Unveiling Keck Medical Center of USC

The USC Health Sciences Campus introduced the Keck Medical Center of USC on Nov. 1, ushering in a new era for medicine at USC. Employees and physicians of Keck Hospital of USC and USC Norris Cancer Hospital celebrated the medical center’s new identity with a special event on Nov. 3. The event included a catered lunch and dinner for staff, a visit from the Trojan Marching Band and an opportunity for employees and physicians to sign the medical center’s mission statement. The mission statement will be on display in the Keck Hospital of USC lobby in the coming weeks. Below, hospital staff and physicians receive Keck Medical Center of USC lapel pins as they enter the Nov. 3 celebration in a tent for a special event on Nov. 3. The event included a catered lunch and dinner for staff, a visit from the Trojan Marching Band and an opportunity for employees and physicians to sign the medical center’s mission statement. The mission statement will be on display in the Keck Hospital of USC lobby in the coming weeks.

Rohrbach named director of Master of Public Health Program

By Amy E. Hamaker

Luanne Rohrbach, an associate professor at the Keck School of Medicine of USC Institute For Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research, has been formally appointed director of the Master of Public Health Program at USC.

Rohrbach, who has taught in the M.P.H. Program since its inception, has served as the program’s interim director for the past year. She has more than 30 years’ experience working in public health. She succeeds Thomas Valente, who served as director for nine years. Rohrbach most recently served as the administrator of the Doctor of Philosophy program in Health Behavior Research in the Department of Preventive Medicine.

“I’m very interested in health promotion and disease prevention, and I thought [the director position] would be an exciting challenge,” said Rohrbach. “The program has many interesting elements, and I think we’re at a point where there are a lot of possibilities for the future.”

The Department of Preventive Medicine, in which the M.P.H. Program is housed, undertook a self-study process last year as part of an overall university academic review. As a result of this process, Rohrbach has chosen two immediate goals for the M.P.H. program.

“First, I’d like to take a look at the program in collaboration with the rest of the faculty and see where we can improve—where the gaps are, what the opportunities are,” she explained.

Second, Rohrbach would like to see a more diversified enrollment that represents all profiles of the professions in public health, including generalists, medicine, pharmacy, nursing, occupational health, environmental and occupational health, and the social and behavioral sciences.

Upcoming initiatives for the program include the development of an online version of the USC Master of Public Health Program and an expansion of the tracks within the program. According to Rohrbach, the online program is in the preliminary planning stages. When the program is launched, it will allow candidates to enroll and complete an M.P.H. degree entirely online.

The M.P.H. Program currently requires coursework in five core areas of public health: epidemiology, biostatistics, health policy and management, environmental and occupational health, and the social and behavioral sciences.

Students choose to concentrate their remaining coursework and practicum experience in one of six tracks: biostatistics/epidemiology, health education/promotion, global health, health communications, health policy or child and family health.

Possible upcoming tracks include environmental health and public health management. “We’re looking at these possibilities,” Rohrbach said.

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“Dr. Rohrbach was the natural choice to lead our Master of Public Health Program,” said Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito. “Her experience in the field of public health and her forward-thinking attitude give her a unique perspective on how to expand the program and make it even more relevant.”

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LA PROSTATE CANCER 5K FUNDRAISER HITS ITS STRIDE—

Despite rain and cold, more than 900 runners and walkers gathered on the USC University Park Campus Nov. 6 for the second annual LA Prostate Cancer 5K. Hosted by the USC Institute of Urology and USC Norris Cancer Hospital, the event created awareness for prostate cancer and raised funds to support prostate cancer research. USC President C. L. Max Nikias; Inderbir Gill, executive director of the USC Institute of Urology; and George Gray, host of the television show “The Price is Right,” welcomed the crowd and congratulated them for supporting the fight against prostate cancer. Two former USC patients, actors Stephen Macht and Stephen Collins, addressed the crowd and shared their gratitude to the USC urology team and those participating in the race.

From left at the Nov. 6 run are: Inderbir Gill; USC President C. L. Max Nikias; Gary Lieskovsky, professor and Donald G. Skinner Chair in Urology; and Eila Skinner, professor of clinical urology.

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Physicians, students donate their time for L.A. CareNow clinic

By Amy E. Hamaker
Rachel Kishosh, a second-year Keck School of Medicine student with an interest in international medicine, had a busy morning at the Los Angeles CareNow free clinic, helping to triage patients into the correct specialty care and making sure that they were seen in a timely fashion.

Despite the heavy influx of patients and long hours on her feet, she said she would not trade the experience for anything.

“It’s an important part of my medical education to give back and do service work,” she said.

“This is our patient population—this is who we’re going to see at County—and it’s nice to see them get care.”

Nearly 70 faculty physicians and students in specialties including primary care, ophthalmology, psychiatry, cardiology, dermatology, gynecology, urology, otolaryngology and public health volunteered their time at the L.A. CareNow clinic, held at the Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena from Oct. 20 to Oct. 23.

The clinic provided 6,684 services (3,222 medical, 1,078 vision, 2,184 dental) to more than 3,700 uninsured and underinsured patients over the four days. The Keck School was an official sponsor.

“It was incredible to see the participation of the Keck faculty, residents and students along with other USC partners participating in an event such as this,” said Glenn Ault, associate dean for clinical administration (Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center), Keck School of Medicine.

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ROHRBACH: ‘I’ve always been interested in community work and community health problems’

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Visions and Voices lecturer discusses benefits, pitfalls of medical humanitarianism

By Amy E. Hamaker

The biggest challenge facing medical personnel today is addressing global health disparities, according to Paul Farmer, medical anthropologist, physician and founding director of nonprofit health care service provider Partners In Health.

Farmer told an audience of Keck School of Medicine students and faculty about his experiences in and beliefs about medical humanitarianism at a recent lecture on the Health Sciences Campus.

Farmer, the Presley Professor of Social Medicine and chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, presented “Medical Humanitarianism: Possibilities and Pitfalls” on Oct. 18 as part of the Visions and Voices lecture series. The event was done in an interview-style conversation with Henri Ford, vice dean of medical education at the Keck School.

Farmer told an audience about pitfalls of working abroad, particularly in a disaster zone. “Problems there are acute and chronic,” answered Farmer. “Surgeons aren’t trained to deal with problems that are out of their control, like so many people being sent into one city.”

Overcrowding, Farmer added, is exacerbated by the problem of absorptive capacity, or the ability for a local government to handle the resources that pour in after a disaster. “In Haiti, the capital is the city, and that’s where the earthquake had its epicenter and biggest impact,” said Farmer. “Coordination was really hard, and the Haitian government is aware how difficult this is—Haiti’s two men in charge of working with NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] were killed during the 2010 earthquake.”

Second annual Pain Management Symposium attracts Southern California clinicians

The second annual Pain Management Symposium, held at Aresty Auditorium in September, attracted more than 140 clinicians from USC and area hospitals to hear the latest advancements in pain medicine and regional anesthesia/analgesia.

Chris Pasero, a pain management authority, educator and clinical consultant with extensive experience in the field, spoke at the event as did several hospital employees and USC faculty representing the division of pain medicine, anesthesiology, orthopedic surgery and pharmacy.

Hospitals Chief Nursing Officer Ellen Whalen said that the number of participants jumped more than 40 percent this year, which she thinks is a testament to the valuable information we are offering in the area of pain management. “This year we focused on the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration to elevate the care provided to our patients. Having the perspectives of nurses with so many varied focus areas—adult to pediatric, acute surgical to hospice—created a rich learning environment. I think this year’s symposium was truly a success.”

Left, Ann Borbon, who works at Kaiser Anaheim, looks at an ON-Q pain relief pump during one of the sessions.

The Weekly NEWSMAKERS

A Nov. 8 story in the Wall Street Journal quoted Jiu-Chian Chen, associate professor of preventive medicine at the Keck School, and Heather Volk, assistant professor of preventive medicine at the Keck School, about their research on the health effects of traffic-related air pollution. “There are more and more scientists trying to find whether and why exposure to traffic exhaust can damage the human brain,” said Chen. “We may be starting to realize the effects are broader than we realized,” Volk added.

A Nov. 4 story in the Los Angeles Times featured research by the Keck School’s Roksana Karim, assistant professor of research, pediatrics and preventive medicine, Wendy Mack, associate professor of preventive medicine; and Howard Hodis, professor of medicine and preventive medicine, with colleagues from Kaiser Permanente Southern California, finding that women who cease hormone replacement therapy run increased risk of bone fracture. The study looked at more than 80,000 women and found that those who stopped hormone replacement therapy were at 55 percent greater risk of hip fracture than those who continued with the therapy.

A Nov. 4 story in the Los Angeles Times quoted William Mason, professor of clinical pediatrics at the Keck School, about parents who sought to avoid giving their kids the chickenpox vaccine, instead arranging on Facebook for strangers to mail licked lollipops or saliva from children who had chickenpox.

A Nov. 3 broadcast on KTLA interviewed eye surgeon Mark Humayun, professor of biomedical engineering and cell and neurobiology at the Keck School and associate director of research at the USC-affiliated Doheny Retina Institute, about the Argus II, an ocular implant that helps people with retinitis pigmentosa see. Humayun’s research formed the basis for the device, which is built by Second Sight in Sylmar, Calif. The prosthesis has been approved for patients in Europe, the story noted.

An Oct. 26 story in the Visalia Times-Delta reported that an agreement between the USC Institute of Urology and the Tulare Regional Medical Center will allow USC surgeons to perform operations at the hospital using a da Vinci surgical robot. Additional stories ran Nov. 2 and 4 noting that Inderbir Gill, chairman and professor of the Catherine and Joseph Areyse Department of Urology at the Keck School, performed the first robotic surgery at Tulare Regional on Nov. 4, a successful prostatectomy.
Calendar of Events

This Calendar of Events is also online atwww.usc.edu/hsscalendar for the Health Sciences Campus community

Tuesday, Nov. 15


Thursday, Nov. 17


Friday, Nov. 18

8 a.m. Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Grand Rounds. “EUS-Guided FNA Biopsy of GI Organs – The Expected and the Unexpected,” Mai Gu, UCI Irvine. NOR 7409. Info: (323) 442-1190

8:30 a.m. Surgical Grand Rounds. “The Contemporary Management of Differentiated Thyroid Cancer.” Christopher McHenry, MetroHealth Medical Center. DOH 110. Info: (323) 442-2848

11 a.m. Hematology Grand Rounds. “Essential Therapeutic Pragmatics Across the Acute Myelogenous Leukemia Spectrum,” Gary Schiller, USC. IPT 221J03. Info: (323) 865-9305


Monday, Nov. 21

9 a.m. – 1 p.m. ZNI Mini-Symposium: “Advancing Biomedical Technologies.” Various speakers. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-2144

Tuesday, Nov. 22

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 p.m. Molecular Microbiology and Immunology and Institute for Emerging Pathogens and Immune Diseases Symposium. “Frontiers in Immunology and Cancer Vaccines with Nobel Laureate Dr. Rolf Zinkernagel.” Various speakers. NRT Arsey Auditorium. RSVP: uchscrvp (code: immunity22). Info: (323) 442-1710

Tuesday, Nov. 29

1 p.m. ZNI Lecture. 2nd Annual Zach Hall Lecture honoring, in person, Zach Hall. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-2144

Friday, Dec. 2


Monday, Dec. 5

11:40 a.m. Keck Research Advancement: Faculty Town Hall Meeting. Various speakers. NRT Arsey Auditorium. Info: (323) 442-2764

Tuesday, Dec. 6


Wednesday, Dec. 7

2 – 4 p.m. Center for Excellence in Research Workshop. “Developing NIH Grant Applications,” Steve Molden, UBC. NML West Conference Room. Info: (213) 740-7679

Friday, Dec. 9

8:30 a.m. Center for Lung Biology Research: “Getting the Most from Pleural Fluid Analysis,” Steven Suhn, Medical University of South Carolina. BD 732-734. Info: (323) 226-7923

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 The Weekly, KAM 400 or fax to (323) 442-2822, or email to eblaauw@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.

ONLINE EXTRAS

Read more HSC news online:

• USC and UC Davis researchers link genetic variant in pregnant women to autism http://tinyurl.com/7eqa2d4

• Keck School of Medicine Surgeon Co-Authors Landmark Study for Predicting Survival in Patients with Billary Atresia http://tinyurl.com/74e8sp9

• Keck professor presents findings that link childhood traits to adult disease http://tinyurl.com/76adrdux

• USC hip replacement patient throws first pitch at Dodgers game http://tinyurl.com/84v2ht15

• USC scientists identify key protein linked to acute liver failure http://tinyurl.com/78ovv7id

• USc Lung Cancer Program is top team at fundraising event http://tinyurl.com/8qv6ap

• Salerni Collegium hosts kickoff dinner http://tinyurl.com/ct42d4

• Five distinguished scholars join faculty at Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy http://tinyurl.com/8zsmjmk4

• Soul of Medicine lecture keeps family practice in the family http://tinyurl.com/7i7jwke

• Walking to fight against strokes: Four-time stroke survivor takes from San Diego to Seattle http://tinyurl.com/7aorwn5

• Keck HOSPITAL OF USC UNVEILS NEW CATHETERIZATION LABS—(from left to right, back row) Sharon Bosler, Neil Carlson, Laurel Kemp, Daniel Preciado, Arturo Morales, (from left to right, front row) Viviana Radulescu, Amy Sumock, Martha Mozia, Janice Ramlogan and Mary Schenbaum gather in front of the GE innova 2100, a new, state-of-the-art imaging machine designed for cardiovascular and interventional procedures. The device, which includes a 60-inch monitor that can project up to four images at one time, is housed in one of two catheterization lab rooms at Keck Hospital of USC. The room recently underwent a five-month modernization project that included extensive renovations, technological upgrades and the purchase of new equipment, like the innova, which can perform a wide variety of procedures such as heart catheterizations, angiograms and electrophysiology studies.

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.

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