

Policymakers, researchers warn of childhood obesity danger

'There's no one factor that causes obesity. It's not just due to over-eating and lack of physical activity. We're working against evolution.'

—Michael Goran, professor of preventive medicine, physiology and biophysics, and pediatrics at the Keck School of Medicine

By Meghan Lewit

Children growing up in the U.S. right now may be the first generation that will not exceed the lifespan of their parents, unless health leaders and policymakers come together to combat the growing childhood obesity crisis.

This was the message of a USC-sponsored health summit held Sept. 10 at the University Park Campus. "Childhood Obesity: A Call to Action" brought together more than 325 policymakers, educators and advocates to discuss solutions and lay groundwork for federal policy on education and child nutrition. The summit was held in cooperation with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus and Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

USC Health Sciences faculty who participated in the event highlighted the need for both broad public policy solutions and community-focused interventions to address the obesity crisis.

Focusing on lifestyle changes alone will not cure obesity



Kenneth Moritsugu (right), of the Johnson & Johnson Diabetes Institute, and Michael Goran, professor of preventive medicine, physiology and biophysics, and pediatrics at the Keck School of Medicine, call for greater action against obesity.

Jon Nalick

and associated diseases such as type 2 diabetes, said panelist Michael Goran, professor of preventive medicine, physiology and biophysics, and pediatrics at the Keck School of Medicine, and founding director of the USC Childhood Obesity Research Center.

The process by which our bodies regulate calorie intake and energy balance is complex, he said. Humans are designed to store excess calories as fat as a protection against famine.

"There's no one factor that causes obesity. It's not just due to over-eating and lack of physical activity," Goran said, adding, "We're working

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Jon Nalick

Audrey Rowe, deputy administrator of special nutrition programs for the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture tells the audience, "Hunger and obesity are two sides of the same coin, both fueled by lack of nutrition."



Photo/Mel Melcon © Los Angeles Times

When he is inaugurated on Oct. 15, C. L. Max Nikias will be only the eleventh USC president since the University's inception.

University counts down to presidential inauguration

By Sara Reeve

The inauguration of USC President C. L. Max Nikias—the first inauguration at USC in almost 20 years—will highlight the importance of the Health Sciences Campus to the university and feature faculty, staff and students from the Health Sciences Campus in key roles. The ceremony, to be held at the University Park Campus on Oct. 15, is expected to attract more than 10,000 people, including 2,000 participants in the opening procession.

That procession, which will begin at 10 a.m., will be led by Peter Conti, director of the USC PET Imaging

Science Center and professor of radiology at the Keck School of Medicine. As the first M.D. president of the USC Academic Senate, Conti will have the honor of leading the procession into the ceremony holding the mace, representing the role of the faculty in university life. Invited delegations representing the university's different constituent groups—staff, students, parents and alumni, among others—will also march.

All faculty and retired faculty are encouraged to march in the procession in full academic regalia, which can be provided by the uni-

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Hospital employees swing for the bleachers at Dodger batting practice

By Tania Chatila

Ever since Bob Rissman was 9 years old, he's wanted to be on the field at the Los Angeles Dodger Stadium. "By the time I got to 15," Rissman said, "I realized it would never happen."

Then Rissman came to work for the USC hospitals, and two months into his job as a senior business analyst with the Information Technology Department, he got an exclusive invitation to visit the stadium and bat on the field. "Getting to sit on the bench in the dugout was a sublime moment. I owe someone breakfast, lunch, dinner, car wash and hugs for this opportunity."

Rissman was one of nearly 100 hospital employees invited to the special outing at Dodger Stadium on Aug. 29. The event was meant to recognize outstanding employees.

"This is a day to celebrate you," said Scott Evans, executive administrator for medicine and hospital operations, who opened the event. "To reward you for all the work you do for USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital."

Each employee was allowed to bring a guest. Included in the afternoon were activities such as batting at home plate, fielding and pitching.

"It's really an honor to be invited," said Karen Chapman, associate administrator

of safety and support services for the hospitals. "This is a nice opportunity to be able to socialize with other employees, and sports are always a good way to bring people together."

In addition to the sporting activities, guests were also able to meet with Dodgers legends Steve Yeager and Jim Campanis, and tour the Dodger Clubhouse.

The tour was 10-year-old Isabella Weller's favorite part of the day.

"How many places do cool stuff like this?" said Michael Weller, Isabella's father and an operating room nurse at USC University Hospital. "It's events like this that show administration's appreciative of the hard work we do."



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Elizabeth Aldaz, USC University Hospital central service and supply employee, takes a swing as Dodger legend and former catcher Steve Yeager offers batting tips.

INAUGURATION: Faculty, staff, students, friends invited

For information
about the
inauguration,
visit [http://
inauguration.
usc.edu](http://inauguration.usc.edu)

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versity, as at commencement.

USC's relationship with four teaching hospitals will be visible with a delegation of invited representatives from USC University Hospital, USC Norris Cancer Hospital, Childrens Hospital Los Angeles and Los Angeles County + University of Southern California Medical Center.

Staff delegates were chosen from among current officers and former presidents of the elected representative Staff Assembly, officers from the Staff Club service organization, and current staff who were prior recipients of the President's Award for Staff Achievement. Several Health Sciences staff members will be among this group invited to march in the procession.

The installation ceremony will begin immediately following the processional. It is at this ceremony that C. L. Max Nikias will be formally installed as the eleventh president of the university.

Nikias has made the issues and concerns of the university's health care community a top priority for his presidency.

As provost, Nikias led the effort to purchase USC University Hospital and USC Norris Cancer Hospital in 2009. In a recent address given on the Health Sciences Campus, Nikias outlined plans to strengthen the Keck School and continue to develop a vibrant USC academic medical center.

The installation ceremony will end shortly before noon, at which time all delegates will march back to their original assembly points in reverse order. At noon, following the recessional, all guests are invited to attend a celebratory luncheon held in McCarthy Quad.

All faculty, staff and students planning to attend the inauguration ceremony should register online at www.usc.edu/esvp, using the appropriate code (Faculty, Staff, Student, Parent or Alumni). University operations will not cease during the ceremony, so staff should consult with their supervisors and students should check with professors before registering to attend.

For more information about the inauguration, visit [http://](http://inauguration.usc.edu)

Did You Know?

- If a guest attends with a faculty member, the guest will be invited to a different seating area during the procession and ceremony. Faculty should RSVP online for themselves and their guests.
- Staff are invited to attend with supervisory approval. Please RSVP at www.usc.edu/esvp Code: staff.
- Faculty requiring regalia will be able to pick it up at the University Bookstore, Third Floor, from Oct. 11 through Oct. 15 at 9 a.m. Faculty marching in the procession must bring their regalia to the ceremony on the morning of Oct. 15.

inauguration.usc.edu.

Getting to the Inauguration

Parking at the University Park Campus is free all day on Oct. 15, but congestion is expected. Increased shuttle bus service will be provided for Health Sciences Campus personnel to travel to the ceremony.

Assembly Points on the University Park Campus

USC Faculty: All faculty will assemble in the Grand Ballroom of the Ronald Tutor Campus Center by 9:30 a.m.

Students: A reception for students will be held from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in Argue Plaza, next to the Alumni House.

At 9:30 a.m., students will be escorted to reserved seating in Alumni Park. Student delegates should assemble inside Bovard Auditorium on the stage, checking in at Associates Park, across from the Ronald Tutor Campus Center, no later than 9 a.m.

Staff: A reception will be held from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in Argue Plaza, next to the Alumni House; all staff are invited to attend. At 9:30 a.m., staff will be escorted to reserved seating in Alumni Park. Designated staff delegates will assemble in Associates Park, checking in across from the Ronald Tutor Campus Center.



GLOBAL HEALTH OPPORTUNITY—A delegation from Taipei Medical University (TMU) visited the Keck School of Medicine and met with senior leaders, faculty, staff and students on Aug. 12 to discuss plans for Keck to send students from its Master's in Global Medicine Program to TMU next summer for two weeks. The Master of Science in Global Medicine program is a one-year master's program offered by Keck that was developed to train future health care professionals to analyze and address critical clinical and management issues in medicine on a global scale. The program is directed by Elahe Nezami, associate professor of preventive medicine and associate dean for undergraduate, master's and professional programs at Keck. A memorandum of understanding was signed by leaders of both schools in which they agreed to explore other opportunities for international exchange and to promote mutual cooperation in education and research. Key leaders who facilitated the agreements included: Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito (front, center); Taipei Medical University President Wen-Ta Chiu (left of Puliafito); Chii Ruey Tzeng (right of Puliafito), College of Medicine, Taipei Medical University; Nezami (right of Tzeng); Allan V. Abbott (second row, fourth from left), associate dean for curriculum and continuing medical education; Alejandro Sanchez (second row, fifth from left) director, Global Health Scholars Program at the Keck School; Donna Elliott (second row, seventh from left), associate dean for student affairs.

Graduate and Professional Student Senate gears up for new year

By Meleeneh Kazarian

The Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) at the Health Sciences Campus recently hosted its annual Student Leaders Meet and Greet to introduce its new HSC Governing Council members and familiarize student leaders with the organization.

GPSS serves as the official voice of the graduate student body, and its executive board members, senators and special interest committees seek to identify and address student needs. The organization also provides funding for social, academic and community service events, and conference travel grants.

The Sept. 1 event attracted student leaders from pharmacy, medicine, physical therapy and public health programs.

Showcasing the diverse culture of Los Angeles, Damon de la Cruz, programming chair, said he is now planning events for USC students, including downtown Los Angeles art walks, museum trips and a tour of Chinatown. He also said he is organizing yoga, pilates, zumba and kickboxing classes for HSC students and staff, set to start this month.

This year, GPSS will partner with Legacy LA to offer young people tutoring and mentorship to help deter them from gangs and violence.

For more information about the organization and upcoming events, visit <http://www.gpssusc.com/hsc-campus> or the GPSS office located inside Seaver Residence Hall.

Prostate cancer 5k walk set for Nov. 21

The USC Institute of Urology and USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and Hospital will host the first LA Prostate Cancer 5K on Sunday, Nov. 21, on San Vicente Boulevard in Brentwood.

The event is intended to raise at least \$50,000 for ongoing prostate cancer research studies taking place at the USC Institute of Urology and the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and Hospital.

Registration is now open online at www.USCUrology.com. The registration cost for adults is \$30 before Sept. 29 and \$35 thereafter.

Event-day registration begins at 6:30 a.m. and the 5K begins at 8:30 a.m. For more information about participating or becoming an event sponsor, call (323) 865-3700 or e-mail LAProstateCancer5K@gmail.com.

The Weekly

Next Issue: Sept. 24

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Nobel Laureate Murray Gell-Mann named USC Presidential Professor

Murray Gell-Mann, a renowned physicist and Nobel laureate, has been appointed Presidential Professor of Physics and Medicine.

“I’m delighted to welcome Murray Gell-Mann to our academic community,” said USC President C. L. Max Nikias. “His discoveries have transformed our concept of the cosmos we inhabit. He represents the very manner of scholar that USC seeks—one who can creatively connect separate fields of inquiry in order to magnify our capacity to see new intellectual pathways.”

The title Presidential Professor is a rare USC honor bestowed upon an individual who combines the highest academic recognition with landmark contributions to society. A pioneer of

quantum physics, Gell-Mann received the 1969 Nobel Prize in Physics for his work on the theory of elementary particles.

In his new role, Gell-Mann will collaborate with cancer researcher and oncologist David Agus, professor of medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC and director of the USC Center for Applied Molecular Medicine.

Elizabeth Garrett, interim senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, sees USC as an ideal incubator for their collaborative work.

“We’re honored to have Murray Gell-Mann join the faculty,” she said. “He’s helped us understand our universe at the subatomic level, and he’ll now

work with David Agus to investigate an equally challenging frontier—the complexity of human disease. Their partnership demonstrates USC’s firm commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration that provides important new insights and drives society forward.”

Agus, one of the world’s leading oncologists, said: “Professor Gell-Mann is a scholar of incredible breadth and depth. I’m excited to continue and expand our work together, which I hope will lead to new ways to understand and treat cancer and other diseases.”

Gell-Mann gained acclaim for successfully theorizing that the neutrons and protons that make up atomic nuclei

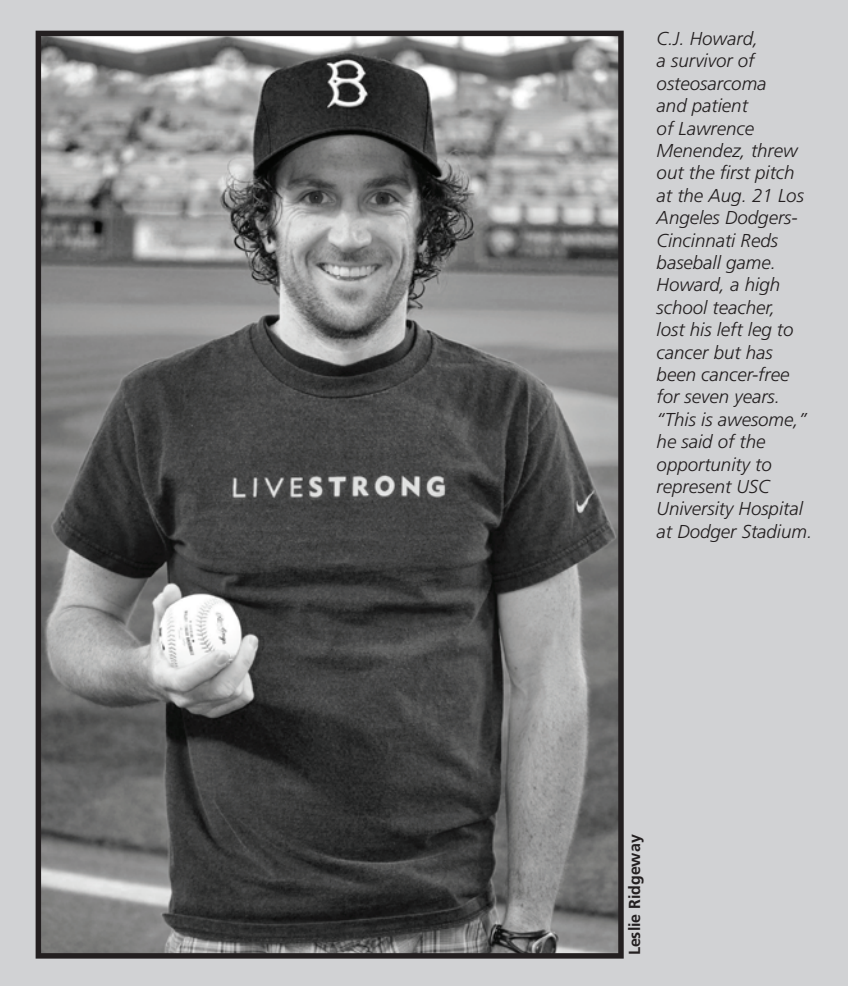
are composed of fundamental building blocks that he named “quarks,” the spelling of which he borrowed from the James Joyce novel *Finnegans Wake*.

Gell-Mann is a Distinguished Fellow at the Santa Fe Institute, which he co-founded and where he heads the Evolution of Human Languages program.

He is now the second Nobel Prize winner among the USC faculty. The first is George Olah, Distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering and Materials Science. “I’m looking forward to continuing my work with Dr. Agus and the USC community to address pressing matters of human health,” Gell-Mann said.



Murray Gell-Mann



USC Body Computing 4.0 conference sees big future for small devices

Imagine a day when an accident victim has his or her current health status transmitted en route to the emergency room, via implanted device. Or a son or daughter can monitor the health of an elderly parent by logging on to a site where they can see Mom or Dad’s health status.

Turning imagination into reality is the impetus behind

the USC Body Computing 4.0 conference on Friday, Sept. 24, which brings together thought leaders in biotechnology, wireless communications, health care, entertainment, and more to discuss the future of health and technology. The conference is sponsored by the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

“Body Computing” refers to

an implanted wireless device, which can transmit up-to-the-second physiologic data to physicians, patients, and patients’ loved ones.

The fourth conference, which takes place at the Town and Gown banquet hall at the USC University Park Campus, will feature live demonstrations of applications and devices that help people

manage their health.

The conference includes three panel discussions that will focus on global wireless healthcare, privacy and regulatory issues, and designing communication interfaces between health care providers and patients.

The conference includes the popular Body Computing Slam on Sept. 23. The slam

offers networked medicine research teams, product groups and companies an opportunity to show off their ideas in fast-paced presentations that are judged by a professional panel.

To register for the Body Computing conference, go to <http://www.usccardiology.org/bodycomputing/index.html> or call (323) 442-6130.

The Weekly NEWSMAKERS

A Sept. 11 *Los Angeles Times* article reported that Keck School of Medicine Dean **Carmen Puliafito** has been named to the board of trustees of Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, and that USC President **C. L. Max Nikias** has been named to the board of councilors. The *Los Angeles Times* ran a second article covering the news.

A Sept. 10 CBS Evening News story featured director of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center **Peter Jones** in a segment on the Stand Up To Cancer fundraising campaign. A team co-led by Jones is developing a revolutionary approach to fighting cancer called “Epigenetic Therapies,” the story reported.

A Sept. 9 *San Bernardino Sun* article quoted chair of the department of urology and associate dean for clinical innovation **Inderbir Gill** about treatments for prostate cancer.

A Sept. 8 Associated Press article quoted head of the division of infectious diseases **Wilbert Mason** about diagnosis of whooping cough cases in California.

A Sept. 7 *Time* article quoted professor of obstetrics and gynecology and chief of the division of reproductive endocrinology and infertility **Richard Paulson** about studies that claim certain behaviors

can determine whether a pregnancy will result in a boy or a girl.

A Sept. 7 front page *Los Angeles Times* article featured Keck School of Medicine student **Joshua Lilienstein**, who is battling cancer while attending medical school.

A Sept. 1 *San Gabriel Valley Tribune* article reported that the Keck School of Medicine has won \$23.5 million in federal funding as part of the ongoing National Cancer Institute national cancer statistics program.

Calendar of Events

This Calendar of events is also online at www.usc.edu/hscalendar for the Health Sciences Campus community

Monday, Sept. 20

Noon. KSOM Research Seminar. “Gene Knockout Rats,” Qi-Long Ying, USC. Pizza at 11:40 a.m. NRT Aresty Aud. Info: (323) 442-1144

Tuesday, Sept. 21

11 a.m. Endocrinology and Diabetes Grand Rounds. “An Update on the Most Important Advances in Clinical Thyroidology,” John Nicoloff, USC. HMR 100. Info: (323) 442-2806

Noon. Psychiatry Grand Rounds. “Psychotherapy Training Online: The USC Experience,” Priyanthy Weerasekera, McMaster Univ. CSC 250. Info: (323) 442-4065

Noon. ZNI Seminar Series. “Survival and Regeneration in the Nervous System,” Jeffrey L. Goldberg, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-2144

3 p.m. – 5 p.m. KSOM Research Advancement Postdoc Orientation and Ice Cream Social. NRT Aresty Aud. Info: (323) 442-2144

Wednesday, Sept. 22

10 a.m. – 2 p.m. 4th Annual Campus Safety Awareness Fair. Harry and Celesta Pappas Quad. Info: (213) 740-5527

Thursday, Sept. 23

8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. 14th Annual Max R. Gaspar Vascular Symposium. “Vascular Emergencies and Complications,” R. Patrick Clagett, Univ. of Texas Southwestern Medical Ctr. Millenium Biltmore Hotel. Info: (323) 442-2555

Noon. Dean’s Translational Medicine Seminar. “Normal and Neoplastic Stem Cells, Irving Weissman, Stanford. NRT Aresty Aud. Info: (323) 442-1144

Noon. “Cyclotides, a Novel Natural Peptide Scaffold for Drug Discovery,” Julio A. Camarero, USC. HMR 100. Info: (323) 442-1283

1 p.m. Kidney Patient Education Seminar. Speaker: David Rosenbloom, USC Transplant Patient and Author. Refreshments will be served. RSVP: Mary Fisher (323) 442-9631

Friday, Sept. 24

8 a.m. Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Grand Rounds. “Recurrent HCV Infection Following Liver Transplantation: Pathology, Differential Diagnosis, Liver Biopsy and Beyond,” Lydia Petrovic, USC. NTT 7409. Info: (323) 442-1180

Noon. Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar Series. “Synthetic Polypeptide Materials for Biomedical Applications,” Timothy J. Deming, UCLA. PSC 104. Info: (323) 442-4118

Saturday, Sept. 25

8:30 a.m. 14th Annual Max R. Gaspar Grand Rounds Lecture. “Aortic Graft Infection: The Problem is Still with Us,” R. Patrick Clagett, Univ. of Southwestern Medical Center. DOH 100. Info: (323) 442-6835

Wednesday, Sept. 29

Noon. ZNI Seminar. “Structural Diversity of Amyloid Oligomers,” Charles Glabe, UC Irvine. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-2144

Noon. USC CET. “Learning in LA: Integrating Service-learning and JEP into your Courses and Discussion Sections.” UPC: ACB 238. Info: (213) 740-3959

Thursday, Sept. 30

Noon. “Mitochondrial Diseases and the Optic Nerve: Canary in the Coal Mine,” Alfredo A. Sadun, USC. HMR 100. Info: (323) 442-1283

Noon. KSOM Research Seminar. “From Mice to Man: A Gene Therapy Clinical Trial for Childhood Blindness,” William Hauswirth, Univ. of Florida. NRT Aresty Aud. Info: (323) 442-1144

1 p.m. Kidney Patient Education Seminar. Speaker: David Rosenbloom, USC transplant patient and author. Refreshments will be served. RSVP: Mary Fisher (323) 442-9631; walk-ins are also welcome

Friday, Oct. 1

The USC Good Neighbors Campaign (GNC) runs for the entire month of October and has set a \$1.3 million goal for its 2010 fundraising effort that helps pay for programs benefiting children and families living in neighborhoods around USC. To learn more, visit www.usc.edu/ext-relations/gnc/

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 *The Weekly*, KAM 400 or fax to (323) 442-2832, 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.

OBESITY: Conference warns of obesity epidemic

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against evolution.”

Children are programmed to crave unhealthy foods, and it’s not just enough to tell them to eat healthier, Goran said. Early and individualized interventions are needed to change behavior.

Other discussions focused on the impact of community outreach efforts. Cheryl Resnik, assistant professor of clinical physical therapy and associate chair of the Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy at the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC, has led USC students in establishing a pro-bono community clinic for school children and their families in East Los Angeles.

“Fit Families” focuses on education, exercise and nutri-

tion counseling. The program has partnered with local parks and community organizations to encourage physical activity, and to assist families who live in food deserts—areas with little or no access to fresh, high quality groceries—with finding foods necessary to maintain a healthy diet.

“We can’t change the behavior of children if we’re not impacting what parents do at home,” Resnik said. “Safety and access is key.”

Mel Baron, associate professor of clinical pharmacy at the USC School of Pharmacy, leads a team that has developed and produced a series of bilingual fotonovelas to educate the Latino community about issues such as diabetes prevention, folic acid and birth defects and obesity.

“We’re improving health literacy and changing behavior,” he said.

The summit coincided with the first National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. Keynote speaker Audrey Rowe, Deputy Administrator of Special Nutrition Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, outlined new legislation and federal programs that will cover screenings for childhood obesity and provide nutrition education and assistance.

“Hunger and obesity are two sides of the same coin, both fueled by lack of nutrition,” Rowe said. “We have a real opportunity to use these programs to effect change. We can make a real impact on habits and health of our most precious resources, our children.”

USC Norris, Keck School of Medicine to host ‘A Concert to Cure Cancer’ on Sept. 26

By Imelda Valenzuela

The USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Keck School of Medicine of USC will host “A Concert to Cure Cancer,” a fundraising event to be held on Sept. 26 at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza Hotel in Century City.

The gala is the first of its kind for USC Norris and will feature the Pasadena POPS, conducted by Rachael Worby in a “Hooray for Hollywood”-themed concert that highlights both nostalgic and current sounds of Hollywood, including songs from *Titanic*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Nine* and *Star Wars*.

Event organizers hope to raise \$1 million.

Proceeds will benefit the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and the new USC Center for Molecular Pathways and Drug Discovery, which was created by Heinz-Josef Lenz, professor of medicine and preventive medicine, associate director of clinical research at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Kathryn Balakrishnan Chair for Cancer Research; and Michael Kahn, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, Provost’s Professor of Medicine and Pharmacy. Kahn and Lenz are co-leaders of the USC GI-Oncology program.

The event opens with

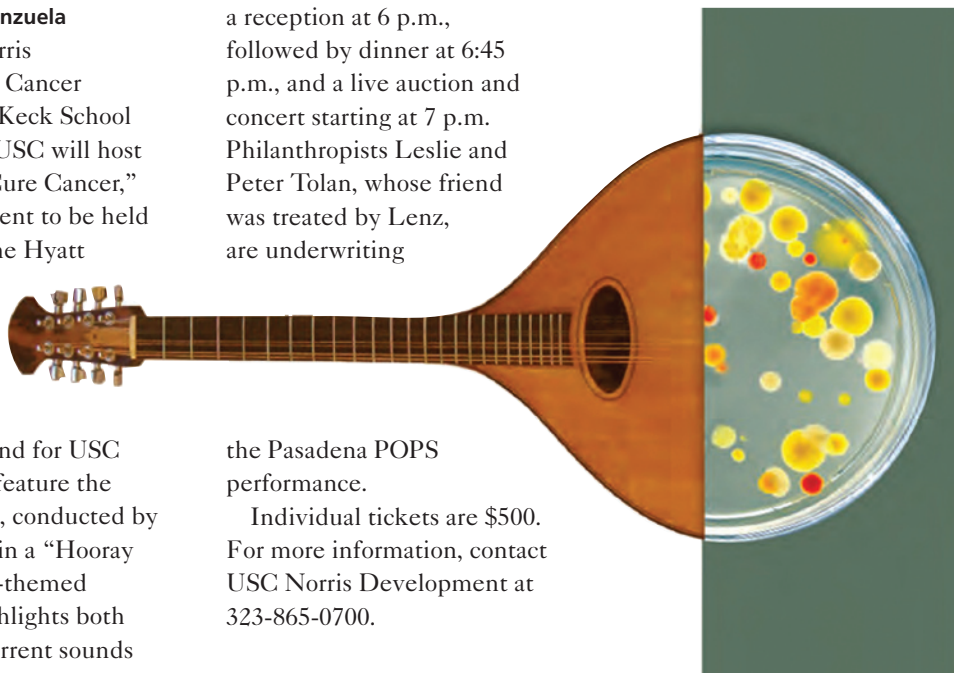
a reception at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:45 p.m., and a live auction and concert starting at 7 p.m. Philanthropists Leslie and Peter Tolan, whose friend was treated by Lenz, are underwriting

the Pasadena POPS performance.

Individual tickets are \$500. For more information, contact USC Norris Development at 323-865-0700.

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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.