USC University Hospital ranked among best

USC University Hospital ranked third among 44 hospitals in Los Angeles and Orange counties in a new survey published by U.S. News & World Report. The rankings are available online at www.usnews.com/hospitals.

The new rankings recognize 622 hospitals in or near major U.S. cities with a record of high performance in key medical specialties, including 132 of the 152 hospitals already identified as the best in the nation. Children’s hospitals were excluded. USC University Hospital ranked third behind Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center (first) and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center (second). USC Norris Cancer Hospital ranked 21st in a four-way tie.

“Our physicians, nurses and staff work tirelessly to give the best care to our patients, with a commitment to safety, excellence and continuous improvement,” said Mitch Cremee, chief executive officer of USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital. “Ranking so highly in these two metro area rankings is an indication of the value our hospitals have to the community.”

USC-affiliated Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center also was ranked, at number seven. Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center was ranked 36th, in a nine-way tie. The new metro area rankings use existing data from the 2010-11 “Best Hospitals” rankings published in U.S. News last July. In those rankings, USC University Hospital ranked in six specialty areas:

- Eighth in ophthalmology (USC Department of Ophthalmology at the Doheny Eye Institute)
- 16th in urology
- 26th in pulmonology
- 31st in orthopedics
- 26th in neurology and neurosurgery (up 25 spots from last year)
- 29th in gynecology (up one spot from last year)

According to U.S. News & World Report, the new metro area rankings are relevant to a much wider range of health care consumers. They are aimed primarily at consumers whose care may not demand the special expertise found only at a nationally ranked “Best Hospital.” Patients and their families will have a far better chance of finding a “Best Hospital” far away from home who can do the same work without the commotion of a major metropolitan area, according to the survey.

USC School of Medicine and the Keck School of Medicine are extraordinary, to USC and the Keck School of Medicine. It is not lost on me when I get older, then there won’t be anybody to take care of me when I get a little older.”

Ford thanked Levan, a former chair of the Department of Dermatology at USC, for his continued support of the Keck School and its students, noting, “You make my job a little easier.”

Levan said he personally reads essays of students applying for scholarships. He said that literacy and clarity are two qualities he looks for. He also prefers students with a background in the humanities rather than the sciences. “They have more stringent ideas about what ethics are,” he explained.

In 2007, Levan donated $6 million to establish the USC Norman Levan Ethics at the Keck School, to future Keck students. He explained, “You make my job a little easier.”

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Town Hall offers update on Clinical and Translational Science Institute

By Ryan Ball

Keck School of Medicine faculty and students assemblred to get the latest news on the USC Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), a Keck School-based, university-wide initiative to accelerate the pace at which research discoveries are translated into clinical practice. CTSI director Thomas A. Buchanan, director of research development Carlon N. Pato and director of scientific translation Roberta Diaz Brinton were on hand for the March 7 town hall meeting to provide an update on the institute’s forward momentum since receiving a $58.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in July of 2010.

They were joined by Richard Hull, senior director of New Ventures and Alliances at the USC Stevens Institute for Innovation. USC Stevens works closely with the CTSI to promote development of novel therapeutic and diagnostic tools for human disease.

Buchanan outlined the vision for CTSI, which is to conduct research to improve health in the diverse urban environment of Los Angeles and to gain knowledge to improve health in urban settings and megacities across the globe. Current priority diseases include cancer, cardiovascular disease, child health, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, neurosciences and mental health.

With the NIH funding, CTSI has been able to award a total of $700,000 to 24 pilot programs to date. During the next round of funding, CTSI plans to award seven to 10 pilot grants of up to $40,000 each. For faculty, trainees and students considering applying for pilot grants, Buchanan noted that the CTSI values the full spectrum of translational research, ranging from clinical trials to outcomes research on large populations. He also said that the CTSI is very focused on interdisciplinary research.

“We’re really not looking to support a lot of fundamental science at the discovery level until it has some evidence that it’s transferrable,” Buchanan remarked.

Pato offered an introduction to the Office of Research Advancement’s first major initiative, Patients Partnering in Health and Discovery. “We want to invite every patient to play a role in the discovery process,” said Pato. “It ensures that each of our patients has the opportunity to consent to partner in and learn about our health discoveries.”

Diaz Brinton spoke about the CTSI Center for Scientific Translation. The center serves as a bridge that enables basic researchers to translate novel discoveries into innovative therapeutics, devices, biomarkers and diagnostics to meet the health needs of the diverse Los Angeles Population.

Among the center’s novel programs is Partnership for Cores, which is managed by UC Davis. The program provides access to a vast repository of existing drugs in hopes of finding new uses for them. Richard Hull said the main focus of the New Ventures and Alliances team has been building out resources to assist emerging startups. Services include pro-bono legal advice and connections to industry mentors and funding sources. Last year, the program spun off half a dozen USC-based startups. Now the program is tracking and assisting more than 50 potential startups.

For more information visit http://labctsi.org.

BEST: USC University hospital lauded in first metro rankings

Continued from page 1

A top-ranked hospital in their health insurance network and might not have to travel to get care at a high-performing hospital. To be ranked in its metro area, a hospital had to score in the top 25 percent among its peers in at least one of 16 medical specialties.

“All of these hospitals provide first-rate care for the majority of patients, even those with serious conditions or who need demanding procedures,” said Health Rankings Editor Avery Comorrow. “The new ‘Best Hospitals’ metro rankings can tell you which hospitals are worth considering for most medical problems if you live in or near a major metro area.”

For the full list of metro area rankings visit www.usnews.com/hospitals.

Grace Ho, who received her master of occupational science and occupational therapy from USC in 1982, recently made the #1 best-seller list for Amazon.com in Japan and #2 in the U.S. Amazon Kindle category for her book, One Minute Feng Shui for Prosperity.

USC has been featured by media outlets in Japan and the United States. Since graduating from USC, Ho said, “I have been working with business executives of Fortune 500, because I want to promote public wellness before they become sick. I use Chinese Feng Shui and Japanese Zen philosophy for a balance and harmony of love, health and prosperity.”

Ho is currently serving as a Board Councilor of Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry, Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.

Penina Segall-Gutierrez, assistant professor of clinical obstetrics and gynecology and family medicine at the Keck School of Medicine, won first place for best oral abstract at the recent meeting of the Association of Professors of Obstetrics and Gynecology. The abstract, “Maintenance of Knowledge, Behavior, Conﬁdence, and Professional Responsibility Regarding Oral Emergency Contraception after a Novel OB/GYN and Pharmacists Developed Educational Interventions on First Year Pharmacy Students,” described an interdisciplinary project between the Department of OB/GYN and the USC School of Pharmacy.

Keck School of Medicine professor Michael Cousineau and his students in the master of public health program participated in a conference in Sacramento on Feb. 2. Cousineau moderated a panel at the Uninsured Project’s 15th Annual Conference on “Building the New Delivery System: Increasing Primary Care Capacity.” The students attended the conference and had an opportunity to meet and hear from health committee staff in the Capitol.

Indebir S. Gill, chair and executive director of the USC Institute of Urology, was selected as the journal European Urology’s first North American editor. European Urology has been published for over 35 years and is read by more than 20,000 urologists across the world.

This journal is a leading publication in the field of urology.

The USC Los Angeles County Cancer Surveillance Program (CSP) CAFÉ Cancer Inquiry Database, developed by the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center Research Informatics and the CSP to document and track public and research requests for information and data, has been adapted for use by the California Cancer Registry and other cancer registries in California.

This database was developed using the framework called CAFÉ: (Common Application Framework Extensible). CAFÉ is a home grown framework that can be used to create any custom application for Health Care Research. Established in 1972 at USC for the purpose of etiological cancer research, the CSP collects demographic and treatment data on all new cancers diagnosed in Los Angeles County.
USC-CHLA Transplant Symposium attracts hundreds of patients, clinicians

By Leslie Ridgeway

More than 350 patients, family members and caregivers, clinicians and providers came together to share knowledge and hope at the USC University Hospital and Children’s Hospital Los Angeles Transplant Symposium, held March 24 at the Langham Huntington Hotel in Pasadena.

The event, “Leading Through Education,” featured presentations from USC and Children’s Hospital faculty physicians, partner groups and colleagues.

Tse-Ling Fong, associate professor of surgery, Keck School of Medicine, moderated the discussion.

“This is about education,” said presenter Mike Donnell, chief administrative officer of the USC Transplant Institute at USC University Hospital.

“We can do better when we educate patients and providers about what a transplant is and how it works.”

Sessions focused on everything from the basics of transplants and the psychosocial aspects of face transplantation, to improving patient care through research, post-transplant malignancy and the social worker’s role in assisting transplant patients.

Presenters included Cynthia Harrington, chief medical officer of the USC Transplant Institute; Yuri Gteryk, director of USC Organ Transplantation; Mark Barr, associate professor of surgery at the Keck School; Emily Blodget, assistant professor of medicine; and Sophonie Bizopoulou, surgical director, USC Kidney Transplant program.

Other speakers were Kiran Dhobney, surgical director, USC Pancreas Transplantation division of hepatobiliary surgery and abdominal organ transplantation; Marvin Malcom, clinical coordinator of cardiovascular transplant; Linda Sher, director, Clinical Research, division of hepatobiliary surgery and abdominal

 organ transplantation; John Donovan, medical director, USC Liver Transplant program; and Jeremy O’Connor, cardiothoracic social worker.

“We’re delighted we have such quality hospitals,” said Bob Winston, who with wife Judy co-sponsored the event with USC University Hospital.

“We sponsored the first symposium four years ago, and this time we wanted to include recipients of transplants so they can learn, and be advocates of the skills USC and Children’s offer to adults and children in Southern California.”

Seven years ago, the Winston’s grandson Ryan received a new heart at Children’s after a catastrophe. Though the transplant was successful, Ryan later passed away, and the Winston’s dedicated themselves to supporting the Children’s and USC transplant programs in part by establishing the Ryan Winston Chair in Transplant Cardiology at the Keck School.

The Winston’s intent to educate and advocate was not lost on Pat Chaves, whose husband, Raymond, had a liver transplant last year.

“I have signed up to be an organ donor,” said the El Monte resident, watching her husband chatting with other transplant recipients. “People think it can’t happen to them. It changes your whole life.”

The full list of Global Health NEWSMAKERS is available at labctsi.org/index.php/cetcd.

Successful Run—The USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center team raised $3,000 for breast cancer research in the 2011 Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. The 15th annual race, which took place on March 6 at Dodger Stadium, attracted more than 15,000 runners, who raised a total of $1.5 million. The USC Norris team was made up of about 30 members, including Norris staff and supporters. “This year’s team was a huge success,” said team captain Tonya Strom. “Thanks to their dedication, we doubled our team members from last year and nearly tripled our fundraising dollars. We made this year truly special.”

By Leslie Ridgeway

At the transplant symposium were (from left) Scott Evans, Cynthia Harrington, Judy Winston, Bob Winston and Mike Donnell. The Winsteons, along with USC University Hospital, made the symposium possible with generous donations. Harrington and Donnell presented at the symposium.

This is about education. We can do better when we educate patients and providers about what a transplant is and how it works.’” —Mike Donnell, chief administrative officer of the USC Transplant Institute at USC University Hospital

The Center for Education, Training, and Career Development (GETCD), part of the USC Los Angeles Basin Clinical and Translational Science Institute, is now accepting applications for cohort 2 of the Pre- and Post-doctoral Research and Career Development Award.

For pre-doctoral students, the two-year award program provides education, training, and mentoring career development and helps recipients acquire the expertise to perform clinical and translational research in diverse populations.

World Health Day event needs volunteers

As part of World Health Day, USC will team up with community organizations on April 7 to host “Pollution Solution: The Port to a Healthy Globe,” to promote environmental awareness, advocacy and action in Los Angeles County.

The event will include a health fair with screenings and educational booths, live entertainment and a community cleanup. Volunteers are needed; to volunteer, contact global.health@usc.edu.

The full list of Global Health NEWSMAKERS is available at http://tinyurl.com/4f8d34d.

A March 21 story in Science ran a Q&A with Martin Pera, professor and foundation director of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC, Pera built a stem cell program that ranges from basic research to clinical trials. USC has reached a milestone, Pera said. “At our Doheny Eye Institute in a CIRM-supported program, Professor Mark Humayun [of the Keck School and the USC Viterbi School] and David Hinton [of the Keck School] are planning to trial stem therapies for macular degeneration, and my colleague Michael Kahn [of the Keck School] has just started a phase I clinical trial of a drug for colorectal carcinoma that was developed using a stem cell-based screen.”

A March 22 article in Wtvo News quoted Thomas Lee, retina specialist at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, about using flash photography to detect possible eye problems in children. Lee recommends that “if a child’s picture has an abnormal or unusual eye glow, an eye exam is highly recommended,” the story stated.

A weekly news summary for the USC School of Medicine is available online at wtvonews.com.
New Master Plan sets strategy for Health Sciences Campus growth

By Ryan Ball

Since taking office last year, USC President C. L. Max Nikias has made it abundantly clear that the Health Sciences Campus is a major priority for the university and a key component of its overall growth strategy. Evidence of this commitment can be found in the Health Sciences Campus Master Plan, which was approved by trustees on Jan. 26. It can be viewed online at www.usc.edu/community/hscmasterplan.

The Master Plan is a long-range development strategy looking forward to 2035. New construction and demolition of older buildings is expected to occur in eight to nine phases, depending on how quickly the University moves forward and what its priorities are.

Kristina Raspe, associate senior vice president of real estate and asset management for USC, said the Master Plan was given the green light once USC started looking into acquiring the two hospitals, now known as USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital. “The university knew that integrating the hospitals into the campus fabric would be key to making the academic medical enterprise successful,” said Raspe. “In order to become a top-tier academic medical center, you need a successful campus with sufficient space and amenities to enable you to recruit the best physicians, the best clinicians and the best students.”

Laurie Stone, executive director of land use and planning, noted that the Master Plan was largely informed by the campus community, with numerous meetings and workshops with all the various campus stakeholders, a number of town halls and other community meetings. “We feel this plan represents a very broad perspective of what the campus needs,” she said.

While the full impact of the Master Plan will take place over a number of years, some changes are already starting to take place. Beautification of the campus is currently under way as a landscape architect begins the work of making San Pablo and Alcazar streets more pleasing to the eye. In addition, design work has begun on a grand entrance for the campus at the Soto/Alcazar intersection, with construction slated to start during the summer.

Other early-phase projects could include the construction of student housing and a hotel, as well as a new outpatient clinical building. The first new research building that was planned would be located behind the Eli and Edythe Broad CRIM Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research. A new academic building is also planned. Timing for both the academic building and research building will depend on funding and university priorities.

The Health Sciences Campus currently consists of 2.88 million gross square feet of development. Through the course of the Master Plan, the university will end up demolishing close to a million square feet and building 4 million square feet. With a net gain of roughly 3 million square feet, the campus will more than double in capacity over the next 25 years.

Another major issue addressed in the Master Plan is inpatient and outpatient access. With roughly 300,000 outpatient and 90,000 impatient visits to the campus annually, traffic on San Pablo Street gets problematic at times with everyone using the same entrance. The Master Plan proposes the outpatient access be separated from the inpatient access. Once this is accomplished, San Pablo Street can be narrowed, making room for much wider, pedestrian-friendly sidewalks double-lined with trees and potentially a landscaped median, as well.

“This can be a really hard campus to walk across,” Stone remarked. “Size-wise, it’s much smaller than University Park Campus, and people don’t think twice about walking across that campus. But they do here, because we don’t have a lot of landscaped pedestrian paths and also because of the topography. The Master Plan proposed beautiful new pedestrian paths and linkages, as well as two bridges in key locations, to address that issue.”

While the Health Sciences Campus will always have a more modern look and feel than its traditional, collegial counterpart, President Nikias is keen on unifying the two campuses aesthetically by bringing more of the USC brand to HSC.

Expect to see brickwork in the sidewalks, as well as some of the same types of furniture, lighting fixtures and gateways found on the University Park Campus. While the Master Plan offers an exciting glimpse into the future of the Health Sciences Campus, Stone encourages the HSC community to also look back at the history of the campus and how it has grown since USC first purchased land adjacent to the county hospital in 1949 and began forming the nucleus of a medical campus.

That historical background can be found, along with the Master Plan, at www.usc.edu/community/hscmasterplan.

Calendar of Events
This Calendar of events is also online at www.usc.edu/hsccalendar for the Health Sciences Campus community.

Tuesday, Apr. 5

Wednesday, Apr. 6
Noon Global Health Lecture. “Innovation for the Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases,” NRT Arroyo. Info: (323) 865-0419

Friday, Apr. 8
8:30 a.m. “Immune Immune Dysfunction in Asthma: The Role of Surfactant Protein A,” Monica Kraft, Duke Univ. 112 732-734. Info: (323) 226-7879
Noon Medicine Grand Rounds. “Peripheral Artery Disease,” Sarah Elsayed, USC. IPT Conference Rm. B. Info: (323) 226-7556

Notice: Deadline for calendar submission is 4 p.m. Monday to be considered for that week’s issue—although three day to be considered for that week’s issue—although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. —although three day to be considered for that week’s issue. 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