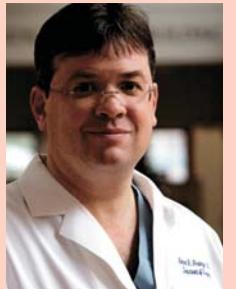


PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

Spotlight on research

Node news

Physicians treating breast cancer first look to lymph nodes in a patient’s armpit to see whether cancer is spreading elsewhere in the body — but new UF research shows they may not be evaluating the nodes in the most effective way. Rather than a change in size or abnormality, it’s the loss of a key part of a normal node’s structure called the fatty hilum that more accurately signals the spread of disease, says UF surgeon Stephen Grobmyer, M.D. The findings were reported in the *Journal of Magnetic Resonance Imaging*. **P**



STEPHEN GROBMYER, M.D.

Research fit for a Yankee

UF scientists have discovered why amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, often referred to as ALS or Lou Gehrig’s disease, progresses more rapidly in some patients than others. Of more than 100 possible mutations of a single gene inherited by people with familial ALS, the mutations most inclined to produce problematic cellular debris seem to be associated with quicker progress of the disease, says UF neuroscientist David Borchelt, Ph.D. Researchers hope the findings, published in *Human Molecular Genetics*, will be an entry point to a treatment for ALS. **P**



DAVID BORCHELT, PH.D.

Better drugs for HIV?

Focusing HIV drug development on immune cells called macrophages instead of traditionally targeted T cells could bring scientists closer to eradicating the disease, a new study shows. Researchers found that in diseased cells also infected with HIV, almost all the virus was packed into macrophages, that “eat” invading disease agents, according to findings published in *PLOS One*. What’s more, up to half of the virus in those macrophages were hybrids, mutants that elude immune system surveillance and escape from anti-HIV drugs, said study co-author Marco Salemi, Ph.D. **P**



MARCO SALEMI, PH.D.

BY APRIL FRAWLEY BIRDWELL

LONG-DISTANCE health

Health travel is booming. While some patients seek expertise in distant locales (including programs at UF) others are opting to leave the states for cheaper care.

They arrived at the UF Proton Therapy Center every morning by 8. By 8:25, Alex Barnes, then 4, was sedated, strapped onto a table while doctors and technicians prepared to blast his brain tumor with a precise beam of radiation.

By 10, the little boy from England was awake, happy and ready to go to the beach or the zoo or wherever else his mother and grandparents planned for the day.

“He came away from that treatment thinking he had a giant vacation,” says Alex’s mother, Rosalie Barnes, who brought her son from their home in Leicester, England for 12 weeks last September so he could undergo proton therapy treatment in Jacksonville. “It

was winter, the weather was beautiful. We sampled all the delights of Jacksonville, and my son thinks of it as a great experience.”

Alex suffers from a rare type of cancer called anaplastic ependymoma. Diagnosed in 2007, he underwent surgery to remove the tumor and had 14 months of chemotherapy before coming to the United States for proton therapy. The tumor came back after his chemo ended, and because of his age and the sensitive location of his cancer, normal radiation wasn’t an option for him. So his parents did what they felt they had to do, they raised \$150,000 — in three days — and brought their boy to the United States for proton therapy, a treatment not available in their country.

Although UF and the Shands HealthCare system don’t explicitly market to international patients, or even to Americans living in distant states, certain highly specialized programs in Gainesville and Jacksonville have become hot spots for patients from across the country and globe. As one of only six proton therapy centers in the country, UF’s Proton Therapy Institute is among them. *(For more on a few of these programs, see page 18)*

For most of the patients who travel to Florida for care, the sunshine and palm trees are just a pleasant bonus. The real draw is the expertise.

A TUMMY TUCK AND A Pina colada

But there is another breed of health traveler out there, the kind most people think of when they hear the phrases “medical tourism” or “dental vacation.”

Nearly 750,000 Americans traveled to other countries for health care in 2007, according to a Deloitte Health Solutions survey. The company’s estimates show that as many as 6 million people may be following suit by 2010. Why? It’s simple. Undergoing dental surgery or obtaining a facelift in Costa Rica or Mexico is cheaper than in the United States, and patients get a vacation to boot.

Imagine reclining on a lounge chair on a tropical isle, margarita in hand, ocean at your feet, while the sun glistens off your bargain basement dental implants. For some patients, the trip might go just like this. But for others, it doesn’t, and a botched procedure in a foreign country can lead to a plethora of problems down the road.

Patients who face complications after returning home may have to spend thousands more to fix the problem and could struggle to find a U.S. surgeon willing to help because of liability concerns, says Kfir Ben-David, M.D., a UF assistant professor and director of the bariatric surgery program in the College of Medicine. Even when a surgeon does agree to take the case, finding out what devices or procedures were used poses a challenge.

Samuel Low, D.D.S., M.S., M.Ed., an associate dean and professor of periodontology, remembers a patient who came to him after having dental implants — one of the most expensive dental procedures — placed in his mouth at a clinic in Mexico. The bone around the tooth implants had been destroyed. When Low tried to call to find out what materials had been used, the clinic’s phone was disconnected.

“He literally almost doubled the cost, plus the trauma, as if we had placed them in the first place. It doesn’t mean there are not great dentists (and physicians) outside of these borders. But when a dentist within these borders does that, we can take action.”

Because of their concerns for patients headed overseas for care, the American Dental Association released guidelines to help patients make decisions about international care before hopping a plane, said Low, one of the ADA’s 17 trustees.

For Ben-David, the main concern about people seeking cheap surgery overseas is the lack of follow-up care in the months afterward, which he says puts patients at risk for complications.

“I think the patients should really think about whether they are saving money. One of the things they have to look at is these are long-term effects,” he said. “Is it really worth it to save money and not have someone to take care of you afterward?”

Patients can find great doctors overseas, but there are still risks. A language barrier could cause communications problems, and patients will have no legal recourse if the procedure goes awry. Ultimately, the decision on where to receive care is a patient’s choice.

“I think the better informed the patients are about the procedures and the surgeon who is going to do it, the better off they are going to be,” says Brent Seagle, M.D., chief of plastic surgery in the UF College of Medicine.



CONTINUED
ON PAGE 18

-TO- WELCOME Jacksonville

Stateside, some cities are trying to recruit a little medical tourism of their own. With Shands Jacksonville, the Mayo Clinic, the UF Proton Therapy Institute and a host of other children's and specialty hospitals scattered across town, Jacksonville is one of the cities trying to make a name as a medical hub.

"We feel we have world-class facilities located right here, and we have a great place for people to heal," says Lyndsay Rossman, communications director for VisitJacksonville, the city's de facto tourism bureau. "We have over 30 significant medical facilities in just Jacksonville alone."

Jacksonville's rebranding campaign began last year with an initiative to bring in more medical meetings and conventions to the city. It's worked so far: The number of hotel rooms booked for these types of meetings has increased 300 percent over five years ago, says Rossman.

The next step for the city will be a marketing campaign touting the advantages



PHOTO BY SARAH KEWEL



NO MATTER HOW FAR

Several HSC programs draw patients and research participants from across the globe. This month, we highlight just a few of these unique groups.

The eye experts

Dennis Brooks, D.V.M., Ph.D., has operated on a Bengal tiger with cataracts, performed eyelid surgery on a potbelly pig named Bacon and flown to Peru to operate on a dog belonging to the Peruvian ambassador to the United States — on live TV.

And those are just a couple of the cases Brooks and his team of veterinary ophthalmologists at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine have worked on over the years.

"Any animal with eyes we will work on," says Brooks, a professor of ophthalmology in the college. "We have probably done more corneal transplants successfully in horses than anyone in the world."

With expertise in all things eye and a particular specialty in restoring vision to horses, Brooks and his team draw patients from distant states such as Vermont, Texas and Colorado and even countries like Argentina. That's no easy feat considering some clients spend 18 hours on the road hauling a horse just to get here.

"Economists should watch veterinarians," he says. "People are counting their pennies, but they are still bringing their animals in for eye problems."

And with promising treatments on the horizon, the number of patients may very well increase. Brooks' team is currently pioneering the use of post-birth placental tissue from horses to repair corneal injuries in animals. — *April Frawley Birdwell*

Doctors helping doctors

The Florida Recovery Center in Gainesville has become one of the top treatment centers in the South for health professionals coping with addiction because of its innovative programs and the expertise of its doctors.

"Our clinicians are the reason that the FRC is so well-known for alcohol, drug and addiction evaluation and treatment," said Mark Gold, M.D., chair of the UF department of psychiatry. "Their determined work and integration of research discoveries has led to FRC program changes that improve treatment and recovery rates."

Led by medical director Scott Teitelbaum, M.D., the FRC treats addicted physicians referred from around the country. It has one of the largest academic faculties in the United States, including medical doctors, Ph.D.s, counselors and support staff focused on the recovery of the patient and family. Interestingly, the FRC has a large number of recovering faculty and staff members whose personal past experiences help patients understand why it is necessary to put drug use permanently behind them.

— *John Pastor*

of its medical facilities and sunny locale to patients, Rossman says.

The number of patients visiting Jacksonville each year has already increased with the establishment of the UF Proton Therapy Institute in 2006. The center sees 100 to 120 patients a day, and on average, about 80 are from out the area, says Gerry Troy, M.S.W., director of patient services for the institute.

Getting patients involved in the community, visiting restaurants and playing golf is good for the city, but more importantly, it's good for the patients, Troy says. For patients dealing with cancer, sitting in a hotel room alone isn't conducive to healing. But having fun is, which is why the center works hard to get patients to take part in events at the center and across town.

"All they have to do is walk out that door and say, 'I am a proton patient,' and someone is going to buy them a beer," Troy says. "That is the essence to me of Jacksonville as a medical hub. It's not just medical facilities. This is a place of healing. Jacksonville has become a national place of healing. It has more to offer than just about any city in the country."



It's been nine months since Alex Barnes started his proton therapy in Jacksonville, but he and his family recently came back for a checkup at the center. His doctors can't give Alex a concrete prognosis yet, his mother says, but so far, the tumor hasn't returned.

But the family has hope, she says, more hope than they may have had if they stayed in England instead of seeking proton therapy.

"I am not sure I would have my son now (without it), and I would have felt guilty the rest of my life," she said. "For my child's life I would have given everything I have."



PHOTO BY SAMAH KIEWEL

Families travel from across the country to participate in UF research studies about Duchenne muscular dystrophy. UF researchers use pushpins to mark where these families live on a map of the United States. (Opposite page) The UF Proton Therapy Institute sees between 100 and 120 patients each day, with some patients traveling from as far away as Saudi Arabia and England to be treated there.

The littlest survivors

When Lisa Pannett was 16 weeks pregnant with her second child, doctors told her the baby had a zero percent chance of making it.

Her baby was diagnosed with congenital diaphragmatic hernia, a rare defect usually spotted on an ultrasound. A hole forms in the diaphragm that allows abdominal organs to grow into the chest cavity, hindering lung development.

Unwilling to accept the prognosis, Pannett searched online and found David Kays, M.D., chief of pediatric surgery in the UF College of Medicine. Kays and his team use a gentler approach to treat the problem, often delaying corrective surgery until after a baby's lungs gain strength. Because of this, they have a 92 percent survival rate treating CDH babies born at Shands at UF, compared with 50 percent elsewhere.

Pannett traveled from her home in St. Louis to have her baby here so she could be treated after birth. Now 6, Bella, is thriving.

"I really feel like (coming to UF) was God-sent," Pannett says.

But CDH is just one of the rare conditions UF pediatricians specialize in treating. Patients with childhood orphan diseases such as Pompe disease, glycogen storage disease and Prader-Willi syndrome come from all over to be treated here. For example, UF's Glycogen Storage Disease program is the largest of its sort in the world, seeing patients from 45 states and 20 countries.

Many of these tiny survivors are also involved in research studies that could one day help cure their conditions. — *April Frawley Birdwell*



Families committed to a cure

Researchers in the College of Public Health and Health Professions are studying the progression of Duchenne muscular dystrophy with the help of a special group of young boys and their families. More than 40 boys, ages 5 to 14, who participate in two UF studies travel to Gainesville from as far west as California and as far north as Maine, and from two foreign countries — Spain and Canada.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy only affects boys and by age 12 many need a wheelchair. Patients often die in their late teens or 20s of cardiorespiratory failure. In the United States, about 400 to 600 boys are born with Duchenne every year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The UF research team, led by Krista Vandeborne, Ph.D., principal investigator and chair of the department of physical therapy, uses magnetic resonance imaging to produce precise, noninvasive assessments of muscle tissue quality. The images allow researchers to determine the natural progression of the disease, the muscles that should be targeted for therapy and the efficacy of drug interventions.

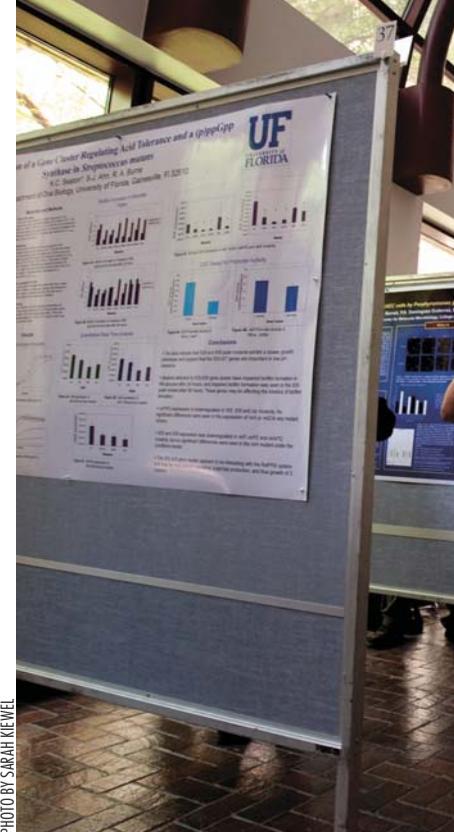
The families come to UF four to six times over a two-year period. No small feat considering the accommodations families need to make for work and school schedules, the special needs of the boys, who often use wheelchairs.

"The families that participate in the research are tremendously committed," Vandeborne said. "They understand that in order to find a cure we have to work together as a team — the parents, children and researchers." — *Jill Pease*

Takin' a CHOMP out of SCIENCE

After the experiments ended and infinite hours of work were logged in the lab, it was time to present ... the giant posters. This spring, the colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Public Health and Health Professions as well as the College of Medicine-Jacksonville honored the work of their scientists and scientists-in-training during annual Research Day celebrations. And the winners are ...

PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL



College of Dentistry

D.M.D. DIVISION WINNERS:

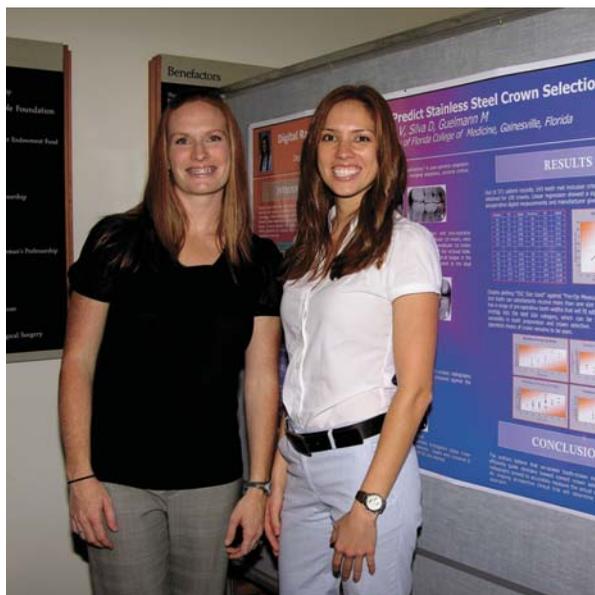
First place: **Gabriel Nossa**
Second place: **Ashley Harris**
Third place: **Lindsey L. Carballo**

GRADUATE/RESIDENT DIVISION WINNERS:

First place: **Jennifer N. Rainho**
Second place: **Caroline Jermanus**
Third place: **Nathan C. Dewsnup**

PH.D./POSTDOCTORAL DIVISION WINNERS:

First place: **Kaleb M. Pauley, with faculty mentor Seunghee Cha, Ph.D.**
Second place: **Paul R. Dominguez-Gutierrez, with faculty mentor Edward Chan, Ph.D.**
Third place: **Andrea E. Knowlton, with faculty mentor Scott S. Grieshaber, Ph.D.**



College of Medicine

THE BASIC SCIENCE RESEARCH AWARD:

Mohan K. Raizada, Ph.D.

THE CLINICAL SCIENCE AWARD:

Paul R. Carney, M.D.; Herwig-Ulf Meier-Kriesche, M.D.

THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:

James L. Talbert, M.D.

MEDICAL GUILD AWARDS:

Gold medal finalist: **Sunitha Rangaraju**
Silver medal finalists: **Andres Acosta, Songqing Li**
Bronze medal finalists: **Brittney Gurda, Sushrusha Nayak, Jihae Shin**

College of Public Health and Health Professions

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT POSTER AWARD WINNERS:

Christine De La Hoz, Magdalena Love, Kelli Mason, Nicole Richelieu, Sarah Rivard

GRADUATE STUDENT POSTER AWARD WINNERS:

Manuela Corti, Emily Fox, Lindsey Kirsch-Darrow, Megan Lipe, Sandra Mitchell, Michael Morris, Lisa Nackers, Bhavana Raja, Kathryn Ross, Milapjit Sandhu, Hannah Siburt, Ravneet Vohra

GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT AWARD WINNERS:

Stacy Dodd, Stephanie Garey, Yvonne Rogalski, Barbara Smith

College of Nursing

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS:

First prize: **Jillian Krickovich, with faculty mentors Sharleen Simpson, Ph.D.; and Jennifer Elder, Ph.D.**

Second prize: **Sydney VandeVeer, Rachel Fernandez, Cassie List, Natalie Mixson, with faculty mentor Meredith Rowe, Ph.D.**

GRADUATE AWARDS:

First prize: **Toni Glover**
Second prize: **Margaret Burns, with faculty mentor Saun-Joo "Sunny" Yoon, Ph.D.**

College of Medicine-Jacksonville

POSTER PRESENTATION WINNERS:

First place: **M. Sankarathi Balaiya, Ph.D.**
Second place: **Dian Feng, M.D.**
Third place: **Senan Sultan, M.D.**
Fourth place: **Ravi Keshavamurthy, M.D.**
Fifth place: **Adbul-Razzak Alamir, M.D.**
Sixth place: **Pratik Desai, M.D.**

PLATFORM PRESENTATION WINNERS:

First place: **Haidee Custodio, M.D.**
Second place: **Tausef Qureshi, M.D.**
Third place: **Bestoun Ahmed, M.D.**
Fourth place: **M. Kamran Aslam, M.D.**
Fifth place: **Darrell Graham, M.D.**
Sixth place: **Saeed Bajestani, M.D.**

FACULTY RESEARCHER/SCHOLAR OF THE YEAR AWARD:

Scott L. Silliman, M.D.

College of Pharmacy

ORAL COMPETITION WINNERS:

Senior division winner: **Vinayak Shenoy**
Junior division winner: **William M. Dismuke**
Levitt division winner: **Christian Hampp**

POSTER COMPETITION WINNERS:

Graduate student winners: **Chinki Bhatia, Yan Ren, Jane Ritho**
Pharmacy student winner: **Stacy Chao**
Postdoctoral fellow division winner: **Dr. Christian Grimstein**



The College of Medicine awarded three Lifetime Achievement Awards in 2009. Dr. Robert Watson and Lynn Romrell (shown at left) were honored at the Medical Education Banquet and Dr. James Talbert (above) was celebrated at the college's Celebration of Research.



Award of a lifetime

Two former deans of medical education were honored with the Society of Teaching Scholars Lifetime Achievement Award at this year's College of Medicine Medical Education Banquet held in April.

Robert Watson, M.D., who was senior associate dean for educational affairs for nearly 20 years, and Lynn Romrell, Ph.D., former associate dean of medical education and a professor of anatomy and cell biology, were honored for their excellence in scientific research and discovery, medical education and clinical career during their extended careers at UF.

"The University of Florida is where I went to college, medical school, did my residency and gave my professional life," Watson said. "It is my home, always will be, and I will always love it. Receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award was one of the nicest honors I have ever received, and I will cherish it forever."

Receiving the award together made the honor particularly special for the pair, who became friends during their years working together on medical education.

Watson, who retired from UF after nearly 20 years as senior associate dean, is currently executive associate dean for administrative affairs at the Florida State University College of Medicine. Romrell left UF in early 2008 and is associate dean for curriculum development and evaluation, also at FSU. — *Karen Dooley* 

Honoring UF's first pediatric surgeon

James L. Talbert, M.D., an emeritus professor in the division of pediatric surgery, was awarded the UF College of Medicine's Lifetime Achievement Award April 29 as part of the college's 2009 "Celebration of Research."

Talbert became UF's first pediatric surgeon when he joined the College of Medicine in 1967 as founding chief of the division of pediatric surgery, a position he held for more than 30 years. During his tenure at UF, Talbert developed innovative surgical techniques for the repair of congenital airway lesions and improved systems of care for injured children and pediatric cancer patients. He established a renowned program, currently led by David Kays, M.D., which grew to become an international leader in pediatric surgical care and research.

The introduction highlighting his myriad accomplishments required more than five minutes.

"I'm surprised and overwhelmed to be on the same list as so many great researchers mentioned here tonight," said Talbert, as he stepped on stage after receiving a standing ovation. "The reason why I'm still here is because of faculty, faculty and faculty. I love the faculty at the College of Medicine, the Health Science Center and the university at large."

Although retired, Talbert continues to mentor and encourage faculty and students.

Talbert completed his medical training at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Nashville, and then both his general and pediatric surgical residencies at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, where he served on faculty prior to coming to UF. — *Jennifer Brindise and Priscilla Santos* 

Cutting off cancer

Gene therapy technique stymies tumor blood supply

By Czerne M. Reid

UF researchers have come up with a new gene therapy method to disrupt cancer growth by using a synthetic protein to induce blood clotting that cuts off a tumor's blood and nutrient supply.

In mice implanted with human colorectal cancer cells, tumor volume decreased 53 percent and cancer cell growth slowed by 49 percent in those treated with a gene that encodes for the artificial protein, compared with those that were untreated.

The research team, led by Bradley S. Fletcher, M.D., Ph.D., an assistant professor of pharmacology and therapeutics in the College of Medicine, created the so-called fusion protein to target another protein called tumor endothelial marker 8, or TEM8, which was recently found to be preferentially expressed in the inner lining of tumor vessels. Such differences in protein expression enable delivery of drug molecules to the cells that harbor these proteins.

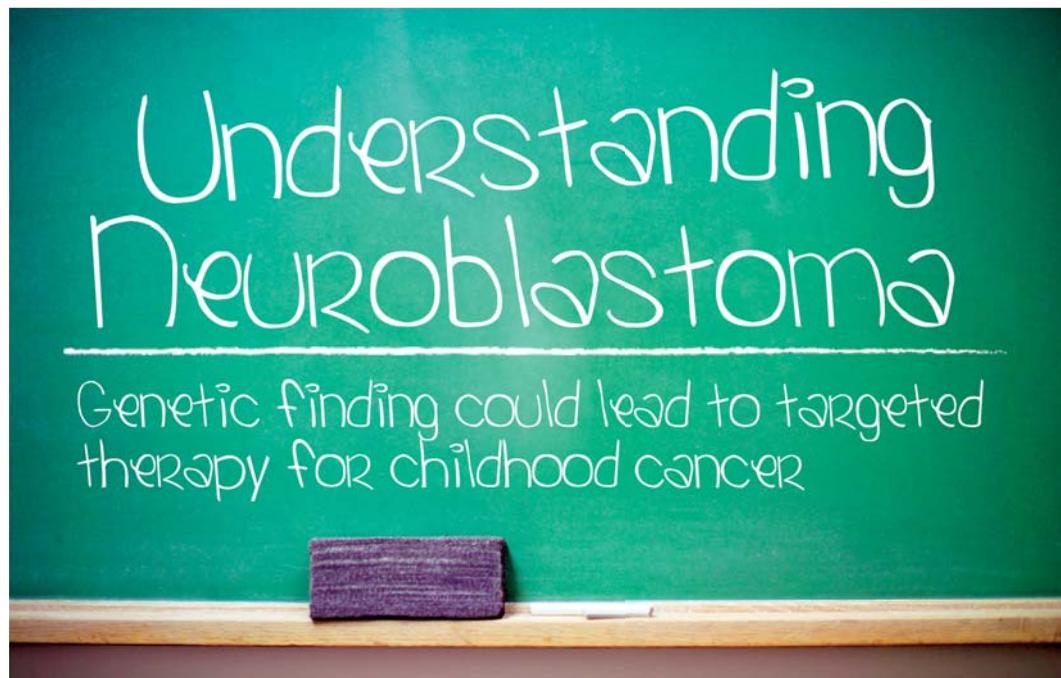
"The protein we created did a very good job of homing to the tumor and binding," said Stephen Fernando, Ph.D., who recently completed his doctoral studies. "By targeting TEM8, we can potentially create a therapy against cancer."

The Fletcher group is the first to target cancer cells through protein binding to TEM8. The findings, now available online, are featured on the cover of the June 15 edition of *Cancer Research*.

"If you can cut off the blood supply, then you can inhibit the tumor from growing — there have been many attempts," said Brad St. Croix, Ph.D., director of the National Cancer Institute's Tumor Angiogenesis Section, whose group first identified the TEM genes that over-express in tumor endothelial cells. "The concept of targeting tumor blood vessels has been around for many years, but it's good that we're finally getting around to the stage where we can see the vessels being targeted therapeutically — it's pretty exciting, I think." **P**



BRADLEY S. FLETCHER, M.D.



By April Frawley Birdwell

Researchers have identified a genetic glitch that could lead to development of neuroblastoma, a deadly form of cancer that typically strikes children under 2. Two UF scientists were part of the multicenter team of researchers that made the discovery, which could pave the way for better treatments that target the disease, according to findings published in the journal *Nature*.

"What makes our study so important is that although neuroblastoma accounts for 7 percent of childhood cancers, it is responsible for 15 percent of deaths in children with cancer," said Wendy London, Ph.D., a research associate professor of epidemiology, biostatistics and health policy research at the UF College of Medicine and the principal investigator for the Children's Oncology Group Statistics and Data Center at UF. "This paper adds yet another gene in the pathway that could lead to tumorigenesis (tumor formation) of neuroblastoma."

Neuroblastoma forms in developing nerve cells, with tumors most often found on a child's adrenal gland. It's the most common form of cancer in babies and the third most common childhood cancer, according to the American Cancer Society.

Led by John J. Maris, M.D., director of the Cancer Center at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, researchers performed what's known as a genome-wide association study to uncover errors in DNA that could be associated with neuroblastoma.

To do this, researchers analyzed the genetic makeup of 846 patients with neuroblastoma, whose samples were derived from the Children's Oncology Group Neuroblastoma Tumor Bank, and 803 healthy patients in a control group.

On the basis of their initial findings, the researchers performed a second validation analysis, pinpointing that a glitch called a "copy number variation" in a single chromosome is associated with neuroblastoma. Copy number variation has to do with the gain, loss or duplication of snippets of DNA.

The researchers reported additional genetic links in *Nature Genetics* in May. The team discovered that on the gene called BARD1, six single-nucleotide polymorphisms — variations in tiny pieces of DNA — were also associated with neuroblastoma.

"Only two years ago we had very little idea of what causes neuroblastoma," said Maris, who led both studies. "Now we have unlocked a lot of the mystery of why neuroblastoma arises in some children and not in others." **P**



WENDY LONDON, PH.D.

Sweet DISCOVERY

UF makes gene therapy breakthrough for glycogen storage disease



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL



By April Frawley Birdwell

A dog born with a deadly disease that prevents the body from using stored sugar has survived 20 months and is still healthy after receiving gene therapy at UF — putting scientists a step closer to finding a cure for the disorder in children.

Called glycogen storage disease type 1A, the genetic disease stops the body from being able to correctly store and use sugar between meals. In order to survive, children and adults with this disease must receive precise doses of cornstarch every few hours. The disease is even more dire in dogs, which must be fed sugar every 30 minutes to survive.

“Without treatment, these dogs all die,” said David Weinstein, M.D., M.M.Sc., director of the UF Glycogen Storage Disease Program and co-investigator on the study. “People usually survive because they are fed so much as infants. But by 4 to 6 months of age, they will have developmental delays and a big liver. If it is diagnosed at that point, the kids can do fine. If it is not diagnosed, then the kids get exposed to recurrent low sugars, and they will end up with brain damage, seizures or they will die.”

UF researcher Cathryn Mah, Ph.D., a member of the Powell Gene Therapy Center and UF Genetics Institute, presented the findings at an American Society of Gene Therapy meeting in May.

About one in 100,000 children have this severe

Dr. David Weinstein checks in on glycogen storage disease patient Kamryn Jackson (center), 5, and big sister Rylee, 7, during Kamryn’s recent checkup at UF. A team of UF researchers recently made a gene therapy breakthrough in a dog born with glycogen storage disease type 1A (right) that could pave the way for better treatments for children with the disease.

form of glycogen storage disease. Children receive doses of cornstarch at scheduled intervals throughout the day because it metabolizes more slowly than other carbohydrates. Until this therapy was discovered about 30 years ago, most children born with this disease did not survive past infancy.

Glycogen storage disease type 1A stems from a faulty enzyme that doesn’t convert stored sugar, or glycogen, to glucose, the type of sugar the body uses for energy. This prevents the body from getting the energy it needs and causes glycogen to build up in the liver.

The goal of gene therapy is to restore the enzyme so the body uses sugar properly, said Mah, a UF assistant professor of pediatric cellular and molecular therapy and a co-investigator on the study.

The dog, which comes from a line of dogs genetically prone to the disease, received its first dose of gene therapy the day after it was born, Mah said. The dog improved at first, often going as long as two to three hours without needing additional glucose to supplement its diet. But several weeks later the progress stopped.

When the dog was 5 months old, the researchers administered another dose of gene therapy, this time using a different type of AAV. Six weeks after the therapy, the dog was completely weaned off glucose supplements.

“We have never had to use any glucose supplementation since we weaned her off,” Mah said. “She just gets fed normal dog food. That is a huge improvement in quality of life.”

A few years ago, when Weinstein, Mah and other UF and National Institutes of Health collaborators began discussing the project, the longest a dog with the disease had lived was 28 days. The dog treated at UF is now 20 months old.

“The success is beyond what I would have imagined at this stage,” Weinstein said. “To have a dog off treatment for 14 months that is clinically doing great with outstanding lab results is beyond what I even dreamt about.”

Finding better treatments for the glycogen storage disease is crucial because the disorder is still associated with multiple complications, and care remains a challenge. As a result of the lack of expertise in this condition, children and adults also must travel to special centers for care. With more than 300 patients from 18 countries, UF’s Glycogen Storage Disease Program is the largest in the world. **P**



Hooked on hookah?

New research examines popularity of hookah smoking, users' perceptions of risk

By Jill Pease

Hookah, the exotic-looking water-pipe smoking shared in groups, continues to gain in popularity, particularly among young adults, despite growing concern about its health risks.

Two new studies led by Tracey Barnett, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the College of Public Health and Health Professions' department of behavioral science and community health, aim to determine the prevalence of hookah use among UF students and to evaluate students' usage patterns and perceptions of the water pipe's harmfulness. Barnett's work is supported by \$114,000 in grants from the UF Research Opportunity Fund and the American Cancer Society.

Hookah pipes are composed of a head, where lit charcoal and tobacco — also known as shisha — sit, a body with water bowl, and a hose. Air is drawn through the tobacco and into the pipe body where it passes through the water before being inhaled through the hose. Ever since hookah was developed in India hundreds of years ago, it has been associated with the belief that it is a harmless alternative to other forms of tobacco smoking.

"Users tend to think smoking hookah is safe because water is a filter," Barnett said. "Some

report it not being as addictive as cigarettes, thus not as harmful. Many actually don't think that shisha has tobacco, while others feel it's a more pure form of tobacco that doesn't have as many chemicals, although there's really no reason to believe this."

In fact, during a typical 20- to 80-minute hookah session, users may smoke the equivalent of 100 or more cigarettes, according to the World Health Organization. Research has also shown that hookah smoking can deliver 11 times more carbon monoxide than a cigarette, in addition to high levels of other carcinogenic toxins and heavy metals found in cigarettes. While the water in the hookah pipes does absorb some nicotine, researchers believe smokers are exposed to enough to cause addiction.

In Gainesville, eight restaurants and lounges offer hookah smoking with sweet-tasting tobacco in flavors such as blueberry, mint chocolate and strawberry. The UF Healthy Gators 2010 survey, conducted in spring 2008,

found that hookah was the second most commonly used substance after alcohol — 44 percent of respondents had smoked hookah.

In the first study, Barnett's team will measure carbon monoxide levels of patrons leaving hookah bars and survey them on their knowledge of hookah's health risks. In the second study, the researchers will estimate the prevalence of hookah smoking by interviewing 1,000 UF students across campus. During the second phase, the researchers will conduct a social network analysis of 100 hookah smokers to identify the location, frequency, duration and social context of their water pipe use.

"Given the social nature of water pipe use, understanding the social influences is essential to developing intervention programs that would target students' reasons for use and to dispel the myth that it is less harmful than cigarette smoking," Barnett said.

The multidisciplinary research team also includes Barbara Curbow, Ph.D., and Dennis Thombs, Ph.D., of the College of Public Health and Health Professions; Scott Tomar, D.M.D., Dr.P.H., from the College of Dentistry; Christopher McCarty, Ph.D., of the Warrington College of Business Administration; and Steven Pokorny, Ph.D., of the College of Health and Human Performance. **P**

An affair to remember

The UF Health Science Center-Jacksonville celebrated the graduation of 119 medical, dental and pharmacy residents and fellows at its annual resident graduation ceremony June 17. As part of the ceremony, the college presented five prestigious awards to residents, fellows and faculty members. And the honorees are:

Excellence in Student Education Award

Resident: Susanna Meredith, M.D., obstetrics and gynecology
Faculty: Miren Schinco, M.D., surgery

Edward Jelks Outstanding Resident Clinician Award

Resident: Andrew Darlington, D.O., medicine

Rosilie Saffos Outstanding Resident Teacher Award

Resident: Richard Westenbarger, M.D., emergency medicine

Ann Harwood-Nuss Award

Resident: April Brenes, M.D., pediatrics

Louis Russo Award for Outstanding Professionalism in Medicine Award

Resident: Victor Hassid, M.D., surgery
Faculty: Linda Edwards, M.D., medicine



(Top) Dr. Eric R. Frykberg (left) congratulates Dr. Victor J. Hassid (right), the 2009 resident recipient of the Louis S. Russo Award for Outstanding Professionalism in Medicine. (Bottom) Dr. Daryhl L. Johnson II (left) and Dr. Alan Brockhurst (right) pose for pictures after the 2009 graduation ceremony in Jacksonville.

Residents on the hill

By Betty Poole

Namita Sharma, M.D., and Shimona Rajkumar Bhatia, M.D., residents in the pediatrics department at the UF College of Medicine-Jacksonville, each received one of only eight scholarships provided nationally to attend the 2009 Resident Advocacy Day in February in Washington, D.C.

The daylong event included advocacy training, presentations and an in-depth legislation session on health reform. Guest speaker J. Nadine Gracia, M.D., a pediatrician and White House Fellow at the Department of Health and Human Services, gave the residents practical advice for advocating for health reform and communicating with legislators.

"I was so grateful to receive the advocacy day scholarship," Sharma said. "Not only did it allow me to attend the conference and further my understanding of community pediatrics, but it also allowed me to see how accessible our legislators are and how easy it is to voice our opinion and to impact change".

After the training and presentation sessions, the resident attendees were given the opportunity to meet at House and Senate congressional offices to put their newfound skills to the test.

For more information about Resident Advocacy Day, go to the American Academy of Pediatrics Web site at www.aap.org. **P**

College selected for prestigious fellowship



SHAHLA MASOOD, M.D.

The UF College of Medicine-Jacksonville has been selected to receive grant funding from the Florida Breast Cancer Coalition Research Foundation for a two-year research fellowship.

The fellowship began June 30, said Shahla Masood, M.D., a professor and chair of the department of pathology and laboratory medicine in Jacksonville.

The Florida Breast Cancer Coalition Research Foundation is dedicated to ending breast cancer through advocacy, education and research. — Betty Poole **P**

Dedicated to UF



PHOTO BY PRISCILLA SANTOS

The HSC recently recognized the service of the longtime employees who make possible the day-to-day activities of its six colleges, institutes and centers. The honorees included staff members who have worked at UF for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 years. For a complete list, visit www.health.ufl.edu and click on "Employee Recognition." HSC-Jacksonville honorees will be listed in the next issue of *The POST*.

College of Dentistry

10 Years: Ayleen Alexander • Cecilia Donofrio • Christina Haskins • Lynn King • Monte Meyer • Angela Stallworth
15 Years: Censeri Abare • Allyson Barrett • Pamela Williams
20 Years: Quincy Allen • Janice Braddy • Valarie Brown • Leslie McManus-Ferrelli • Allene Taylor • Mary Taylor • Sandra Watkins
25 Years: Stephanie Baldwin • Katherine Galloway • Frances Rollins
30 Years: Melanie Chelette

College of Medicine

10 Years: Angela Avery • Dawn Beachy • Jill Bischoff • Kevin Bishop • Susan Boyle • Shelly Burleson • Vicky Campbell • Weijun Chen • Chris Chronister • Larry Compton • Vickie Dennis • Cara Duffaut • Summer Duke • Robyn Edwards • Jerome Elam • Christine Engstrom • Elise Feagle • Felicia Fitzgerald • Patricia Flewelling • Alan Hagan • Christine

Halvorsen • Lisa Hamilton • Nancy Hanson • Laura Hudson • Linda Hunt • Kimberly Hysell • Nencie Katz • Connie Kirkpatrick • Nancy Lambka • William Lentzsch • Barbara Lindsey • Dorothy McCallister • Angela McGraw • Patricia Meehan • Sherri Mizrahy • Tiffany Noble • Linda Novinger • Melissa Ogle • Kelley Paulling • Sheila Pendergast • Douglas Perkinson • Tina Philipsberg • Renae Preston • Edgar Rodriguez • Judith Sallustio • Pamela Schreck • Victoria Shearin • Albert Shroads • Harold Snellen • Irmadelle Sotomayor • Myrna Stenberg • Steve Stripling • Julia Tamarit • Tammy Toskes • Aaron Weldon • Patricia Zeile • Kimberly Zinkel

15 Years: Todd Barnash • Kathryn Bauman • Susan Bryan • Candace Caputo • Sheryl Cox • Elaine Cronheim • Richard Davis • E. Rosellen Dedlow • Denise Eggleton • Tina Hall • Candy Hill • Janet Huffstetler • Monica Jette • Dana Leach • Sharon Lepler • Steve Pomeroy • Nina Tarnuzzer • Isabel Valentin-Oquendo • Judy Walch • Arthur Wallen

20 Years: Frances Anderson • Elizabeth Bedell • Karen Carawan • Linda Carlson • Janice Clark • Lisa Clary • Joyce Conners • Richelle Davis • Connie Dillashaw • Sandra Donohue • Donald Dugger • Patricia Glenton • David Habell • Linda Horne • Henry Kolb • Verne Landsiedel • Carol McAllister • Allyson McFauls • Ilona Fenyo Morales • Diane Palmetter • Deborah Pendry • Cynthia Puckett • Linda Robbins • Frances Skipper • Mary Weldon • Angela Bent Williams
25 Years: Mary Allen • Sandra Bivins • Michael Browning • Nancy Chancey • Debra Hope • Nancy Hughes • Tina King • Thelma Lewis • Barbara Lindsey • B.J. Morasco • Lark Noll • Deborah Otero • Michael Paiva • Terry Rickey • Thomas Roane • Angeline Sellung • Myrtle Williams
30 Years: J.E. Beem • Edith Bruno • Sylvia Clemons • Frances Dunn • Jerry Janiec • Anne Michael • Isabelle Orta • Pamela Patton • Prissilla Rogers • Sheila Thigpin • Kitty Wiley • Brenda Wise
35 Years: Cheryle Downing • Leslie Harlin • Roberta Hendrix • Rosa Mills

College of Nursing

10 Years: Carol Delany • Cecile Kiley
25 Years: Sammie Brooks **30 Years:** Gloria Anderson • Vivian Brown

College of Pharmacy

10 Years: Jerald Blanchard • Gregory Zuest
15 Years: Katie Ratliff-Thompson • Yufei Tang
20 Years: Janet Wiegand

College of Public Health and Health Professions

10 Years: Todd Fraser • John Gowan • Kelli Granade • Heather Steingraber **15 Years:** Melissa Jones **20 Years:** Philip Chase
25 Years: Peggy Bessinger **30 Years:** Janet Haire • Susan White

College of Veterinary Medicine

10 Years: Wendy Davies • Carolyn Diaz • Stephanie Stein **15 Years:** Pamela Cromer • Bobbie Davis • Thomas Dehaan • Joy Lee • Jessica Markham • Antoinette McIntosh • Marc Salute • Debra Spence-Thomas • Lynn Varner **20 Years:** Terry Dufran • Devony Harnist • Sharon Kitchen • Linda Lee-Ambrose • Anna Lundgren • Raymond Moore • Samuel Smith • Sylvia Tucker • Elliot Williams
25 Years: Patricia Lewis • Charles Yowell
30 Years: Doe Davis • Debbie Johnson • Drema Palmer • George Papadi • Sharon Sams • Marie-Joel Thatcher

HSC Affiliated Units

(Animal Care Services, Biotechnology, Emerging Pathogens Institute, Institutional Review Board and the Whitney Marine Lab)

10 Years: Shadi Bootorabi • Sharon Norton • Jacques Thimote **15 Years:** Alfred Chung • Diane Duke • Anita Hancock
20 Years: Vickie Criswell • Cheryl Dykeman • James Netherton • Tawnya Rodriguez • Cynthia Sanders **25 Years:** Scherwin Henry • Lisa Lindsey **30 Years:** Carolyn Baum • Sherry Scruggs

Physical Plant Division

10 Years: Angelia Carter • Charles Henry • Steve Jackson • Walter Mickle • Classie Ross • Annette Thomas • Raymond Thompson • Greta Walker • Roosevelt Waters **15 Years:** Annie Henry • Lashonda Roberts • Steven De Robertis • Frederick Smyth **20 Years:** Herbert Hooker • Effie Jackson • Alton

McKinney • Robert Mitchell • Violet Murphy • Bobby Wright **25 Years:** James Brillhart • Harley Ingle **30 Years:** Elwood Anderson • Ron Reading • Larry Thomas • Joyce Volcy **35 Years:** Joshua Johnson • Maggie Montgomery • Freddie Neal • Vivian Smith

Student Health Care Center

10 Years: Karen Cosner • Anthony Greene • Ann Jaronski • Labrisha Johnson • Michael Wuerz **15 Years:** • Karen Bell • Wayne Benham • Betty Blenco • Gudrun Dennis • Paula Dragutsky • Marcia Morris • Diane Pecora • Roberta Seldman • Zenon Switlik
20 Years: Roya Barger • Mary Flowers • Tammy Reno **25 Years:** Zulma Chardon • Carolyn Coleman • Mary Jones • Barbara Welsch **30 Years:** Elizabeth Brooks • Joan Cintron • Elizabeth Vinson

Senior Vice President, Health Affairs

(Includes HSC Library and the McKnight Brain Institute)

10 Years: Barbara Beck • Kelly Bishop • Lynne Cuda • Denae Flentje • Thomas Livoti • James Rocca • Nadine Smith • Kelly Stone **15 Years:** Kristin Belyew • Vickie Converse • Harris Plant • Melanie Ross • Tonya Webb • Karen Yanke
20 Years: Gregory Clayton • Susan Cochran • Kathleen Spinks **25 Years:** Laverne Burch • Elizabeth Powers • Gwendolyn Young
30 Years: Linnea Danielsen 

30 Years:

(Opposite page, listed alphabetically) Elwood Anderson, Jean Anderson, Elaine Beem, Vivian Brown, Edith Bruno, Melanie Chelette, Ann Clemmons, Linnea Danielson, Doe Dee Davis, Fran Dunn, Janet Haire, Jerry Janiec, Debbie Johnson, Drema Palmer, George Papadi, Pamela Patton, Lynn Rogers, Sharon Sams, Sherry Scruggs, Marie-Joel Thatcher, Sheila Thigpen, Larry Thomas, Susan White, Kitty Wiley and Brenda Wise

35 Years:

(From left) Vivian Smith, Freddie Neal, Maggie Montgomery, Joshua Johnson, Roberta Hendrix and Rosa Mills.



PHOTO BY PRISCILLA SANTOS



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

A picture of SUCCESS

Young veterinary professor wins university-level Superior Accomplishment Award

By Laura Mize

Two years ago, Matthew Winter, D.V.M., joined the College of Veterinary Medicine's department of small animal clinical sciences as an assistant professor. A short time later he was met with an unexpected challenge: the resignation of the only other radiology faculty member in the department.

"As I arrived, the rest of the radiologists had left," Winter said. "So I came here with very little in the way of radiology faculty and did a lot to try to maintain the teaching mission of our service, as well as the clinically oriented mission of our service."

In just his second job as a professor, Winter was faced with the enormous task of providing the necessary radiology courses for the college's students and working as service chief of radiology.

In May, Winter received the university's Superior Accomplishment Award for academic personnel in recognition of his success over the past two years.

Colin Burrows, B.Vet.Med., Ph.D., a professor and chair of the department of small animal clinical sciences, nominated him for the award.

In his nomination letter, Burrows wrote that Winter also helped draw another radiologist to the faculty, developed a business plan to increase the number of patients using UF's veterinary radiology service and received the college's Teacher of the Year award for his work in a typically unpopular course.

"Radiology now has four faculty members, a nascent

residency program and is now one of the strengths of the hospital and college," Burrows wrote. "I give much of the credit for this to Dr. Winter."

But Winter emphasized there are many others at the college who deserve some credit for his success.

"Without the support of a great team of technologists and technicians that I have in my ... radiology service — all of whom are tremendously hard working — without the support, as I said, of the administration and without the understanding of the clinicians with whom I work, it would never have happened," Winter said. "So it wasn't just about me."

He personally thanked Burrows and John Haven, director of the Veterinary Medical Center, and said the experience has helped him learn more about teamwork than he otherwise would have had in his first two years as a professor at UF.

Winter, who attended veterinary school at Cornell University, said a mentor there influenced him to specialize in veterinary radiology.

Despite his busy schedule, Winter still finds time to conduct research. In one of his current projects, Winter is trying to develop ways to learn more about liver tumors in dogs — whether the tumors are malignant or benign, for example — through CT and MRI scans.

"Right now that's something that's kind of difficult to do (non-invasively) and there have been some breakthroughs in the area of ultrasound contrast agents (dyes or other materials used to show contrast in an ultrasound and highlight problems), but there may be other methods," Winter said.

Winter said the college is making progress in its efforts to rebuild the radiology program.

"Part of what we've been working toward is making the University of Florida, specifically the College of Veterinary Medicine and, more specifically the radiology service, a place where people want to come to build their careers," Winter said. "And I think we've made a lot of steps in that direction." 

Superior Accomplishment Award winners, 2009

UNIVERSITYWIDE WINNER

Matthew Winter, College of Veterinary Medicine

HSC WINNERS

College of Dentistry: Antwan Bates, Charles Lesch, Lee Mintz, Justus Weber

College of Medicine: Denise Heather Bell-Brunson, C. Michael Bucci, Tina Calton, Jenika Loren Christmas, Bridget DeSue, Laura Dickson, David Feller, Eileen M. Handberg, Connie Philebaum, Frederica Robbins, Clay W. Smith, Sherri Swilley, Carol Stanaland

College of Nursing: Laurie Rinfret

College of Public Health and Health Professions: Lillanna Bell, Jason Rogers

College of Veterinary Medicine: Wendy Davis, MaryAnn Dixon, Dieter Haager, Rebecca Richardson, Mary Ring, Stephanie Stein, Amy Stone, Brandy Woodley, Cecilia Yemma

College of Pharmacy: Sarah Carswell, Edward Phillips

Student Health Care Center: Karen Brennan, Anthony Menella, Laura Tipton, Karen Williams

Senior Vice President, Health Affairs: Donald S. David, Ashlee Hardin, Sharon Y. Milton-Simmons

JACKSONVILLE

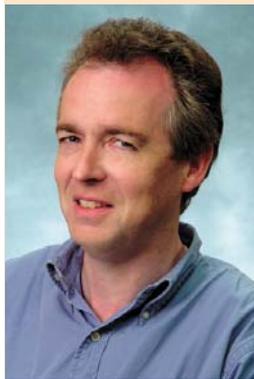
ROBERT A. PELAIA, J.D., senior university counsel for health affairs, was inducted as a member of the 2009-11 National Advisory Board of The American Academy of Professional Coders. The AAPC National Advisory Board advises AAPC leadership on coding and coding-related issues and questions while promoting and supporting the mission of the AAPC and the coding profession.



Robert A. Pelaia

Researcher receives prestigious NIH Award

Richard Lamont, Ph.D., a professor in the UF College of Dentistry department of oral biology, recently received a MERIT (Method to Extend Research in Time) award from the National Institutes of Health, an honor bestowed on fewer than 5 percent of NIH-funded investigators. Initiated in 1987, the MERIT Award program extends funding to experienced researchers who have superior grants and who have demonstrated a long-term commitment to and success in research. In January, Lamont received a five-year, \$2.4 million grant for his study investigating the molecular dialogue between oral bacteria and host cells, which has yielded groundbreaking insights into



Richard Lamont

the bacterial lifestyle within humans. In May Lamont was notified that the original award had been named a MERIT Award, which essentially upgrades his grant from a five-year to a 10-year term and guarantees additional funding during the second five-year phase of the study.

COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

MARY FRANCES STAVROPOULOS, D.D.S., associate professor of oral and maxillofacial surgery, was selected for the 2010 class of fellows of the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine Program for Women at Drexel University's College of Medicine in Philadelphia. With the goal to increase the presence of women in high-level administrative positions in medical institutions, ELAM candidates are women who already hold leadership positions and demonstrate the potential to advance to the executive level within five years.



Mary Frances Stavropoulos

TIMOTHY WHEELER, D.M.D., Ph.D., a professor and chair of orthodontics and assistant dean for advanced and graduate education, was appointed as the Academy 100 Eminent Scholar Chair. The



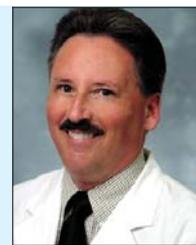
Frank Catalanotto



Madhu Nair



Roberta Pileggi



Marc Ottenga



Arthur Nimmo

Leadership shuffle

The UF College of Dentistry recently announced the following organizational and administrative changes: **Frank Catalanotto, D.M.D.**, became chair of the department of community dentistry and behavioral science effective May 29; **Madhu Nair, D.M.D., M.S.**, became chair of the newly created department of oral and maxillofacial diagnostic sciences effective July 1; **Roberta Pileggi, D.D.S., M.S.**, was appointed graduate program director of the graduate endodontic program effective July 1; **Marc Ottenga, D.D.S.**, was appointed director of operative predoctoral curriculum for the department of operative dentistry effective July 1; **Arthur Nimmo, D.D.S., F.A.C.P.**, was appointed director of predoctoral implant dentistry for the department of prosthodontics effective July 1.

Academy 100 is a scholarship society established in the 1960s to help fund scholarships for student dentists and to promote the creation of a dental school in Florida. Wheeler has been involved in clinical dentistry for 20 years.



Timothy Wheeler

presented his research on a new gene therapy method to disrupt cancer growth using a synthetic protein that targets tumor blood vessels, inducing thrombosis that cuts off a tumor's blood and nutrient supply.



Stephen Fernando

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

RONIEL CABRERA, M.D., M.S., a hepatologist and assistant professor of medicine, has won a \$375,000 New Investigator Research Grant from the Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program grant and the Florida Department of Health in support of his research on primary liver cancer. The work involves characterizing immune-related pathways that promote development and progression of liver cancer in order to develop new targeted liver cancer therapies.



Roniel Cabrera

MAUREN A. NOVAK, M.D., associate dean for medical education and vice chair of pediatric education, was selected for the 2010 class of fellows of the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine Program for Women at Drexel University's College of Medicine in Philadelphia. Novak and fellow UF candidate Mary Frances Stavropoulos are two of only 53 senior faculty women selected for the program and represent 49 medical, dental and public health schools.



Maureen A. Novak

PHILIPP DAHM, M.D., M.H.Sc., an associate professor and director of clinical research for the department of urology and the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System, is one of the recipients of the 2009 Dennis W. Jahnigen Career Development Scholars Award for his proposal "Evidence-based Decision-Making in Geriatric Genitourinary Oncology." Dahm will work under the mentorship of Johannes Vieweg, M.D., and Rebecca J. Beyth, M.D., to investigate the high-quality evidence that guides clinical decision-making in genitourinary oncology and determine its applicability to the older patient.

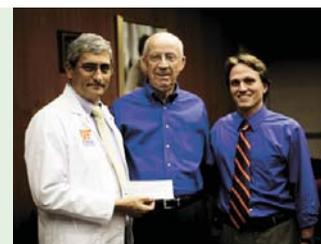


Philipp Dahm

STEPHEN FERNANDO, Ph.D., who recently completed his doctoral studies in the department of pharmacology and therapeutics, was awarded a merit-based travel grant by the American Society of Gene Therapy to attend the society's annual meeting in May in San Diego. Fernando

Eye researchers receive award

William Dawson, M.S., Ph.D., an emeritus professor of ophthalmology, and **Timothy Garrett, Ph.D.**, director of the General Clinical Research Center Core Laboratory, received a \$25,000 North Florida Lions Eye Foundation Research Award in May for their research about age-related macular degeneration. While most Lions Clubs raise funds for eye care, this club is one of a few that donates to research as well. Dawson and Garrett were chosen by the Lions Club for their forward analytical research technique called imaging mass spectrometry, which allows them to study the specific chemicals involved with the disease in the eye. This award will be used to fund equipment, specimens and new research methods. Pictured from left are William Driebe, M.D., chair of ophthalmology; Walt McLanahan, chair of the North Florida Lions Eye Foundation; and Garrett.



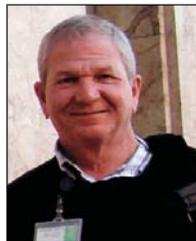
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

GERALD E. GAUSE, Ph.D., an associate scholar in the department of Pharmacodynamics, was recently chosen as the college's 2009 Teacher of the Year. Gause, a four-time winner of the award, said respect for students is one of his guiding philosophies. "Students challenge me and introduce me to new ideas," Gause said. His dedication to teaching is coupled with a heavy interest in research. He has published numerous articles on pulmonary physiology and pulmonary hypertension.



Gerald E. Gause

LESLIE HENDELES, Pharm.D., a professor of pharmacy and pediatrics, was invited to be one of 13 voting members to serve on the Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee of the Food and Drug Administration. The committee evaluates the safety and effectiveness of drugs used in the treatment of pulmonary disease and makes recommendations to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs. Hendeles serves on the committee until May 2010.



Leslie Hendeles

JASON KWAN, a graduate student in medicinal chemistry working under the mentorship of Hendrik Luesch, Ph.D., was awarded the 2009 American Society of Pharmacognosy Student Research Award. He received a \$500 cash gift



Jason Kwan



Barbara Richardson, Ph.D., R.N., program director of the UF Area Health Education Centers, received the College of Public Health and Health Professions' first Distinguished Service Award. Richardson has helped guide the development of the college's public health program for several years, serving as chair of the Public Health External Advisory Committee and as a member of the Public Health Executive Committee. She is also a longtime supporter of college faculty members' work in areas such as mental health, smoking cessation and weight loss for rural residents. Interim Dean Michael Perri and Associate Dean Mary Peoples-Sheps (right) presented the award to Richardson May 7 during the UF Public Health Conference.

and up to \$1,000 travel assistance to present his research findings in June at the ASP 50th Anniversary Meeting in Honolulu.

JAY SHAUB, a third-year graduate student in pharmacodynamics who works with Carrie Haskell-Luevano, Ph.D., was selected by the Endocrine Society to receive complimentary registration and a \$500 travel award to attend the Endocrine Trainee Day Workshop at the June annual meeting of the Endocrine Society in Washington, D.C.



Jay Shaub

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

DAVID FULLER, Ph.D., an associate professor in the department of physical therapy, received the Respiration Section New Investigator Award from the American Physiological Society. The award recognizes an outstanding investigator in the early stages of his or her career.



David Fuller

AMY RODRIGUEZ, a doctoral student in the rehabilitation science program, is one of 15

students to receive a fellowship from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders to attend the 2009 Clinical Aphasiology Conference in Colorado. The fellowship covers Rodriguez's travel and registration costs associated with attending the conference and provides special mentoring opportunities with senior researchers.



Amy Rodriguez

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

AMY STONE, D.V.M., Ph.D., a clinical assistant professor of small animal clinical sciences, has been named the 2009 College Council Teacher of the Year. Stone received her veterinary and doctoral degrees from UF in 1999 and 2002, respectively. She also completed postdoctoral training in vaccine and mucosal immunology at UF. She presently serves as chief of the outpatient medicine and dentistry service at UF's Veterinary Medical Center. She recently received the prestigious 2009 Pfizer Distinguished Teacher of the Year Award.



Amy Stone

Laura Fraser

Laura Fraser, a dedicated and respected member of the College of Medicine family since 2005, passed away June 13 after a lengthy battle with cancer. She was 35.



Fraser (center) leaves behind an 8-year-old daughter, Addie, and her husband, Todd, who works at the College of Public Health and Health Professions.

Laura first joined the College of Medicine in the Office of Medical

Education. In 2008 she transferred to the Office of Admissions and was a valued member of the College of Medicine's administrative team, said Michael L. Good, M.D., interim dean. Her warm personality and beautiful smile will be missed.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in memory of Laura to Haven Hospice. Mail to Haven Hospice, 4200 N.W. 90th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32606. **P**

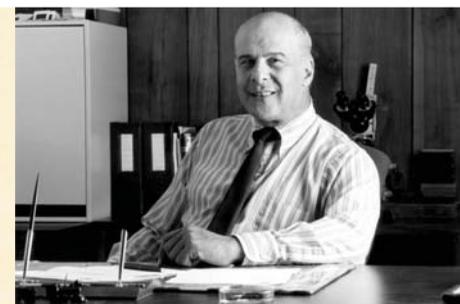
Michael Ross

Michael Ross, Ph.D., former chair of the UF College of Medicine's department of anatomy and cell biology, died June 9. He was 78.

Ross graduated with a bachelor of science degree from Franklin and Marshall College in 1951. After serving in the U.S. Army from 1951 to 1954, he went on to receive a master's in biology in 1959 and a Ph.D. in biology in 1960 from New York University.

After launching his academic career at New York University, he joined the UF faculty in 1971 as a professor and director of the division of anatomical sciences in the department of pathology. In 1976, the department of anatomy was formed and Ross was named chairman. It is now the department of anatomy and cell biology. He served as chair until his retirement in 1996, but continued to provide guidance and support to the department as emeritus professor.

Throughout his career, Dr. Ross' research interest was in the male reproductive system, where he pioneered studies on the blood-testicular barrier and the role of the Sertoli cell in maintaining the barrier. He was also well-known for his contributions to the teaching community through his textbooks. The first edition of the *Atlas of Descriptive Histology*, by Edward J. Reith and Michael H. Ross, was published in 1965, with two subsequent editions in 1970 and 1977. This atlas became the nucleus for the development of a textbook titled *Histology: A Text and Atlas*, which is used in medical schools around the world in numerous languages and will publish its sixth edition this fall. **P**



The 'Sunny' side of nursing

By Jessica Metzger

Saun-Joo "Sunny" Yoon hopes to give older adults the means to manage their chronic pain.

Yoon, Ph.D., R.N., an associate professor in the College of Nursing, studies complementary and alternative therapies for pain and symptom management.

Yoon's interest in these therapies extends back to when she was working on her dissertation. At the time, the use of dietary supplements by older women was on the rise and very little was known about the prevalence of their use. These supplements were readily available and not FDA-approved.

According to Yoon's study, many people used supplements in addition to their usual medications for chronic illnesses. Some used supplements instead of their prescribed medications. This study served as a steppingstone to her current work.

Yoon's research focuses mostly on the elderly and pain management, finding complementary and alternative methods for treating symptoms of chronic illnesses. One of her studies involved using acupressure on older adults experiencing pain and pain-related sleep. Yoon said the small pilot study's results have not been analyzed but seem to show that while acupressure hasn't helped the chronic issues, it helped with cramping and sleeping.

Yoon's work has also led her to study the effects of massage therapy on children with sickle cell disease, teaching massage to the children's caregivers. One of the byproducts of the therapy was the improved bond between caregiver and child. They became closer and communicated more.

"It's an unusual area for me, but I thought the children had such a promising future," Yoon said. "I thought if we can get better care or can manage their pain properly, then they can have great outcomes in their lives."

Yoon is from Korea and moved to Gainesville with her husband in the late 1980s to pursue graduate nursing degrees at UF. Gainesville was completely different from Korea, though, and the language was a major issue.

"Language is not just language; it is an understanding of the culture. Without knowing the culture, it's very hard to understand the language," Yoon said. "It was very difficult at that time. I tried very hard. I'm still trying."

Yoon finished her master's degree at UF in 1990. She moved back to Korea for two years, returning in 1994 to work on her Ph.D. Earning her doctorate in 1999, Yoon was then appointed as a visiting professor until 2001, when she earned a place as a tenure-track faculty member.

Yoon teaches primarily in the areas of adult health nursing.

"Nursing has been a very rewarding job. Teaching has also been very rewarding for me, especially teaching the students in a clinical setting," Yoon said. "I have taught the juniors and some seniors, and I can see how they grow professionally ... They are going to become the future of our profession, our colleagues and will eventually take care of us. I'm very proud of them."

SAUN-JOO "SUNNY" YOON, PH.D., R.N.



Yoon is currently collaborating on a research project with Ann Horgas, Ph.D., R.N., an associate professor and associate dean for research in the College of Nursing. The project is just beginning, but Horgas said they want to collaborate with nurses on the oncology floor of Shands at UF to explore families' and patients' preferences for therapies to relieve pain and symptoms.

Horgas said she and Yoon share a longstanding interest in older adults and pain management, and in researching complementary and alternative therapies. They have been collaborating together since Horgas moved to UF in 2000.

"I think one of the great things about Dr. Yoon is that she is really committed to high-quality care and to integrating research into health care," Horgas said. "She is a really valued colleague who brings creativity and enthusiasm to her work."

Yoon said research has always been an interest for her, especially medications, their uses and patients' adherence to them. The translation of these research findings into actual clinical care is very important, Yoon said.

"Hopefully, my research findings can be applied in ways that help a person's everyday life. If research is just research and the findings are not applied, we have a problem. We don't have to have big and grandiose ideas. If our research can help someone's life, that's good enough for me." **P**

SEE YA!



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

Shawn Batlivala, M.D., former co-chief resident of pediatrics, fits a new bicycle helmet on Carly Gilliam, 6, as her brother, Maddox, 4, waits for his turn to receive a helmet. The helmets were given to patients June 19 at the Gerold L. Schiebler Children's Medical Services Center during a bicycle safety event.

The College of Dentistry uses this cart of "rubber chickens" and "chrome domes" to make what are called "heads on a stick." These mannequin heads clamp onto dental chairs, simulate a patient's face and lips and allow students to get in a little practice before they work on the real thing.



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

Michael L. Good, M.D., interim dean of the UF College of Medicine, and Mark Gold, M.D., chair of the department of psychiatry, officially cut the ribbon to open the new Springhill Health Clinic July 1.

THE POST

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