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## The art of balancing social media -and- health care

PAGE 12



Return of a hero 5

Help from dolphins 10

My little miracle 17

## On the Cover

There's more to Facebook and Twitter than meets the eye for patients looking for solutions and inspiration. More and more, Web sites are fostering relationships among people who are facing enormous health challenges.



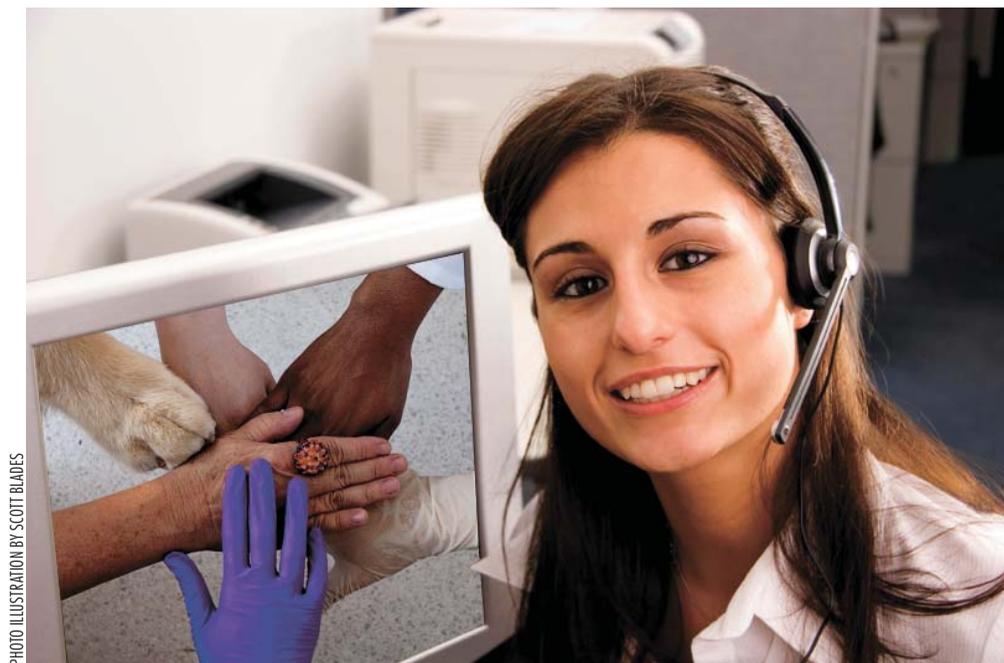
## Table of Contents

- 3 **POST-it**
- 4 **Administration:** New leaders
- 7 **Education:** Positive thinking
- 8 **Education:** Infectious teaching
- 9 **Research:** Alcohol and energy drinks
- 10 **Research:** Studying dolphins
- 12 **Cover story:** A healthy medium
- 16 **Patient Care:** Helping children
- 18 **Jacksonville:** Aiding Haiti
- 20 **Research:** Golde's standard
- 21 **Distinctions**
- 23 **(Extra)ordinary Person:** Switzerland bound

# Teaching with Tech

HSC faculty forum March 8-12

UP FRONT



**A** weeklong series of events focusing on effective uses of technology to improve learning outcomes is being offered to UF faculty March 8 to March 12 while students are away for spring break. The Symposium for Teaching and Learning with Technology is a collaborative effort led by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. In keeping with the mission to “learn together, work together and succeed together,” the symposium allows colleges to foster interdisciplinary collaborations on future projects.

“This as an opportunity to recognize innovative faculty and provide a forum for professors to share their work with other disciplines within the Health Science Center,” said Scott Blades, M.Ed., a coordinator of instructional design in the College of Pharmacy.

The series features presenters from Health Science Center colleges and departments. Learn more at <http://tech-symposium.health.ufl.edu>.

— Linda Homerwood

# Post it

## SAY, WHAT?

The UF Speech and Hearing Clinic will offer free hearing screenings, good for all ages. More than half of the 36 million Americans with hearing loss are younger than 65, according to the American Academy of Audiology. With the increased use of MP3 music players and ear buds, the number of Americans experiencing hearing loss at a younger age is growing, said Patricia B. Kricos, Ph.D., a professor in the College of Public Health and Health Professions' department of communicative disorders.

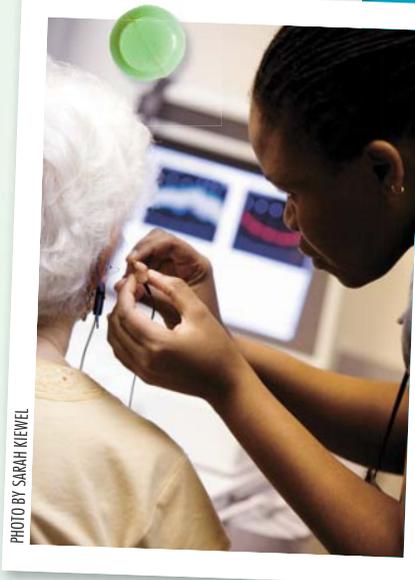


PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

The Speech and Hearing Clinic will offer free screenings from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on March 17, March 31, April 7 and April 28. The clinic is located at 1405 NW 13th St., Suites B and C. No appointment is necessary. For more information, please call 352-273-0542.

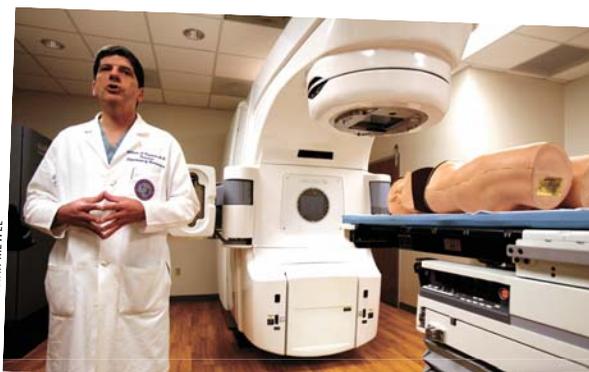


PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

## BE AWARE OF THE AMAZING BRAIN

Hear the whole story about how UF doctors developed technology to thwart deadly brain tumors at a talk for Brain Awareness Week at noon Monday, March 15, in the DeWeese Auditorium of UF's McKnight Brain Institute. Neurosurgery chairman William Friedman, M.D., Ph.D., will discuss the more than 20 years of translational research at UF that has gone into the development of radiosurgery to treat brain tumors — technology that today is used the world over. Brain Awareness Week is recognized globally from March 15 to March 21.



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

## MAKE THEIR DAY

UF College of Medicine faculty and community physicians who practice at Shands HealthCare hospitals dedicate countless hours to saving lives, delivering excellent patient care, conducting research and educating tomorrow's doctors. We can recognize and applaud their efforts on National Doctors' Day on March 30 by wearing red. A little extra color will help honor their commitment to excellence, leading-edge research and training. Did you know Doctors' Day was first observed by the Barrow County Alliance in Winder, Ga., on March 30, 1933? In 1990, Congress passed a resolution proclaiming March 30 National Doctors' Day.



PHOTO BY CHERIE M. REID

## MUSCLE MACHINE

Exercise one hour once a week and get the same benefits as traditional strength training. UF's Strength Science Lab is now open to faculty, staff, students and others who want to get a higher-intensity workout with NeGator, a training system developed by UF orthopaedics and sports medicine specialists. NeGator is based on eccentric or negative training, in which machines help you to lower weights too heavy for you to lift. To arrange a free session or find out about setting up a regular training schedule, call fitness director Trevor Barone at 352-672-5554. — *Czerne M. Reid*

Jean Michelson, a 53-year-old dietitian, works out on the NeGator system under the guidance of fitness director Trevor Barone.

## Health Science Center development leader named



MARY ANN KIELY

### HSC Staff Report

**M**ary Ann Kiely has been appointed associate vice president for development for the UF Health Science Center, effective March 1.

Kiely will work with Vice President Paul Robell, the deans of the colleges, the directors of the research centers and institutes, and the HSC development team to foster broad-based fundraising and constituency building at the UF Health Science Center, across Gainesville and Jacksonville, in support of its missions of patient care, education and research.

“As you know, we have been working to enhance the close collaboration between the University of Florida Health Science Center and Shands HealthCare,” said David Guzick, M.D., Ph.D., senior vice president for health affairs and president of the UF&Shands Health System. “Toward this end, Mary Ann has also been appointed vice president for development at Shands HealthCare. Her goal is to strengthen development activities at the Health Science Center by coordinating with parallel efforts at Shands HealthCare.”

Kiely has 20 years of fundraising experience, the last 10 with the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, where she achieved tremendous success in directing the medical school’s alumni relations and development program. During her tenure, she substantially strengthened relations with alumni, grateful patients and community supporters, successfully completed a medical student scholarship campaign, and established a new, successful volunteer organization in support of Rochester’s medical school.

“We are pleased to welcome Mary Ann to this new role within our health system,” said Shands HealthCare CEO Tim Goldfarb said. “She will collaborate closely with Susan Barcus (Shands HealthCare chief development officer) and the Shands team as well as our HSC colleagues to continue to strengthen our development efforts to support our patient care, research and education programs and further the growth of our organization.” **P**



PHOTO BY JOHN PASTOR

Shands HealthCare System Information Services leaders wrapped up a recent round of workflow validation sessions concerning the Epic electronic medical records system. With the new system, which will be introduced and tested extensively before it goes live in 2011, patients visiting any Shands HealthCare facility will be able to build a single medical record. The system will be in sync with a number of clinics led by UF Physicians that have already switched to the Epic system.

## ‘Delivering Results’

### New IT chief to build health-system, academic efficiencies

**K**ari Cassel has been appointed chief information officer for the UF Health Science Center. She will begin March 22.

Cassel will work with Jan J. van der Aa, Ph.D., assistant vice president of health affairs for Information Technology, the deans of the colleges, the directors of the research centers and institutes, and the HSC information technology team to enhance academic computing at the Health Science Center.

Cassel has also been appointed senior vice president and chief information officer of Shands HealthCare. In that role, she will lead Information Services and direct the team responsible for implementing the systemwide Epic initiative.

She will work with Marvin Dewar, M.D., vice president for affiliations and medical affairs for Shands HealthCare and associate dean of continuing medical education, and his electronic medical records team to ensure seamless integration of the Epic electronic medical record across the faculty practice and Shands HealthCare.

“Kari will make important contributions to our aspirations at the Health Science Center regarding patient care quality and safety, biomedical and clinical research, and inter-professional education across the HSC colleges,” said David Guzick, M.D., Ph.D., senior vice president for health affairs and president of the UF&Shands Health System. “She has a track record of building successful teams with an emphasis on creativity, customer service, collaboration, communication and delivering results.”

Shands HealthCare CEO Tim Goldfarb said, “This is an exciting new appointment for our health system as we establish a more integrated approach. We look forward to working with Kari to build stronger relationships and efficiencies within the UF and Shands health system. Having such a strong IT leader working on behalf of the entire system will support our goals of outstanding, quality patient care and service.”

Cassel has more than 25 years of experience in academic health care information technology. Since 1997, she has served as chief information officer at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. At UAMS, her accomplishments included successful implementation of advanced clinical systems and collaborative efforts to more effectively leverage IT resources to advance the organization’s missions of health care, education, research and outreach. She created a research development group that has made extensive use of open-source software combined with internal development, winning awards for “Delivering Results” from the National Cancer Institute/caBIG and being listed as No. 23 on InformationWeek’s list of 500 most innovative companies.

Before joining UAMS, Cassel was employed as a consultant for National Healthtech Corp., specializing in interim management, strategic planning and organizational assessment. Prior to that, she directed all programming activities associated with clinical mainframe systems at Loma Linda University Medical Center.

Cassel currently serves on the CIO Council for the University Health Systems Consortium and on the steering committee for the AAMC Group on Information Resources as immediate past chair. She holds a bachelor of arts degree in management science from California State University, San Bernardino and an M.B.A. from the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. **P**



KARI CASSEL

# Return of a hero

Admirers show their appreciation to a College of Medicine legend



PHOTOS BY PRISCILLA SANTOS

Dr. John Jernigan, a former student whose life has been shaped by Willie Joel Sanders, speaks of his memories and interactions with Sanders during a ceremony honoring the former anatomy professor Feb. 27 at the UF Medical Science Building auditorium.



Former College of Medicine student, Dr. Patrick O'Leary, M.D., brought a smile to Willie Joel Sanders. O'Leary is the executive associate dean of clinical affairs at Florida International University.

By Priscilla Santos

It is not often that people get an opportunity to thank their heroes.

But on a chilly afternoon in February, a former faculty member and mentor who influenced thousands of students at the UF College of Medicine came home to a hero's welcome.

More than 200 families, friends, former students and current Health Science Center leaders gathered to honor Willie Joel Sanders, a legendary teacher and agent for change.

His influence was even acknowledged by Grammy award-winning recording artist Lionel Richie.

"When I spoke to Lionel Richie about Willie Sanders, he (Richie) was moved to send him a gift and dedicate one of his songs to him," said Dr. John Jernigan, a former student and current professor at the University of Alabama-Birmingham.

Jernigan continued by reading the lyrics of "Hero," and by handing Sanders a framed, autographed photograph of Richie.

Sanders, one of the first six black students to be accepted into UF as an undergraduate student, first began working at the Health Science Center in 1957 as an anatomy lab technician, 13 years before the first two African-American physicians graduated from the College of Medicine.

Because of his love for the study of anatomy, he advanced from the role of preparing the cadavers used to instruct medical students to faculty ranks, becoming an associate professor of gross anatomy. He later became the director of the Office of Minority Affairs.

The ceremony honoring Sanders began with opening remarks by Donna M. Parker, M.D., assistant dean of the Office of Minority Affairs. It progressed with musical dedications, a photo slide show of his life and thousands of words of encouragement, as former students and friends spoke about how he changed their lives.

"Based on the attendance in this room, you've left a legacy in each of our lives," said Alice Rhoton, M.D., a former student who shared memories of Sanders helping her in

**"A lot of sermons are preached, but Will is a living sermon. Even if it was midnight, he was there for us."**

— *Dr. John Jernigan*

the anatomy lab. "He's passed on who he is to the next generation."

Sanders — husband to his wife of 48 years, Pauletta, and father of five children — listened quietly on the stage to his admirers.

"A lot of sermons are preached, but Will is a living sermon," said Jernigan. "Even if it was midnight, he was there for us."

And on this sunny Saturday, Sanders — a legend who broke racial barriers for the College of Medicine — showed that he never left, gifting UF medical students with a legacy that will never fade. **P**

# The latest word in Alzheimer's research

Researchers to study word-finding problems caused by Alzheimer's disease

**“The long-term goal of our study is to develop a model of brain activity that explains the different patterns of impairment.”**

— *Bruce Crosson, Ph.D.*



By Jill Pease

**P**HHP researchers have received a \$384,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health to study word-finding problems in people with Alzheimer's disease.

“Almost all patients with Alzheimer's disease will develop problems recalling words or names,” said lead researcher Bruce Crosson, Ph.D., a professor in the department of clinical and health psychology at the College of Public Health and Health Professions.

Difficulty remembering words is one of the 10 early warning signs of Alzheimer's disease, a disease that affects more than 5 million Americans, according to the Alzheimer's Association.

Word-finding problems can result from two kinds of cognitive deficits. Some patients with Alzheimer's disease have trouble remembering the meaning of particular words, while other patients cannot retrieve correct words from memory.

“The long-term goal of our study is to develop a model of brain activity that explains the different patterns of impairment,” Crosson said.

In the UF study, subjects with Alzheimer's disease with either type of word-finding impairment will be shown a series of pictures of everyday objects and asked to name the items. At the same time, functional magnetic resonance imaging scans will measure participants' brain activity in the regions that control language. The results will be compared with findings from a control group of participants who do not have Alzheimer's disease.

“Once these patterns of deficit are understood, interventions for each pattern can be developed to help maintain communication abilities further into the disease, improving quality of life for patients and families and prolonging patients' independence,” Crosson said.

To participate in the picture-naming study, participants must be 65 or older, right-handed, native English speakers, diagnosed with probable Alzheimer's disease and able to undergo an MRI scan. For more information, please call 352-273-5249. **P**

# Pain and ethnicity

Dentistry researcher to examine ethnic differences in pain

By Karen Rhodenizer

**P**ain affects people differently. For example, studies have shown that African-American and Hispanic people tend to have stronger responses to pain than white people. The question is why?

With funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, UF College of Dentistry researcher Roger Fillingim, Ph.D., has received a \$713,000 revision to a \$3.6 million grant he received earlier in 2009 to study whether whites and African-Americans differ in their response to arthritis pain. The stimulus-funded addition will allow Fillingim, a professor of community dentistry and behavioral science, to find out how his study participants' perception of pain differs from healthy individuals, too.

“Many people do not know there are these disparities in pain,” Fillingim said. “If we want to correct these disparities, we have to understand where they come from.”

Aside from showing how African-Americans and whites perceive arthritis pain differently, Fillingim's team also hopes to identify biomarkers to predict pain severity. The researchers will also be looking at social and psychological factors that could be contributing to differences in pain perception.

The stimulus funding will allow the researchers to take the study a step further, too. Instead of just comparing people with arthritis to each other,



**“Many people do not know there are these disparities in pain. If we want to correct these disparities, we have to understand where they come from.”**

— *Roger Fillingim, Ph.D.*

they will now be able to compare people with arthritis to healthy people of the same age and race. For example, researchers theorize that people with arthritis may be more sensitive to pain throughout their bodies. UF researchers would be able to explore that question through this study.

But primarily, Fillingim says his team's goal is to improve how pain is treated in all individuals. To do that, doctors must first understand how the pain system functions in different groups people, and whether there are genetic or other factors that are responsible for these variations.

“It's very complex, but we are just trying to look at several aspects associated with race that might give us some ideas for how to tailor treatment,” Fillingim said. **P**

# The **Power** of the mind

Dr. Ben Carson shares his keys to success

By Kim Libby

**B**en Carson, M.D., remembers his days as a medical assistant. He often liked to sit outside the emergency room and gaze up at the public address system, which screeched commands to doctors from its tiny speaker. It sounded so important, he said, it was his goal to have the speaker one day call his name.

Thanks to modern technology and the use of beepers, he never got to hear it, but that hasn't stopped Carson from holding more than 50 honorary doctorate degrees or successfully separating conjoined twins for the first time in 1987. The director of pediatric neurosurgery at The Johns Hopkins Hospital spoke to a crowd of about 250 people in UF's Rion Ballroom on Jan. 26, as part of an ACCENT Speakers Bureau event.

His childhood dream was to become a doctor, and Carson stressed how he learned the value of hard and efficient work. He noted the importance of sticking to a task and seeing it through, and to only worry about what you can control, which is how he got through his younger years. His visit also marked a celebration of February as Black History Month.

"Young black males are an endangered species. There are more of them in prison than there are in college," he said. "If you don't think they're your problem, they are one less person you have to worry about and one less person you have to be afraid of. We can't afford to throw anyone away."

Carson also told the story of Chang and Eng Bunker, the original "Siamese" twins who managed to become successful farmers in 1811, despite being conjoined at the chest.

"Nowadays, people hurt their pinky finger and want worker's compensation for the rest of their lives," he said. "Those men cooperated enough to run a business when smelling each other's breath 24/7, and they even had 21 children between the two of them."

Another downfall in modern society, the neurosurgeon said, is the shift of priorities away from academia and a "loss of moral compass." He said he asked a crowd to name five NBA players, five rap stars and five NFL players — all of which were rattled off with ease. However, when he said to name 10 Nobel Prize winners or explain a microprocessor, his audience was dumbfounded.

"The U.S. is not the first pinnacle nation in the world — Great Britain, Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome all came before us — but where are they now?" he questioned the group. "We can learn from our mistakes in the information age if we care about other nations and be the kind of people we wish to see."

He showed the power of intellect by posing the simple question, "what



PHOTO BY KIM LIBBY

Dr. Ben Carson, the director of pediatric neurosurgery at The Johns Hopkins Hospital, stresses the value of sticking to a task and seeing it through.

did you do on your last birthday?" and then proceeded to give an immensely detailed account of what processes the brain and body had to do to remember the day, which took about five minutes of reciting run-on sentences.

For Nadia Palma, a UF premedical student studying surgical oncology, this display, and his speech as a whole, truly hit home.

"Everything he says is so profound, but he seems like such a nice, down-to-earth, real guy," she said. "I watched his video and read his biography; his success is extremely inspirational."

Carson said attributes his success to his "THINK BIG" theorem, which includes honesty, insight, kindness, talent, hope, knowledge, books, in-depth learning skills and his love for God.

He urged his audience to "live in the now," focusing on an efficient work method and avoiding procrastination. He said young people often continue to plan for their future, when in reality, the younger years are the best time to get things done.

"Use what you have now to get what you want," he said. "Once someone stops accepting your excuses, you stop looking for them and start looking for solutions." **P**

# Infectious TEACHING



PHOTO BY ANCKEY CUTHBERTSON

FREDERICK SOUTHWICK, M.D.

Experts 'school' instructors on best way to teach about infectious disease

## A NEW APPROACH

- "Just in time" teaching that requires students to email answers to two general questions and areas of misunderstanding to the instructor several hours before each lecture
- Peer instruction or large-group sessions consisting of four-member student teams who electronically answer a conceptual question before each major lecture section
- Teaching from edited textbooks and Internet sources
- Small-group discussions that focus on how diseases originate and develop, and on differential diagnosis — the process by which physicians diagnose a condition by eliminating other possibilities based on a patient's symptoms
- Essay questions that encourage and test understanding in addition to recognition

By Czerne M. Reid

Approaches that rely on PowerPoint lectures and notes followed up with multiple choice tests are not the best way to teach medical microbiology and infectious diseases to medical students, say a group of experts led by a UF professor. Such strategies are ineffectual because they set low expectations and encourage rote learning at the expense real understanding and long-term memorization of the subject among students, they say.

"These methods also fail to stimulate active participation, collaborative learning and two-way communication with the professor, and they do not respect the students' diverse talents and ways of learning," said Frederick Southwick, M.D., professor and chief of infectious diseases at UF's College of Medicine, and four other professors in a commentary recently published in the journal *Academic Medicine*.

The authors — from UF, University of California, Los Angeles, University of Michigan, Virginia Commonwealth University and Albert Einstein School of Medicine — are all members of the Preclinical Curriculum Committee of the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

The committee proposes a new five-pronged teaching approach that emphasizes active learning and understanding.

The committee also proposes the development of a national syllabus in order to reduce information overload and lessen the need for excessive memorization.

In addition to helping students approach their studies more effectively, the authors said, the new methods could help rekindle interest in the field of infectious diseases and encourage future medical students to bring a richer understanding of clinical and basic science to the bedside. **P**

# The tricky MIXER

Alcohol and energy drinks add up to higher intoxication levels, increased driving risk

By Jill Pease

Energy drinks, favored among young people for the beverages' caffeine jolt, also play a lead role in several popular alcoholic drinks, such as Red Bull and vodka. But combining alcohol and energy drinks may create a dangerous mix, according to UF research.

In a study of college-aged adults exiting bars, patrons who consumed energy drinks mixed with alcohol had a threefold increased risk of leaving a bar highly intoxicated and were four times more likely to intend to drive after drinking than bar patrons who drank alcohol only.

The study appears in the April issue of the journal *Addictive Behaviors*.

"Previous laboratory research suggests that when caffeine is mixed with alcohol it overcomes the sedating effects of alcohol and people may perceive that they are less intoxicated than they really are," said the study's lead

Experts believe that among college drinkers, as many as 28 percent consume alcohol mixed with energy drinks in a typical month.

The UF study is the first of its kind to evaluate the effects of alcohol mixed with energy drinks in an actual drinking environment, that is, at night outside bars. Research on college student alcohol use in campus communities has traditionally relied on self-report questionnaires administered to sober students in daytime settings, Thombs said.

Data for the UF study were collected in 2008 from more than 800 randomly selected patrons exiting establishments in a college bar district between the hours of 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. Researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with participants to gather demographic information and details on participants' energy drink consumption and drinking behavior. Participants also completed self-administered questionnaires that asked about their drinking history and intention to drive that night. Next, researchers tested participants' breath alcohol concentration levels. Participants received feedback on their intoxication levels and advice about driving risk.

Bar patrons who reported drinking alcohol mixed with energy drinks — 6.5 percent of study participants — were three times more likely to be intoxicated than drinkers who consumed alcohol only. The average breath-alcohol concentration reading for those who mixed alcohol and energy drinks was 0.109, well above the legal driving limit of 0.08. Consumers of energy drink cocktails also left bars later at night, drank for longer periods of time, ingested more grams of ethanol and were four times more likely to express an intention to drive within the hour than patrons who drank alcohol only.

Consumers of alcohol mixed with energy drinks may drink more and misjudge their capabilities because caffeine diminishes the sleepy feeling most people experience as they become intoxicated. It's a condition commonly described as "wide awake and drunk," said study co-author Bruce Goldberger, Ph.D., a professor and director of toxicology in the UF College of Medicine.

"There's a very common misconception that if you drink caffeine with an alcoholic beverage the stimulant effect of the caffeine counteracts the depressant effect of the alcohol, and that is not true," Goldberger said. "We know that caffeine aggravates the degree of intoxication, which can lead to risky behaviors."

The study, funded by the UF Office of the President, raises a lot of questions and suggests topics for future research, Thombs said.

"This study demonstrates that there definitely is reason for concern and more research is needed," he said. "We don't know what self-administered caffeine levels bar patrons are reaching, what are safe and unsafe levels of caffeine and what regulations or policies should be implemented to better protect bar patrons or consumers in general." **P**



**DENNIS THOMBS, PH.D.**

researcher Dennis Thombs, Ph.D., an associate professor in the UF College of Public Health and Health Professions' department of behavioral science and community health. "This may lead people to drink more or make uninformed judgments about whether they are safe to drive."

# Another reason to love dolphins...

Dolphins could be ideal model to study human cervical cancer



Hendrik Nollens, D.V.M., Ph.D., a marine mammal biologist and clinical assistant professor at UF's College of Veterinary Medicine

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY DR. HENDRIK NOLLENS



By Sarah Carey

After testing dozens of samples from marine mammals, UF aquatic animal health experts say they have found the ideal model for the study of cervical cancer in people.

“We discovered that dolphins get multiple infections of papillomaviruses, which are known to be linked with cervical cancer in women,” said Hendrik Nollens, D.V.M., Ph.D., a marine

terrestrial ecosystem boundary — from sea to land,” Nollens said. “We have demonstrated at least one case of genetic recombination between viruses of human and marine mammals. So while it’s exciting that dolphins can provide a unique window into the role of coinfection in human cervical cancer, we can’t rule out that the next high-risk virus, such as SARS, or West Nile, might actually come from the marine environment.”

The presence of coinfections is believed to be one of the biggest risk factors for the development of cervical cancer in humans, Nollens said, although he added that there is no evidence that dolphins develop the disease.

“Why do people develop the disease, but dolphins don’t? If we can figure out why, the human medical community might be very

embarked on a large-scale collaborative research project to catalogue previously unrecognized and emerging viruses of marine mammals, both in collections and in the wild.

Over a four-year period, some 1,500 blood, tissue and fecal samples taken from dolphins have been analyzed at different laboratories across the United States, Nollens said. No animals were harmed during collection of cell and tissue samples, although some were obtained from animals that had died of natural causes in the wild.

“Some 90 percent of what we do in the laboratory is molecular analyses,” Nollens said. “Because of advances in molecular medicine since January 2006, we’ve found more than 40 new viruses in dolphins alone. When the last textbook came out in 2003, only 19 were noted.”

All viruses found in the laboratory and suspected of having pathogenic potential are further evaluated to assess the impact each could have on the health of individual dolphins, he added. The information is then used to generate guidelines for disease outbreak management and prevention strategies.

The discovery of new infectious diseases and viruses in marine mammals is important for conservation as well as for a better scientific understanding of the connections between oceans and people, according to Teri Rowles, D.V.M., Ph.D., director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program.

“This work highlights the importance of partnerships in this type of interdisciplinary ‘One Health’ science to allow us to be better stewards of healthy oceans and coasts, healthy marine mammal populations and healthy people,” Rowles said. **P**

“Because of advances in molecular medicine since January 2006, we’ve found more than 40 new viruses in dolphins alone. When the last textbook came out in 2003, only 19 were noted.” — Hendrik Nollens, D.V.M., Ph.D.

mammal biologist and clinical assistant professor at UF’s College of Veterinary Medicine on Feb. 18 at the annual meeting of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science. “Dolphins are the only species besides humans that we know of that can harbor coinfections, or infections of multiple papillomavirus types, in the genital mucosa.”

There are approximately 100 types of human papillomaviruses, and multiple infections of up to eight HPV types have been reported in humans, he said.

“Even more surprisingly, some virus groups have shown the ability to cross the marine-

interested in how that information might be applied to human strategies for preventing the disease,” he said.

Of all creatures that inhabit the ocean, dolphins and other marine mammals are the closest relatives of humans. But researchers say scientific knowledge of infectious diseases, particularly viral diseases, affecting these animals is limited.

In hopes of shedding more light on the nature, prevalence and potential of such diseases to be passed to humans, Nollens and his colleagues at UF’s Marine Animal Disease Laboratory have



## Avoiding pain in children

Pediatricians say colleagues are cautious about treating chronic pain in patients

By Laura Mize

**M**any pediatricians don't think it's their responsibility to treat severe, chronic pain in their patients, according to a new study co-authored by several UF College of Medicine researchers and an investigator from Molloy College.

Writing in the February issue of the *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, researchers said only 32.3 percent of pediatricians from Florida and California surveyed said treatment of chronic pain was their responsibility.

Physicians don't have as much knowledge of pain treatment as they should, and many pediatricians probably are afraid to manage that part of their patients' treatment, said principal investigator Lindsay A. Thompson, M.D., an assistant professor of pediatrics at UF. "The side effects for pain medications can be pretty severe," she said. "The opioid medicines are the gold standard for pain treatment, but they have side effects that can decrease your breathing. When you're not in the hospital setting, that's dangerous and primary care providers may worry about the side effects more than the pain."

The researchers received 303 fully completed responses from mail and online questionnaires sent to 800 pediatricians about treatment of severe, chronic pain. Questions also asked about demographics, clinical experience and components related to palliative care.

Pediatricians were allowed to select more than one option when asked who should treat their patients' chronic pain, and most respondents said they thought other providers should oversee pediatric pain treatment.

Pain specialists were the most popular choice, with 58.1 percent of respondents selecting them as the preferred providers for pediatric pain treatment. Other specialists and hospice providers were the second and third most popular options selected, with 39.6 percent and 26.1 percent of respondents selecting them, respectively.

But Thompson emphasized that these aren't realistic ideas, given a lack of pain specialists in the United States, especially ones working in pediatrics.

In the responses, 84.2 percent of pediatricians say they "often" or "always" use patient reports to evaluate pain, and 87.1 percent use parental reports. About 67 percent always or often watch for nonverbal cues, and about 50 percent ask patients to keep "pain diaries."

When it comes to the most commonly used treatments for pain, acetaminophen and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDs, topped the list: 61.7 percent of pediatricians said they often or always use acetaminophen, while 66.9 percent often or always use NSAIDs. **P**



LINDSAY A. THOMPSON, M.D.

## Changing the face of research

New HSC researcher recognized for work in health-care disparities for black men

By Linda Homewood

**F**olakemi Odedina, Ph.D., began the new year with career accomplishments firmly in hand: two new UF appointments and national recognition for leadership in reducing health-care disparities.

A professor of pharmaceutical outcomes and policy, Odedina began her dual appointment in January in UF's College of Pharmacy and in the College of Medicine's department of urology.

Only weeks before coming to UF, Odedina received the inaugural ABHP-ASHP Leadership Award for her global efforts in prostate cancer prevention in black men. The Association of Black Health-System Pharmacists and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists teamed up to establish the new award, which recognizes individuals who are exemplary in their efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in health care.

In her acceptance speech in December at the 44th ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting, ABHP Luncheon, Odedina — who had just returned from weeks of work in Africa — described her passion for reaching underserved populations of black men at risk for prostate cancer.

"I am restless because of what I see," Odedina said. "Behind every statistic is the tears, the agony and the problems that are going on with the individual and their families."

Odedina emphasized the importance of finding out the community needs first, before a researcher begins seeking grants, funding or publication. She challenged her colleagues to "change the face" of their efforts to improve health-care disparities by making the community an equal partner in their work.

In her capacity as the director of community outreach at the newly established interdisciplinary research and educational center for the development and delivery of advanced treatment methods for the prostate diseases — the Prostate Disease Center in the Department of Urology — she continues her commitment to eliminating health disparities between black men and their white counterparts through collecting data and disseminating important health information about prostate cancer throughout the state of Florida. With a firm belief in working from within the community rather than from the outside, Odedina looks to the support of black businesses such as barber shops and community pharmacies to reach black men in their own neighborhoods.

"Community pharmacies have long hours with easy access for patients. Pharmacists should be leaders in patient education, and should be dialoguing with other health professions," Odedina said.

As a 2006-07 Fulbright Scholar, Odedina conducted Nigeria's first national research assessing how Nigerians report cancer data. She received a B.S. in pharmacy from the University of Ife in Nigeria, and in 1994 she earned a Ph.D. from UF's College of Pharmacy. **P**



FOLAKEMI ODEDINA, PH.D.

# A healthy medium

The *art* of balancing **social media** and **health care**

By Laura Mize

When Karen Thurston Chavez learned her 1-year-old son, William, had a heart defect, she envisioned a worst-case scenario.

“My immediate thought was, ‘I’m going to lose him,’ ” she says.

Her first online searches for information about William’s heart condition didn’t help; they turned up horror stories of other children who had lungs removed.

Then Thurston Chavez, who lives in Tallahassee and runs a business called Sixth Generation Communications, found a Georgia mom whose online stories and pictures of her young son’s battle with the same condition and successful treatment gave her hope.

“Here was Kara with Quinn and they were living a regular life.”

Now, William is an active but shy kindergartner who will celebrate his sixth birthday this month. After undergoing surgery at UF’s Congenital Heart Center at age 2, he has been free from the exhaustion and illness that plagued his earliest years. He returns to the center for annual visits.

Thurston Chavez says her friendship with Kara was a vital source of support.

“That Kara in Georgia took the time to e-mail me back and share the pictures of her son after surgery and share her experience just made a huge, huge difference,” Thurston Chavez says.

Today, Thurston Chavez helps spread hope to other families by managing numerous Web sites and a Twitter account focused on congenital heart disease. She runs a home page for Broken Hearts of the Big Bend, a support organization she co-founded for families



Pharmacy student Sara Neissari frequently checks Twitter updates from “Neal Beal” — a fictional patient who helps bring pharmacy classes to life. She says frequent messages from “Neal” were a good approximation of what it’s like to work with actual patients.

and individuals dealing with congenital heart disease, plus Yahoo and Facebook pages dedicated to the group.

She also started a Facebook “Fan Page” in honor of Mark Bleiweis, M.D., an assistant professor of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery at UF and director of the Congenital Heart Center. Bleiweis is the man who operated on William’s heart. Since then, Bleiweis has created his own Facebook page, where he connects with many of his patients.

Thurston Chavez says Web sites like the ones she manages are important because they foster relationships between and provide information for people whose lives are affected by congenital heart disease. Because most of the families involved in Broken Hearts of the Big Bend bring their children to Shands at UF for treatment, for example, they can provide valuable insight on the quality of their experiences to parents with newly diagnosed children.

“A lot of people think ‘Oh, I’ve got to go to Boston, or I’ve got to go to Philadelphia ... for care,’” she says, “and they don’t realize that Shands is just a couple hours away.

“They like being able to see that other families have had success with this particular center.”



**A new tool for health care**

Thurston Chavez is not alone in using social media to help others navigate the complex world of health and health care. A Web site called PatientsLikeMe allows people with certain medical conditions to post personal and health information online then connect with others who have the same condition. Caring Bridge is a site that allows patients and their families to post updates, keeping friends and family abreast of improvements and setbacks. The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has embraced outlets such as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and Second Life to spread health messages to its audience of 300 million people. Jay Bernhardt, Ph.D., M.P.H., director of the CDC’s National Center for Health Marketing, says using these tools is a necessity for the CDC.

### Social media do’s and don’ts:

- Don’t post information about patients, even if you think you’ve “de-identified” it.
- Do select your privacy settings carefully.
- Don’t post anything you don’t want the general public — including your boss, future employers and family members — to know. Privacy settings are not foolproof!
- Do monitor pictures and other content featuring you that others post. Ask friends to remove pictures or other materials if you don’t want them to be public.
- Do make sure official UF Facebook pages feature policy statements about terms and conditions, intended audience and purpose.



PHOTO BY APRIL FRANKLEY BIRDWELL



Karen Thurston Chavez found encouragement and support on the Internet from a Georgia family that faced the same cardiac challenges their son William was confronting several years ago. Today, William is an active kindergartner about to turn 6 and Thurston Chavez manages Web sites and a Twitter account focused on congenital heart disease.

“Our main goal is to try to present our information, our science, our interventions to the populations we’re serving in the most user-centered way we can. So we want our health information to be presented to people where, when and how they want it.”

David Guzick, M.D., Ph.D., UF’s senior vice president for health affairs and president of the UF&Shands Health System, says social media has the potential to improve care for patients.

“We’ve long known that medicine is not only a science but an art. Part of that art consists of knowing how to encourage effective communication between doctor and patient,” he said. “Done properly, that communication is a two-way dialogue. Social media in its many forms provides new opportunities for fostering that dialogue, which ultimately can lead to improved health outcomes.

“Social media has benefits in other realms as well. Researchers may share new ideas with each other that inspire innovative approaches to health care. And students may access or exchange information that helps them learn more effectively.”

### Potential pitfalls

But Thurston Chavez cautions that the Internet can be a dangerous place for people seeking information about complicated health conditions, such as congenital heart disease.

“There are lots of blogs with misinformation,” she says. “If you stick with the university sites and you stick with the hospital sites — I eventually dug into PubMed and some of the other medical journal subscription services to look up journal articles — then you can be pretty safe with the information that you’re getting.”

She emphasizes that parents should always consult their child’s doctor about information they find online and to remember that stories of other people’s experiences may not match up with their own.

“On Facebook and Twitter our information tends to be more personal, so it’s experience-based,” she says of the social-media efforts she spearheads. “You just have to learn to take that for what it is and you have to learn that every kid’s defect is different, and so (everyone is) going to react differently.”

Health-care providers can get in trouble using social media, too. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, known as HIPAA, still applies in social media formats, as do other laws governing the disclosure of private information.

Susan Blair, UF’s chief privacy officer, says health-care providers who refer to patients in blogs or Facebook posts sometimes think they’ve sufficiently “de-personalized” the information. But that’s not always true.

“Even if you think you’ve de-identified, generally we can figure out who it is,” Blair said during a seminar on social media held at the Levin College of Law in January. “With a blog for example, it would be date and time (stamped), you might mention where you work, you might mention the great surgery that you did that day and the poor outcome for the patient, hopefully not because you’ve done something wrong during the surgery.”

Presenters at the January social media seminar emphasized that the law lags behind the use and development of social media. While no one knows for sure how these kinds of issues would play out in court cases, Lyrissa Lidsky, J.D., a professor of law at UF’s law school, said institutions could potentially be held liable for an employee’s posts revealing protected health information made on the providers’ official sites, even if the employee did so independently.

These potential pitfalls have prompted some organizations, including UF’s College of Medicine, to create policies governing employees’ and students’ use of social media outlets. The College of Medicine’s policy states that students and employees could face legal and academic penalties for some things, such as posting someone else’s protected academic or health information online or pretending to represent UF officially. It also warns them against putting pictures depicting things like sexual promiscuity or substance abuse online. The other Health Science Center colleges are considering similar policies.

### Following Neal



Last fall, Paul Doering, M.S., a distinguished service professor in the College of Pharmacy, and Tom Munyer, M.S., a clinical associate professor, introduced their Pharmacotherapy IV class to “Neal Beal.” A fictional senior citizen developed by Scott Blades, the college’s coordinator of instructional design, Neal is a military veteran who expresses his health woes and complaints about his health care on Twitter, in video messages and in simulated voicemails accessible online. Occasionally, he makes surprise class appearances.

Pharmacy students such as Sara Neissari spent the semester frequently checking Twitter for Neal’s updates and preparing oral and written responses to his comments.

“It kind of brings the classroom to life,” says Neissari, a third-year pharmacy student.

She says the variety of communication channels and frequent messages from Neal were a good approximation of what it's like to work with real patients.

"No patient is the exact same (as another)," Neissari says, "so some people will communicate by e-mail, some will come in to see you, some will leave a voice message and some will be communicating through someone else."

The fall 2009 semester was the first time social media tools were used to make the students' experiences with a simulated patient last throughout the course.

### Online reviews: fair or unfair?



In addition to preparing tomorrow's health professionals and helping families deal with disheartening diagnoses, social media is playing another role in the health-care scene.

Rating sites for health-care providers are sprouting up online. The sites' formats vary, but the basic idea remains the same: Consumers can share their impressions of health-care providers online, sometimes without any filtering or restrictions.

Erik Black, Ph.D., and Lindsay Thompson, M.D., M.S., researchers in UF's College of Medicine who have studied the phenomenon, say some providers don't like the idea.

Black, an assistant professor of pediatrics and director of research for the college's Ped-I-Care program, says open rating of health-care providers online is "a messy process," but he doesn't think physicians should object to the feedback.

"The thing about people not liking to be rated, it's a two-way street. We've all used Zagat, and we would never, ever think twice about checking online ratings on a product or even a plumber or a roofer. But for some reason, doctors are above that same standard? That's not the case."

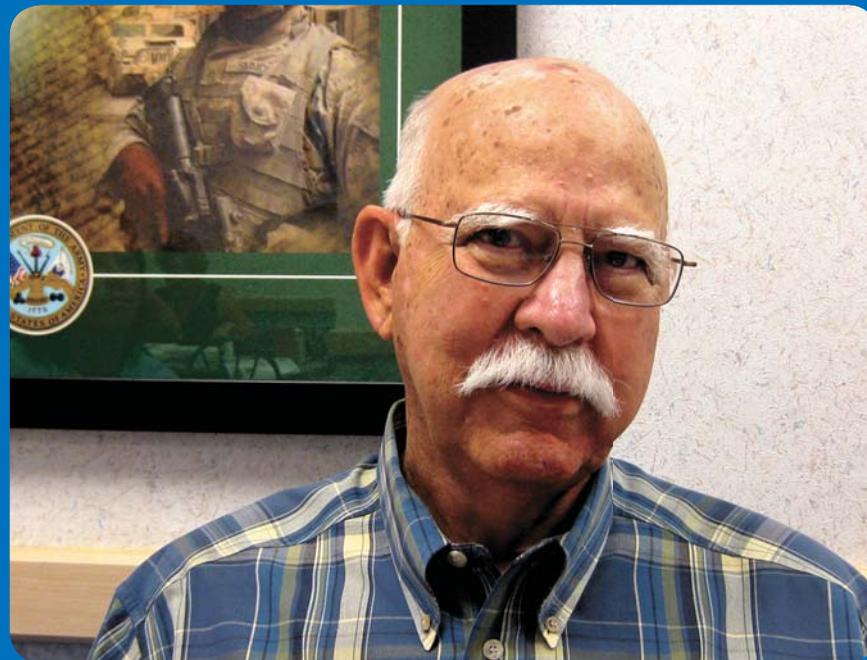
A study authored by Black, Thompson and others from the colleges of Medicine and Education, including Heidi Saliba, B.A., a research coordinator in the Ped-I-Care program; Kara Dawson, Ph.D., an associate professor of educational technology at the College of Education; and Nicole M. Paradise Black, M.D., an assistant professor of critical care in the College of Medicine, examined reviews of health-care providers from four major U.S. cities on the Web site RateMd.com. The research, published in February in the journal *Informatics in Primary Care*, found most of the reviews were positive, not negative, as the authors had hypothesized.

Though some sites allow users to submit reviews of individual pharmacists, Neissari, the pharmacy student, says she has not heard of any of these sites, and the topic of online ratings for health-care providers has not been addressed by her professors. But she, like Black, says the ratings should be allowed.

"There are times where I've definitely wanted to just post something about my experience with a company. You have product reviews. It's a pharmacist review. It's an opinion," she says. "You know, it's not fact and most Web sites will say that these are just opinions, so hopefully people will understand it's just an opinion."

Bernhardt, the CDC marketing director, says sharing stories and experiences is part of being human, and health-care providers should embrace the growing role of social media in their industry.

"As humans, we've been communicating in our social networks for millennia, so that's nothing new," Bernhardt says. "Having access to Web sites and blogs and social networks ... it's only natural that people are going to both want to share their experiences and also seek out other people who've been through similar experiences to learn from what they've been through. I think social media will always play a big role in health care." 🐧



Arthur E. Wharton, M.S., a clinical associate professor and director of continuing education in the UF College of Pharmacy, plays the fictional patient "Neal Beal" on pharmacy Web sites and sometimes even makes surprise classroom appearances. The idea for a Web dramatization of a patient was the idea of Scott Blades, the college's coordinator of instructional design.

### Check us out!

Find the UF Health Science Center Office of News and Communications on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/UFHealth](http://www.facebook.com/UFHealth). See the "Favorite Pages" section on the left for links to Facebook pages for the colleges of Veterinary Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry and Public Health and Health Professions, as well as the alumni offices of the colleges of Medicine and Pharmacy.

The Health Science Center Office of News and Communications is on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/UFHealth>. Check out the "Following" section for links to the College of Nursing and College of Medicine Twitter profiles.

As of September 2009, UF has 24 official Twitter accounts, more than any other institution ranked by U.S. News & World Report as a "Top 100" college, according to a study by [UniversitiesAndColleges.org](http://UniversitiesAndColleges.org). The number continues to grow.



# Helping children find their voice

Prader-Willi patients focus on speech patterns, therapy

By Kim Libby

For some young patients who are treated at the UF Speech and Hearing Center, a job well done is never rewarded with a trip to the ice cream shop.

Jennifer Miller, M.D., an assistant professor of pediatrics in the College of Medicine, has worked for nine years with many children who have Prader-Willi syndrome, a complex genetic disorder that causes a chronic feeling of hunger. As the No. 1 genetic cause of childhood obesity, the disorder can also be associated with short stature or cognitive disabilities.

Miller said those affected are born with a low, floppy muscle tone and never seem to be hungry. However, as these children develop, hormones contribute to flawed signals in the hypothalamus of the brain, which leaves them feeling starved.

“Our main question now lies in trying to figure out why and how these signals are caused,” she said. “These kinds of signals can lead to other kinds of behavioral problems such as OCD or tears, temper tantrums and physical aggression.”

Thanks to a genetic test developed in the 1990s by Daniel Driscoll, M.D., Ph.D., a UF professor of pediatric genetics, Prader-Willi can be detected in patients shortly after they turn 1 month old.

So, what’s next for families after diagnosis? The answer is a lot of instruction.

“When we diagnose a child at an early age, we can tell the families what is going to happen,” Miller said. “You’ll find that Prader-Willi families are some of the healthiest you’ll ever meet, because too much food around the house could mean the child will eat itself to death.”

Other techniques include putting padlocks on refrigerators and cabinets, using sour spray to interfere with saliva and dispel appetite, and monitoring children at home and school to make sure they don’t get into food that was not intended for them. Families also watch for development of pica, an eating disorder in which children can eat substances not normally thought of as food to satisfy their hunger.

Children with Prader-Willi also often have speech development problems



PHOTO BY KIM LIBBY

Sara Plager, M.Ed., chief of speech-language pathology at the College of Public Health and Health Professions, practices a teaching method with children called tactile cueing, marking syllable patterns with taps on the leg.

because of their poor muscle tone, which is where Sara S. Plager, M.Ed., chief of speech-language pathology in the College of Public Health and Health Professions’ department of communicative disorders, comes in to save the day at UF.

Plager has been working with Miller’s patients for almost a decade by assessing their language skills and developing them. She begins by working on swallowing and feeding with some of her patients, who are as young as 3 to 4 months old.

“People and even parents often think that just because a child is floppy and can’t hold their head up, they can’t understand anything you’re saying,” Plager said. “That couldn’t be further from the truth in some cases.”

She notes that many children with Prader-Willi often suffer from apraxia, or trouble with forming precise movements needed to form recognizable speech. Therefore, children with Prader-Willi often sound garbled and unintelligible. Plager has implemented a multimodal approach to treating this motor speech disorder, including visual, tactile, auditory and kinesthetic feedback. For facilitating language development, she provides parents with a home language stimulation program, which highlights activities they can be doing at home with their children to promote development.

“One of my favorite therapeutic methods is called tactile cueing,” she said. “This is when the therapist, parents and hopefully the child himself marks syllable patterns by tapping on the leg, and it seems to work wonders for their intelligibility.”

Plager also helps the children sound less nasal and works on voice resonance and clarity. These were just a few of the topics discussed at UF’s Consortium for Prader-Willi Syndrome, which occurred in December. Patients from across the U.S. came to seek the expertise of those like Miller and Plager, who are often referred to on many support group Web sites.

With the right monitoring of diet and exercise, Miller said the prospects for the youngsters are looking up. About 90 percent of the patients she sees are enrolled in regular, mainstream classes, accompanied by an aide to keep them from getting too close to the chocolate on teacher’s desk.

“Many of these kids will grow up to go to community college or live in a group home where daily tasks are much easier for them,” she said. “We have older residents even in Alachua County who should give hope to everyone with this disease.” **P**



The Johnson family's story has many characters, among them, from left, Jean Melby, R.N., UF Women's Health at Magnolia Parke surgical nurse specialist; Alice Rhoton-Vlasak, M.D., UF College of Medicine OB/GYN clinical assistant professor; Jaret, Jennifer and Jesselyn Leigh Johnson; R. Stan Williams, M.D.; Jessica Gutter, R.N., UF Women's Health at Magnolia Parke nurse specialist; and Kristin Demming, Ferring Pharmaceuticals representative.

# 'My [little] miracle'

Infertility patient shares story, wins contest

By Katherine Sims

**A**fter four years, four cycles of in-vitro fertilization and more than \$40,000 of uncovered medical expenses, Jennifer and Jaret Johnson welcomed their healthy baby girl into the world on May 7, 2009. Jesselyn Leigh Johnson's arrival concluded a journey most couples experience in less than a year.

"We would not have our little princess without the wonderful people at Shands HealthCare, UF physicians, the hard working team at Ferring Pharmaceuticals and countless prayers offered on our behalf," Jaret said.

So he wrote a story to inspire other couples dealing with infertility issues and entered it into Ferring Pharmaceuticals' My Little Miracle essay contest. It was a welcome surprise when the company awarded the Johnsons a \$3,000 contribution to a college fund for their daughter. The check was presented to the Johnsons at UF Physicians Women's Health at Magnolia Parke in December.

"Obviously the monetary award is greatly appreciated, but our motivation for writing our story was to encourage couples experiencing difficulty conceiving to be patient and educate themselves,"

Jaret said.

The Johnsons' story is both heartbreaking and heartwarming because they never gave up trying, even after they lost their first children. During a second cycle of in-vitro fertilization, one embryo was successfully implanted and split into identical twins.

Jennifer went into premature labor at 20 weeks gestation and delivered two boys at Shands at UF. Unfortunately, Joshua Lee and Jonathan Cole only lived for four hours.

"Despite the sorrow of losing our boys, we are grateful for the sincere concern, respect and sensitivity offered by all of the UF physicians and Shands nurses who looked after us that day at Shands at UF," Jaret said.

After an unsuccessful third cycle, the couple questioned whether to go forward with a fourth cycle or consider other options. R. Stan Williams, M.D., UF College of Medicine obstetrics and gynecology chair, helped them feel confident about trying again.

One embryo was transferred. A positive pregnancy test two weeks later confirmed the fourth IVF cycle was a success.

Jennifer enjoyed a healthy full-term pregnancy and felt complete holding Jesselyn in her arms for the first time. **P**

# Run for NuNu

Supporters set out to finish triple negative breast cancer

By Kim Libby

**E**ven as the participants in the first NuNu 5K crossed the finish line, event coordinators and runners alike looked ahead to next year's run, named in honor of a woman who battled a type of treatment-resistant breast cancer.

Mary Lou Miller died of triple negative breast cancer in September 2008. Affectionately called LuLu by her parents, Mary Lou as a child was given the name "NuNu" by a sister who was still working with her "L" sounds. The name stuck, according to NuNu's daughter, Michelle Gumz, a UF biomedical researcher.

NuNu grew up to be a coordinator of a California adult literacy program and an active member of her church's ministry. She was always conscious of maintaining her health and even scheduled extra mammograms, knowing her family history of breast cancer. She was diagnosed in 2007 after postponing one of these trips to the doctor in favor of waiting for her annual checkup. Three months later, she found a lump in her breast.

"None of us had any idea what she was up against," Gumz said. "There is no targeted treatment for triple negative breast cancer. We just prayed that it would be

responsive to conventional chemotherapy."

Breast cancer is generally diagnosed based upon the presence of estrogen receptors, progesterone receptors and human epidermal growth factor receptor 2, known as HER2-negative. The most successful treatments for breast cancer target these receptors, but none of them are found in women with triple negative breast cancer.

After finishing chemotherapy with a seemingly clean bill of health, headaches and leg pain soon left NuNu unable to walk. Doctors found the cancer had spread to her brain, causing strokelike symptoms. She passed away a few weeks later.

"She never lost her sense of humor, even on the last day of her life. She was my best friend," her daughter said. "She made a lot of people feel that way; she was one of those people who meant so much to so many."

The NuNu 5K race on Feb. 27 was coordinated by the Collaborative Scientists for Critical Research in Biomedicine Inc. Shahla Masood, M.D, medical director of breast health at Shands Jacksonville, addressed the crowd and Paul Okunieff, M.D., director of the UF Shands Cancer Center, began the race with a blare of an air horn.



Participants and organizers of the NuNu 5K race are already looking forward to next year's event.

"Highlighting triple negative breast cancer with events like this is crucial," Okunieff said. "The therapies for this category of patients is limited compared with the arsenal we have for tumors with hormone receptors or Her2-negative receptors. As we find out more about triple-negative breast cancer and how to treat it, our knowledge can be applied to other treatment-resistant cancers."

All proceeds from the race go toward a research grant for triple negative breast cancer research. **P**

# Employees aid Haiti earthquake victims

**Story** by Kandra Albury

**Photos** contributed by David Chesire, Ph.D.

**A**fter learning about the devastation following the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti, employees throughout Jacksonville were moved to action. UF physicians and Shands HealthCare providers began coordinating a trip to Haiti to provide medical care, while those who couldn't make the journey aided relief with the donation of supplies.

"People were so liberal — they gave clothes, shoes, toiletries and more," said Connie Jenkins, manager of receiving, distribution and the mailroom.

Three truckloads of supplies were taken to Mission Harvest America Inc., a local nonprofit organization that provides humanitarian aid locally and globally.

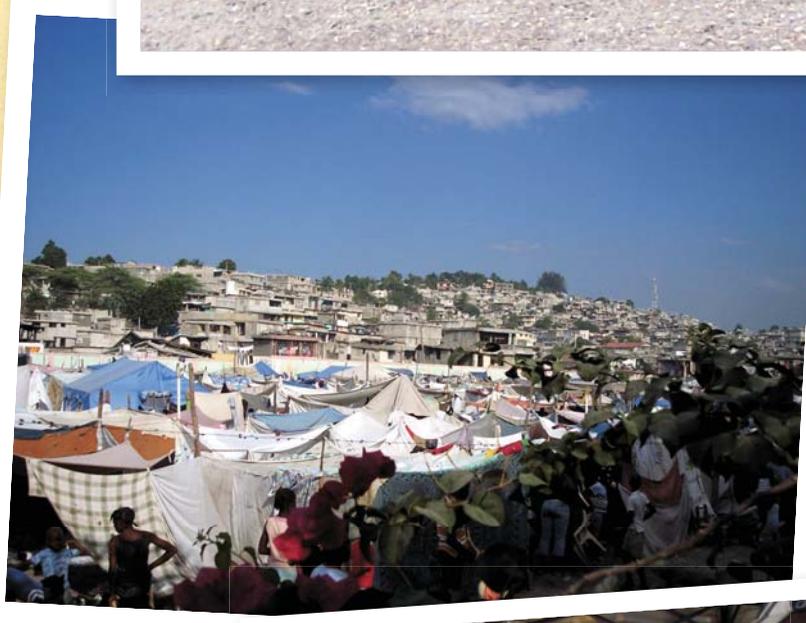
"The number of items donated in such a short time was fantastic, but I am not surprised," said Elaine Eppolito, Shands human resources project coordinator. "When a co-worker or a patient is in need of help, our employees always open their hearts and their wallets to take care of them. In this case, they opened their hearts to a nation of people in distress."

Several UF physicians and a College of Nursing faculty member were on the ground in Haiti Jan. 20-26 offering direct medical support to the injured. Those assisting included pediatricians, orthopedic surgeons and acute care surgeons. In addition, several boxes of medical supplies were sent to care for the wounded.

David Chesire, Ph.D., a UF College of Medicine—Jacksonville assistant professor of surgery, said he was honored to serve the people of Haiti during his weeklong stay. While there, he served as the team's pharmacist and mental-health counselor, both for the injured and the medical team.

"When I was asked to join the team to Haiti, it never occurred to me to say no," Chesire said. "Witnessing such humanity in a time of grim despair was perhaps the most remarkable thing I had ever seen. I consider myself a better person because of that experience."

Tim Goldfarb, CEO of Shands HealthCare, said the organization will continue to work with the state to donate medical supplies, hospital equipment, surgical instruments and other materials. **P**



# Keeping patients safe

Doctor to thoroughly examine the patient safety movement

By Lorrie DeFrank

**W**ith the goal of making a lasting impact on health care and policy, a physician at the UF College of Medicine—Jacksonville has embarked on an ambitious study of patient safety.

Robert L. Wears, M.D., a professor and senior scientist in the department of emergency medicine, is using a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Investigator Award in Health Policy Research to study "Medicalizing Patient Safety" with Kathleen M. Sutcliffe, M.S.N., Ph.D., the associate dean for faculty development and research at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business.



ROBERT L. WEARS, M.D.

Starting in September, the collaborators will spend two-and-a-half years reviewing the patient safety movement from the 1970s to the present. According to Wears, in addition to a series of academic and policy papers, the initiative will include a book on the history and evolution of the movement, focusing on how it has been reshaped by its gradual acceptance in health care.

Sutcliffe's expertise in organizational design will be critical to their study, Wears said. In addition, Sutcliffe said her nursing background helps her grasp his medical perspective.

"That creates a really strong research synergy that enhances what we come up with," she said. "Bob is an absolute star in my mind with respect to understanding not only patient safety and medical care but also the organizational implications of making patients safe."

Wears and Sutcliffe have collaborated on projects since meeting in 1998 at the 2nd Annenberg Conference on Enhancing Patient Safety and Reducing Errors in

Health Care.

Wears believes their proposal is innovative because the few studies of patient safety as a social movement have focused more narrowly on how health care resisted, as opposed to embracing the quest for lasting solutions.

If their study is empirically supported, important policy implications would include building human capital to support safety in health care, a radical redirection of research and educational efforts, and substantial collaborations between clinicians and safety scientists.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's investigator award program started 18 years ago. Since then, 202 scholars from a wide range of fields have received grants of up to \$335,000 to study the country's challenging health issues.

"Dr. Wears is a nationally and internationally recognized expert in medical safety and this award from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation attests to his superb reputation, his innovative approach to analyzing impediments to health safety and his successful history of obtaining foundation and federal funding," said Alan R. Berger, M.D., a professor and chair of the department of neurology and assistant dean for research at the UF College of Medicine—Jacksonville.

Wears praised the college for supporting his research on the frequently controversial subject of patient safety and his submission of the award proposal.

"I value the academic freedom to explore different areas," he said. "It reflects well on the organization that it allows people to take risks to see if they can be successful."

He said he cites Robert C. Nuss, M.D., dean of the regional campus, and David J. Vukich, M.D., a professor and chair of the department of emergency medicine, for funding his sabbatical in 2004 to study with leading patient safety scientists and engineers in London.

"That was a transformative learning experience for me," he said. "I came back with a different set of skills and body of knowledge." **P**

## Young history maker in the making

High school student tops TheGrio's 100 list



PHOTO BY ERIN VANWYK

Tony Hansberry was interviewed by special contributor for NBC's "Today" show, Jenna Bush Hager.

By Kelly Brockmeier

**F**ifteen-year-old Jacksonville high school student Tony Hansberry recently received national attention after being recognized as one of TheGrio's 100 African-American History Makers in the Making.

Hansberry attends Darnell Cookman's School of the Medical Arts, located across the street from Shands Jacksonville. UF physicians have partnered with the school to add special events to the medical education curriculum and serve as guest speakers. It is believed the program at Darnell Cookman will be the first medical magnet in the country to develop an integrated medical curriculum for grades 6-12.

Because of the relationship between UF and Darnell Cookman, Hansberry spent a summer inside UF's Center for Simulation Education and Safety Research, known as CSESaR, at Shands Jacksonville. Director Bruce Nappi took Hansberry under his wing, allowing him to tinker with the same equipment and high-fidelity mannequins that physicians and nurses use in training.

Hansberry became interested in minimally invasive surgery during his time at CSESaR. Over the summer he developed a technique that reduces surgical time for minimally invasive hysterectomies. Hansberry presented the project at the regional science fair and came in second place in the senior grade 9-12 division, allowing him to compete in the state finals. Before gaining national attention by TheGrio, Hansberry's project caught the attention of UF faculty, who deemed it worthy of being presented alongside physicians during their medical education week. **P**

# Golde's STANDARD

By John Pastor

The director of the Center for Translational Research in Neurodegenerative Diseases at UF received the MetLife Foundation Award for Medical Research in Alzheimer's Disease during a recent scientific briefing and luncheon in Washington, D.C.

Todd Golde, M.D., a professor of neuroscience in the College of Medicine, studies amyloid beta protein, a substance believed to contribute to the accumulation of "brain plaque" in Alzheimer's patients.

Golde helped explain the molecular interplay between amyloid beta protein and a class of therapeutic agents known as gamma-secretase modulators, or GSMs, now being tested in patients with Alzheimer's disease.

He was honored in February alongside his frequent collaborator, Edward H. Koo, M.D., a professor of neuroscience at the University of California-San Diego, as well as Eva-Maria Mandelkow, Ph.D., and Eckhard Mandelkow, Ph.D., of the Max Planck Institute for Structural Molecular Biology in Hamburg, Germany.

Each winner received a \$100,000 research grant and a personal prize of \$25,000 to further their work.

"This year's recipients are examples of how differing schools of thought can come together to solve some of the world's most vexing problems," according to a statement from the MetLife Foundation. "Drs. Koo and Golde have together identified the gamma-secretase modulators that decrease production of the highly toxic 42 amino acid "long" form of (amyloid beta protein), which holds great promise for drug therapies to treat or prevent Alzheimer's."

The event's keynote speech will be delivered by photographer Judith Fox, author of the book "I Still Do: Loving and Living with Alzheimer's."

The book tells the story of Fox's husband, Dr. Edmund Ackell — the first dean of UF's College of Dentistry and provost for health affairs at UF from 1968 to 1973 — who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's three years into their marriage. Photo-Eye Magazine



**TODD GOLDE, M.D.**

named the book "one of the best of 2009."

C. Robert Henrikson, chairman, president and chief executive officer of MetLife, said in a statement, "MetLife Foundation has long recognized the impact Alzheimer's has on families, society and the economy. We continue our commitment to support the outstanding scientists who are making strides and developing methods to combat and, perhaps someday, prevent Alzheimer's disease from impacting future generations."

As many as 5.3 million Americans have Alzheimer's, making it the seventh leading cause of death. Unless the disease can be effectively treated, delayed or prevented, the number of people with Alzheimer's could increase to 7.7 million in 2030, according to MetLife.

"As physician-scientists we're trying to prevent human suffering," said Golde, who is associated with UF's McKnight Brain Institute. "If we can impact this horrible disease so much fewer people get it — that's our goal."

MetLife Foundation has granted major awards to scientists who have demonstrated significant contributions to the understanding of Alzheimer's disease since 1986. The program's goal is to recognize the importance of basic research, with an emphasis on providing scientists the opportunity to pursue ideas. **P**



## Nimmo elected to the American Board of Prosthodontics

**Arthur Nimmo**, D.D.S., F.A.C.P., a professor of prosthodontics and director of predoctoral implant dentistry at the UF College of Dentistry, was elected as an examining member of the American Board of Prosthodontics and will serve a seven-year term.

Nimmo earned his bachelor's degree from SUNY College at Oneonta in 1975. He earned his D.D.S. from the University of Maryland in 1979 and completed specialty training in prosthodontics at the UCLA Center for the Health Sciences in 1983. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Prosthodontics and a Fellow of the American College of Prosthodontists.



## Membership has its privileges

The UF is the latest school to establish a chapter of **Delta Omega**, the honorary society for graduate studies in public health. UF's chapter joins 60 other chapters at public health-accredited schools and programs.

Membership offers several opportunities for schools and individuals, said UF's Delta Omega chapter president Nabih Asal, Ph.D., a professor in the College of Public Health and Health Professions' department of epidemiology and biostatistics. The national office of Delta Omega sponsors faculty curricula awards, a student poster session at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association, a mentorship network for students, and access to classic public health texts that are out of print or not widely available, including books by Florence Nightingale and John Snow, the father of epidemiology.

### COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

**TIMOTHY WHEELER**, D.M.D., Ph.D., a professor and chair of the department of orthodontics, assistant dean for advanced and graduate education, and the Academy 100 Eminent Scholar chair, was elected to a two-year term as president of the Edward H. Angle Society of Orthodontists during its recent meeting. Wheeler joined the society in 1996, has served on the board of directors since 2001.



Timothy Wheeler

### COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

**STARR BEDY** and **HARMONY SCHNEIDER**, UF pharmacy students, placed among the top 10 finalists in a national clinical skills competition. The UF College of Pharmacy team joined a record 102 college teams competing in the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists' National Clinical Skills Competition. Students demonstrated their skills in areas such as assessing patient information, identifying drug therapy problems and recommending a pharmacist's care plan. The competition took place in December at the ASHP 44th Midyear Clinical meeting in Las Vegas.



Starr Bedy



Harmony Schneider

### RHONDA COOPER-DEHOFF

Pharm.D., an associate professor of pharmacotherapy and translational research, has been awarded an American College of Clinical Pharmacy Research Institute Bioanalytical Grant to help support analysis of clinical samples derived from her earlier NIH award on the metabolic effects of antihypertensive drugs. This award is an in-kind grant estimated at \$50,000 for bioanalytical services stipend support to cover DeHoff's expenses for conducting on-site research at a pharmaceutical product development facility in Ohio and Virginia.



Rhonda Cooper-DeHoff

### W. THOMAS "TOMMY" SMITH

Pharm.D., J.D., a clinical assistant professor of pharmaceutical outcomes and policy, has received a one-year award totaling more than \$56,600 from Cephalon Inc. The award supports research conducted by Smith and co-investigator professor David Brushwood, R.Ph., J.D., titled "Pharmacist Responsibility for Screening of Opioid Use in Non-Tolerant Patients." The study aims to locate and report legal precedents that recognize pharmacists' responsibility for the screening of opium-based narcotic prescriptions that contain warning labels for patients who may suffer adverse reactions.



W. Thomas Smith

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

## COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

**KEVIN BEHRNS, M.D.**, chair of the department of surgery, is now serving as a governor-at-large for the American College of Surgeons. Behrns was elected to a two-year term on the organization's Board of Governors during this fall's annual member business meeting. In this role he represents the college's fellows in Florida, serving as a communications link between the fellows and members of the Board of Regents.



Kevin Behrns

**WINSTON T. RICHARDS, M.D.**, a clinical assistant professor of acute care surgery in the College of Medicine, recently won first place in a burn research competition. Presenting at the 22nd Annual Southern Regional Burn Conference, Richards outlined predictions in a lack



Winston T. Richards

of resources for elderly burn patients as Baby Boomers hit age 65 and older.

## FREDERICK SOUTHWICK, M.D.

chief of infectious diseases, has been named a 2010 Harvard University Advanced Leadership fellow. He is one of 22 fellows from around the world who are leaders in fields such as health care and public health, business, communications and public administration. Each fellow is charged with helping to make the world a better place through nonprofit efforts. Southwick's fellowship project focuses on how to improve the frontline systems of care for patients.



Frederick Southwick

**JOHANNES VIEWEG, M.D.**, chair of the department of urology, has been selected by the American Urological Association's board of directors to chair the AUA Foundation Research Council's Office of Research. He will assume this new role in June. "The primary objective of my tenure as chair will be to develop support

systems to bring urologic research to the forefront and increase NIH funding for researchers engaged in the urologic sciences," Vieweg said.



Johannes Vieweg

## PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

## MERYL ALAPPATTU, P.T., D.P.T.

a student in the college's rehabilitation science Ph.D. program and a physical therapist at Shands at UF, received one of four Florence P. Kendall Doctoral Scholarships from the Foundation for Physical Therapy board of trustees for the 2009 to 2010 academic year. The \$5,000 scholarships are awarded to outstanding physical therapists entering their first year of doctoral studies.



Meryl Alappattu



PHOTO BY SARAH KEWEL

## Hugh A. Walters Humanitarian Award bestowed

Highlighting a core value of medicine – humanism – the UF department of surgery honored third-year resident Tad Kim, M.D., with the Hugh A. Walters, M.D., Humanitarian Award on March 3 during a special lecture dedicated to the memory of Dr. Walters. Kim is the second recipient of the award, which honors a surgical resident who embodies Dr. Walters' qualities of compassionate care and selfless dedication to excellence. Walters was a talented young surgeon who died unexpectedly in 2008. Visit the Insider @ [news.medinfo.ufl.edu](http://news.medinfo.ufl.edu) to read the full story.

Department of Surgery Chairman Kevin Behrns, M.D., (from left) gathers with surgical residents Darrell Hunt, M.D., Ph.D., and Tad Kim, M.D., Dr. Walters' parents Margaretta and Curtis Walters, and Surgical Residency Program Director George Sarosi, M.D., after this year's award ceremony.



## Switzerland bound

### Jacksonville surgeon becomes first American selected for orthopedic fellowship

Pratik Desai (back row, second from left) went snowshoeing in the town of Davos, Switzerland — the headquarters of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Osteosynthesefragen — as a team-building activity. Team members Beate Hanson, M.D., M.P.H., (kneeling, second from left) and Laurent Audige, D.V.M., Ph.D., (back row, sixth from left) are also pictured.

By Kim Libby

**P**ratik Desai, M.D., knew he wanted to be a surgeon early on in his medical career, as the hands-on experience made him feel like he was physically doing something to help others.

Now as an orthopedic resident at Shands Jacksonville Medical Center, he has been given the opportunity to sharpen his research skills and give back to his surgical community.

Desai was chosen for a clinical investigation and documentation research and epidemiology fellowship in Dubendorf, Switzerland, sponsored by the AO Foundation. The AO, or Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Osteosynthesefragen, was started in 1958 by four Swiss surgeons as an organization that pioneered the study of fracture healing and fixation in orthopedics.

As the first American resident to be offered the three-month musculoskeletal trauma fellowship, Desai is participating in a number of projects that explore ways to foster and conduct research accurately.

“You can’t just go out and listen to a patient’s symptoms and suddenly get data,” said Desai. “There must be a methodology to it. There are criteria for sound scientific practice, so physicians don’t arrive at false or erroneous conclusions.”

Desai plans to gather and review data, perform statistical analyses and write papers for medical journal publication. Delving far beyond the typical premedical school statistics class, he will learn from prominent figures in the orthopedic world, such as Beate Hanson, M.D., M.P.H., and

Laurent Audige, D.V.M., Ph.D.

The 32-year-old Zambian native, who moved to Jacksonville at age 7, received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Miami in biology and a master’s degree in biomedical sciences from Barry University. He then earned his doctoral degree from the University of Miami School of Medicine.

It was during a fortunate round of golf with an orthopedic resident at UM when Desai’s interest in the field was sparked. This early mentorship granted him hands-on experience early in his education and paved the path to meet his current mentor, the professional that has influenced his career the most — Michael Suk, M.D., J.D., M.P.H.

Desai completed a year of research with Suk before beginning his residency, and attributes his fellowship achievement to Suk’s guidance and collaborative relationship with the AO.

This was quite the accomplishment, he said, as fracture education is introduced early to residents and is founded upon AO principles. During the second year of residency, candidates also participate in the AO Basic Course, which

provides them with principles on soft tissue management, fracture treatment and fixation that are essential to understanding the craft.

“I learned quickly what a fun and fulfilling field orthopedics can be,” he said. “There is nothing like being able to give somebody the ability to walk again, or to give someone a new joint that has been so painful and limited their lives for so many years.”

Desai participated in a number of projects with Suk, investigating novel ways to treat and prevent infection in open fractures, studying new devices to prevent lung complications after femur fractures, and publishing a review article, “Orthopedic Trauma in Pregnancy.” He was then invited to present his research at local and national scientific meetings, including the Florida Orthopedic Society meetings in Sandestin, Fla., and Key Largo, Fla., the Southern Orthopaedic Association meeting in the Bahamas, the Orthopedic Trauma Association meeting in Boston, and the American Academic of Orthopedic Surgeons meeting in Las Vegas, to name a few.

He plans to continue endeavors like this in Switzerland, while working on project such as The BiMasquelet technique for Distal Tibia Reconstruction, and Combined Orthopaedic and Vascular Injuries in the Lower Extremity: Sequence of Care and Outcomes.

“To rub shoulders and elbows with the accomplished professionals of the AO is a life-changing experience for me that shouldn’t be underestimated,” Desai said. “It’s a bit overwhelming and very humbling, and it’s a great achievement for UF.” **P**

SEE YA!

Nina Stoyan-Rosenzweig, director of the COM's Medical Humanities Program, presents fourth-year medical student Monique Dieuvil with a special award for her work with the Medical Humanities and Clinical Practice course, for which she created the standardized patient program.



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

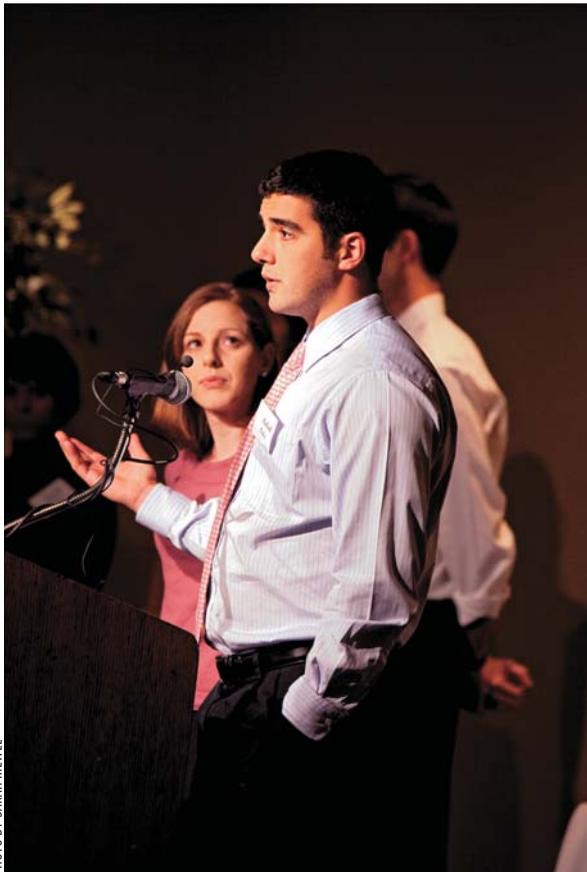


PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

Erin Lessner and Michael Ortiz talk about their involvement with the PACE Center for Girls in Gainesville, which provides education, counseling, training and advocacy for girls. The Chapman Society brings PACE participants to the UF Health Science Center for a day to inspire them to consider careers in health care.



PHOTO BY SARAH KIEWEL

College of Medicine medical students, residents and faculty were inducted into the Chapman Chapter of the Gold Humanism Honor Society March 2. Posing with them is Dr. Robert Watson, former senior associate dean for educational affairs.

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