



Steve Cohn

Graduates are hooded during the MD and MD/PhD graduation, held May 14 at the Galen Center. For complete coverage of the health sciences commencement ceremonies, see pages 3-4 or go to snip.ly/tnk4p

\$200 million gift launches new cancer institute

By Lynn Lipinski

Technology entrepreneur Larry Ellison has donated \$200 million to establish the Lawrence J. Ellison Institute for Transformative Medicine of USC, a new center in Los Angeles that will combine interdisciplinary research with the holistic prevention and treatment of cancer. David B. Agus, MD, professor at the Keck School of Medicine of USC and the USC Viterbi School of Engineering, will lead the institute.

Ellison's gift is among the largest made to cancer research and treatment in recent years.

The donation was announced at the Rebels with a Cause fundraising gala for the USC Center for Applied Molecular Medicine on May 11.

"Tonight I'm announcing a gift of \$200 million to the University of Southern California to build an interdisciplinary center for cancer research headed by Dr. David Agus," said Ellison, Oracle Corp. chairman and chief technology officer. "The new institute will invite mathematicians, physicists and other scientists to collaborate with cancer researchers from the traditional disciplines of medicine and biology. We believe the interdisciplinary approach will yield up new insights currently hidden in existing patient data."

Ellison also was the speaker for USC's 133rd commencement May 13.

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Alex Bertiner/AB Images

Larry Ellison, Nikita Kahn, Niki Nikias and C. L. Max Nikias are seen before the Rebels With A Cause gala, held May 11 in Santa Monica.

Shuttle schedules to change for summer

USC Transportation has announced several time changes affecting Health Sciences Campus bus routes for the summer, which went into effect May 16. For more information on the new times, go to transnet.usc.edu and navigate to Bus Schedules from the home page.

Here come the graduates



Steve Cohn



Claire Norman



David Sprague

Clockwise from left: Keck School of Medicine of USC Interim Dean Rohit Varma, above, speaks at the MD and MD/PhD ceremony; Primary Care Physician Assistant graduates put on leis before the ceremony, top right; and USC School of Pharmacy graduates, bottom right, get ready for commencement.

Awards, statue unveiling mark Nurses Week events

By Douglas Morino

Celebrations rang out across Keck Medical Center of USC during Nurses Week, a time to honor the men and women on the front lines of patient care.

Two ceremonies highlighted the important work being done by nurses at Keck Medical Center. The Nursing Recognition Awards Ceremony on May 6 was followed by a dedication on May 11 of statues donated by the DAISY Foundation to Keck Hospital of USC and the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Hand-carved from a single block of serpentine stone by artists of the Shona Tribe in Zimbabwe, the Healer's Touch statues honor the nurses who continue to make this organization a great place to receive beyond exceptional care.

"This statue is dedicated to all of the nurses who continue to make this organization a great place to receive beyond exceptional care," said Annette Sy, chief nursing officer of Keck Medicine of USC. "It will serve as a constant reminder of how special our

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Ricardo Carrasco III

From left, Annette Smith, Matthew Madaule, Cheryl Schuch, Carmela Montero, Annette Sy, Kaitlin Alderete, Gina Kucherepa and Chelsea Palacios celebrate after the Nursing Recognition Awards.

New eye pathology lab opens on campus



Michael Pamilar

From left, Michael Selsted, Rohit Varma and Narsing Rao cut a ribbon during the grand opening of the Ophthalmic Molecular and Immuno-Pathology Lab at the USC Gayle and Edward Roski Eye Institute, April 8 on the Health Sciences Campus.

By Amanda Busick

One of the few dedicated eye pathology labs in the country has opened at the Keck School of Medicine, providing an important resource for clinical applications, education, and researchers study the delicate, sometimes very small tissue samples that are common in ophthalmology.

The Ophthalmic Molecular and Immuno-Pathology Lab at the USC Gayle and Edward Roski Eye Institute, under the direction of Narsing A. Rao, MD, professor of ophthalmology and pathology, opened April 8 on the USC Health Sciences Campus.

To handle the small specimens common in eye pathology, a dedicated lab with a properly trained technician is preferred, providing the specific expertise to make proper diagnoses based on a minimal amount of available tissue.

"General pathologists are not exposed to these kinds of material," Rao explained. "That's one reason that the eye pathology lab is needed. Eye pathologists are trained ophthalmologists, as well as trained pathologists."

The lab utilizes various examination methods, including molecular diagnostic techniques. This allows not only for diagnosis but also prognosis of a given condition.

The lab, which had an opening reception on March 31, provides expertise in complex ophthalmic cases for Keck Medicine of USC, as well as other local and regional hospitals.

Residents and fellows from the USC Roski Eye Institute also will be rotating through the lab as part of their education, so they can use this training to make proper

clinical diagnoses. General pathology departments cannot provide training specific to ophthalmology.

"Establishing this integrated pathology and ophthalmology service enables a level of patient care, teaching, and research that continues a long history of excellence in academic eye care at USC," said Michael E. Selsted, MD, PhD, chair of the Department of Pathology. "The central role of the new laboratory ensures that USC Roski Eye Institute patients receive state-of-the-art care while continuing to support ophthalmology education and discovery."

Researchers also will benefit from the opening of the lab, where tissue and fluid samples will be stored and made available for analysis in clinical trials, studies and advancements in diagnostic and clinical techniques.

Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, director of the USC Roski Eye Institute, chair of the Department of Ophthalmology and interim dean of the Keck School of Medicine of USC, is pleased that the lab is now available for use.

"The pathology lab is a great resource for physicians, scientists, educators and students at Keck Medicine and throughout the community," he stated. "We are excited at the prospect of being able to advance clinical diagnoses and scientific research in the field of ophthalmic pathology and molecular diagnosis."

Rao believes that the success of the lab would not be possible without the cooperation and enthusiasm of Keck School leadership.

"I'm grateful for both the chairman, Dr. Varma, as well as the pathology chair Dr. Selsted. To do this, it has to be a close cooperation between two disciplines."

NURSES: Keck Medicine first gave Daisy Award in 2010

Continued from page 1

nurses are and how important their work is."

Sy and Keck Medical Center of USC CEO Rod Hanners were joined by DAISY Foundation co-founders Bonnie and Mark Barnes.

The DAISY Award honors exceptional nurses and was established in honor of their son, Patrick, who died of idiopathic thrombocytopenia purpura, or ITP.

Keck Hospital and USC Norris began recognizing nurses with the DAISY Award in 2010.

More than 2,000 health care facilities across the U.S. and in 15 countries honor their nurses with the Daisy Award.

"Thank you for doing your job, thank you for being heroes," Mark Barnes said during the afternoon ceremony in front of the Healer's Touch statue that stands in front of USC Norris.



Nurse Leader of the Year Anabel Cantero celebrates her award with colleagues after the dedication of the new Healer's Touch statue, located in front of the USC Norris Cancer Hospital.

"Thank you for being nurses."

Nurses Week kicked off with the Nursing Recognition Awards, a ceremony honoring the finest in nursing care at Keck Medical Center.

Award recipients were:
Brittany Wilson, Nurse of the Year; Kaitlin Alderete,

Care Partner; Mary Schoenbaum, Nurse Advocate; Chelsea Palacios, Nurse Rookie; Matthew Madaule, Nurse Preceptor; Gina Kucherepa, Advance Practice; Annette Smith, Nurse Humanitarian; and Anabel Cantero, Nurse Leader of the Year.

Study shows how skeletal stem cells form blueprint of face

By Cristy Lytal

Timing is everything when it comes to the development of the vertebrate face. In a new study published in *PLoS Genetics*, USC Stem Cell researcher Lindsey Barske, PhD, from the laboratory of Gage Crump, PhD, and her colleagues identify the roles of key molecular signals that control this critical timing.

Previous work from the Crump and other labs demonstrated that two types of molecular signals, called Jagged-Notch and Endothelin1 (Edn1), are critical for shaping the face.

Using sophisticated genetic, genomic and imaging tools to study zebrafish, the researchers discovered that in the lower face, Edn1 signals accelerate cartilage formation early in development, while in the

upper face, Jagged-Notch signals prevent stem cells from making cartilage until later in development. The authors found that these differences in the timing of stem cells turning into cartilage play a major role in making the upper and lower regions of the face distinct from one another.

"We've shown that the earliest blueprint of the facial skeleton is set up by spatially intersecting signals that control when stem cells turn into cartilage or bone. Logically, therefore, small shifts in the levels of these signals throughout evolution could account for much of the diversity of shapes we see within the skulls of different animals, as well as the wonderful array of facial shapes seen in humans," said Barske, lead author and an A.P. Giannini postdoctoral research fellow.

Calendar of Events

Saturday, May 21

7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. California Orthopaedic Association. "California Orthopaedic Association's 2016 Annual Meeting/QME Course," Alidad Ghiassi, MD. The Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel. Info: Nelly Lopez, (916) 454-9884, coa1@pacbell.net, <http://annualmeeting.coa.org/>

Monday, May 23

Noon. Research Seminar Series. "Single Cell Proteogenomics to Understanding Cancer Evolution," Peter Kuhn, PhD. Aresty Auditorium. Info: Mary Jane Chua, maryjane.chua@med.usc.edu

Noon. Department of Medical Education. "Faculty Development Seminar — Creating a Short Instructional Video with IPAD," Patrick Crispin, EdD. KAM 206.

Info and RSVP: Cris Argosino, (323) 442-2746, meded@med.usc.edu

Tuesday, May 24

5:30 p.m. Department of Ophthalmology Grand Rounds. Shannon Philander, USC. HC4 Conference Room, 6th Floor. Info: Tyaisha Christopher, (323) 409-5233, Tyaisha.Christopher@med.usc.edu

Wednesday, May 25

Noon. The Saban Research Institute Seminar. "From Pathogenesis to Predictions to New Therapies Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia: A Team Research & Clinical Care Model," Philippe S. Friedlich, MD, MBA, MSEpi. Auditorium, Saban Research Building, 4661 Sunset Blvd. Info: Ritu Gill, (323) 361-8715, tecpad@chla.usc.edu, <http://chla.org/tecpad>

Thursday, May 26

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Department of Neurology and Roxanna Todd Hodges Foundation. "Stroke Health Fair," Nerses Sanossian, MD. Aresty Auditorium. Info and RSVP: Leslie Tarlow, (323) 442-0049, ltarlow@usc.edu

3 p.m.-6 p.m. HTE@USC, Associated Students of Biomedical Engineering, and mHealth Collaboratory Mixathon. Seaver Science Library 150. Info: nafari@usc.edu

Friday, May 27

6:30 a.m. USC Department of Anesthesiology Grand Rounds. "Percutaneous Valve Surgery," Tawfik Ayoub, MD. McKibben Lecture Hall, Room 256

Noon. Department of Medical Education. "Faculty Development Seminar — Teaching in the Clinical Setting When Time Is Limited," Julie Nyquist, PhD. KAM 206. Info and RSVP: Cris Argosino, (323) 442-2746, meded@med.usc.edu

Tuesday, May 31

12:15 p.m. Department of Radiology Grand Rounds. "Emergency Medicine." NRT LG503/4-Harlyne Tower. Info: Rosy Diaz, (323) 442-7469, rosaura.diaz@med.usc.edu

Wednesday, June 1

5 p.m. USC Research Center for Liver Diseases. Letters of intent due for pilot project funding. Info: Maria Vidrio, (323) 442-5571, vidrio@usc.edu

Notice: Calendar items are due at least 10 days before publication date. Timely submission does not guarantee publication in print. See more calendar entries at hscnews.usc.edu/calendar-of-events. Submit items at tinyurl.com/calendar-hsc. Include day, date, time, title of talk, first and last name of speaker, affiliation of speaker, location and a phone number/email address.



Photos by Steve Cohn

New doctors from the Keck School of Medicine of USC celebrate during the satellite commencement ceremony at the Galen Center. [For more stories and photos, go to snip.ly/tnk4p](http://snip.ly/tnk4p)

Laughter, tears as graduates celebrate commencement

By Health Sciences staff

Proud graduates celebrated with pomp and circumstance May 13 and 14 as USC held its 133rd commencement. The Keck School of Medicine of USC, Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC and USC School of Pharmacy held eight satellite ceremonies to honor the hundreds of graduates.

Health Promotion and Global Health

On May 13, 105 newly minted graduates from the Bachelor of Science of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, and Global Health programs of the Keck School of Medicine of USC cheered as Program Director and Associate Dean, Elahe Nezami, PhD, told them to “Fight on!” one last time after announcing their degree completion.

Interim Dean Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, was among the Keck School’s leadership present at the celebration.

The commencement speech was given by Jonathan Samet, MD, director of the USC Institute for Global Health and Distinguished Professor and Flora L. Thornton Chair, Department of Preventive Medicine, who applied his own expertise to the occasion, providing statistics and comparisons for graduates to consider between life at the time of his own undergraduate graduation and today

to show how much change happens and how much is yet to come. Student speakers Grace Amoo and Troy Sekimura talked about their time at USC, their hopes for the future and gave thanks to their family and friends for their support.

Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

“You have earned your degree from this great university and proven to your professors, your families and your friends what you’re capable of,” said Carol Gomez Summerhays, DDS, to Ostrow’s Class of 2016. “Make us proud. But more importantly, make yourself proud.”

During her own dental school interview in the mid-1970s, Ostrow’s commencement speaker promised to make the dental school proud, she shared during her speech.

“In the back of my mind, I’ve always held myself to that promise,” said Summerhays, who is the 152nd president of the American Dental Association, the largest and oldest dental association in the world.

The ceremony marked the entry into the dental profession of 39 dental hygienists, 174 doctor of dental surgeons and 50 advanced specialty graduates.

Another 17 students received master’s degrees and four earned doctor of philosophy degrees.

MD/PhD and MD

The Keck School of Medicine of USC’s MD and MD/PhD ceremony, held May 14 at the Galen Center, was both heartfelt and humorous.

Henri Ford, MD, MHA, vice dean for medical education, was the grand marshal of the ceremony. Interim Dean Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, set the tone for the graduates with three items of advice for the future: look beyond the status quo to find ways to break new ground; provide care not only to those who can afford it but also to those who cannot as they deserve good health as much as anyone; and always practice with passion.

Attendees were particularly moved by the commencement address from Paul Farmer, MD, co-founder of Partners in Health.

“You will feel fear and see suffering, but most of all you will experience the joy of the most rewarding profession that I can imagine. And that’s true no matter where you end up practicing or how,” Farmer said.

PhD, Master of Science and Master of Public Health

Thousands of family and friends filled the Galen Center on May 14 as the more than 400 PhD and master’s students celebrated their commencement from the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

Interim Dean Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, conferred the degrees. Master of Science in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology graduate Nell Narasappa gave a spirited student address, while Barbara Wold, PhD, the Bren Professor of Molecular Biology, Beckman Institute, California Institute of Technology, gave the commencement address.

Wold explained to the attendees that this commencement marks a

turning point in the graduates’ careers.

“For your parents and family, I want to summarize what I just said. Your graduate is not merely finishing the 22nd grade. This is not just a bigger longer bachelor’s degree with longer harder courses and more facts stuffed into his or her brain. You now have in your midst a professional discoverer — however poorly paid.”

Primary Care Physician Assistant

On May 13, the Primary Care Physician Assistant Program at the Keck School of Medicine of USC held a satellite commencement ceremony honoring the program’s 54 graduates.

Several leaders from the Keck School were present at the celebration, including Interim Dean Rohit Varma, MD, MPH. Faculty member Mitzi D’Aquila, MACM, PA-C, led the ceremony this year beginning with the achievements of the Class of 2016, particularly those students who participated in the Interprofessional Geriatric Curriculum and the selected individuals to be inducted into Pi Alpha Honor Society, the national honor society for physician assistants.

Raymond Waliany, MD, then rose to the podium to speak to the graduating class about being human in their practice. He referred to his own experience as it taught him to be a better listener and physician. Next Jennifer Wegler, MMSc, MA, PA-C, advised the students that they were about to start on a new journey in their career, but the best advice was to “be on time and bring doughnuts.”

USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

Fariborz Maseeh, ScD, delivered the USC Chan Division of Occu-

See **COMMENCEMENT**, page 4



Claire Norman



Grad Images



Melissa Masatani

Clockwise from left: Velen Tat and Richard Bruce at the Primary Care Physician Assistant Program ceremony; Florence Clark and commencement speaker Fariborz Maseeh enter the USC Chan Division ceremony; PhD graduate Pingye Zhang takes a photo with family members outside of Leavey Library on the University Park Campus.



Grad Images

Graduates from the Keck School of Medicine of USC’s Health Promotion and Global Health programs take a class photo after commencement.

COMMENCEMENT

Continued from page 3

pational Science and Occupational Therapy commencement speech on May 13.

Maseeh founded the Kids Institute for Development and Advancement (KiDA) in 2008 after his son was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at the age of 2. Maseeh credited much of the success of KiDA to division students and the guidance of associate dean and chair Florence Clark, PhD.

The class of 2016 consisted of 10 bachelor of science, 156 master of arts, 53 doctor of occupational therapy and one doctor of philosophy graduates.

During his commencement speech, Maseeh took a moment to recognize Clark for 28 years of leadership at USC Chan. Graduates and guests joined in with a standing ovation for Clark, who is set to step down as associate dean at the end of 2016.

USC Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy

The division welcomed 94 new doctors of physical therapy into the profession as part of its 2016 commencement proceedings.

“Graduates, you are entering the profession at a very exciting time. Barriers to practice are coming down and your financial incentives will come. You will be rewarded for working smarter instead of harder,” said commencement speaker Sharon

Dunn, PT, PhD, president of the American Physical Therapy Association, the professional organization that represents more than 93,000 physical therapists and physical therapy assistants nationwide.

This year’s ceremony marks the 20th anniversary since USC graduated one of the nation’s first post-professional doctors of physical therapy classes. Up until that point, the entry-level degree had been a bachelor’s or master’s degree. Today, the doctor of physical therapy is the professional standard.

In addition to the doctors of physical therapy, the division also conferred three doctors of philosophy and five master’s degrees in biokinesiology at the 2016 ceremony.

USC School of Pharmacy

The USC School of Pharmacy marked its 109th Commencement May 13. Interim Dean Glen L. Stimmel, PharmD, presided over the event, awarding degrees to 177 Doctors of Pharmacy, 18 Doctors of Philosophy, two Doctors of Regulatory Science and 78 Masters of Science. Additionally, 35 pharmacists were recognized for completing residency training along with eight individuals who received certificates marking the conclusion of their fellowship programs.

The featured commencement speaker was USC Distinguished Professor Dana Goldman, PhD, direc-



Grad Images

Above: Ostrow School graduates show their Victory signs. **Right:** USC School of Pharmacy graduate Eno-Abasi Inyang is hooded.

tor of the USC Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics, who described the 15-year difference in life expectancy between the top 1 percent and bottom 1 percent of income earners in the United States, and challenged graduates to find ways to help alleviate inequalities in health care.

“The most disadvantaged people will come through your doors. When they do, show them compassion,” Goldman told graduates. “And understand that the diploma you are about to receive gives you the power to address one of society’s greatest disadvantages.”



David Sprague

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2016!

Allison Ficht

Master of Public Health

Allison Ficht began her master’s degree in public health after she already began her career working for nonprofits. After college, she spent time living on the border of Thailand and Myanmar working with Burmese migrant children.

“I realized I wanted to spend time working to give agency to those who do not have it but desperately need it,” she said.

Her most memorable global health experience at USC was attending the 2015 World Health Assembly in Geneva, where she met Margaret Chan, director-general of the World Health Organization. Allison took a global policy position at the AIDS Healthcare Foundation and will continue on there after graduation.



Anthony Searcy

Master of Physician Assistant Practice

When Anthony Searcy’s father was sick, he had a great appreciation for the medical staff that took care of him. When one of the main caregivers was introduced as a PA, Searcy was inspired by the care, compassion and understanding in his way of practicing medicine.

“I think the most important takeaway I have from the program is to continue to make positive impacts on peoples’ lives and continue to cultivate personal relationships. When I’m out in practice, I truly believe making strong bonds with my patients will help me be the best PA I can be.”



Clare Yarka

Master of Science, Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine

“I decided to come to this program as a transitional step between undergraduate and graduate school or a job. One of the most rewarding parts of the program for me was the Bringing Stem Cells to the Clinic class. Once I learned about all the different opportunities in industry, I really thought that that could maybe be the direction that I go. So I got a job at a small biotech firm here in Southern California. It’s called Kite Pharma in Santa Monica, and I’ll be working as a research associate in the field of immuno-oncology. So, onward and upward!”



Jiawei Zhao,

Master of Science, Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine

“My father died of myelodysplastic syndrome transformed acute myeloid leukemia when I was 12. That was my initial inspiration to do cancer research. I figured out that there was a tight relationship between cancer and stem cells, so I came to USC’s master’s program to study more about stem cell biology and prepare my PhD applications. I got PhD offers from a few institutions: University of Massachusetts Medical School, University of Rochester Medical Center, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Harvard University, Yale School of Medicine and Columbia University Medical Center. I will go to University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center this fall.”



Lucy Ruderman

Bachelor of Science, Global Health

Lucy Ruderman is graduating with a bachelor’s in global health with minors in French and policy, planning and development (nonprofits, philanthropy, and volunteerism track). She picked the combination of global health and policy for her undergraduate studies because she knew she wanted to work in the health sector with the ability to affect people on a population level. Her biggest takeaway from her global health education was, “Everything begins and ends with education and community empowerment.” With that guiding principle, she is entering the Peace Corps as an HIV/AIDS civil society capacity-building volunteer in Botswana after graduation.



Martha Ryan

Bachelor of Science, Global Health

Martha Ryan took a winding path towards her degree, switching first from environmental studies to international relations before discovering the interdisciplinary curriculum of global health. She said she has always been interested in global responses to humanitarian emergencies. During her time studying abroad in Delhi, India, Martha immersed herself in a research project on government involvement in the red light district. She received a Fulbright-Nehru grant that will allow her to continue this research in India for nine months after graduation.

“Taking the time to comprehensively analyze how a global health intervention has impacted a specific community is so important.”



Richard Bruce

Master of Physician Assistant Practice

When one of the medics on his detachment got called away, Richard Bruce changed from being an Army radio operator and intelligence gatherer to acting junior medic. Under the guidance of his senior medic, he performed numerous procedures and his love of medicine began. When he came off active duty in 2009, he used the GI Bill and the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Vocational Rehabilitation program to begin his medical education, culminating in his graduation with a master’s degree.

“I like a challenge. I have found that most things worth doing are difficult and must be earned.”



Sandra Najuna

Master of Public Health

On her first day of the Master of Public Health Program, Sandra Najuna heard a presentation from the USC Institute for Global Health about its projects around the world, including Uganda. As a Ugandan, Sandra said she was greatly inspired. In 2015, she attended the 68th World Health Assembly in Geneva and took an internship with the Ebola team at the World Health Organization. After graduation, Sandra will continue on as a USC Institute for Global Health projects coordinator back in Uganda.

“Keep an open mind in the first year. You will be surprised which elements of public health will fascinate you.”



Vamsi Aribindi

Doctor of Medicine

Vamsi Aribindi was set to be an aerospace engineer when, as an undergraduate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he joined the Emergency Medical Services group. He fell in love with medicine and the HTE@USC program caught his eye. Five months before earning his medical degree, though, he was diagnosed with diffuse large B-cell lymphoma — but didn’t let that stop him from matching in general surgery at Baylor College of Medicine and being named the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award winner for his graduating class.

“There are so many people in my class who are deserving of the award, so it’s really an honor.”



In Memoriam: Daniel Mishell Jr., 84

Daniel R. Mishell Jr., MD, a longtime professor and former chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, died May 4. He was 84.

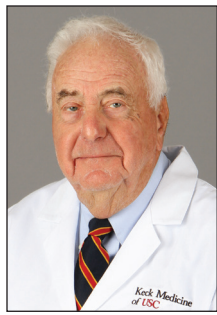
“Daniel R. Mishell Jr., MD, had been a leader in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology for almost 40 years until his recent retirement,” said Laila Muderspach, MD, chair of obstetrics and gynecology. “Dr. Mishell led us in so many ways — from department chair to research mentor to friend. He always generously shared his clinical insights, intellectual acumen and passion for women’s health. His pioneering work in family planning touched the lives of women all over the world.”

A national and international pioneer in the fields of contraception, infertility and reproductive endocrinology related to menopause, Mishell was recruited to USC from UCLA in 1969 as a professor and went on to serve as chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the

Keck School and chief of professional services at Women’s and Children’s Hospital from 1978 to 2005. He was appointed the Lyle G. McNeile Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology in 1989. He remained a valued and highly respected member of the department until his retirement on April 4, 2016.

Mishell’s original research resulted in the development of the majority of devices and hormonal treatments used for contraception today. Other aspects of his research led to technologies that allowed women who desired pregnancy to more easily conceive.

While Mishell was renowned for his landmark contributions to contraception, infertility and reproductive endocrinology, when asked for an interview what he regarded as his



Daniel Mishell Jr

greatest accomplishment, he pointed to USC.

“I’ve trained over 400 residents and made sure they would provide excellent health care in the field of Ob/Gyn,” he said at the time. “That’s what I’m most proud of.”

Mishell also was noted for his commitment to providing excellent medical care to the underserved and as a particularly strong proponent of recruiting women to his field.

Mishell earned his bachelor and medical degrees from Stanford University, then went on to an internship at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, and residency training in internal medicine at Bellevue Hospital (Cornell University) and in obstetrics and gynecology at UCLA.

Mishell is survived by his wife, Carol, and his three children, Sandra, Daniel III and Tanya.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations to the Keck School of Medicine Daniel R. Mishell Jr., MD, Professorship. See <http://keck.usc.edu/giving/danielmishell> for more information.

ELLISON

Continued from page 1

“This investment by Larry Ellison in USC is as inspirational as it is momentous, and it will serve as a dynamic force for change in how we approach cancer treatment and prevention,” USC President C. L. Max Nikias, PhD, said. “It is a concrete endorsement of USC’s vision to invest in the promise and potential of new technologies, and to support a bold push forward in how we achieve wellness.”

Ellison’s gift will provide the lead investment for a state-of-the-art facility in west Los Angeles that will serve as the Ellison Institute’s home. The building will house interdisciplinary cancer research laboratories focused on scientific discovery and innovation.

“Larry Ellison’s extraordinary generosity will have a lasting impact on the way we conceive of cancer research and treatment,” said Keck School of Medicine Interim Dean Rohit Varma, MD, MPH. “The profound depth of his philanthropy and his dedication to medical discovery is truly inspiring.”

Clinical advances will focus on transforming cancer treatment through technology and an interactive care clinic that offers patients world-class healthcare. The institute’s collaborative environment will include a think tank, education and outreach, and a wellness program. The institute will feature community spaces built on encouraging a healthful lifestyle, including a library and gardens. The center will be open to the community for lectures and wellness classes on nutrition and similar topics.

The Ellison Institute will draw collaborators from across conventional health and wellness fields, as well as from a broad range of other disciplines such as physics, biology, math and engineering to study cancer and potential ways to prevent, detect and treat the disease. The institute will complement and integrate cancer research being conducted by faculty physicians and scientists across the university.

Agus currently leads the USC Center for Applied Molecular Medicine (CAMM) at the USC Norris Westside Cancer Center in Beverly Hills and on the USC Health Sciences Campus in Los Angeles. Under Agus’ guidance, CAMM’s research focuses on the application of proteomics (the study of the body’s proteins) and genomics, integrating clinical trials, pre-clinical studies and molecularly targeted therapy, which focuses on molecular and cellular changes specific to cancer. Molecularly targeted therapy helps determine which cancer therapies are likely to work best for individual patients, allowing physicians to customize treatment for each patient’s cancer.

“It is an honor and a privilege to team up with Larry Ellison in the fight against cancer,” Agus said. “Larry understands the need for transformation in cancer care. His gift will enable us to change our very approach cancer research, treatment and prevention. We will create a new paradigm, where patients and researchers have the opportunity to interact, and where research is not taking place in an isolated silo. I believe with Larry’s support, we can advance our research to the next level, allowing the most effective treatments to benefit patients who are in urgent need of new therapies — today.”

Ellison, the founder and chairman of Oracle, is an internationally renowned entrepreneur, philanthropist and sportsman. His founding of Oracle — the enterprise-technology giant — heralded a new era of corporate data management and organization, and established him as a visionary business leader.

Longtime employees honored at breakfast

By Douglas Morino

Employees were recognized recently for their years of dedicated service to Keck Medical Center of USC.

About 470 employees were honored at the 2016 Years of Service Breakfast, an annual event held May 9 in the Soto I courtyard.

The longest-serving employees honored were Aurora Baduria, a registered nurse in the outpatient surgery center, and Debra Jean Barller, a

payroll coordinator in General Accounting Department. Baduria and Barller were recognized for serving 40 years with Keck Medical Center.

The commitment of the staff is instrumental to the continued success of the medical center, Rod Hanners, Keck Medical Center CEO, said to employees gathered at the breakfast ceremony.

“You are the reason why Keck Medical Center of USC shines,” Hanners said.



Aurora Baduria, a registered nurse in the outpatient surgery center, was honored during the Years of Service Breakfast for her 40 years of service to Keck Medical Center of USC.

Patients, colleagues remember John Niparko

By L. Alexis Young

Gentle giant, selfless, gracious, gifted, angel in human form. These were just some of the words used to memorialize the late John K. Niparko, MD, former Tiber Alpert professor and chair of the USC Rick and Tina Caruso Department of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, who died April 25. He was 61.

On May 10, hundreds of faculty, family, colleagues and students filled Mayer Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus to capacity, while dozens more stood in the vestibule at the memorial service for the internationally renowned otoneurologic surgeon and authority on implantable technologies.

USC President C. L. Max Nikias, PhD, Keck School of Medicine of USC interim Dean Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, university trustee Rick Caruso and his family, and patients of Niparko were among those who spoke about the impact he made in their lives and at USC.

President Nikias described Niparko as a remarkable human being and said, “perhaps nothing reveals the greatness of a physician more than his ability to blur the lines between the medical and the miraculous, and the dutiful and the devoted. To be under John Niparko’s care, to work alongside him, to witness his transformation of lives — it was an experience not forgotten.”

Nikias said just a short time after Niparko arrived at USC from Johns Hopkins University, he recruited a talented team that tripled in size and enlarged the otolaryngology department’s scope, broadening its subspecialties as well as surgical expertise. “His unbounded compassion and dedication to giving children a successful future would attract the support of our trustee Rick Caruso and his wife Tina.”

Caruso described meeting Niparko after seeing several specialists in search of treatment for his daughter Gianna, who was born with mild to moderate hearing loss.

“I remember our first meeting well,” Caruso said. “John greeted me with a firm handshake, a soft voice, and a sense of comfort and quiet confidence. We as a family knew right away we were in the hands of not just an



Rick Caruso comforts his daughter Gianna during the memorial for John Niparko.

expert, but an incredibly kind and gentle man.”

Caruso said he and his family will always remember the day Niparko moved them to tears of joy. “That was the day that he gave Gianna the gift of hearing,” he said. “More than 14 years we had gone from doctor to doctor, from appointment to appointment, searching to get her the experience of the full sense of sound. It was John who provided a miracle, we will never forget that day.”

Gianna Caruso fought back tears as she described Niparko as not only her doctor, but as a family member and friend.

“Today we are here to honor an amazing man who changed my life, the way I view life and the way I live life,” she said. “Dr. Niparko gave me the gift of hearing. I believe he was an angel sent down by God to change not only my life but the lives of many others.”

Varma, who is the director of the USC Gayle and Edward Roski Eye Institute, said Niparko stood out among the incredible group of scientists and physicians at USC. “In part, this is because of his wide range of skills as a gifted physician and a scientist and an innovator, and his ability to lead and inspire. Even during his all-too-brief time here in L.A., it was his leadership that elevated the Caruso Department of OHNS into one of the best in the United States. But John also stood out because of his uncommon humility and humanity.”

HSC Newsmakers

A roundup of news items related to Keck Medicine of USC, which may include philanthropic donations, research grants, publication in academic journals and mentions in the news media:



Edward De la Torre

Althea Alexander, left, receives the Fellowship Spirit Award from John K. Su, program director of the Schweitzer Fellowship.

Althea Alexander recognized for work with Schweitzer Fellowship

THE LOS ANGELES CHAPTER OF THE ALBERT Schweitzer Fellowship (LA-ASF) recently recognized Althea Alexander, assistant dean for student diversity in the Office for Diversity and Inclusion at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, with the Fellowship Spirit Award at the organization's Celebration of Service, held April 8 in Los Angeles. The Fellowship Spirit Award recognizes extraordinary achievement by those working to promote the work of LA-ASF, and whose life example has influenced and inspired others. Alexander has served as an active board member of the Los Angeles chapter since its inception in 2007.



Chris Jones

USC School of Pharmacy's annual High School Career Day brought approximately 140 students to the Health Sciences Campus.

High school students learn about pharmacy at annual career day

USC SCHOOL OF PHARMACY'S ANNUAL High School Career Day on April 15 brought approximately 140 students to the Health Sciences Campus from local high schools. Alumna Leticia Hernandez, PharmD, welcomed students from STAR Prep Academy, King Drew Magnet High School for Medicine and Science and Bravo Medical Magnet School by sharing her journey of growing up in Huntington Park, becoming the first female in her family to go to college, going to USC, and becoming a pharmacist in a predominantly Spanish-speaking Latino community. Students spent the afternoon in group rotations focusing on asthma, hypertension and diabetes and participated in a hands-on exercise to learn about compounding, the art and science of preparing personalized medicines for patients.

— Michele Keller



Courtesy

Keck Medicine of USC doctors stand with Silva Katchiguian, president of the Armenian International Women's Association.

USC Verdugo Hills Hospital joins Armenian women's group for panel

THE USC VERDUGO HILLS HOSPITAL FOUNDATION recently held a special event with the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) Los Angeles Affiliate to better acquaint the community with the clinical innovations and high level of medical expertise available at the hospital. More than 100 people attended the April 6 event to mingle and enrich their health and wellness knowledge. Arman Dorian, MD, associate professor of emergency medicine, moderated the panel discussions, which featured Rose Taroyan, MD, MPH; Antreas Hindoyan, MD; Leo Doumanian, MD; Rene Sotelo, MD; and Nerses Sanossian, MD. — Mary Dacuma



Ricardo Carrasco III

GALLERY OPENING: Visitors look at artwork, including photographs and paintings by Keck School of Medicine of USC faculty, staff and students, on display in the Hoyt Gallery during the Spring gallery opening, April 27 in the basement level of the Keith Administration Building.

Special gift to establish care program focused on patients

By Douglas Morino

A generous gift from the family of a grateful patient will establish an endowment and fund new programs in perpetuity that are designed to strengthen patient-centered care and support continued education and excellence throughout Keck Medicine of USC.

The gift from the Choi family will establish the USC Choi Family Patient-Centered Care Program. The program will foster a culture of service focusing on compassionate, empathetic care and patient advocacy across Keck Medicine by providing training and educational opportunities.

The gift was made after a Choi family member received exceptional care at Keck Hospital of USC.

“Our family experienced firsthand how doctors at Keck Hospital are strong patient advocates,” said Henry Choi, a USC alumnus. “We want to reinforce their commitment and give our appreciation to this important value that ought to be the top priority in today's medical world.”

The gift also will establish the USC Choi Family Patient-Centered Care Symposium, which will be organized annually and open to all health care professionals in the community, providing them with education and training focused on compassion, empathy, advocacy and patient-centered care.

“The Choi Family Patient-Centered-Care program will continue to grow and sustain our Keck Culture,” said Char Ryan, MHA, patient experience and employee engagement officer for Keck Medicine. “Through education and recognition we will continue our focus on the voice of the patient and their family.”

Additionally, the gift will establish the USC Choi Family Awards for Excellence in Patient-Centered Care, a public recognition

‘This special gift is a key investment in the future of patient-centered care at Keck Medicine.’

— Rod Hanners

of clinical staff, residents, physicians non-clinical staff and team who consistently demonstrate the ideals of patient-centered care, compassion and excellence.

The first awards will be given at a gala event May 25.

“Patients are the heart of everything we do here at Keck Medicine of USC,” said Rod Hanners, CEO of Keck Medical Center of USC. “This special gift is a key investment in the future of patient-centered care at Keck Medicine and will help ensure the culture of service and patient advocacy that is

such an essential part of our mission will be supported for generations to come.”

The Choi family is a longtime supporter of USC and Keck Medicine.

The family has made previous gifts to support stem cell research at the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC, an artist-in-residence endowment at the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance and a violin scholarship honoring the late Eudice Shapiro at the USC Thornton School of Music.

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