Trustee’s $20 million gift to support Ellison Institute

By Lynn Lipinski

U.S.C. Trustee Marc Benioff ’86 and his wife, Lynne, have given $20 million toward construction of 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. In recognition of the gift, the lobby of the Ellison Institute will be named in honor of Marc Benioff’s late father, Russell Benioff.

A pioneer of cloud computing and chairman and CEO of Salesforce, Marc Benioff has served as a member of the USC Board of Trustees since 2010. Widely recognized for his visionary leadership, he is noted for integrating philanthropy into the core of his business with the creation of the 1-1-1 model of philanthropy, donating 1 percent of Salesforce’s equity, employee time and product to non-profits and educational institutions to improve communities around the world. Today, more than 1,000 companies around the world have adapted this model through Pledge 1%.

The Benioffs have focused their extensive personal philanthropy on children’s health, public education, homelessness and other social issues. Under his leadership, Salesforce has grown from a groundbreaking idea into a Fortune 500 company and the fastest-growing top-10 software company in the world. Prior to launching Salesforce, Benioff spent 13 years at Oracle Corp., which was founded by Larry Ellison, the Ellison Institute’s primary benefactress. Benioff founded his first company, Liberty Software, which created video games, at age 15, and also worked at Apple Computer’s Macintosh division as a teenager. He has a bachelor’s in business administration from the USC Marshall School of Business, a car. Lynne Benioff is an independent marketing consultant and philanthropist. In 2011, she co-founded Star Community Home, a short-term residential community for homeless families in San Francisco. She is a member of the board for several organizations, including the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Foundation, UCSF Benioff Child Health and Engineering and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC.

By Douglas Marinos

A new chair named in honor of two pioneers in the fields of business and engineering will help strengthen bridges between technology and the health sciences at USC.

Terence Sanger, MD, PhD, was named the David L. Lee and Simon Ramo Chair in Health Science and Technology at a ceremony Sept. 29 on the Health Sciences Campus at the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC. A provost associate professor of biomedical engineering, neurology and bioinformatics, Sanger is a former member of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office’s Patent Policy Board and a recipient of the National Academy of Inventors巾的 Innovator of the Year Award. His research focuses on developing new drug delivery systems and designing new materials for the fabrication of microfluidic devices.

By Michele Keller

S t e v e n Chen, PharmD, chair of the Titus Family Department of Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Economics & Policy, received the 2016 Pinnacle Award from the American Pharmacy Association (APhA) at a ceremony Sept. 19 at the APhA headquarters in Washington, DC.

Chen has received the award, one of the nation’s highest pharmacy honors, twice previously, in 2007 and 2013. He is being recognized this year as part of an interdisciplinary team of public health leaders for their collaborative work on two significant initia-

By John Hobbs

W hen it comes to eating healthfully and staying active, not all neighborhoods are created equal. The community just east of USC’s Health Sciences Campus is one of L.A.’s many food deserts — low-income areas where affordable, nutritious food can be hard to find, particularly for those without a car.

“There are literally no grocery stores and no gyms,” said area resident Angelica Reyes, 24. “Learning to live healthfully in those circumstances can be very challenging.”

Reyes hopes to help by working as a community liaison for USC Fit Families, a free service that helps low-income children — ages 7 to 17 — and their families, develop healthy eating and exercise habits.

Families find good neighbors in USC

By Virginia Baca

2016 • VOLUME 3 • NUMBER 18
Friday, Oct. 7
9 a.m.-3 p.m. USC Stevens Center for Innovative Student Showcase. Hanksion Foundation Building C, 1130 W. 39th Street, second floor. Info: Peijuan Tu, peijuant@usc.edu, http://se汶e.org/events/innovator-showcase


Saturday, Oct. 8
9 a.m.-10 a.m. Department of Medicine, division of rheumatology. Continuing Medical Education. “USC Rheumatology Update: Facts on Spondyloarthropathy.” Daniel Addleman, MD, and Sam Mery, MD. Anxori Auditorium. Info: Anika Bohle, (323) 442-2745, anika.bohle@med.usc.edu. RSVP: Chelsea Michel, (323) 442-2555, usccer@usc.edu, http://www.usc.edu/cms

Sunday, Oct. 9
3 p.m.-6 p.m. Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Symposium. “The ABCs of Overcoming Addiction.” Featuring Dr. Dan Persson of the LA General Hospital and Dr. Carl L. Bower, MD. Aresty Conference Center, Room LG 500. Info: Emily Chu, (323) 442-3219, Emily.Chu@med.usc.edu

Friday, Oct. 14
8 a.m.-5 p.m. Office of Research Workshop. “USC Awards to Fund Your Research.” Sibila da Costa, PhD, director of faculty research relations, Office of Research, USC. Earle Baum Conference Room, ZNI 112. Info: Emily Chu, (323) 442-3219, Emily.Chu@med.usc.edu.

Friday, Oct. 18
10 a.m.-noon Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Forum: Who Should Decide Whether Cancer Patients May Enroll in Research Without Exclusion? Featuring Dr. Sam Mery, MD. Aresty Conference Center, Room LG 500. Info: Emily Chu, (323) 442-3219, Emily.Chu@med.usc.edu, http://www.usc.edu/cms

Oct. 9, 2016
By Amanda Busick
A prestigious national student organization has established a new chapter at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.
Twenty-five members of the Keck School’s class of 2017 were inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS) on Sept. 7 in Aresty Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus. The GHHS is well-known for recognizing individuals who excel at providing compassionate patient care with the goal of encouraging compassion, empathy, respect and other important qualities among medical students and doctors.

Henri Ford, MD, MHA, vice dean for medical education at the Keck School, welcomed attendees to the event and spoke about the importance of humanism in medicine today.

“We live in a global environment and each one of us can contribute to making the world a better place to live,” he said. “That is humanism.”

He went on to say, “Humanism, the relentless pursuit of excellence and teamwork, are the essential building blocks for reaching our ultimate goal in life: to achieve significance by making a difference in the lives of others locally and globally.”

The Arnold P Gold Foundation, sponsors and administrators of the society, have a long history of contributing to making the world a better place to live, he said. “That is humanism.”

Students inducted into Gold Humanism Honor Society

Sajjad Yacoub, MD, assistant dean for student affairs and chapter adviser of the medical school’s chapter of the GHHS, also spoke about the inductees would be responsible during this school year for creating that project that will be the legacy of the new members of the GHHS at the Keck School.

The keynote speaker at the event was Jo Marie Reilly, MD, associate professor of clinical family medicine, who received the 2016 Humanism in Medicine Award from the society. She shared with audience members that they needed to join others to make health care optimal for everyone.

“Dig deep for empathy and compassion. It’s hard to do when we are working long hours. But if we don’t, we become angry, bitter and jaded at the work we do. We forget why we’re called to do it.”

Donna Elliott, MD, EID, senior associate dean for student and educational affairs, joined Yacoub in distributing pins and certificates to the new members of the society. Developmental.outputs.fo1d led them in the oath of the society, which concludes with the words, “I will dedicate myself to joining others to make health care optimal for everyone.”

Calendar of Events
OCTOBER 7 • 2016
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Massry Prize winners to speak on campus

By Hope Hamazakhi

The winners of the 2016 Meira and Shaul G. Massry Prize are a trio of scientists — Gero Miesenbock, Peter Hegemann and Karl Deisseroth — whose research paved the way for a breakthrough technology called optogenetics that has revolutionized the way scientists study the brain.

The Meira and Shaul G. Massry Foundation established the Massry Prize in 1996 to recognize contributions to the biomedical sciences and the advancement of health.

The winners of this year’s Massry Prize will participate in an hour-long concert at 1 p.m. Oct. 20 in Mayer Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus.

Optogenetics allows scientists to turn on and turn off electrical activity in specific brain cells by introducing photosensitive proteins that make them react when exposed to light. Optogenetics made it possible to study the role of specific neurons in both normal brain function and disorders such as Parkinson’s disease, depression and schizophrenia.

“The fundamental findings of Miesenbock, Hegemann and Deisseroth, which enabled neuronal function to be controlled through optogenetics, have now become a crucial tool to understand how neurons work, at the single cell and with groups of neurons working together,” said Shaul Massry, MD, professor emeritus of medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. “Scientists all over the world routinely use the optogenetic technology that was developed by these eminent scientists for their laboratories. This field has become one of the most interesting and exciting areas of neuroscience.”

Miesenbock, MD, a physiology professor at the University of Oxford, was the first to genetically modify a brain cell so that its electrical activity could be controlled by shining light, thereby altering them with opsins proteins from the retina of a fly. (Hegemann, PhD, professor of biophysics at the Humboldt University of Berlin, discovered that green algae possessed a type of light-sensitive molecule that gave it the ability to move toward light in spite of having no eyes and no evidence of opsin reception.)

Charmine Thompson, who had been diagnosed with HIV, has gone blind, or one of the

Storied lives address compassion in medicine

By Amanda Busick

The USC Visions and Voices series, co-sponsored by the Keck School of Medicine of USC’s Program in Medical Humanities, Arts, and Ethics, came to the Health Sciences Campus recently to present the critically acclaimed “Two Men Talking,” a thought-provoking spoken-word performance piece about compassion, communication and listening.

“Two Men Talking” was written and presented by Paul Browde, MD, a psychiatrist and performer from South Africa now living in New York City, and Murray Nossel, PhD, a former clinical psychologist, also from South Africa, who is an Oscar-nominated documentary filmmaker and former social worker. The event was held Sept. 19.

The performance used non-linear storytelling, humor, drama and even seemingly spontaneous cappella singing to weave various stories together from both men’s pasts. While the basics of the performance were scripted, there was room throughout for improvisation, which created an atmosphere of immediacy where it happened between the two storytellers.

Paul Browde, left, and Murray Nossel perform their acclaimed show “Two Men Talking” at Mayer Auditorium on Sept. 19.

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Inaugural symposium addresses solutions to avoid elder abuse

By Claire Norman

Guests were welcomed from across the globe to gather in Los Angeles recently for the first annual USC Judith D. Tamkin International Symposium on Elder Abuse. In bringing together stakeholders interested in creating a safe and healthy environment for all older adults, this symposium focused on solving dilemmas in research methods in order to move the field forward.

The symposium, held Sept. 15-16, welcomed the first Tamkin Scholar Award winners, each who is in a graduate school pursuing an MD or PhD. Elizabeth Bloomer, MPH; John F. Fundinho, MS; and Katelyn Jetelina, MPH. Each scholar is committed to pursuing a career that expands the knowledge in how to prevent and detect elder abuse. At a luncheon on the second day, Georgij A. Anetzberger, PhD, was honored for her lifetime of work, innovation and inspiration in the field of elder abuse.

During the two-day symposium, the meeting rooms were alive with ideas and thought-provoking conversations from the 125 registered participants. “We want people to contribute and think about these topics and we have just the right people in this room to be working on these issues,” said Laura Mosqueda, MD, chair and professor of clinical family medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, in her opening address. “We are going to ask those people to work hard in the next few days. This is about solving problems and moving toward solutions.”

The world-renowned speakers inspired the audience through thought-provoking discussions that addressed pertinent issues in elder abuse research. “This and future symposiums will serve as a catalyst for critically needed research in the areas of elder abuse interventions and prevention,” said Julie Schoen, JD, deputy director of the National Center on Elder Abuse. “Having national leadership speak concerning the issues made me more hopeful that the future will hold thoughtful work to impact the abuse and suffering of older adults, both in the U.S. and abroad.”

The Elder Justice Foundation has contributed funds that will allow the publication and dissemination of a white paper that summarizes the symposium, due out in January 2017. Through the generosity of Judith D. Tamkin, the next symposium will be held in 2018.