Trojan Family welcomes hospital employees

By Katie Neith

USC toasted the ownership of two new hospitals at picnic celebrations welcoming the USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital into the Trojan Family.

“The sun shone brightly on a new era of academic medicine at USC as more than 2,000 hospital employees, Doctors of USC and clinic personnel were treated to fresh salads, grilled meats and a plentiful array of desserts on April 3. With many decked out in cardinal and gold, the crowd cheered and danced to the music of the USC Trojan Marching Band.

“Travis Martin, a USC University Hospital ultrasound tech, hailed the hospitals’ transition to USC ownership, adding that the employee celebration “is really something special and new for us. We feel like we’re being welcomed to the family.”

“It’s fabulous!” added Joanne Weigh, a registered nurse who works in pre-op and recovery at University Hospital.

An evening picnic was also held to recognize the nightshift employees. The picnics were hosted by Mitch Creem, who was recently appointed CEO of the two hospitals.

Saturnino Don Andres Jr., a stationary engineer in plant operations for the hospitals, who attended the dinner picnic, added, “I’m glad to be on board with an organization that has such a good reputation.”

Scott Evans, chief operating officer of USC’s two hospitals, said the transition of ownership went very well.

“The new USC employees are very excited,” he said. “They’ve been waiting a long time for this—and we’re all looking forward to building a great medical center.”

New marketing plan to support hospitals

Within moments of USC’s acquisition of two hospitals, two new patient-focused Web sites went live on April 1 to promote the university’s clinical expertise.

That’s just the first step in a new set of hospital marketing initiatives designed to leverage the USC brand, increase patient referrals and enhance patient revenue, according to Jane Brust, associate senior vice president of USC’s Health Sciences Public Relations and Marketing office.

Accessible via the links www.uscuniversityhospital.org and www.norriscancerhospital.org, the two sites are integrated with the Doctors of USC Web site to create a consistent Web presence and access to the searchable Doctors of USC physician database. The two sites launched in Phase I of their development, and planning for Phase II is now under way.

All three sites were developed by Health Sciences PR and Marketing staff working in collaboration with Swanson Russell Associates, a full-service marketing and communications agency with specialized expertise in marketing.

University creates governing boards to provide oversight, direction for new hospitals

By Jon Nalick

USC President Steven B. Sample has established governing boards for the university’s newly acquired hospitals and named their initial 15 members.

The Hospital Governing Boards guide and oversee USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital, as well as approve budgets and capital expenditures. The boards also ensure that the medical staff is accountable for quality of care and that the hospitals meet their regulatory and compliance obligations.

Each board initially comprises the following additional members:

• Mitch Creem, hospital chief executive officer
• Ellen Whalen, hospital chief nursing officer
• Eda Skinner, hospital chief of staff
• Vaughn Starnes, chair, Department of Surgery
• Philip Lumb, chair, Department of Anesthesiology
• Todd R. Dickey, USC senior vice president, administration
• Robert Abeles, USC interim senior vice president and chief financial officer

Carmen A. Puliafito, dean of the Keck School of Medicine, will serve as vice chair for each board.

As we celebrate a new era in academic medicine at USC, The Weekly is proud to debut a new graphic design with a larger size and tabloid format. The changes complement our expanded coverage of the campus, including the hospitals and their staffs.

“The new USC employees are very excited. They’ve been waiting a long time for this—and we’re all looking forward to building a great medical center.”

— Scott Evans, Chief Operating Officer of USC’s hospitals
USC hospitals woo new nurses with residency program

By Sara Reeve

USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital hosted more than 170 local nursing school students and recent graduates at a New Graduate Brunch on April 3. The brunch offered an opportunity for the hospitals to introduce the Versant RN Residency program, an 18-20 week program that helps residents transition from student to professional nurse.

“When you join the Versant program, you are not done with studying or classes, so don’t put your books away in the garage!” said Tanya Zwick, Versant RN Residency manager for the hospitals.

“The hands-on experience before you get to the floor prevents you from feeling completely lost when you have to treat a patient.”

Anya Zwick, Versant RN Residency manager for the hospitals.

“Patients come to these hospitals from all over the world. That’s the university that will draw new doctors and lots of new patients. USC buying the hospitals is just icing on the cake,” said Patsy Rodriguez, also a graduate of California State University, Los Angeles’ nursing program. “USC is a prestigious, world-renowned university that will draw new doctors and lots of new patients. Patients come to these hospitals from all over the world. That’s the type of environment I want to be in.”

Applications to the Versant RN Residency program are due by April 24, and interviews are scheduled for mid-May. Offer letters to accepted residents will be mailed in mid-June, and the fall cohort begins on Aug. 3.

Created by Childrens Hospital Los Angeles in 2004, the Versant RN Residency provides a structured program of classroom and skills lab education, clinical experiences with one-to-one preceptors, individual mentor relationships and support/self-care group meetings.

USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital began using the Versant program in 2007, with sessions beginning twice a year in March and August. Residency is very competitive: the number of positions are only accepted only 18 residents.

“The collaborative process will continue as we develop the continued classroom learning. I feel like it offers a great transition from student life.”

Interested attendees had the opportunity to take small group tours of several of the medical and surgical units. As the tours began, the purchase of the hospitals by USC became a popular topic of discussion.

“USC buying the hospitals is just icing on the cake,” said Paty Rodriguez, also a graduate of California State University, Los Angeles’ nursing program. “USC is a prestigious, world-renowned university that will draw new doctors and lots of new patients. Patients come to these hospitals from all over the world. That’s the type of environment I want to be in.”

Interest in the program and the application process. “I don’t know how many openings there are, but I hope I get one of them,” said Abegail Balotto, a graduate of California State University, Los Angeles.

Residents will begin on Aug. 3.

Next Issue: April 17

The Weekly is published for the faculty, staff, students, volunteers and visitors in the University of Southern California’s Health Sciences Campus community. It is written and produced by the Health Sciences Public Relations and Marketing staff. Comments, suggestions and story ideas are welcome. Permission to reprint articles with attribution is freely given.

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E-mail: hscwkly@usc.edu Web: uscnweekly.usc.edu (see related story, page 11) and the full-page “We Are USC” ad placed in the Los Angeles Times the same day. The ad features more than 400 images of hospital personnel and physicians.

“The response to our request for permission to use personal photos was so great that another 100 images not used in the ad will be featured in a revised layout for two banners to be hung outside the two hospital cafeterias in coming weeks,” Brust said. “The ad concept has been so popular that employees have requested copies, so we are offering the full-page ad in this issue of the Weekly as a commemorative poster for employees to keep.”
In the classroom. In the laboratory. In the operating room.

We are USC.

As of April 1, USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital and their 1,600 dedicated employees became full members of the Trojan family. Located just east of downtown Los Angeles, the hospitals are now wholly owned and operated by the University of Southern California. This means the hospitals are now not only backed by nearly 130 years of Trojan pride and tradition, they’re also backed by the full educational and fiscal might of one of the country’s most respected and successful private research universities.

USC has invested $275 million in the purchase of the two hospitals.

Together, USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital have 471 beds and nearly 1,600 full-time employees who work with 500 physicians known as the Doctors of USC.

USC and UCLA are the only two Los Angeles-area universities owning hospitals.

USC University Hospital is a private, 411-bed referral, teaching and research hospital staffed by The Doctors of USC. Opened in 1991, the hospital provides a comfortable setting in which patients receive personal care and access to the most advanced health care services.

Services at the USC University Hospital include organ transplantation and neurosurgery, as well as cardiothoracic, urological, esophageal, orthopedic, and plastic and reconstructive surgeries; neuro-interventional radiology; interventional cardiology; musculoskeletal medicine; and epilepsy, among others.

The USC Norris Cancer Hospital is a 60-bed hospital with adjacent outpatient facilities. The hospital is affiliated with the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center is one of only 41 centers designated as “comprehensive” by the National Cancer Institute for its leadership role in cancer treatment, research, education and prevention. USC Norris has held this designation since 1973 – just two years after establishment in 1971 – when it was one of the first eight comprehensive cancer centers to be recognized in this way.

Treatment options at USC Norris include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy and combinations of these therapies. Immunotherapy and genetic counseling for specific cancers are also provided.

The USC Norris Cancer Hospital has a designated bone marrow transplantation unit and surgical unit with highly trained staff.

With the university’s acquisition of the hospitals, more than 500 physicians known as The Doctors of USC are integrating their 18 private practices into the university’s operations. The new integrated business model will enhance business planning for new clinical services, multi-disciplinary programs and support for recruitment of new clinical faculty. The new structure also will make it easier to build new clinical programs in collaboration with the hospitals.
Doctors integrating into one faculty practice group

By Jane Brust

While the university’s acquisition of two hospitals has been big news on both USC campuses, behind the scenes much work has been under way to ensure the success of the new clinical enterprise.

Key to that success is the integration of 18 separate physician practice corporations outside the university into The Doctors of USC—a single corporate entity within USC providing centralized services to support the physicians’ clinical activities.

The integrated model will provide for enhanced business planning for new clinical services, multi-disciplinary programs and support for recruitment of new clinical faculty. The new structure also will make it easier to build new clinical programs in collaboration with the hospitals.

In recent days, nearly 500 personalized letters were sent to individual physicians to officially welcome them into The Doctors of USC and to outline their compensation and other considerations.

“Producing new, integrated compensation packages for the clinical faculty has been a tremendous project,” said Chester Rodgers, chief operating officer of the Keck School of Medicine. “The clinical chairs were true leaders in this process, supported by myself, USC Care and the Faculty Affairs office. We are grateful to all participants who gave us their time and creative energy to develop a successful transition plan for our physicians.”

According to Minor W. Anderson, president and CEO of The Doctors of USC, “All of the activities to support our clinical practices will be easier within one corporate entity. We are committing to the complex process of integration so that we have greater business efficiency and success going forward. We want to enhance the patient experience and create an ideal work environment for faculty and staff.”

Efforts also are under way to develop more patient-friendly business systems by completely redesigning and upgrading billing and information technology. For example, a new OE/IDX system will be implemented to improve appointment scheduling, patient registration, billing and collections across the enterprise. Also in development is a new patient-focused call center.

In addition, The Doctors of USC are committed to investing in advanced technologies and additional infrastructure to address a growing patient population. “Our goals are to enhance patient access to our physicians and to improve the patient experience across the board,” Anderson said.

"All of the activities to support our clinical practices will be easier within one corporate entity."

—Minor W.
Anderson, president and CEO of
The Doctors of USC

'Swim with Mike' fundraiser slated for April 18

USC will award Physically Challenged Athletes Scholarships to 33 student scholars on April 18 at “Swim With Mike,” an annual swim-a-thon fundraiser for scholarships to students who have overcome life-challenging accidents or illnesses.

Since its inception in 1981, Swim with Mike has raised more than $8.7 million for 77 full scholarships, including providing financial assistance toward housing and books. It boasts an impressive recipient and alumni list, ranging in age from 18 to 38, traveling as far away as India and pursuing careers in fields ranging from cinematography to business, medicine and law.

Athletes have represented 16 different sports on levels ranging from high school junior varsity to NCAA Division 1. Two former Keck medical students have been Swim with Mike Scholarship recipients.

Swim with Mike began as a fundraiser to purchase a specially equipped van for three-time All-American USC swimmer, Mike Nyeholt, who became paralyzed in a motorcycle accident in 1981.

At Nyeholt’s suggestion, the excess monies raised that year were used to aid other athletes in overcoming paralyzing or physically disabling injuries or illnesses, and in returning to school. With the help of Nyeholt’s teammate and now USC Associate Athletic Director Ron Orr, Swim with Mike was born the following year when Nyeholt returned to swim laps.

The event, featuring a barbecue at noon, live entertainment, celebrity guests, massage tent, Kid’s Corner, and silent auction, will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at USC McDonald’s Swim Stadium. Parking and admission are free for sponsored swimmers. Barbecue at noon is $15 if you are not swimming.

For more information, call (213) 740-4155 or visit the event web site at www.swimwithmike.org.

The Weekly NEWSMAKERS

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

An April 6 widely-carried HealthDay News story highlighted a USC study which found that increasing fiber intake and reducing sugar consumption can help reduce type 2 diabetes risk factors in Latino teens. Forbes, MSN Health and Fitness and MedPage Today online also covered the research.

On April 3, neurologist Mark Lew was interviewed live on NBC’s “The Today Show” about cervical dystonia, a condition that causes painful neck spasms. A segment featured one of Dr. Lewis’ patients.

An April 3 U.S. News & World Report article quoted urologist Inderbir Gill about whether President Barack Obama should have PSA testing, a type of prostate cancer screening.

An April 1 Los Angeles Business Journal article quoted Provost C.L. Max Nikias about the $275 million sale of USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital to the University of Southern California. MedCenter Today Online, Fox Business, the Contra Costa Times, Modern Healthcare Magazine, Armenia TV News and the Daily Trojan also covered the sale.

On April 1, KNBC-TV aired an interview with environmental health expert James Gauderman on the effects of air pollution.

A March 30 New York Daily News article on the impact of the show “ER” noted a study by researchers at the Keck School which found that viewers of an “ER” episode on obesity were 65 percent more likely to change their eating habits afterward than non-viewers.

A March 28 Los Angeles Times article quoted pharmacologist Roger Clemens about whether sweeteners derived from agave are better for one’s health than other sweeteners.

A March 28 Los Angeles Times article described how actor Stacy Keach returned to the stage play “Frost/Nixon” after suffering a stroke. The article noted that Keach altered the name “Dr. Lundgren,” which is mentioned in passing during the play, to “Dr. Larsen,” in tribute to Donald Larsen who treated him at USC.

A March 27 Wall Street Journal article highlighted research led by cardiologist Robert Kloner about the increased death risk associated with being a fan of a losing Super Bowl team. WebMD, ABC Science Online, The Mercury News, a widely carried Asian News International (India) story and KNBC-TV also covered the research.
Calendar of Events
This Calendar of events is also online at www.usc.edu/hsccalendar for the Health Sciences Campus community

Monday, April 13
Noon. "Case Presentations," Shahrouz Bermanian, USC. INT 331B05. Info: (323) 409-7995

Tuesday, April 14
8:45 – noon. The 19th Annual Cancer Surveillance Program Educational Symposium. "From Surveillance to Prevention," Various speakers. NRO/Arcy Conference Ctr: RSVP: arcysymposium@usc.edu

Thursday, April 16
4 p.m. USC Ctr. For Excellence in Research. "Writing Persuasive Proposals," Bonnie Lund, The Writing Ctr. NML West Conference Room. Info: (213) 740-6709

Friday, April 17
8 a.m. CHLA Grand Rounds. "Challenges of Protecting Children, It’s not all ‘Law and Order’ and ‘CSI’." Karen Kay, USC/CHLA. CHLA Saban Research Auditorium. Info: (323) 361-2935
11 a.m. Hematology Grand Rounds. "Diagnosis and Treatment of Gaucher Disease," John Barranger, USC. ITP C2J103. Info: (323) 865-3950

Monday, April 20
Noon. "NEPHISAP. Transplant," Yasar Qazi, USC. GNH 4420. Info: (323) 226-7307

Wednesday, April 22
4 p.m. USC Ctr. For Excellence in Research. "Cellular Imaging Methods in Basic Research," Shaun Forsburg, USC. UPG CUB 320. Info: (213) 740-6709

Friday, April 24
8 a.m. Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Grand Rounds. "Influenza Aggressive B-cell Lymphomas," Jonathan Sond, UCLA. NRB 7409. Info: (323) 442-3180
8 a.m. CHLA Grand Rounds. "The Child is the Sentinel Species for Good or Bad Environments: How the ‘Built Environ’ Shapes Children and their Health," Richard Jackson, USC/CHLA. Saban Research Auditorium. Info: (323) 361-2935

Monday, Apr. 27
Noon. "NEPHISAP. End-stage Renal Disease and Dialysis (2008)," Hossmadinali Madkour, USC. GNH 4420. Info: (323) 226-7307

Wednesday, April 29
Noon. ZNI Seminar Series. "Emergence of Sympatric Specificity in the Mouse Gerbillellum," Peter Sheaﬁle, Univ. of Basel. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-2144
1 p.m. "Head & Neck Cancer Awareness," Tom Lubono, LA CountyMem. and Chief Bratton, LA Police Dep't. HSBT Level G, Rm. 503. Info: (323) 442-7808

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) 442-2822, or e-mail to eblaauw@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.

USC University Hospital signs promotional partnership with the Los Angeles Dodgers

USC is hitting for the fences with a promotional agreement signed with the Los Angeles Dodgers for the larger of its two new hospitals. The partnership, announced on April 9, makes USC University Hospital the “Ofﬁcial Hospital of the Los Angeles Dodgers.” The multi-year agreement guarantees the hospital in-stadium and promotional exclusivity among hospitals and medical centers.

“Partnering with the Los Angeles Dodgers is a strategic move to align the USC University Hospital brand with another iconic brand in Los Angeles,” explained hospital CEO Mitch Cremen. “We look forward to bringing Dodgers fans timely health information through in-stadium promotions and educational opportunities. This partnership with the Dodgers also will allow us to expand our community outreach through many activities that will be fun and educational for our patients, their families and our employees and friends.”

The Dodgers’ partnership with USC University Hospital features homeplate rotational signage during all local regular season television broadcastscasts on PRIME TICKET and KCAL, permanent Pavilion Wall signage during all regular season games, and sponsorship of the Dodgers’ "Heart of Dodgerstown" platform, which highlights various community programs throughout the season on Dodgervision. Additionally, USC University Hospital will receive LED Ribbon board messaging during all regular season home games.

As part of the “Heart of Dodgerstown” platform, current and former Dodgers players will visit patients at USC University Hospital. The visits will be featured in the Dodgers on Demand content on Time Warner Cable. "This partnership with USC University Hospital is a strategic alliance with another iconic Los Angeles Dodgers is a strategic move to align the USC University Hospital brand with another iconic brand in Los Angeles,” explained hospital CEO Mitch Cremen. “We look forward to bringing Dodgers fans timely health information through in-stadium promotions and educational opportunities. This partnership with the Dodgers also will allow us to expand our community outreach through many activities that will be fun and educational for our patients, their families and our employees and friends.”

In Case of An Emergency...
Call the Emergency Information Phone: 213-740-9233 The emergency telephone system can handle 1,400 simultaneous calls. It also has a backup system on the East Coast.
Visit the USC Web: http://emergency.usc.edu 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.

USC Health Sciences Public Relations and Marketing 1975 Zonal Ave. KAM 400 Los Angeles, CA 90033

Discounted Dodgers tickets available to all Weekly readers
As a special beneﬁt from the USC University Hospital-Dodgers partnership, Weekly readers can now buy discounted Dodger game tickets for the 2009 season through the Dodgers’ “Super Groups” site.

To purchase discount tickets online, visit www.dodgers.com/uscuniversityhospital and follow the on-screen instructions.

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APRIL 10 • 2009