

HSC kicks off campus planning process

By Jane Brust

What will USC's Health Sciences Campus look like in five years? In 10 years?

Those are questions under consideration by an executive planning committee charged with developing a Health Sciences Campus Master Plan for the future. The committee kicked off their planning process Jan. 8.

"The Health Sciences Campus is at an important juncture as USC works to acquire the two private hospitals, grow the clinical enterprise, expand research and educational programs and more," explained Curt Williams, vice president, campus development and facilities management. "The university will benefit from a strategic planning study that identifies critical needs and plans for future growth, with an eye toward the best locations for various functions."

Williams added that a successful master plan can enhance the academic mission of the university as well as lead to improved patient/visitor satisfaction for clinical services and in turn positively impact the operations and profitability of the clinical enterprise.

Laurie Stone, program director for capital construction and university counsel, who is leading the planning process, explained that the final master plan—which could take two years to develop—will reflect both the needs of USC units, as well as opportunities for optimal utilization of existing buildings and available land.

In their initial discussion, committee members expressed a broad range of current needs and ideas for the future. Among those:

- improved services for students, including student housing
- recreational/exercise facilities
- food service amenities for patients, visitors and



The growth and evolution of the Health Sciences Campus are the focus of a master planning process.

Bill Youngblood

guests

- increased dry lab space for translational research
- increased office space for administrative functions
- additional parking and improved circulation around campus
- a visitors center/conference center facility.

Vice Provost Mitch Creem, who is leading the transition process toward acquisition of the two private hospitals, said that creating a safe and inviting environment for students, patients and their families should be a priority in campus development.

Keck School of Medicine Chief Operating Officer Coreen Rodgers emphasized the importance of developing additional space for dry research labs for translational research and additional office space for administrative functions.

Preparation of the master plan will involve assistance from consultants such as architects and traffic engineers.

University Architect Jon Soffa commented that the process also will examine HSC's aging buildings and formulate recommendations for demolishing or repurposing for other uses. Landscaping across and around the campus also will be studied.

What can be accomplished with a campus master plan?

- Develop a strategic planning framework for future growth of the campus as it relates to: academic, clinical, research missions; campus life; and BioMedTech Park uses.
- Identify development opportunities for growth on land currently owned by USC.
- Identify major drivers for future campus development.
- Survey existing building resources as to historic value and functional capacity to support future campus space needs.
- Identify ways to strengthen the service and integration of the University Hospital and Norris Cancer Hospital into the campus fabric.
- Identify opportunities to improve the physical identity for the Health Sciences Campus with recognizable entries and gateways, improved wayfinding, branding and signage.
- Identify ways to improve resources and management of USC parking and transportation systems, including coordination with publicly owned and operated systems.
- Identify potential amenities that will serve the campus community, including students, faculty, staff, patients, visitors and tenants, as well as the neighboring community.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen pedestrian linkages between HSC and LAC+USC facilities.
- Extend and enhance a safe, attractive, sustainable campus and neighboring urban community.
- Identify ways to encourage public and private non-university investment in the proposed BioMedTech Park.

Relax! Keck School opens new and improved student lounge

By Sara Reeve

Attention Medical Students: Between Gross Anatomy lab and study group, how about a little foosball?

The new calendar year has brought new opportunities for Keck School of Medicine students to enjoy break time during their busy academic days.

A new and improved Keck School of Medicine student social lounge, located on the first floor of the McKibben Building, opened on Tuesday, Jan. 22, in response to student requests for enhanced lounge amenities.

In an e-mail to students, Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito announced the opening of the lounge, which is used as an active gathering place.

"In response to your comments and suggestions, we've made a number of upgrades that make the lounge a much more pleasant place in which to take a break and hang out with friends, get something to eat, and watch TV or play a little foosball," he stated.

"I'm envious—I wish I had a lounge like this near my office."

The lounge contains a pool table, foosball table and television. A microwave oven will be added soon, and vending machines are located a few steps away.

The committee to manage the refurbishment included Donna Elliott, associate dean for student affairs; Donna Poole, director of multidiscipline teaching facilities; Steve Hole and Melissa Kennedy, Year 1 class co-presidents; and Ryan O'Shea and Ashley Prosper, Year 2 class co-presidents.

"The new student lounge is great.

From the new furniture to the new television to the spirited SC decals on the wall, it is a fabulous new space," said Prosper. "The lounge is now a beautiful, functional space to relax, commune with fellow stu-



Students let off some steam during the day by playing foosball in the refurbished Keck School student lounge.

Veronica Jauriqui

dents and clear our heads before getting back to studying. I can't thank our deans enough for not only making these improvements, but involving us in the process."

Keck School honors Donald Skinner at retirement celebration

By Katie Neith

Family, friends and colleagues gathered at the Edmondson Faculty Center on Jan. 26 for a retirement celebration honoring the illustrious career of Donald G. Skinner, who has served as professor and chair of the Catherine and Joseph Aresty Department of Urology at the Keck School of Medicine since 1980.

"Don Skinner represents the best of medicine at USC," said Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito. He went on to say that there are a number of dimensions in academic physicians that he finds to be exemplary, all of which Skinner possesses: commitment to clinical excellence combined with clinical innovation, institutional commitment and commitment to research excellence.

"Very few professors at medical schools can claim as much impact on clinical care of patients as Don Skinner can," said Puliafito. "Everything he did here was about helping patients and helping USC."

A urologic surgeon at the forefront of the profession for more than 40 years, Skinner is known worldwide as a pioneer in the surgical treatment of bladder cancer.

Closer to home, Skinner is recognized for laying the foundation for the urology program at the Keck School in the early 1980s.

When Skinner first came to USC, he was the sole faculty member in a urology program with zero federal research funds. Today, the department of urology at USC is one of the best in the country.

Skinner began his career in 1964, after graduating from Yale University's medical school. He trained in general surgery with the Air Force and at the Harvard University-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital, where he also did his urology residency. After a year of subsequent teaching at Harvard,

Skinner joined the urology faculty at UCLA. In 1980, he became a professor of surgery at USC, as well as the chief of the former division of urologic surgery.

During his career, Skinner has been the recipient of some of the most prestigious awards in urology, including both the Gold Cystoscope Award and the Barringer Medal from the American Association of Genitourinary Surgeons, the Huggins Medal, which is the highest award bestowed by the Society of Urologic Oncology, and the American Urological Association's highest honor, the Ramon Guiteras Award. He was also awarded USC's highest honor, the Presidential Medallion, in 2005.

Gary Lieskovsky, holder of the Donald G. Skinner Chair in Urology at the Keck School of Medicine, thanked Skinner for his outstanding leadership over the past 29 years. He outlined the remarkable career of Skinner as a pioneering surgeon, prolific researcher, compassionate clinician and acclaimed professor.

Puliafito also read a letter from USC President Steven B. Sample commending Skinner on his highly successful career and thanking him for his service to USC and to countless patients.

Adding humor to the jovial celebration, Bill Watson, former chief development officer at the Keck School, regaled the large crowd with tales of Skinner's techniques for raising donations—many of which included taking prospective donors out to the golf course.

An avid golfer, Skinner received a gift of a weekend stay at the Pelican Hill Resort in Newport Beach, which

includes two rounds of golf.

For his commitment to medicine and patient care, the outdoor seating in front of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and Hospital will be named in his honor upon completion.

Skinner thanked his family, and said they are the "key to everything that has happened to me." He also acknowledged the support of his mentors, grateful patients, the Department of Urology and his colleagues at USC.

"Retirement is a time to reflect back on an extraordinary time and to think of this as a thank you party for everyone here who has played a role in my career and my success," said Skinner. "The soul of Norris has made this a very special time of my life."

He gave special thanks to Steve Garnett, who has helped coordinate Skinner's clinic for 24 years, and Wendi Van Hecke, who has been Skinner's secretary for 19 of her 22 years at USC.

Skinner also offered praise for the department's new chair, Inderbir Gill, and left words of encouragement for the future of urology at USC.

"We have built the foundation and now it's ready for a skyscraper to be built on top of it," he concluded.



Donald Skinner, former professor and chair of the Catherine and Joseph Aresty Department of Urology at the Keck School of Medicine, is surrounded by family and friends at his retirement celebration.

Brian Morri



Carol Matthieu

A SURGEON'S REFLECTIONS—Transplant surgeon and New York Times bestselling author Pauline Chen speaks at Mayer Auditorium on Jan. 23 during her guest appearance on the Health Sciences Campus as part of the USC Visions and Voices initiative. Chen read narratives from her bestselling book, "Final Exam: A Surgeon's Reflections on Mortality," to convey her experiences with the care of dying patients and the culture of the health care profession. "Remember who you are today, hold on to your dreams and ideals about caring for others as if your life depended on it, because someone's does," she said.

ETCETERA

Lourdes Baezconde-Garbanati, assistant professor of preventive medicine, presented at the National Institutes of Health summit on "The Science of Eliminating Health Disparities" in December.

The Childrens Hospital Los Angeles Web site, www.childrenshospitala.org, received a 2008 W3 Silver Award from the International Academy of the Visual Arts (IAVA). The W3 award honors outstanding Web site, Web marketing and Web video created by some of the best interactive agencies, designers and creators worldwide.

The Keck School of Medicine's Department of Ophthalmology received a grant of \$110,000 from Research to Prevent Blindness. The research will be directed by **Ronald E. Smith**, chairman of the department.

Pharmacy study shows anti-aging strategy may be pointless

By Carl Marziali

If you are a mouse on the chubby side, then eating less may help you live longer.

For lean mice—and possibly for lean humans, the authors of a new study predict—the anti-aging strategy known as caloric restriction may be a pointless, frustrating and even dangerous exercise.

“Today there are a lot of very healthy people who look like skeletons because they bought into this,” said Rajindar Sohal, professor at the USC School of Pharmacy.

He and Michael Forster, of the University of North Texas Health Science Center, compared the life span and caloric intake of two genetically engineered strains of mice.

The “fat” strain, known as C57BL/6, roughly doubles in weight over its adult life. That strain benefited from caloric restriction, Sohal said.

The “lean” strain, DBA/2, does not become obese. Caloric restriction did not extend the life of these mice, confirming previous work by Forster and Sohal.

The results appeared online Jan. 13 in *The Journal of Nutrition*.

“Our study questions the paradigm that caloric restriction is universally beneficial,” Sohal said. “Contrary to what is widely believed, caloric restriction does not extend (the) life span of all strains of mice.”

By measuring the animals’ metabolic rate, Sohal and his colleagues came to a deceptively simple conclusion: Caloric restriction is only useful when, as in the case of the obese mice, an animal eats more than it can burn off.

“Your energy expenditure and your energy intake should be in balance,” Sohal said. “It’s as simple as that. And how do you know that? By gain or loss of weight.”

For humans of normal weight, Sohal strongly cautions against caloric restriction. In a 2003 study, he and Forster found that caloric restriction begun in older mice—both in DBA and leaner C57 individuals—actually shortened life span.

However, Sohal said that obese individuals are probably better off cutting calories than increasing their exercise to make up for overeating. Overly vigorous exercise can lead to injuries and long-term wear and tear.

In other words, it is better to skip the double cheeseburger than to turn up the treadmill after binging at Carl’s Jr.

Sohal’s study is not the first to question the allegedly universal benefits of caloric restriction. A study by Ross et al. published in *Nature* in 1976 (“Dietary practices and growth

responses as predictors of longevity”) found that caloric restriction works best in mice that gain weight rapidly in early adulthood, Sohal said.

Studies of caloric restriction in wild types of mouse strains have shown minimal life span extension, he added.

Next, the researchers want to understand why the obese mice have a lower metabolic rate that promotes weight gain.

The other members of the research team were Melissa Ferguson and Barbara Sohal of the USC School of Pharmacy. Funding for the study came from the National Institute on Aging, part of the National Institutes of Health.



Rajindar Sohal, the Timothy M. Chan Professor in Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences



Sample to present State of the School address Feb. 10

USC President Steven B. Sample will present his annual State of the School address on Tuesday, Feb. 10, in the Aresty Auditorium, Harlyne J. Norris Cancer Research Tower.

A reception will begin at 4 p.m., followed by the address at 4:30 p.m.

Sample became the 10th president of USC in March 1991. He is the university’s first holder of the Robert C. Packard President’s Chair.

New HR director brings expertise to Keck School

A new source of help is available to Keck School of Medicine faculty and staff who need advice and assistance regarding various personnel actions.

James D. Lynch joined USC in December, filling the medical school’s newly created director of human resources position.

According to Coreen Rodgers, Keck’s chief operating officer, Lynch will work to build a department to serve faculty and staff as the new medical enterprise evolves.

His priorities include expediting new hires, assisting with recruitment strategies, and advising on disciplinary actions.

“Our faculty and staff administrators are experts in their own fields, not necessarily in human resources,” Rodgers said. “Jim brings great experience in HR along with great customer service skills to assist Keck leaders with effectively managing a range of HR issues.”

Lynch most recently served as senior vice president for human resources for the May Department Stores Inc./Federated Department Stores Inc.

The company employs 30,600 employees spread among 78 stores in six states.

His experience includes corporate reorganization and re-staffing, reduction of employee turnover and enhancement of employee productivity.

Lynch earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology and economics at Metropolitan State College in Denver.

“This is an exciting time for the medical school, and I look forward to working with Keck School

leaders to ensure that we have the work force we need in terms of quantity, quality and diversity as we build our clinical, research and education programs,” he said. “While the recruitment of outstanding faculty is a priority, so is the recruitment of outstanding staff to support our faculty.”

Lynch’s office is located on the fifth floor of the Keith Administration Building.

He can be reached via e-mail at james.lynn@keck.usc.edu or via telephone at (323) 442-2217.



James D. Lynch

Jon Nalick

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HSC FACULTY CENTER Tuesday, Feb 3rd Noon-1:30 p.m.
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Calendar of Events

The HSC Calendar is online at www.usc.edu/hscalendar

Monday, Feb. 2

NOON. "A Renaissance in the Biology Granzymes – Granule Proteases Are Not Just Killers Anymore," Christopher Froelich, Northshore Univ. GNH 6441. Info: (323) 442-1946

NOON. "RTA: Case Discussion," Elaine Kaptein, USC. GNH 4420. Info: (323) 226-7337

4 P.M. "Research in Progress," Sheila Cherian, USC. GNH 4420. Info: (323) 226-7337

Tuesday, Feb. 3

9 A.M. Neurology Grand Rounds. "Early Treatment of Parkinson's Disease," Mark Lew, USC. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-7686

Wednesday, Feb. 4

4 P.M. USC Ctr. for Excellence in Research. "Developing a Funded Research Program," Randolph Hall, USC. UPC: CUB 329. Info: (213) 740-6709

Thursday, Feb. 5

NOON. "HIV and Women—Current Topics," Various speakers. NOR 1315. Info: (323) 865-0343

Saturday, Feb. 7

9 A.M. Rise to Action Los Angeles. A conference for young adult cancer survivors and their families. Various speakers. NOR Aresty Conference Ctr. Info: (240) 821-9412

Wednesday, Feb. 11

4 P.M. USC Ctr. for Excellence in Research. "Developing DoD Grant Applications," James Murday, USC. UPC: CUB 329. Info: (213) 740-6709

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 ebalauw@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.

Friday, Feb. 13

8:30 A.M. CORC Seminar Series. "Genetic and environmental contribution to metabolic disease," Anthony Comuzzie, Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research. CSC 250. Info: (323) 442-2637

Tuesday, Feb. 17

11:15 A.M. USC University Hospital Guild Speaker Series. "Living with Rheumatoid Arthritis and Other Arthritic Conditions," Glenn Ehresmann, USC. Norris Inpatient Tower: Hoffman Cafeteria Dining Rm. Info: (323) 254-0600

Friday, Feb. 20

8 A.M. "The Many Faces of Dementia: Linking Research, Practice, and Prevention," Thomas Obisesan, Howard Univ. and Lynda Anderson, Ctr. for Disease Control, Atlanta. UPC: Davidson Conference Ctr. Info: (213) 821-5288

Monday, Feb. 23

NOON. "MicroRNAs: Another Layer of Gene Expression Regulation," Marianthi Kiriakidou, Univ. of Pennsylvania. GNH 6441. Info: (323) 442-1946

Wednesday, Mar. 4

NOON. USC Ctr. for Excellence in Teaching. "Net Forward Energy: Instructional Lessons Learned From a National Clinical Practice Change Collaborative," Steven Chen, USC. KAM B21/23. Info: (323) 740-9040

Friday, Mar. 6

3 P.M. "Of Mind, Medicine and Music," Antonio Damasio, USC, and composer, Bruce Adolphe. KAM Mayer Aud. Info: (213) 740-1744



Professor Mark Humayun (left) with Marjorie Pings and Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito.

Humayun named inaugural holder of Pings Chair in Biomedical Sciences

By Veronica Jauriqui

Mark Humayun, professor of ophthalmology, cell and neurobiology, and biomedical engineering at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, the Doheny Eye Institute and the USC Viterbi School of Engineering, was named the inaugural holder of the Cornelius J. Pings Chair in Biomedical Sciences in a ceremony on Jan. 14.

Humayun was presented with the honor by USC President Steven B. Sample at a dinner attended by colleagues, the Pings family and deans Carmen A. Puliafito of the Keck School and Yannis Yortsos of Viterbi.

The newly created Pings Chair is an honorary university-wide professorship named for a former provost and USC professor of chemical engineering. Pings served as USC's provost and senior vice president for academic affairs from 1981 to 1993. As provost, Pings directed the academic and research programs at USC and is credited with leading the university through one of its most significant periods of growth.

Pings passed away in 2004 at the age of 75.

"I did not know Neal Pings personal-

ly, but I wish I had," Humayun said in accepting the chair. "It is clear that throughout his tenure, Neal Pings exhibited incredible energy, integrity, clarity of thought and rigorous standards of excellence."

In presenting the honor, President Sample said that Pings and Humayun shared much in common. "Both men have used their skills and talents to teach and explore the mysteries of our world and to improve the quality of human life," he said.

Humayun was recognized for his work as co-inventor of the retinal prosthesis—an implantable artificial retina that has restored partial sight to blind patients.

Humayun and his research, Sample said, were in the vanguard "combining biomedical craftsmanship with the healing arts."

Representing the Pings family was Cornelius Pings' widow, Marjorie, who said that USC was a very special part of her late husband's life. She joked that her husband did not always enjoy public events, "but I have a funny feeling," she said, "he just might be watching [tonight]."

HSC NEWSMAKERS

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

A Jan. 27 Associated Press article quoted fertility expert **Richard Paulson** in a story about the birth of octuplets. He was also interviewed by ABC News, the *Los Angeles Times*, KPCC-FM and KABC-TV.

On Jan. 22, the National Public Radio Show "Morning Edition" interviewed preventive medicine expert **Jonathan Samet** about changing attitudes regarding smoking.

A Jan 23 *Orange County Register* article quoted **Harris Done** of the USC School of Dentistry and featured a community outreach effort by the school.

A Jan. 23 *Telegraph* (U.K.) article noted that neurologist **Leslie Weiner** is the father of Matthew Weiner, the creator of the TV series "Mad Men."

A Jan. 22 *Washington Post* article quoted vision researcher **James Weiland** and noted the retinal implant project at USC.

A Jan. 22 *Los Angeles Times* article noted that USC University Hospital is among L.A. County hospitals with significantly better than average stroke death rates in 2007.

On Jan. 21, KABC-TV quoted environmental expert **James Gauderman** about a new study

linking air pollution to life expectancy.

A Jan. 21 *New York Times* article quoted pharmacologist **Roger Clemens** about detoxification regimens.

A Jan. 15 *USA Today* article quoted neurobiologist **Joseph Miller** about NASA's strategy to detect life on Mars.

On Jan. 12, the Discovery Channel highlighted work by pathologist **Cheng-Ming Chuong** and colleagues. The team studied chickens to predict what the first feathers on dinosaurs would have looked like.

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