Stephen Gruber named USC Norris Cancer Center director

Stephen B. Gruber, a renowned physician-scientist from the University of Michigan, has been named to the position of director of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, effective Dec. 1. Gruber has also been named the H. Leslie Hoffman and Elaine S. Hoffman Chair in Cancer Research and visiting professor of medicine at the Keck School.

“Dr. Gruber is ideally suited to lead USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center,” said Carmen A. Puliafito, dean of the Keck School of Medicine. “He is actively involved in research, patient care and administration, and he has a strong appreciation for the important role of each area to our academic mission, as well as to USC’s commitment to the growth of our academic medical center.”

Gruber was selected after a national search, led by Jon Nalick, founding director of the USC Institute for Global Health and chair of the Keck School’s Department of Preventive Medicine. Gruber succeeds Peter Jones, who has led the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center for the past 17 years.

Gruber comes to USC from the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center, where he is the associate director for cancer prevention and control. He also holds the H. Marvin Pollard Chair of Medicine and faculty appointments in the Departments of Internal Medicine, Epidemiology and Human Genetics at the University of Michigan.

The USC Primary Care Physician Assistant Program received a $704,000 expansion grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

As the demand for health care professionals grows, physician assistant (PA) programs across the country are expanding. The USC Primary Care Physician Assistant Program received a $704,000 expansion grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

The grant allows for four additional students in each class over the next three years, bringing the class size to 54, and provides each of those additional students with $22,000 to be applied to their tuition over two years.

The USC Primary Care Physician Assistant Program has been continually accredited for the past 35 years and will graduate its 44th class in 2012. There are currently 159 accredited PA programs in the United States, with another 42 seeking accreditation over the next four years, according to Kevin Lohrney, who

Going up? USC hospitals elevators make sure you’ve got handwashing down

By Amy E. Hamaker

Hand hygiene was the talk of the USC hospitals on Sept. 23, as new elevator screens touting the importance of proper hand hygiene were introduced in 14 locations at USC University Hospital.

Each screen featured a different USC “hand hygiene hero,” either a patient or hospital employee, who had been a role model for good hand hygiene. The screens feature the tagline “Clean hands save lives,” and will remain in place indefinitely to help remind people to wash their hands.

Along with the new screens, infection control employees staffed booths to share information about the hand hygiene program. There, medical personnel, patients and hospital visitors could learn more about germs that can cause disease and received free mints and hand sanitizers.

The booths were located at the USC University Hospital main lobby and cafeteria and at the USC Norris Cancer Hospital Rainbow Café.

Several administrators, including USC hospitals CEO Mitch Creem, worked alongside booth workers to show their support of the hand washing initiative.

“We are trying to improve the quality of care for our patients and reduce the rate of infection,” said Creem, adding that the screens will help increase the overall awareness of hand hygiene. “We’re here to show our patients and our staff just how much organizational support is behind this initiative.”

Carney Montgomery, clinical and nutritional manager, food and nutrition, added: “The national average is very low for hand hygiene, and we want to change that culture here at the USC hospitals. We’re hoping to see an improvement for hand hygiene and patient safety. When you emphasize that it’s for the patients, the support is really there.”
GRUBER: ‘Looking forward to ‘transformative opportunity’ at USC Norris

Continued from page 1

care of patients and families with cancer,” said Gruber.

“The Trojan Family allows me to do that best, and I’m looking forward to this transformative opportunity here at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center to really make a difference in the lives of our patients and families, as well as our research community.”

Gruber is a medical oncologist, cancer geneticist and epidemiologist whose research focuses on genetic and environmental contributions to cancer. His particular research interests include the genetic epidemiology of cancer, with emphasis on colorectal cancer; the molecular pathogenesis of cancer, integrated with genetic epidemiology; methods in genetic epidemiology; and breast cancer genetics and translational research in cancer prevention.

Max S. Wicha, distinguished professor of oncology and director, University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center, said, “Dr. Gruber is one of the world’s leading investigators studying the molecular epidemiology of cancer. He has been a wonderful leader for our Cancer Center as the associate director for cancer prevention. We will miss Steve at Michigan but are excited by the opportunities he will have at USC. We hope that we can work together in the future.”

As director of the Cancer Genetics Clinic at the University of Michigan, Gruber concentrates his clinical practice on the care of patients and families with inherited susceptibility to cancer. “Dr. Gruber is the perfect candidate for the job,” said Jones. “He is qualified as both a scientist and a practicing physician. He brings his expertise in genetics to the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, and also his experience in operations as the associate director of cancer prevention and control at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center—which is arguably one of the best cancer centers in the country. I could not be happier with the selection of the search committee.”

In addition to serving on editorial boards for several professional journals, Gruber is active in national organizations. Since 2005, he has been chair of the Colorectal Family Registries Advisory Panel for the National Cancer Institute. For the past three years, he chaired the Cancer Genetics Education Committee of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. He also holds two patents on a mutation associated with familial colorectal cancer.

The USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center was established in 1971 and has benefited from continuous research and funding from the National Cancer Institute since 1973, when it was named one of the original eight comprehensive cancer centers. It is one of only 40 comprehensive cancer centers in the country. The NCI recently awarded the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center a five-year, $32.5 million core grant renewal to support its broad range of clinical, research and educational programs.

“By great terms, the priorities I have for the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center are to invest in research in a way that transforms clinical care and to provide the infrastructure that facilitates those discoveries and the technology that is available to cancer patients in the United States and the world,” said Gruber.

Gruber has been with the University of Michigan since 1997. He was appointed associate director for cancer prevention and control at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center in 2009, and has been a proponent of public health and doctorate from Yale University. For his medical degree, he returned to the University of Pennsylvania, where he also completed his internship and residency. He completed fellow- ship in medical genetics at Johns Hopkins Hospital and in clinical medical genetics at the University of Michigan. He now lives in Los Angeles by his wife, Robin, and their three children, Ellen, Claire and Megan.

USC Norris faculty and staff welcome their new director

By Sara Reeve

The mood was celebratory and the champagne was flowing for staff and faculty of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center at a reception for the naming of Stephen Gruber as the center’s incoming director.

Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito opened the reception, held on Oct. 11 in the Aescy Auditorium, by thanking Jon Samet, founding director of the USC Institute for Global Health, who led the search committee. Puliafito told the audience of USC Norris faculty and staff that he had been amazed “by the strong strength of talent that is here at the University of Southern California among my colleagues, I saw that there is a lot going on here right now, and we are moving forward. Having a physician who is actually treating patients is very important because of the excitement we see in the clinical arena.”

Champagne corks were literally popping as Stephen Gruber addressed the assembled crowd.

“As I came through and recognized the unbelievable talent that is here at the University of Southern California, I was really in a unique position to move forward,” said Gruber. “We are really in a wonderful place to be able to advance cancer research and cancer care.”

Faculty and staff applauded as glasses were raised to usher in a new era for the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center.

ShakeOut quake drill set for Oct. 20 at 10:20 a.m.

All faculty and staff members at USC are being asked to join millions of other Southern Californians participating in the Great California ShakeOut Oct. 20 at 10:20 a.m.

Everyone is being encouraged to practice the “drop, cover and hold on” technique for 30 seconds, as part of the largest earthquake drill in U.S. history with more than 8 million Californians participating.

For detailed instructions and additional information, visit www.usc.edu/dept/hr/shakesout.
PA: Program expands to meet rising demand

Continued from page 1 earlier this year succeeded Anne Walsh as director of the USC Primary Care Physician Assistant Program.

“The shortage of health care providers that is projected for 2020 is behind the big push for this expansion,” said Lohenry.

Lohenry took part in a workforce taskforce for the PA profession this past spring and says it is projected that less than a decade from now the U.S. will see a shortage of 91,000 physicians across primary care and specialties. The shortage is due to overall population growth compounded by the aging baby boomer set and more than 30 million people gaining access to health care through the Affordable Care Act.

“The PA profession has been looking at this to try to determine what we should be doing as part of that team practice,” Lohenry said. “We recognize that there is a need for our profession to expand, but there is also a need to break down barriers to expansion in our profession as well.”

A number of states, including California, limit the number of PAs a physician can supervise. Lohenry said those laws may change as more patients require access to health care and become more comfortable with non-physician providers.

The average PA student graduates with a master’s degree in 26 months. Given medical school’s greater investment of time and money, the PA program provides an attractive alternative to prospective students. The program also offers greater flexibility to switch specialties after graduation.

As the program grows, it will remain dedicated to recruiting students from diverse backgrounds so that a number of them can be deployed to underserved communities.

Upcoming lecture to highlight real-world implications of medical humanitarianism

By Amy E. Hamaker

An upcoming free lecture in the Visions and Voices lecture series will take a realistic look at what is involved in medical humanitarianism on a global scale.

Paul Farmer, the Presley Professor of Social Medicine and chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, will present “Medical Humanitarianism: Possibilities and Pitfalls” twice on Tuesday, Oct. 18:

• At 10:30 a.m. at the Mayer Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus, with a medically focused conversation facilitated by Henri Ford, vice dean of medical education at the Keck School. Seating priority will be given to USC health-professional students.

• At 4 p.m. at the Bovard Auditorium on the University Park Campus. Seating will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Farmer is a medical anthropologist, physician and founding director of Partners In Health, an international nonprofit organization that provides direct health care services. He and his colleagues in the United States and in Haiti, Peru, Russia, Rwanda, Lesotho and Malawi have pioneered novel community-based treatment strategies that demonstrate the delivery of high-quality health care in resource-poor settings.

He will present information not only on immediate emergency treatment in a devastated area, but also on long-term care that will play out after medical teams have left.

The lecture was organized by Erin Quinn, former associate dean of admissions for the Keck School; Pamela Schaff, director of the Program in Medical Humanities, Arts and Ethics for the Keck School; and Lyn M. Boyd-Judson, director of the USC Levan Institute for Humanities and Ethics. It is co-sponsored by the Program in Medical Humanities, Arts and Ethics; the USC Pacific Center for Health Policy and Ethics; and the USC Levan Institute for Humanities and Ethics.

The Visions and Voices initiative, started in 2006 by USC President C. L. Max Nikias during his tenure as provost, offers dynamic events in the arts and humanities, encouraging students to interact with artists, writers, professors and special guests.

USC to help CareNow bring free health services to L.A. residents

By Amy E. Hamaker

Partnering with the community is one of USC’s core values, and faculty and students will have the chance to do just that at the 2011 CareNow Los Angeles community free clinic event.

This year’s event will be held from Thursday, Oct. 20, to Sunday, Oct. 23, at the Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, 9393 South Figueroa St. The Keck School is an official sponsor, and faculty and student volunteers from the Keck School of Medicine, the USC School of Pharmacy and the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry at USC will help provide free medical, dental and vision services to the uninsured, underinsured and underserved populations in the Los Angeles community.

Visitors to the CareNow event will also be able to receive follow-up care. Several Los Angeles-based clinics and health care centers have volunteered to provide medical homes for patients who need continuing medical attention.

Glenn Ault, associate dean for clinical administration (Los Angeles County USC Medical Center), is spearheading Keck School and School of Pharmacy participation.

“This is a huge community-based effort to provide care to those less fortunate, which is at the crux of the Keck School’s mission,” said Ault.

“This event is right in our backyard,” said Paul Farmer, the Presley Professor of Social Medicine and chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, will present “Medical Humanitarianism: Possibilities and Pitfalls” twice on Tuesday, Oct. 18:

• At 10:30 a.m. at the Mayer Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus, with a medically focused conversation facilitated by Henri Ford, vice dean of medical education at the Keck School. Seating priority will be given to USC health-professional students.

• At 4 p.m. at the Bovard Auditorium on the University Park Campus. Seating will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Farmer is a medical anthropologist, physician and founding director of Partners In Health, an international nonprofit organization that provides direct health care services. He and his colleagues in the United States and in Haiti, Peru, Russia, Rwanda, Lesotho and Malawi will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Farmer is a medical anthropologist, physician and founding director of Partners In Health, an international nonprofit organization that provides direct health care services. He and his colleagues in the United States and in Haiti, Peru, Russia, Rwanda, Lesotho and Malawi will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Farmer is a medical anthropologist, physician and founding director of Partners In Health, an international nonprofit organization that provides direct health care services. He and his colleagues in the United States and in Haiti, Peru, Russia, Rwanda, Lesotho and Malawi will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Farmer is a medical anthropologist, physician and founding director of Partners In Health, an international nonprofit organization that provides direct health care services. He and his colleagues in the United States and in Haiti, Peru, Russia, Rwanda, Lesotho and Malawi will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Farmer is a medical anthropologist, physician and founding director of Partners In Health, an international nonprofit organization that provides direct health care services. He and his colleagues in the United States and in Haiti, Peru, Russia, Rwanda, Lesotho and Malawi will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
Calendar of Events

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

Sunday, Oct. 16
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles 3K to End Epilepsy. Rose Bowl, Pasadena. Join the USC Epilepsy Team. To register www.walktoendepilepsy.org. Info: (800) 564-0445

Monday, Oct. 17
7 a.m. – 8 a.m. USC Physical Sciences in Oncology Center Short Course. Free registration. UPC: Davidson Conference Ctr. Info: (323) 442-3949

Tuesday, Oct. 18
10:30 a.m. USC Hospital Guild Women’s Health Focus. “You Are What You Do,” Camille Dieterie, USC, and Christy Russell, USC. Coffee reception at 10 a.m.; lunch following program. $15 per person. Wilshire Country Club. Info: (323) 254-0600

Noon. USC Cancer Center Grand Rounds. “Genome Organization and Targeted DNA Damage Determine the Location and Frequency of Chromosomal Translocations,” Rafael Casillas, NCI NRT Arsky Auditorium. Info: (323) 865-0801

Wednesday, Oct. 19
Noon. Center for Excellence in Research. “How to Manage a Research Lab: A Workshop for New Faculty,” various speakers. NML West KAM 400. Info: (323) 442-6709

Thursday, Oct. 20

Friday, Oct. 21
8:30 a.m. Surgical Grand Rounds: “The Failure of General Surgery.” E. Christopher Ellison, Ohio State University. DOH 100. Info: (323) 442-2506
11:45 a.m. Southern California Environmental Health Sciences Center Seminar. “Modern Diesel Engine Exhaust: New Insights into the Potential Biological Effects of Exposure Inhalation,” Jacob McDonald, Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute. Info: (323) 442-7874


Saturday, Oct. 22
9 a.m. – 1 p.m. USC Norris Women’s Cancer Event. “Personalizing Breast Cancer Care,” Debi Trapani, USC. Free multidisciplinary half-day conference will feature updates on personalized approaches for the prevention and treatment of breast cancer. Includes breakfast reception and tours of screening, care and research facilities. KAM Mayer Auditorium. Info: (213) 740-7070

Tuesday, Oct. 25
Noon. Psychiatry Grand Rounds. “Publicly Funded Outpatient Care for Childhood ADHD,” Bonnie Zima, UCLA. CMC 250. Info: (323) 442-4065

Wednesday, Oct. 26

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 www.usc.edu/hsccalendar for the Health Sciences Campus community.

ONLINE EXTRAS

Read more HSC news online:
• “Healthy” habits linked to childhood obesity in China
http://tinyurl.com/42zy7z5
• US researchers find significant hip fracture risk for women who discontinue hormone therapy
http://tinyurl.com/3vhpnyj
• Occupational Therapy welcomes international students
http://tinyurl.com/5vsnr6v
• Severe morning sickness may be more than a passing thing
http://tinyurl.com/3dsba5h
• Keck School researchers engineer functioning small intestine in laboratory environment
http://tinyurl.com/3v8d2eg
• CHLA researcher earns competitive grants for work in neural tumors
http://tinyurl.com/6b3fc4d
• Blind photographer’s eyesight improves after artificial cornea transplant
http://tinyurl.com/36l6gc

USC scientist wins award for groundbreaking research

Alexandre Bonnin, assistant professor of research at the Keck School of Medicine’s Department of Cell and Neurobiology, is the winner of the 2011 Freedman Award from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation for his research on the role of serotonin in the fetal brain during development. Bonnin and another outstanding researchers were recognized July 29 in New York City. The Freedman award is given in honor of Daniel X. Freedman, whose legacy as a researcher, teacher, physician and administrator has long inspired and influenced neuropsychiatry. Bonnin has received two Young Investigator grants from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation, formerly known as the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression.

Bonnin’s research, published in April 2011 in the journal Nature, showed for the first time that the human placenta plays an active role in synthesizing serotonin, paving the way for new treatment strategies that could mitigate health impacts such as cardiovascular disease and mental illness.

work in neural tumors
http://tinyurl.com/3v8d2eg
blind photographer’s eyesight improves after artificial cornea transplant
http://tinyurl.com/6b3fc4d
American Architecture Award honors Eli & Edythe Broad CIRM Center
http://tinyurl.com/36l6gc

Keck School welcomes new faculty

Jon Nalick

In case of an emergency...

Call the Emergency Information Phone: (213) 740-9233 The emergency telephone system can handle 1,400 simultaneous calls. It also has a backup system on the East Coast.

Visit the USC Web: http://emergency.usc.edu This page will be activated in case of an emergency. Backup Web servers on the East Coast will function if the USC servers are incapacitated.

USC scientist wins award for groundbreaking research

Alexandre Bonnin, assistant professor of research at the Keck School of Medicine’s Department of Cell and Neurobiology, is the winner of the 2011 Freedman Award from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation for his research on the role of serotonin in the fetal brain during development. Bonnin and another outstanding researchers were recognized July 29 in New York City. The Freedman award is given in honor of Daniel X. Freedman, whose legacy as a researcher, teacher, physician and administrator has long inspired and influenced neuropsychiatry. Bonnin has received two Young Investigator grants from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation, formerly known as the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression.

Bonnin’s research, published in April 2011 in the journal Nature, showed for the first time that the human placenta plays an active role in synthesizing serotonin, paving the way for new treatment strategies that could mitigate health impacts such as cardiovascular disease and mental illness.

ONLINE EXTRAS

Read more HSC news online:
• “Healthy” habits linked to childhood obesity in China
http://tinyurl.com/42zy7z5
• US researchers find significant hip fracture risk for women who discontinue hormone therapy
http://tinyurl.com/3vhpnyj
• Occupational Therapy welcomes international students
http://tinyurl.com/5vsnr6v
• Severe morning sickness may be more than a passing thing
http://tinyurl.com/3dsba5h
• Keck School researchers engineer functioning small intestine in laboratory environment
http://tinyurl.com/3v8d2eg
• CHLA researcher earns competitive grants for work in neural tumors
http://tinyurl.com/6b3fc4d
• American Architecture Award honors Eli & Edythe Broad CIRM Center
http://tinyurl.com/36l6gc

In case of an emergency...

Call the Emergency Information Phone: (213) 740-9233 The emergency telephone system can handle 1,400 simultaneous calls. It also has a backup system on the East Coast.

Visit the USC Web: http://emergency.usc.edu This page will be activated in case of an emergency. Backup Web servers on the East Coast will function if the USC servers are incapacitated.

USC scientist wins award for groundbreaking research

Alexandre Bonnin, assistant professor of research at the Keck School of Medicine’s Department of Cell and Neurobiology, is the winner of the 2011 Freedman Award from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation for his research on the role of serotonin in the fetal brain during development. Bonnin and another outstanding researchers were recognized July 29 in New York City. The Freedman award is given in honor of Daniel X. Freedman, whose legacy as a researcher, teacher, physician and administrator has long inspired and influenced neuropsychiatry.