

Healthful foods are on the menu at new teaching garden



Jon Nalick

Author and Wolfgang Puck Worldwide pastry chef Sherry Yard demonstrates how to whip up nutritious, but tasty, foods using fresh-from-the-garden ingredients.

By Imelda Valenzuela

With broccoli, beets, bell peppers and other vegetables and herbs, the Keck School of Medicine planted its first “teaching garden” in the courtyard of the Center for Health Professions building March 30 with fifth graders from south Los Angeles’ Nevin Avenue Elementary School.

“We’re here to learn about nutrition and eating well, and that really starts with eating green things,” said Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito, who planted heirloom beans from his grandmother’s garden in Italy. “One way to stay healthy is to



Jon Nalick

Students from Sheridan Elementary School plant fresh basil, cilantro, tomatoes and other fruits, herbs and vegetables at the newly installed teaching garden in the Center for Health Professions courtyard.

eat lots of vegetables. It’s even better when you grow them yourself because then you’re connected with those vegetables. It’s a great thing to do to stay healthy.”

The Teaching Garden is a collaborative project aimed at

fighting childhood obesity by helping school-age children learn about food through planting a garden.

Inspired by First Lady Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move!” campaign, the Teaching Garden was co-founded

in Los Angeles by philanthropist Kelly Chapman Meyer, co-founder of the Women’s Cancer Research Fund and wife of Universal Studios’ president and chief operating officer, Ron Meyer.

“For us, being able to

stand here on the campus of a world-class medical institution that is doing world-class research for cancer and many other diseases, is amazing,” said Meyer. “To have the dean of the Keck School of

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New Rapid Response Team offers speedy care anywhere on campus

By Tania Chatila

A newly launched team of clinical care providers is making strides in minimizing the need for 911 response within the USC medical enterprise.

Launched by the USC hospitals earlier this year, the Rapid Response Team provides assessment and initial treatment to outpatients and other visitors who may need medical assistance while on the USC University Hospital campus. Administrators say the main goal of this new initiative is to provide more timely response to non-inpatients who may need urgent care, and to reduce the number of 911 calls made from campus clinics and other areas.

“Patients who come here do so for a reason,” said James Buck, program coordinator for the Rapid Response Team. “They come for the quality care and expertise that USC is known for. So instead of calling 911 and having our



Jon Nalick

From left: Zak Zargarian, clinical coordinator of respiratory therapy; physician Wei-I Vickie Wu; James Buck, EMP program coordinator; pharmacist Gary Shanklin.

patients taken elsewhere, we want to keep them within the care of the USC family.”

When paged, the 24/7 Rapid Response Team is always made up of the same core group of patient care providers—a physician, a registered nurse from the Evaluation and Treatment Clinic, a respiratory therapist and a pharmacist. They have access to crash carts, defibrilla-

tors and gurneys, and together they will treat anyone on the USC University Hospital campus who is not already admitted to the hospital. This includes outpatients, visitors or staff in Healthcare Consultation Centers I and II, the Doheny Eye Institute, the hospital parking structure and all hospital-based clinics. The team also responds to USC

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‘Instead of calling 911 and having our patients taken elsewhere, we want to keep them within the care of the USC family.’

—James Buck, program coordinator for the Rapid Response Team

Renowned mountaineers to offer lessons on leadership

Mountaineers Conrad Anker and Geoff Tabin will visit the Health Sciences Campus on April 26 to discuss the challenges of mountain climbing and medicine. Hosted by Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito, the lecture will be held in Aresty Auditorium at 6 p.m. following a wine and cheese reception at 5:30 p.m.

Anker is an author famous for his challenging ascents in the high Himalaya and Antarctica. Tabin is a professor of ophthalmology at the University of Utah and co-founder of the Himalayan Cataract Project.

For more information, call the Office of Events at (323) 865-3804.

Peter Jones honored by the Norris Auxiliary for 18 years of leadership

‘Cancer is a survivable disease—and it’s a frightening disease, but I think we should all think of what we’ve done as a group to actually make cancer a disease of the past.’

—Peter Jones, director of USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center

By Imelda Valenzuela

The Norris Auxiliary recently raised \$26,000 for the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center at a luncheon and silent auction held in honor of Peter Jones, director of the center.

Held March 14 at the California Club in Los Angeles, the event was the first official retirement event for Jones, who announced in November that he intends to leave his leadership position in order to pursue his passion for epigenetics research.

“I’ve worked with Peter for only three years now, and he has done tremendous things for the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center over many years,” said Dean Carmen A. Puliafito of the Keck School of Medicine of USC. “Building on the firm founda-

tion Peter has created, there’s going to be a lot of excitement at the cancer center over the next few years, new programs, new positions and new space. The cancer center at USC is going to be charging ahead, and I know that Peter is going to be there helping us all the way.”

William (Bill) Watson, vice president for Health Sciences Campus development, who has worked with Jones over much of his career, gave the keynote speech.

“Following Peter’s lead, there’s been a lot of great success in the history of the USC Norris. The USC Norris has 25 endowed chairs, our endowment has grown hugely over the years and as a result of all of this, the USC Norris has remained a jewel of the Health Scienc-

es Campus,” said Watson.

Watson also discussed Jones’ life-saving cancer research. “I can’t think of anything better to do than to be able to get to a point in your career where you are saving lives, and that’s what Peter’s been able to do in his over 30 years of research.”

Jones received a standing ovation as he stood to address the crowd. He said, “What have we done in 18 years at the USC Norris? We’ve built capital buildings, we’ve recruited some of the greatest faculty in the world, we’ve increased our clinical footprint, and we’ve made ourselves one of the top cancer research centers in the United States.

“Cancer is a survivable disease—and it’s a frightening disease, but I think we should all think of what

we’ve done as a group to actually make cancer a disease of the past. We haven’t done it yet, but we will do it eventually. We will detect it earlier, we will prevent it better, we will come up with better therapies—this is what a cancer center is all about.”

Others in attendance included Harlyne Norris, life member, USC Board of Trustees, and chair of the Norris Advisory Board, and Lorna Reed, founding president of the Norris Auxiliary.

Proceeds from the event will be directed to the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center Auxiliary’s Endowment.

The endowment supports the cancer center in its mission of performing clinical cancer research protocols for its patients.

Symptoms of PTSD vary in effect on quality of life

By Suzanne Wu

In the case of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), not all symptoms are created equal.

In an effort to better treat PTSD, a study published March 1 in the journal *Psychiatric Services* is the first to examine which problems associated with PTSD actually correspond to lower quality of life, as indicated by the patient’s willingness to die sooner or to risk life-threatening treatment to relieve their symptoms.

“To our knowledge, this is the first study to ask actual patients with PTSD about their health preferences,” said lead author Jason Doctor, associate professor of pharmaceutical economics and policy at the USC School of Pharmacy. “These findings identify targets for treatment that may improve quality of life among people with PTSD.”

The researchers found that, of four major symptoms associated with PTSD, not all were associated with a patient’s immediate quality of life, even though those who sought treatment for PTSD expressed significant overall declines in mental health.

Distressing recollections of a traumatic

event and avoidance of certain activities and thoughts—both commonly conceived of as dysfunctional behaviors—had little correlation to a patient’s reported sense of well-being, according to the study.

However, symptoms tied to heightened arousal—such as trouble sleeping, irritability and vigilance—were associated with lower quality of life among PTSD patients. Anxiety and depression were also associated with lower quality of life.

“We conjecture that although avoidance is an important aspect of PTSD, its effect on quality of life may be limited because it is a coping strategy. Avoidance may be a dysfunction that improves, in the short term, subjective well-being,” explained Doctor.

The researchers found that, on average, a patient with PTSD was willing to give up 13.6 years of his or her life to live unburdened by the symptoms of the disorder.

On average, those with PTSD were willing to accept a treatment with up to a 13 percent chance of immediate death in order to achieve total relief of PTSD symptoms.



MINI-MEDICAL SCHOOL—Keck School of Medicine student a cappella group, Chorda Tympani (above) gets medical school parents fired up with their rendition of “Fight On” at the annual Parents’ Association Mini-Medical School event on March 24.

Sara Reeve

RESPONSE: Enhancing patient care

Continued from page 1
Norris Cancer Hospital after 7 p.m.

Since launching, the team has been paged several times, including one page involving a clinic patient who had a seizure in HCC I.

“In the past, a case like that probably would have required a 911 call and our patient would have been taken elsewhere to be treated at another hospital,” said Buck, who is a trained emergency medical technician and a volunteer fireman. “With the Rapid Response Team, we were able to respond, assess the situation and we admitted the patient to USC University Hospital, where he was able to receive the care he is accustomed to.”

Buck pointed out the level of care that patient received with the Rapid Response Team versus 911 response. “Paramedics are trained to do

a lot, but with Rapid Response you are getting an experienced doctor, a pharmacist who can administer medications on the spot, a highly trained nurse—the level of care is stronger.”

Plans to get the Rapid Response Team off the ground have been months in the making. The effort was led by Annette Sy, associate administrator of ambulatory care.

“I’m so excited to have finally launched this important initiative,” Sy said. “We’re very confident that the Rapid Response Team is already enhancing the level of care for everyone on the USC University Hospital campus.”

To activate the Rapid Response Team, call the Evaluation and Treatment Clinic at (323) 442-9922 and provide the ETC nurse with your name, callback phone number, location and a brief description of the situation.

The Weekly

Next Issue: April 22

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Associate Senior Vice President, Health Sciences Public Relations and Marketing: Jane Brust

Executive Director of Communications: Ina Fried

Assistant Director of Publications: Sara Reeve

Editor: Jon Nalick

Contributors: Ryan Ball, Eva Blaauw, Tania Chatila, Gabrielle Olya, Leslie Ridgeway, Imelda Valenzuela and Suzanne Wu

Senior Vice President, University Relations: Martha Harris



Phone: 323-442-2830 Fax: 323-442-2832

E-mail: hscwkl@usc.edu Web: theweekly.usc.edu RSS: http://www.usc.edu/hscw

GARDEN: Elementary school kids “pay it forward” building gardens

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Medicine of USC talk about the importance of good food and nutrition as a pathway to health and breaking it down to the fact about eating your own green vegetables is mind-boggling, and we are ever-grateful.”

Much of the Teaching Garden’s focus is on nutrition and exercise. Jaimie Davis, assistant professor of preventive medicine and lead investigator with the Childhood Obesity Research Center at the Keck School of Medicine, conducted a nutrition lesson that demonstrated healthy alternatives to sugar-heavy sodas for the students.

The USC Trojan Band joined the celebration, along with Sherry Yard, executive pastry chef for Wolfgang Puck Worldwide, who was on-hand to show that “you can eat dessert and it can still be good for you.” Among those attending were Marion Laurie, co-founder of

the Women’s Cancer Research Fund and board member of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center advisory board, and eight Keck School students who volunteer with the garden.

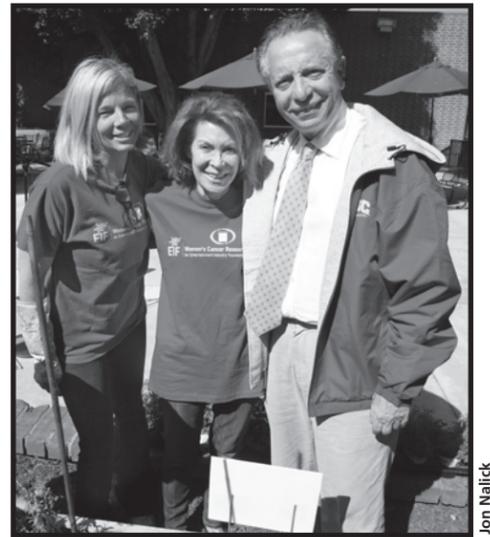
In less than a year since the inception of the Teaching Garden, celebrities including actor Tobey Maguire, best known for his role in the “Spider-Man” films; Los Angeles Laker Derek Fisher; Cat Cora of Food Network’s “Iron Chef”; and former professional volleyball player Gabrielle Reese have signed-on to promote the Teaching Garden. The American Heart Association has adopted the program as part of its prevention campaign and is working to launch the program nationwide.

The Teaching Garden collaborates with entities such as the Farmer-Veteran Coalition, an organization that helps returning veterans find work and training opportunities in the thriving

organic farming industry. The veterans from the Farmer-Veteran Coalition helped build the raised planter boxes used by the Keck School’s teaching garden. Helping with the construction were fifth graders from Malibu’s Point Dume Marine Science Elementary School, where Teaching Garden co-founder Chi Kim is principal.

Members from the coalition who help build gardens in other elementary schools are pivotal in sustaining the gardens and often return for “salad days” during which they show students how to prepare salads from the vegetables they have grown.

As recipients of teaching gardens themselves, students from both Point Dume and Nevin Elementary participated in the teaching garden at USC’s academic medical center as a way of “paying it forward”—a tenet of the Teaching Garden.



From left: Kelly Chapman Meyer and Marion Laurie, co-founders of the Women’s Cancer Research Fund—a program of the Entertainment Industry Foundation—and Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito get their hands dirty at the Teaching Garden.

Jon Nalick

USC School of Pharmacy’s Kids’ Day encourages good choices and healthy living

By Gabrielle Olya

The USC School of Pharmacy hosted children from El Cerrito Middle School on March 4 as part of the 14th annual Kids’ Day held on the Health Sciences campus.

Organized by the school’s Skull & Mortar Honorary Service Fraternity, the event welcomed children to participate in all-day workshops and activities

intended to teach them health and well-being lessons, while also encouraging them to consider future careers in health care.

This year’s theme was “Safari Dreams,” and the School of Pharmacy lobby was decorated with handcrafted lions, giraffes, hippos and safari jeeps.

The event included educational workshops that

covered topics relevant to the students from El Cerrito, such as avoiding gangs, healthy living, resisting substances, safe sex and how to start a career in the health professions. The day also involved interactive games and prizes.

During the lunch break, the youngsters watched skits and dances performed by members of Skull & Mortar.

Student coordinator Angela

Lee, a Pharm.D. candidate, hopes the children walked away with a few lessons.

“The ultimate goal of Kids’ Day is not only to educate these middle-school students, but also to have them associate what they learned with the positive experiences they had and the role models that they met during the event,” she said.

Kids’ Day aims to provide

fundamental knowledge that will encourage the children to make well-informed decisions regarding education, health and relationships.

Funding for this year’s event was provided by CVS Pharmacy, Supervalu, the Los Angeles Rotary Club, the USC Graduate and Professional Student Senate, the USC School of Pharmacy and Q-gifts.

USC Football players come to HSC

Join USC Football Head Coach Lane Kiffin and his players as they visit HSC Pappas Quad on April 20 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Enjoy performances from the USC Spirit of Troy Band and the USC Song Girls. Coaches and players will speak to the HSC community and be available for autographs and photos.

Season ticket information will be provided during the rally and can be purchased on-site.

All purchases will be eligible for the Game Day Experience prior to the Spring Game. Don’t miss your chance to be part of this special event as the USC Health Sciences Campus welcomes Trojan Football.

The Weekly NEWSMAKERS

In an Associated Press story on April 1, *The Washington Post* profiled **Drew Pinsky**, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, whose new talk show “Dr. Drew” debuted on the HLN network April 1. The Canadian Press also covered the story.

An April 6 Asian News International story covered trials of online support for depression and anxiety, in which students from the Keck School of Medicine of USC and Yale University participated. ABC News (Australia) also covered the trials.

In an Associated Press article on April 5, *The Washington Post* reported that USC University Hospital has reopened its kidney transplant program, which was temporarily shut down after an error. The news was also covered by another Associated Press story, ABC News and two *Los Angeles Times* articles.

An April 8 *Times-Picayune* story reported that **Jonathan Samet**, professor and chair of the department of preventive medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, led a National Research Council committee that reviewed the EPA’s draft assessment of the potential health effects of formaldehyde.

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Calendar of Events

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

Tuesday, Apr. 19

Noon. Psychiatry Grand Rounds. "An Update on the Genetics of PTSD," Colin Dias, USC. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-4065

Wednesday, Apr. 20

8:30 a.m. Women in Management Workshop. "PowerPoint: How it Can Work Best for You," Stacy Patterson, USC. CHP 102. Info: (323) 442-1865

11 a.m. – 1 p.m. USC Athletics Football Pep Rally. Join USC Football Head Coach Lane Kiffin and the USC Football Team as they visit HSC. Enjoy performances from the USC Spirit of Troy Band the USC Song Girls. HSC Pappas Quad. Info: (323) 442-2830

Thursday, Apr. 21

10:30 a.m. LAC+USC Medical Center Emergency Room Renaming Celebration. IPT Conference Rooms A & B. Info: (323) 409-6899

Noon. "Reactive Nitrogen Species in Acetaminophen Hepatotoxicity," Jack Hinson, University of Arkansas. HMR 100. Info: (323) 442-1283

Friday, Apr. 22

11 a.m. Hematology Grand Rounds. "Red Cell Pretransfusion Testing: Past, Present and Future," Ira Shulman, USC. IPT C2J103. Info: (323) 226-7879

Noon. Medicine Grand Rounds. "Renal Transplant," Joel Angel, USC. IPT Conference Rm. B. Info: (323) 226-7556

Tuesday, Apr. 26

6 p.m. "Leadership Lessons from the Top of the World," Conrad Anker, American mountaineer, environmentalist and author. Geoff Tabin, Univ. of Utah. Wine and cheese reception at 5:30 p.m. NRT Aresty Auditorium. Info: (323) 865-3804

Thursday, Apr. 28

5:15 p.m. Vladimir Zelman Distinguished and Endowed Lectureship. "Fragile Brains, the Young & the Old," James Cottrell, SUNY Downstate Medical Ctr. NRT Aresty Aud. Reception begins at 4:30 p.m. Info: (323) 409-6856

Friday, Apr. 29

6:45 – 8:30 a.m. Anesthesiology Grand Rounds. "Preoperative Aneurysm Management," James Cottrell, SUNY Downstate Medical Ctr. MCH 256. Info: (323) 409-6856

8 a.m. Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Grand Rounds. "Nevoid Melanoma: Beware!" Scott Binder, UCLA. NOR 7409. Info: (323) 442-1180

Tuesday, May 10

Noon. Psychiatry Grand Rounds. "Optimization of Psychiatric Care: A Look into Behavioral Causes of Medical Co-Morbidities," Robert Cobb, USC. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-4065

Tuesday, May 24

Noon. Women In Management Seminar. "Heart Disease in Women," Helga Van Herle, USC. NRT LG 503/504. Info: (323) 442-1865

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.

Keck School researcher awarded \$1.1 million for diabetes study

By Jon Nalick

Gregory D. Stevens, assistant professor of family medicine at the Keck School of Medicine, has received a three-year, \$1.1 million grant to study how the delivery of medical services to diabetic adults affects their ability to successfully manage their disease.

Funded by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the study will explore how the delivery of primary care services to diabetic adults influences the quality of care ultimately received by patients—and how well patients adhere to providers' recommendations to successfully manage their condition.

Stevens said, "We think, and there is a body of evidence to suggest, that delivering care in accordance with a 'medical home model' helps to improve patient experiences and may improve patients' receipt of, and response to, appropriate care."

A 'medical home' is a method for delivering care, not a person or place of care. It is about being accessible, developing a relationship with a patient, providing all the care the patient might need and coordinating services when a patient needs more complex or specialized assistance.

Stevens said that changes in how primary care physicians deliver care to their patients are likely to reduce disparities in Type 2 diabetes outcomes for vulnerable adults. While providers may offer good technical quality of care—for example, the clinical services provided and therapeutic recommendations made—there are known deficits in how providers make those services accessible to patients. These deficits also extend to communication with patients about complex management regimens, as well as how care is coordinated with other providers caring for the patients' condition.

To explore the relationships among the setting of care, medical home performance, diabetes services, and control and outcomes for vulnerable adults, the study will collect longitudinal data over 18 months from 100 primary care physicians and 500 of their adult Medicaid patients with diabetes in Los Angeles.

"We will gather the

perspectives of both physicians and their patients in assessing medical home performance, and data on diabetes services, preventive medications, physiologic measures of diabetes risk, and adverse health care utilization related to diabetes," he said.

Stevens is collaborating with Leiyu Shi, a nationally

recognized primary care researcher at Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, and Anne Peters, professor of medicine and director of the USC Clinical Diabetes Program.

The study will be carried out with L.A. Care Health Plan, the largest Medicaid health plan in the nation.



TAKEN FOR GRANITE

Keck School of Medicine students scramble up a faux rock wall on March 22 as part of Dean Carmen A. Puliafito's study break at "Camp Keck." The event at Harry and Celesta Pappas Quad featured climbing, arts and crafts, and a barbecue lunch. About 450 attended the event, and more than 50 scaled the wall.

Jon Nalick

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