

USC Norris receives \$20 million bequest

Adding to a distinguished legacy of support for leading-edge cancer research and treatment at USC Norris, the estate of philanthropist Henrietta C. Lee has given \$20 million, bringing Lee's total giving to \$45 million.

Lee, who died of natural causes on June 19 at the age of 94, made a bequest to support research and programs at USC Norris. Prior to the \$20 million gift, Lee gave \$25 million to establish two endowed cancer research chairs and a breast cancer center at the facility.



Henrietta C. Lee

Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito lauded Lee's generosity. "We are privileged to have known such a generous friend. Henrietta's legacy will be the hope that her generosity gives to patients who will benefit from promising new therapies."

In 1997, Lee made a lead gift to establish the Harold E. and Henrietta C. Lee Breast Center, a 5,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art research and treatment facility located on the first floor of the USC Norris Cancer Hospital. Mrs. Lee's husband, Harold, passed away in 1990.

She also provided funding for two endowed chairs: the Harold E. Lee Chair in Cancer Research, held by Michael Press, professor of pathology at the Keck School of Medicine; and the Henrietta C. Lee Chair in Cancer Research, whose inaugural holder was Melvin J. Silverstein, a former professor of surgery at the Keck School.

In 2002, Lee made a gift to establish the Lee Women's Health Center at USC Norris to create and advance the understanding and care of female-specific cancers and the ability to diagnose and treat by integrating patient care, research, prevention and education.

Levitt named director of Zilkha Institute

By Katie Neith

Pat Levitt, an esteemed neuroscientist from Vanderbilt University, has been named director of the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute at the Keck School of Medicine, effective Nov. 1. He also will serve as chair and professor of Cell and Neurobiology at the Keck School and Provost's Professor of Neuroscience, Psychiatry, and Pharmacy at the USC School of Pharmacy, effective full-time July 1, 2009.

"Dr. Levitt is a highly influential and productive scholar in the field of basic and translational neuroscience," said

Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito. "He is an academic star well-suited for leadership of the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute."

Established in 2003, Zilkha serves as part of an initiative to expand the neuroscience effort at USC by bringing together basic and clinical scientists to concentrate on a range of disorders.



Scientists reach across boundaries to embrace methods and techniques from other fields of study, identifying new approaches to examine nervous system function so we may all better understand the underlying causes of neurological and psychiatric disorders.

Jeannie Chen has served as interim director of the institute since 2005.

As director of Zilkha, Levitt will lead the implementation of a strategic

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USC drops, covers and holds on during Great SoCal ShakeOut

University staff, faculty and students practiced their response to a 7.8-magnitude earthquake centered on the San Andreas Fault on Nov. 13. At 10 a.m., people rehearsed the earthquake safety procedure called "drop, cover and hold on."

The USC University Park Campus was one of the primary sites for the Great Southern California ShakeOut drill. During scheduled mass casualty and building inspection exercises, disaster response teams made up of staff and faculty treated wounded people and identified unsafe structures. The injuries and building damage were simulated with makeup and special effects.

The goal of the drill, coordinated by USC Fire Safety and Emergency Planning, was to activate the university's disaster medical response plan, coordinating the actions of all department operation centers, zone command posts and the emergency operations center.

The Disaster Medical Response Team, under the direction of the Student Health Center and composed of the School of Dentistry, the School of Pharmacy, the USC Community Emergency Response Team, the Center for Work & Family Life and the School of Social Work, set up the treatment area and were responsible for performing triage, treating the injured and providing crisis intervention and counseling.

"I think that the training and information that I have received from the Fire Safety and Emergency Planning teams at USC has been outstanding," said Chris Coppa, MIS director at the School of Pharmacy, a member of the university's Community Emergency Response Team that participated in the UPC drill. "The USC community is much better prepared to handle emergency situations as a result of the training we have received and through the experience of participating in the ShakeOut drill."

After the drill, communication and coordination between response departments was evaluated. A similar mass casualty exercise is being planned for the Health Sciences Campus in 2009. University emergency officials hope to incorporate les-



Vejas Skripkus, a primary care physician at the Eric Cohen Student Health Center on the Health Sciences Campus, drops, covers and holds on.



University Community Emergency Response Team members try to stabilize "victims" crushed under debris during the Nov. 13 earthquake drill.

sons learned from the ShakeOut drill experience.

More than five million people registered their participation in the Great Southern California ShakeOut, making it the largest earthquake preparedness activity in U.S. history.

To learn more about the ShakeOut, as well as other earthquake preparation tips, visit <http://www.daretoprepare.org>

USC staff and faculty can receive a 10 percent discount on emergency supplies at <http://www.sosproducts.com>.

Veronica Jauriqui

Carol Matthieu

Jeff Goad to lead California Pharmacists Association

By Kukla Vera

Jeff Goad, associate professor and director of the USC School of Pharmacy International Travel Clinic, was installed as the new president of the California Pharmacists Association at the annual Synergy Meeting held in Sacramento Nov. 15-16.

As president, Goad represents the interests of licensed pharmacists and student pharmacists throughout the state, particularly on legislative and professional issues that impact the profession.

"It is particularly important for pharmacy professors to be actively involved in the association," Goad said. "It's a good way for us to set the right example for our students, stressing the importance of the group's work for our profession. Students are not only our future, but also a large part of our present as they represent an active contingent of the organization."

Among the pressing issues that have already hit Goad's desk is the recently passed extension of a bill that deals with drug pedigree. This refers to the electronic system of tracking a drug—from manufacturer to distributor to point of sale to customer—in an effort to assure that drugs are not counterfeit.

"This is an important concern for pharmacists," Goad said. "We have to be certain that the drugs we provide to our patients are exactly what we think they are. The e-pedigree system addressing this has been put in place, but this is an unfunded mandate. So the association continues to press the legislature and the board of pharmacy to allow adequate time for pharmacists to integrate the necessary new technologies required for e-pedigree."

With health care among the chief issues nationwide and possible reform coming, Goad insists that pharmacy be represented at the table. Staff and lobbyists for the organization provide Goad with on-the-ground presence in Sacramento as these discussions unfold.

Immediate concerns include the protection of MediCal reimbursement rates and expanded scope of practice issues. Goad also is working with the Board of Pharmacy on an immunization bill that would allow pharmacists to vaccinate patients with any routine CDC vaccination without needing a physician sign-off. Currently, the requirement for a physician protocol to be in place for pharmacists to vaccinate patients has become an obstacle to expanding immunization access.

"Immunization is a great example of the changing face of pharmacy," Goad said. "Ten years ago, pharmacists did not immunize in California to any great degree. Today, virtually every pharmacy chain and many independents offer immunizations to patients."



School of Dentistry offers gentle help for locked jaws

By Beth Dunham

Just as with other joints such as the knee or hip, problems in the temporomandibular joint, or TMJ, can lead to popping, clicking, movement limitations and debilitating pain.

But surgery for the hardworking jaw joint is not always the best answer, cautions Glenn Clark, director of the USC School of Dentistry Orofacial Pain and Oral Medicine Graduate Program. "Over time, the trend has been for treatment to get less invasive and more conservative," he said.

Clark and his team have had good results with a new and very conservative technique called anesthesia-assisted mobilization. During an outpatient office visit, a combination anesthetic and steroid injection is administered to the joint, the jaw is manually mobilized (stretched open gently) to increase mobility and the patient is taught self-stretching exercises to be performed at home.

"A large part of this minimalistic approach is the self therapy, including stretching exercises, use of bite guards and taking pain medication properly," Clark said.

The patient is anesthetized locally for the procedure, unlike the use of intravenous sedation employed during other types of jaw surgery. Most importantly, the success rates of anesthesia-assisted mobilization are equivalent to jaw surgery, according to clinical empirical evidence.

Many TMJ problems occur when the cartilaginous disc inside the joint moves out of place or

folds over inside the joint. This "internal derangement" usually causes pain and jaw locking and in previous decades was treated with very invasive open surgery.

In the mid 1980s, Clark was one of the pioneers in promoting arthroscopic surgery techniques for the TMJ. Surgical TMJ arthroscopy reduced the invasiveness of joint procedures while providing a substantial degree of relief for TMJ patients.

"It was a great improvement over what had been done before," Clark said. A newer procedure, arthrocentesis, came into favor in 2000, with results and level of invasiveness similar to arthroscopy, while equipment and personnel costs are much less.

But according to Clark, the surgery is still too costly for many of the working poor that the USC School of Dentistry serves.

Simply waiting out the problem can sometimes bring relief, but that wait can take months or years—a large price to pay for patients who miss work and other activities due to jaw problems and can often develop neck, head and shoulder pain as side effects.

Clark said that anesthesia-assisted mobilization is gaining in popularity and hopes that clinical studies eventually will quantify when and on whom it is most successful.

"With MRI imaging, we now understand more of what's going on anatomically," said Clark. "We don't want to under-treat the problem, but we also don't want to over-treat."

LEVITT: New director will raise profile of Zilkha Institute

Continued from page 1

plan to understand the genetic and environmental basis for brain diseases. He also will develop plans to increase philanthropic efforts to enhance research and training, as well as lead recruitment efforts in collaboration with departments in the Keck School of Medicine, the USC School of Pharmacy and the Center for Genomic Psychiatry.

"The Provost and the deans of the Keck School of Medicine and School of Pharmacy have created an unusual opportunity for me to play a role in growing what is arguably the most exciting and most challenging biomedical science discipline—neuroscience," said Levitt. "This takes commitment on the part of the USC administration and tapping into the great resources of the Los Angeles community by engaging them in a meaningful way."

At Vanderbilt, Levitt is the Annette Schaffer Eskind Chair and Director of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development, and a tenured professor in the Department of Pharmacology at the School of Medicine.

Named a McKnight Foundation Scholar in 2002, Levitt is also an elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He serves on the editorial boards of the journals *Autism Research*, *Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders*,

Disease Models and Mechanisms, *Biological Psychiatry*, *Cerebral Cortex* and *Neuron*.

Levitt has a long history of distinguished service to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in various advisory capacities. Of particular note, he is a member of the NIMH National Advisory Council, a high profile leadership position indicative of wide respect in the research community. He has published over 200 papers and is currently principal investigator of three NIH R01 grants and two NIH P50 program project grants (project leader).

"Through his extensive research experience, Levitt will increase the university's prominence in the field of developmental neuroscience—particularly in the areas of autism and schizophrenia—by adding innovative research and offering interdisciplinary courses and research opportunities to USC students through Zilkha, Keck School of Medicine and the USC School of Pharmacy," said Puliafito.

Levitt received his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Chicago in 1975. He received his Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego, in 1978 and completed an NIH Fellowship in Neuroanatomy at Yale University in 1981.

CNN's Larry King hosts discussion of childhood obesity

By Ina Fried

To overcome the health crisis of childhood obesity in the United States, we need to change the culture symbolized by drive-through, supersized value meals, agreed panelists at the Nov. 14 Southern California Health Leadership Panel.

Speaking at the Aresty Conference Center on the USC Health Sciences Campus, health policy leaders joined CNN talk show host Larry King in discussing the causes, consequences and possible solutions to childhood obesity.

The cause of increasing obesity over the last 20 years, panelists said, is the change in lifestyle—a decrease in exercise and an increase in consumption.

"If your parents both work and you don't have dinner at home cooked by your mom or your dad, you tend to go out to fast food places," said Bill Van Antwerp, distinguished scientist in the Science and Technology Organization at Medtronic. "Kids who are at home alone don't go out and play any more. Even in the world of research, it used to be that you'd go to the library and spend an hour walking up and down the steps in the stacks to find a reference article. Now with the kids in my lab, if it doesn't exist in PDF, if they can't get it with one finger, it doesn't

exist."

A multitude of health problems result from this lifestyle. "We know that supersizing America is very bad for heart disease and diabetes," said Carmen A. Puliafito, dean of the Keck School of Medicine of USC. "Diabetes in America is just exploding. Basically a disease called adult-onset diabetes—type 2 diabetes—is moving younger and younger. This is a real warning signal for us."

Sixty percent of children who develop type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese, according to national studies.

Besides diabetes, other results of being overweight include high blood pressure and high cholesterol, which are precursors to heart disease; problems with joints; and an increase in some types of cancer, among others.

"We have a consumer-driven society, but we have a culture of neglect," said Elizabeth G. Nabel, director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute at the National Institutes of Health. "We have so many choices, but I think we fail as parents and as educators in helping our young people under-



CNN talk show host Larry King (left) leads the discussion, amusing Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito (center) and Tom Miller (right), resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

Veronica Jauriqui

stand and make healthy lifestyle choices."

School systems and communities can take steps to better educate children about nutrition and to create an environment where exercise is valued, but parents need to take the first steps to "pay attention to what their children are eating, and what example they set in their own lifestyles," said Tom Miller, a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

Physicians, too, need to engage their young patients and families in preventing obesity.

"One of the things we discovered at L.A. Care is that physicians weren't comfortable talking to families and asking the right questions," said Howard A. Kahn, CEO of L.A. Care Health Plan. L.A. Care created a training module to help physicians, and 400 attended the first session.

The annual panel discussion was sponsored by the Larry King Cardiac Foundation, LAC+USC Healthcare Network, COPE Health Solutions and the Keck School of Medicine.

Keck USMLE part 1 scores beat national mean

Keck School of Medicine students have once again proven themselves to be academic all-stars. The recently released results of the 2008 national medical licensing examination (USMLE part 1) show that Keck students scored an average of 10 points above the national mean.

The Keck School implemented a new Year 1-2 curriculum in 2001, and USMLE scores began to improve in 2003, the first year the new curriculum students took the exam. Scores have shown a steady increase to the point where students consistently score 10-14 points above the mean. "While it may not be possible for Keck students to

further improve their overall performance on part 1 of the USMLE as a group, we are committed to continue to support our students' efforts to maintain this superb level of academic achievement," said Henri Ford, vice dean for education for the Keck School.

The USMLE is a rigorous examination that assesses whether students understand and can apply important concepts of the sciences basic to the practice of medicine. In 2008, 6.7 percent of all United States medical students who took USMLE part 1 failed. In contrast, in 2008, the failure rate for Keck students was 0.0 percent.

ETCETERA

The Medical School Operating Agreement-required Fall Provider Time Study will run from Dec. 1 to Dec. 14. A new online survey, found at <http://keck.usc.edu/pts>, will replace the blue book process. Faculty members should look for an e-mail with their user name and password. For more information, faculty should contact their department administrator.

In Case of An Emergency...

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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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- **Join us** at an EMHA Information Session:
HSC FACULTY CENTER Tuesday, Dec 2nd Noon-1:30 p.m.
UPC UNIVERSITY CLUB Wednesday, Jan 14th Noon-1:30 p.m.
HSC FACULTY CENTER Tuesday, Feb 3rd Noon-1:30 p.m.
- Contact us at **(213) 740-2984** or **emha@usc.edu** to RSVP or to arrange a personal appointment.
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Calendar of Events

The HSC Calendar is online at

www.usc.edu/hsccalendar

Saturday, Nov. 22

9 A.M. Visions and Voices, the USC Arts & Humanities Initiative. "The Met: Live in HD La Damnation de Faust." UPC: Eileen Norris Cinema Theatre. Info: visionsandvoices@usc.edu

6:30 P.M. University Kidney Disease Research Assoc. Benefit Dinner Honoring Shaul G. Massry. Beverly Hilton Hotel. Info: (323) 314-7000

Tuesday, Nov. 25

NOON. Cancer Ctr. Grand Rounds. "Inferring the Past: How Did Your Cancer Grow?" Kimberly Siegmund, USC. NOR 7409. Info: (323) 865-0801

Wednesday, Dec. 3

NOON. "Regulation of Synaptic Transmission in C. Elegans: MicroRNAs and Seizures," Joshua Kaplan, Harvard. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-3219

Friday, Dec. 5

8:50 A.M. So. CA Research Ctr. for ALPD & Cirrhosis: 10th Annual Symposium. Various speakers. MCH 149. Info: (323) 442-3121

NOON. Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar. "Dysfunction of Serotonin System During Early Brain Development: Autism?" Rick C.S. Lin, Univ. of Mississippi Medical Ctr. PSC 104. Info: (323) 442-1441

NOON. "The New USC Institute for Global Health: Setting an Agenda for Environmental Health," Jonathan Samet, USC. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-1096

Monday, Dec. 8

10 A.M. – 12:10 P.M. Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences Mini Symposium. Various speakers. PSC 104. Info: (323) 442-1451

Wednesday, Dec. 10

NOON. Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar. "Towards Designer Therapeutics: Discovery of Prosecretory Mitogen Lacritin, Off/On Switch Mechanism, Surprising New Properties and Preclinical Studies," Gordon Laurie, Univ. of Virginia. PSC 104. Info: (323) 442-1445

NOON. "Synaptic and Circuitry Mechanisms of Obsessive Compulsive-like Behavior in Mice," Guoping Feng, Duke Univ. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-3219

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 HSC Weekly, KAM 400 or fax to (323) 442-2832, or e-mail to ebllaauw@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.



Sara Reeve

STUDENT FORUM—The key in applying for residencies is to "pick a field you really love," said Carmen A. Puliafito, dean of the Keck School of Medicine, in an informal meeting organized by first- and second-year medical students. In answer to student questions, he also advised that in highly competitive fields, medical students who do a year of research distinguish themselves and improve their chances of being selected for residencies.

Building security upgrades effective Dec. 1

As part of a \$3 million campus security upgrade, new restrictions and identification policies will go into effect on the Health Sciences Campus beginning Dec. 1.

All staff and faculty will be required to wear an official USC identification badge, which includes the employee's name, picture and department. All photo identification badges will need to be worn in a visible manner on the upper torso.

A new electronic lock system will limit access to HSC buildings after regular business hours—generally between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., although some buildings may have different policies depending on the needs of their occupants. Under this system, personnel will swipe their USCards, which are coded with their access authorization for the buildings in which they work or are authorized to enter.

The cards permit access after hours and also log the times at which the user enters and leaves the building. Employees should consult their home department coordinator for questions about whether they need their cards updated or replaced to access their buildings after hours.

Record amounts raised for Good Neighbors

The Good Neighbors fundraising campaign ended Oct. 31, and although donations will be accepted through December, the 2008 campaign is already breaking records. More than \$1,071,000 has been raised to date, representing a university participation rate of 38 percent.

Schools on the Health Sciences Campus helped lead the way by raising \$152,684. As of Nov. 14, the Keck School of Medicine has raised \$85,557, an increase of almost \$5,000 compared to 2007 totals. The Division of Biostatistics, a unit of the Department of Preventive Medicine, brought in the most of any unit in the Keck School—\$9,637.

The School of Pharmacy raised \$13,803. The School of Dentistry raised more than \$30,000, while the Division of Occupational Therapy brought in more than \$14,000. The Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy raised \$8,578 while achieving a participation rate of 81 percent—the highest of any unit on the Health Sciences Campus.

The USC Good Neighbors Campaign raises funds for two separate charitable organizations: USC Neighborhood Outreach and United Way. USC Neighborhood Outreach is a non-profit organization with the sole purpose of enhancing the quality of life in the neighborhoods surrounding the University Park and Health Sciences campuses.

HSC NEWSMAKERS

Complete listing at: www.usc.edu/uscnews/usc_in_the_news/

A Nov. 19 *Los Angeles Times* article quoted Alzheimer's expert **Lon Schneider** and highlighted his editorial on a study showing that ginkgo biloba doesn't prevent dementia. The editorial was also featured in *The New York Times*, *Science News*, *U.S. News and World Report* and a number of other publications.

A Nov. 15 *Los Angeles Times* article highlighted Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center's move to its new facility.

A Nov. 15 *Investor's Business Daily* article quoted pharmacoeconomics expert **Joel Hay** about the likelihood that Democrats will repeal the 2003 law prohibiting Medicare from negotiating drug prices directly with pharmaceutical companies.

A Nov. 12 *Los Angeles Daily News* article featured the "Maxmobile," the first and only bloodmobile at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles.

A Nov. 10 *Washington Post* article quoted fertility expert **Richard Paulson** about successful attempts to freeze ovaries and then transplant them. The technique could help women diagnosed with cancer, the story stated. A recent issue of *Women's Health* magazine also names Paulson as one of America's top doctors for women.

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