Foothills community celebrates the joining of USC and Verdugo Hills Hospital

By Coline Petrosian

More than 700 members of the Foothills community joined the wide array of cardinal-and-gold-themed festivities at the USC Verdugo Hills Hospital Wellness Celebration on Sept. 28 on the USC-VHH campus. The event celebrated the new affiliation of the two organizations.

“I’m terribly in favor of the new partnership,” said Sunland resident Bob Pinkston, who attended the event with his wife Diane. “I love USC. Verdugo Hills has been a great hospital and the association with USC is a step up. All of my three children were born at this hospital.”

From cholesterol and bone density screenings administered by the USC School of Pharmacy students to balance and blood pressure screenings provided by the USC-VHH clinical staff, community members received their health check-ups and met many of the members of the Trojan Family. Car seat safety, hands-on CPR training and infection control methods were also among the educational activities offered at the event.

Debbie Walsh, the new CEO of USC-VHH, welcomed the crowd to the celebration. “This partnership provides everyone who lives in the Foothills community the same great services and care from the physicians and staff you know and trust,” she said, “but also expands access to specialty services that a world-class academic medical center can offer.”

Event participants also enjoyed a visit by the USC Trojan Marching Band and USC Song Girls, and had an opportunity to take photos with Traveler, USC’s mascot. In addition, the Radio Disney road crew entertained children of all ages with games and prizes.

Other exhibitors included the Keck Medical Center of USC; Glendale Healthy Kids; Glendale Police and Fire Departments, and Crescenta Valley Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coalition.

Sue Jacobs, executive director of Crescenta Valley Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coalition, said the new partnership between USC and Verdugo Hills Hospital is great for the community. “The hospital was already a great community resource, and now it’s even better,” she said.

The integration of Verdugo Hills Hospital into Keck Medicine of USC creates a unique opportunity for exceptional patient care in the community through synergies that enhance the strengths of both organizations. Keck Medicine of USC includes the Keck Medical Center of USC, the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

Keck Medicine of USC opens diagnostic and treatment center for children with hearing loss

By Alison Trinidad

Hearing loss among children is a major challenge for pediatricians and parents. According to the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities, children who are hard of hearing often find it much more difficult to learn vocabulary, grammar and word order.

No single treatment is the answer, however. To offer patients and their families comprehensive clinical care backed by innovative research, Keck Medicine of USC recently opened the USC Center for Childhood Communication on the campus of John Tracy Clinic, 806 W. Adams Blvd., in Los Angeles. Pediatric audiology and speech pathologists with special expertise began seeing patients on Oct. 1.

The new center provides audiologic and speech language pathology services to children with hearing loss from birth to adulthood, including access to national clinical trials and state-of-the-art rehabilitative care.

The center builds on the world-renowned clinical and scientific expertise of the Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery at Keck Medicine of USC. “Research and clinical innovation go hand in hand at the Keck School of Medicine,” said Carmen A. Puliafito, MD, MBA, dean of the Keck School. “We are enthusiastic about the opening of this new center.”

The center is the result of the hard work and dedication of many departments university-wide, according to Coreen Rodgers, MBA, CPS, chief operating officer of the Keck School of Medicine of USC. “Coordination for the logistics of starting things up in just 10 days’ time had been a massive task between legal, USC Care, marketing, the audiologists and USC real estate,” she said. “We wanted to provide continuity of care for these children, setting up a location where audiologists could see patients and have access to both clinical and academic resources.”

The Med-COR program kicked off on Oct. 1 and runs through the end of the month. Begun in 1994, the USC Good Neighbors Campaign encourages USC’s students and faculty to contribute toward a better quality of life for the communities surrounding the Health Sciences and University Park Campuses.

Fifty UNO grants were awarded in June 2013 to partnership programs developed between the university and local community organizations. Of those 50, 23 grants went to programs surrounding the Health Sciences Campus community.

One of the programs to receive funding is the Med-COR program. Originally founded in 1970, Med-COR, which stands for Medical Counseling Organizing and Recruiting, works with high school students of color to help prepare them for careers in the health professions.

“The Med-COR program exposes underrepresented minorities living in inner-city communities of Los Angeles to health professional careers and helps them become competitively eligible for admission to top universities,” said Joyce Richen, PhD, director of the USC Med-COR program. “The process of attaining competitive grades, standardized test scores and interviews with top universities.”

To learn more about the USC Good Neighbors Campaign, please visit www.uscgoodneighbors.org.

To learn more about the USC Neighborhood Outreach Program, please visit www.uscneighborhoodoutreach.org.

Strengthening the community, one good neighbor at a time

By Sara Reeve

How many high school students voluntarily give up many of their Saturdays just to go to school? Every year, more than 160 Los Angeles students do just that, in the USC Good Neighbors Campaign.

USC’s staff, faculty and friends can pledge to help organizations that improve the quality of the community by promoting better health and educational opportunities in the areas surrounding both the Health Sciences and University Park Campuses.

The 2013 USC Good Neighbors Campaign kicked off on Oct. 1 and runs through the end of the month. Begun in 1994, the USC Good Neighbors Campaign encourages USC faculty and staff to contribute a portion of their paycheck to support programs through grants from USC Neighborhood Outreach (UNO) and United Way. Fifty UNO grants were awarded in June 2013 to partnership programs developed between the university and local community organizations.  Of those 50, 23 grants went to programs surrounding the Health Sciences Campus community.

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HEARING: New center provides comprehensive clinical, research resources

Continued from Page 1

research resources targeted for a pediatric population." Fully staffed by USC faculty, the center is able to test the degree and type of hearing loss a child may have; fit assistive devices such as hearing aids, bone conduction devices and cochlear implants; and assess auditory, listening and communication skill development. It also will participate in various National Institutes of Health-funded research projects that focus on hearing and speech development, in hopes of developing innovative technologies and procedures for people with profound hearing loss.

"With the right care, young children with hearing loss can achieve developmental, academic and social outcomes commensurate with their hearing peers," said John K. Niparko, MD, professor and chair of the Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery. "Our center fills a regional gap, integrating the Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery with profound hearing loss."

The center is located on the first floor of John Tracy Clinic (JTC), which was founded in 1943 and is a leading diagnostic and education center for young children with hearing loss in the world. John Tracy Clinic’s integrated services include pediatric audiology, community hearing screening, parent-infant programming, an auditory-oral preschool, counseling and child development, parent distance education, and an accredited master's degree and credential program.

"Without the John Tracy Clinic, we could never have gotten up and running so quickly," said Rodgers. "We’ve already seen patients at the JTC facilities, and we are now building a full audiology clinic on-site with four hearing booths, family therapy rooms and a second floor with offices for research facilities and staff, all due to open Jan. 1, 2014."

"We are pleased to have our two remarkable institutions under one roof," added Gaston Kent, president and CEO of John Tracy Clinic. "Our proximity will be a tremendous asset to children with hearing loss and we look forward to a long and collaborative relationship."

The USC Center for Childhood Communication is the latest addition to the Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, which recently recruited four physicians specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders that affect hearing, balance, speech, swallowing, sleep and facial function. The department is home to preeminent surgeons who have unparalleled experience in cochlear implantation — Niparko and Rick A. Friedman, MD, PhD — who have performed nearly 2,000 cochlear implants — including advanced surgical techniques and multidisciplinary approaches to rehabilitation.

"Keck Medicine of USC is growing in new work and expanding its reach to meet the needs of the community at large," said Tom Jackiewicz, MPH, senior vice president and CEO of USC Health. "We are pleased to have these hearing and speech specialists join the Trojan Family. Their expertise and experience in clinical care and research will be invaluable in building a first-class center for patients with hearing loss."

Murad explained that his science of cellular water theory states that people go from a state of full hydration to a state of low hydration as they age, and that this change in condition affects cell health and regeneration. "After reviewing more than 300 different theories of aging," he said, "I found that all of them had to do with one thing: dehydration."

Murad recommended a three-pronged approach to look better (using targeted topical skin care), live better (making careful choices of food and dietary supplements) and feel better (put yourself first and manage the impact of stress).

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By Amy E. Hamaker

The foremost mission of the UniHealth Foundation, an independ- ent private health care founda- tion founded in 1998, is to support pacesetting programs that positively impact health in the communities it serves. Two recent grants from the foundation totaling $1.1 million will help support vital programs at USC. Two grants totaling $1.1 million assist pacesetting programs at USC

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Celebrating Breast Cancer Awareness this October

As part of its breast cancer awareness campaign, the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center is offering specially designed breast cancer T-shirts for sale only through the end of October. Your purchase will promote breast cancer awareness while supporting breast cancer research at USC Norris.

Visit any USC Bookstore or hospital gift shop to get yours, you can also purchase one at www.uscbookstore.com/breast-cancer.

Additionally, on Oct. 26, get behind more than just the Trojan football team by celebrating breast cancer awareness at a USC Trojan football game. During halftime, USC Norris physicians, staff members, and former and current breast cancer patients will be recognized on the field as leaders in the fight against breast cancer.