

Abelson named acting dean of dental school

By Angelica Urquijo

Sigmund H. Abelson has been named acting dean of the USC School of Dentistry.

Abelson had been serving as the school's associate dean of clinical affairs and associate professor of clinical dentistry under Dean Harold C. Slavkin. Earlier this year, Slavkin announced his plan to step down as dean at the end of the year after serving in the position since 2000.



In January, Slavkin will begin a one-year sabbatical to refocus his scholarly interests. Beginning in January 2010, he will return to USC as a member of the School of Dentistry faculty.

Abelson assumed the role Nov. 1 and will remain in the post until the university completes its national search for a new dean. He has been responsible for the school's clinical operations, which include the predoctoral and advanced specialty programs.

Executive Vice President and Provost C. L. Max Nikias made the announcement on behalf of USC President Steven Sample. "Under his leadership, a new clinical model has been implemented, one that enhances the students' clinical accomplishments, as well as the addition of benchmarks to assess their progress throughout their clinical education," Nikias said.

Abelson is responsible for managing the Oral Health Center, the Center for Oral Microbiological Testing Services and the Redmond Radiological Imaging Center. "I am a strong advocate for instilling a humanistic model of dental education, a commitment to clinical education excellence and to growing our students as professionals," he said.

Before coming to USC, Abelson served as the associate director for governance, strategic development and component relations of the California Dental Association and as a speaker of the House of Delegates for nine years. He also is a member of the Omicron Kappa Upsilon dental honor society.

For 33 years, Abelson has practiced restorative dentistry in Beverly Hills and Los Angeles.

Awards recognize Keck School's best and brightest

By Meghan Lewit

Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito recently recognized second- and third-year medical students who have distinguished themselves as leaders, both inside and outside the classroom.

The annual ceremony, held Oct. 29, honored 50 students who received Dean's Recognition Awards, as well as 37 recipients of the Association of Pathology Chairs' Pathology Honors Society awards.

Students gathered at the Edmondson Faculty Center with family and friends before being called up one by one to receive their awards.

"The greatest asset to this school is the medical students," Puliafito said in opening remarks. "We pay attention to what our students say and we're here to help them have the best possible foundation for life-long education."

The students selected for awards have demonstrated excellence in academics, research and service to the community in their first two years of medical school, said Henri Ford, vice dean for medical education at the Keck School. Recipients are chosen based on nominations by faculty members.

The Association of Pathology Chairs' Pathology Honors



The Keck School's top second- and third-year students were honored at a reception at the Edmondson Faculty Center on Oct. 29.

Society awards recognized students who have excelled in the Keck School's pathology curriculum. Of the 37 Pathology Honors Society recipients, 19 were also Dean's Recognition Scholars.

"I've seen a lot of excellent students go through this school," said Clive Taylor, senior associate dean for educational affairs and chair of the Department of Pathology. "Each year they seem to get better."

See SCHOLARS, page 2

Shake, shake, shake! USC prepares to ShakeOut Nov. 13

All faculty and staff members at USC are being asked to join millions of other Southern Californians participating in the Great Southern California ShakeOut on Nov. 13. The regional drill is based on a potential magnitude 7.8 earthquake on the southern San Andreas fault—approximately 5,000 times larger than the magnitude 5.4 earthquake that shook Southern California on July 29.

Everyone is being encouraged to practice the "drop, cover and hold on" technique at 10 a.m. for 60 seconds, followed by a discussion of emergency procedures and department emergency plans.

On the University Park Campus, a number of departments will be participating in a large-scale mass casualty exercise from 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. in the area of Cromwell Field.

William Regensburger, director of fire safety and emergency planning at USC Career and Protective Services, said, "We plan to do a similar mass casualty exercise next year for the Health Sciences Campus, and many of our HSC responders are participating in this UPC exercise."

Approximately 80 staff and faculty members were given a crash course in earthquake preparedness at a seminar held in the Mayer Auditorium on Oct. 28. Steven Goldfarb, USC fire safety and emergency planning specialist, led the discussion, which featured video of earthquakes from Japan and Northern California.

"Preparedness isn't just a job of emergency responders," said Goldfarb. "Preparedness is everyone's responsibility."

Goldfarb stated that Southern California is overdue for



Steve Goldfarb leads an earthquake preparedness seminar for 80 Health Sciences Campus staff and faculty members on Oct. 28.

a major earthquake. "We average a major earthquake on the San Andreas fault every 150 years," he noted. "The last one we had was in 1857, or 151 years ago."

One key point in Goldfarb's presentation was the importance of securing loose objects and furniture to prevent injury and damage. "It's the stuff that hurts people," he said. "There were 40,000 injuries in the Northridge earthquake, and most of those were due to falling and flying objects."

According to Goldfarb, anything over 4 feet tall or that is taller than it is wide should be secured with appropriate earthquake restraint materials. This may include straps, Velcro, earthquake putty or earthquake picture hooks.

He also added that everyone should sign up for TrojansAlert for emergency communication from the university at www.trojansalert.usc.edu. For more information, visit the USC emergency web page at <http://emergency.usc.edu>.



Peter Katsufakis (left), associate vice president for post-graduate and developmental programs for the National Board of Medical Examiners, visits with Henri Ford, vice dean for medical education for the Keck School of Medicine, during a Nov. 2 reception hosted by the Keck School in San Antonio, Texas. The event was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges. Katsufakis is the former associate dean for student affairs at the Keck School.

Jane Brust

LAC+USC moves inpatients into new facility Nov. 7-8

At press time, LAC+USC Medical Center staff and Keck School faculty were counting down to this weekend's planned move into the new replacement hospital. The historic move into the new facility is scheduled to begin today at 7 a.m. and continue tomorrow with assistance from Navy and Air Force personnel. Outpatient clinics are closed today to free space and staff for the move.

Hospital officials plan to move approximately 570 patients, averaging one patient every two minutes. Most patients, including all those in intensive care, will be moved by ambulance, while up to 20 percent will be moved by wheelchair and/or van.

Southern California Health Leadership Panel Nov. 14

Students, faculty and staff are invited to attend the Southern California Health Leadership Panel on Friday, Nov. 14, at 10 a.m. The panel discussion will be held in the Aresty Conference Center, at the Harlyne J. Norris Cancer Research Tower.

The annual discussion, moderated by CNN's Larry King, will explore obesity and heart disease among adults and children. Among the featured panelists will be the Keck School's Dean Carmen A. Puliafito.

The discussion is sponsored by the Larry King Cardiac Foundation, LAC+USC Healthcare Network, COPE Health Solutions and the Keck School of Medicine.

Attendees should RSVP online at www.usc.edu/esvp, code: Health, or by calling (213) 740-1744.

Following the panel, a community health fair will be held at the new clinic tower at LAC+USC Medical Center, 1100 North State Street.

Kidney disease awards to be presented to USC researchers

The John McKay Memorial Fellowship in Renal Research, established to honor the USC sports legend who passed away from kidney failure, will be presented during the University Kidney Disease Research Associates (UKDRA) annual benefit dinner on Saturday, Nov. 22.

This year's recipient is Li Yang, a former Ph.D. student in physiology and biophysics at the Keck School of Medicine, who has also trained in two-photon microscopy in the lab of Janos Peti-Peterdi at the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute at the Keck School.

UKRDA is an organization dedicated to supporting research in kidney disease and hypertension performed primarily at the Keck School of Medicine.

The organization is also committed to creating, in association with the Keck School of Medicine, a pre-eminent center for research and treatment relating to kidney disease.

Shaul Massry, professor emeritus of medicine, physiology and bio-

physics at the Keck School of Medicine, will be honored at the dinner with the Leadership Award in Nephrology. Massry served as chief of the division of nephrology at the Keck School from 1974 to 2000. The dinner, to be held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, will feature entertainment by comedian and late-night talk show host Craig Ferguson, as well as Mistress of Ceremonies, singer songwriter Deana Carter.

For more information or for tickets, please call Mann Productions at (323) 314-7000.

SCHOLARS: Keck School students honored

Continued from page 1

Dean Recognition Scholars

(Class of 2010)

Amin Abdi
Julianne M. Awrey
Yekaterina Bakhta
Natalie S. Burns
Philippe Champagne
Angelina M. Crans
Erik I. Curtis
Jonathan M. Deeth
Vaninder K. Dhillon
Alexis E. Dixon
Jamie L. Funamura
Andrea Halim
Ivan P. Harnden
Adrienne M. Keener
Melissa G. Lechner
Steven J. Narvy
Jordan E. Pomeroy
Dustin G. Sanchez
Kathryn L. Serowka
Grant D. Shifflett
Eric R. Sue
Sergei Terternov
David Valenzuela
Jenny Wong

Rebecca A. Shatsky
Rebecca G. Van Horn
James E. Walls
Benjamin A. Weinberg
Oliver L. Yeh
Haig A. Yenikomshian

APC Pathology Honor Society

(Class of 2010)

Ann Barnett
Philippe Champagne
Summer Chong
Erik Curtis
Vaninder Dhillon
Alexis Dixon
Andrea Halim
Ivan Harnden
Felicia Katz
Adrienne Keener
Julie Kuperman
Melissa Lechner
Celina Montelongo
Omar Ragab
Cherise Saito
Kathryn Serowka
Sergei Terterov
Matthew Voorman
Jenny Wong

Dean Recognition Scholars

(Class of 2011)

Nicholas Arger
Sze Wing C. Au Yeung
Aaron E. Bond
Jennifer A. Cotter
Charles M.T. DeBoer
Lauren M. Friedman
Theresa L. Gipps
Emily C. Harnden
Joshua A. Hornstein
Joshua N. Jeharajah
David M. Larson
Michael P. Leathers
Erin M. Meisel
Mark B. Mitchell
Christian A. Paquet
Brigid A. Quigley
Kelsey L. Richardson
Kim A. Ruby
Alison R. Santana
Gaurav Sharma

APC Pathology Honor Society

(Class of 2011)

Nicholas Arger
Sze Wing C. Au Yeung
Anna Beavis
Aaron Bond
James Brush
Henry Chu
Marcia Ciccone
Jennifer Cotter
Charles DeBoer
Alexandra Demco
Emily Harnden
Joshua Jeharajah
Alexis Korostoff
Marya Leahy
Matthew Lilley
Brigid Quigley
Kelsey Richardson
Jeanie Zhang

Upcoming seminar prepares for changes in federal research funding

The most recent election is now over and the planning for a new era in Washington has begun. The future state of federal research funding is in flux with a new administration in office.

To prepare faculty for new trends and priorities in funding, the USC Office of Federal Relations will present "Change in Washington: Assessing Your Federal Research Outlook for 2009 and Beyond." The seminar will be held at the Edmondson Faculty Center on Wednesday, Nov. 19, from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

Presenters will discuss the funding outlook for extramural

research at federal science agencies and the Washington policy context affecting research priorities and attitudes toward universities.

"By connecting their research agenda with federal trends, participants will improve their federal grant applications and influence programs and priorities at federal agencies," said Jennifer Grodsky, USC executive director of federal relations.

Faculty are encouraged to RSVP at www.usc.edu/esvp, code: Federal, and submit questions for the presenters in advance.

Samet receives 2008 Alton Ochsner Award

Jonathan M. Samet, director of the USC Institute for Global Health and chairman of the Department of Preventive Medicine of the Keck School of Medicine, has received the 2008 Alton Ochsner Award for his contributions to the understanding of the hazards of smoking.

The Alton Ochsner Award is supported by the Ochsner Clinic Foundation and recognizes "outstanding scientific achievements that have provided pivotal insights into the biological and clinical mechanisms that relate tobacco consumption to human disease."

The selection committee noted Samet's important contributions to the overwhelming evidence on the health hazards of active and passive smoking, as well as the knowledge that radon

and asbestos pollutants exacerbate the role of cigarettes in producing lung cancer. The committee also acknowledged Samet's population-based studies carried out in New Mexico, which provided the earliest evidence of the risk of smoking in Hispanics and children; and his international population studies that provided compelling evidence for the direct role of cigarettes for producing lung cancer in minorities and other cultures.

The award is named for the late Dr. Alton Ochsner, the first person to recognize that cigarette smoking is the major factor underlying lung cancer. It was presented at the Annual Convocation of the American College of Chest Physicians, held on Oct. 26, in Philadelphia.

Environmental health grants available

The Southern California Environmental Health Sciences Center (SCEHSC) is seeking applications for 2009 Environmental Health Research Pilot Project Grants. The SCEHSC awards one-year pilot projects (up to \$35,000) to support investigators with the opportunity of collecting preliminary data to establish the feasibility of a research project and/or to validate the utility of specific procedures or techniques.

Eligible applicants include faculty or graduate students/post-doctoral researchers with a faculty sponsor. Young investigators are particularly encouraged to apply, and with all other factors equal, will receive funding priority.

Applicants should submit a one-page Letter of Intent describing proposed projects by Nov. 17 to Ashley Nielsen at anielsen@usc.edu. Applications must be electronically received by Dec. 3.

For more information, contact Ashley Nielsen at (323) 442-2750 or anielsen@usc.edu.



George Record explains the difference between a refugee and an internally displaced person (IDP) to USC students at Griffith Park on Oct. 24.

A refugee camp in the heart of the city

By Meleeneh Kazarian

USC students from the Health Sciences Campus received a strong dose of reality on Oct. 24 when they visited a simulated refugee camp in the heart of Griffith Park.

The Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) Governing Council, along with USC students from occupational therapy, public health, biochemistry and medicine visited "A Refugee Camp in the Heart of the City," an outdoor educational exhibit sponsored by Doctors Without Borders.

Students examined typical living quarters and tasted food normally distributed to the refugees at the campsites. After learning about water systems and rationing, the group examined facilities and instruments used to treat the sick, malnourished and mentally ill.

Surgeon George Record and nurse Michele Belletete, who spoke about their own personal experiences working at refugee camps in Chad and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), led the tour.

"I thought this experience was very enlightening" said Roxanne Abrams, an occupational therapy master's degree student. "While I feel it's impossible to really know what's going on in countries suffering from war, poverty, hunger and famine, events like this provide a crack in the door and at least open our eyes to these unfortunate situations."

The most memorable part of this experience for the students was "observing the framed drawings and paintings created by the child refugees during war and disasters," said Sonya Soni, second-year public health master's student and GPSS community service chair. "The mature art pieces, which portrayed guns, death, poverty and war, reminded me how these disasters disallow children to experience their most important virtue of innocence."

Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an independent international medicine humanitarian organization that delivers aid to people affected by war, epidemics, malnutrition, natural disasters or exclusion from health care in more than 60 countries.

MSF doctors, nurses, logistics experts, epidemiologists, laboratory technicians and mental health professionals provide assistance to people caught in crises around the world. Their services include providing medical attention, feeding malnourished children, constructing wells for clean drinking water and distributing shelter materials.

MSF is also committed to speaking out against the causes of suffering and to raising public awareness of the unfortunate situations in these countries.

"As future health care providers, not only do we have the power to help, but we have a responsibility to get the word out," Abrams said.

ARE YOU READY FOR AN EARTHQUAKE?

Major earthquakes are forecast for Southern California. While earthquakes can be hazardous, preparedness can ensure your safety in even a major earthquake.

KEY STEPS INCLUDE:

KNOW WHAT TO DO AFTER THE SHAKING STOPS

- Check for injuries to people in your area. Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger. Call for medical assistance (213.740.4321), and render first aid if required.
- Check the area for safety hazards such as building damage, fires, or gas leaks. If the area or building appears to be unsafe, leave the building, and report any emergency.
- Report to your building's designated emergency assembly area. All building assembly areas are identified at <http://emergencyplan.usc.edu>.
- For emergency information, call 213.740.9233, or go to <http://emergency.usc.edu>.
- Implement your department's emergency plan. Talk to your supervisor to find out your responsibilities in an emergency.

IDENTIFY & FIX EARTHQUAKE HAZARDS

- Bolt tall cabinets and bookcases to the wall.
- Secure heavy office equipment with earthquake straps.

GET AN OFFICE EMERGENCY KIT

- Every USC building has been provided with an emergency kit for use by the building emergency response team. Each staff or faculty member should also consider making or buying a personal emergency kit, including:
- Water and non-perishable food
 - Emergency space blanket
 - First aid supplies
 - Personal medication and extra eyeglasses
 - Portable AM/FM Radio (spare batteries)
 - Flashlight (spare batteries)
 - Cash (small bills)
 - List of essential phone numbers, including an out-of-state family contact number

CREATE A HOME/FAMILY DISASTER PLAN

- Learn first aid/CPR, and maintain a first aid kit.
- Learn how to use a fire extinguisher.
- Practice **DROP, COVER & HOLD ON** with family members.
- Identify home evacuation area/family meeting point.
- Keep shoes & flashlight near your bed.
- Know how to shut off utilities such as water, gas, and electricity.
- Designate an out-of-state contact for family members.
- Know the emergency plan for your child's school.
- Don't forget emergency preparation for your pets.
- Keep enough food, water & supplies to last two weeks.
- If you are a homeowner:
 - Make sure the house is bolted to the foundation and the chimney reinforced.
 - Purchase earthquake insurance.
- Keep backup copies of health, financial, and insurance documents.

USCREADY
EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS CAMPAIGN

USC Fire Safety/Emergency Planning Office | For more information, see <http://www.shakeout.org> or <http://emergencyprep.usc.edu>

Calendar of Events

The HSC Calendar is online at www.usc.edu/hscalendar

Monday, Nov. 10

NOON. "SB 840: A Single-payer Prescription for California," Sara Rogers, Health Policy Consultant to State Senator Sheila Kuehl. MCH 149. Info: (510) 301-7109

4 P.M. USC Research Advancement Workshop. "Obtaining Research Funding from Foundations," Kavita Munjal, USC. NML West Conference Rm. Info: (213) 740-6709

Tuesday, Nov. 11

9 A.M. Neurology Grand Rounds. "EEG Monitoring," Kenneth Jordan, Neuroscience Inc. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-7686

NOON. Cancer Ctr. Grand Rounds. "Better Living Through Hyper-mutation," Myron Goodman, USC. NOR 7409. Info: (323) 865-0801

Wednesday, Nov. 12

7 A.M. Medicine Grand Rounds. "Immune Thrombocytopenia Purpura," Rahul Naik, USC. GNH 1645. Info: (323) 226-7556

8:30 A.M. "Respiratory Issues in Neuromuscular Disease," A. Baydur, USC. GNH 11-321. Info: (323) 226-7923

NOON. "Growth Factor Signals Controlling Development and Maintenance of the Peripheral Nervous System," David Ginty, Johns Hopkins Univ. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-3219

4 P.M. USC Ctr. for Excellence in Research. "Developing Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)," Gaurav Sukhatme, USC. UPC: CUB 329. Info: (213) 740-6709

7 P.M. Visions and Voices the USC Arts & Humanities Initiative. "Safari of the Soul: The Quest for Water in Africa," Dave and Dana Dornsife. UPC: Town and Gown. Info: visionsandvoices@usc.edu

Thursday, Nov. 13

NOON. "Mechanisms in Organ Repopulation: The Liver Paradigm," Sanjeev Gupta, Albert Einstein College of Medicine. HMR 100. Info: (323) 442-1283

6:30 P.M. Visions and Voices the USC Arts & Humanities Initiative. "Painting the Body Today," Ruth Weinsberg and Lisa Bitel, USC. UPC: Watt Hall, Rm. 118. Info: visionsandvoices@usc.edu

Friday, Nov. 14

8:30 A.M. "Managing ALI/ARDS: The Expanding Evidence Base," N.R. MacIntyre, Duke Univ. GNH 11-321. Info: (323) 226-7923

11 A.M. Hematology Grand Rounds. "Making Sense of Myelodysplastic Syndromes: From Diagnosis to Treatment," Guillermo Garcia-Manero, M. D. Anderson Cancer Ctr. GNH 14-441. Info: (323) 865-3950

Saturday, Nov. 15

8 A.M. "Current Management of Cardiac Arrhythmias and Atrial Fibrillation," Various speakers. KAM Mayer Aud. Info: (323) 442-2555

Wednesday, Nov. 19

7 A.M. Medicine Grand Rounds. "Primary Adrenal Hyperaldosteronism/Adrenal CA," Shazia Khan, USC. GNH 1645. Info: (323) 226-7556

Notice: Deadline for calendar submission is 4 p.m. Monday to be considered for that week's issue—although three weeks advance notice of events is recommended. Please note that timely submission does not guarantee an item will be printed. Send calendar items to HSC Weekly, KAM 400 or fax to (323) 442-2832, or e-mail to ebalauw@usc.edu. Entries must include day, date, time, title of talk, first and last name of speaker, affiliation of speaker, location, and a phone number for information.



Sara Reeve

DIWALI FESTIVAL—First-year medical students Nick Landsman and Neha Mahajan strut their stuff during Diwali Day festivities held in the Harry and Celeste Pappas Quad on Oct. 28. Students celebrated Diwali Day, the Indian festival of lights that signifies the victory of good over evil. The Graduate and Professional Student Senate and the Asian/Pacific American Medical Student Association sponsored the event, which featured lively dance performances, an a capella vocal arrangement and Indian food. The student singers and dancers showcased the styles of Bollywood, Bhangra and Indian hip-hop.

ETCETERA

Peter Jones, director of USC/Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, was honored by the Samuel Waxman Cancer Research Foundation at a ceremony held on Oct. 22. Jones was presented with the David Workman Memorial Award, which "celebrates advances in treating cancers where science had previously offered little hope." The award is given every two years and includes \$50,000 to support a two-year research project.

Richard G. MacKenzie, associate professor of pediatrics at the Keck School of Medicine, has received the State of Mongolia Friendship Medal, the highest award given by the Mongolian government to a non-Mongolian to recognize outstanding contributions to the country and its people. MacKenzie received the Friendship Medal from President Nambaryn Enkhbayar at the Presidential Offices in Ulanbatar, Mongolia.

HSC NEWSMAKERS

Complete listing at: www.usc.edu/uscnews/usc_in_the_news/

A Nov. 1 *Los Angeles Daily News* reported that USC and UCLA will compete next week to see which campus can register the most people for the National Marrow Donor Program. The article also quoted USC alum **Nancy Ullman**.

An Oct. 31 *Los Angeles Times* article quoted pharmacoeconomics expert **Joel Hay** about a price war between pharmacies selling generic drugs.

An Oct. 30 *La Opinion* article featured Spanish classes offered by the USC School of Dentistry to help dental students commu-

nicate with Latino patients who don't speak English.

On Oct. 30, KVEA-TV interviewed **Olga Castro** of the USC School of Dentistry about the relative healthiness of different kinds of candy.

On Oct. 28, Medcenter Today featured an announcement that Keck School Dean **Carmen Puliafito** was appointed to the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

An Oct. 28 Reuters article featured research led by emergency medicine expert **Marc Eckstein**.

An Oct. 27 *Los Angeles Times* article quoted pediatric dentist **Julie Jenks** and highlighted the USC School of Dentistry's Candy Buy-Back option. The Candy Buy-Back was also featured in the *Daily Breeze*.

A *Verdugo Monthly* article highlighted on ongoing study led by optometrist **Susan Cotter**, which confirms that Latino children tend to have a high occurrence of astigmatism.

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