

USC kicks off ambitious \$6 billion fundraising campaign

'This campaign is ultimately an investment in people—faculty and students of unmatched ability and ambition.'

—USC President C. L. Max Nikias



Steve Cohn Photography

Mark S. Humayun, professor of biomedical engineering and cell and neurobiology at the Keck School and USC Viterbi School of Engineering, addresses USC supporters at the Sept. 16 campaign kick off event at Bovard Auditorium.

By Imelda Valenzuela

USC launched its unprecedented \$6 billion fundraising campaign amid a full house of enthusiastic supporters in Bovard Auditorium at the University Park Campus Sept. 16.

The Campaign for the University of Southern California is the biggest fundraising campaign to date in the history of American higher education. It aims to secure \$6 billion or more in private philanthropy for the university.

"This campaign is ultimately an investment in people—faculty and students of unmatched ability and ambition," said USC President C. L. Max Nikias. "This campaign will allow us to continue to bring the best people to this campus, so they can do their best work together here. USC has been on the move to an ultimate destination that is within reach: undisputed, academically world-class status."

Nikias noted the momentum of the campaign as he announced that USC has raised a total of \$1.2 billion so far, the most of any American university ever over the course of a single year.

Mark S. Humayun, professor of biomedical engineering and cell and neurobiology at the Keck School of Medicine and USC Viterbi School of Engineering and associate director of research at the Doheny Retina Institute of USC, was a featured speaker at the event.

Humayun discussed a revolutionary artificial retina implant that is restoring partial vision to the blind as well as "leapfrog" technologies that foster new devices and therapies to aid people with other neurological impairments.

"This campaign can clearly accelerate what we can do at the intersection of engineering and medicine and transform human health," he said.

USC researchers find link between language development, autism

By Sara Reeve

Researchers at the Keck School of Medicine's Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute, with other scientists, have identified a genetic connection between language and brain development and the autism candidate gene, MET.

In the paper, "Regulation of MET by FOXP2, Genes Implicated in Higher Cognitive Dysfunction and Autism Risk," published on Aug. 10 in the *Journal of Neuroscience*, scientists report that the protein FOXP2, which is linked to human speech and language development, is responsible for regulating MET.

This study allowed researchers "to determine [that] an important gene that increases risk for language disorders may work together with a gene that increases risk for autism, in order to influence the wiring for brain circuits at risk in these disorders," said Pat Levitt, director of the Zilkha Neurogenetic

Institute, and co-investigator on the study.

MET regulates neuronal differentiation and growth, and previous studies have linked variations in MET to an increased risk of autism. Levitt's colleagues at UCLA—led by Daniel Geschwind—mapped the gene's expression in brain tissue and found it predominantly in the temporal lobes, an area of the brain related to the understanding of language, and social and emotional cues.

Manipulation of FOXP2 in the laboratory showed researchers that the protein plays an important role in the regulation of MET expression. The study states that while there is no evidence of a direct link between variations in FOXP2 and increased autism risk, the evidence grows for an indirect relationship, through its regulation of other autism-linked genes.

"Most autisms are not caused by problems with

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Report touts key accomplishments of USC hospitals

By Tania Chatila

The USC hospitals topped off a successful second year under USC ownership with increased admissions, higher revenues and a host of achievements related to staff, facilities and clinical development.

The successes are outlined in a recent executive report published by the hospitals, and include the significant accomplishment of creating a three-year strategic plan for the entire medical center. It also highlights patient success stories and accolades from physicians and staff, as well as the W. M. Keck Foundation's \$150 million gift to name the medical center.

"At its core, this last year has truly been about reaching our goal of becoming a trusted, compassionate and innovative provider of care for

the patients and families we serve," said hospitals CEO Mitch Creem. "We devoted ourselves to organizing and delivering personalized care to our patients, celebrating and empowering our employees and faculty and preparing for the new future of health care."

During fiscal year 2010-2011 (July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011), hospital admissions increased 7 percent, surgeries increased 9 percent and net patient revenue grew 17 percent. The hospitals also continued heavy recruitment of expert staff, including 18 new faculty physicians and nearly 300 new hires, bringing the total number of hospital staff members to 2,415.

"All the people at the USC hospitals are just wonderful," said Irwin LaMell, who was treated for leukemia at USC University Hospital in 2010.

"They care about the patients, not like some other institutions that treat people and move them on. Everyone has a positive attitude and never forgets that the patients come first. ... The USC hospitals are fortunate to have a facility filled with people who really care about the patients they are charged with."

Other accomplishments of the year include:

- Negotiation and ratification of the first-ever contract between the California Nurses Association and USC, benefiting more than 600 nurses;
- Launch of the Trojan Bootcamp leadership training program for managers and directors;
- The opening of two new surgical units at USC University Hospital;
- A lease on a new multi-

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Success Indicators	7/1/09 - 6/30/10	7/1/10 - 6/30/11	Increase
Admissions	9,481	10,140	7%
Outpatient Surgeries	6,351	6,962	10%
Inpatient Surgeries	5,828	6,316	8%
Total Surgeries	12,179	13,278	9%
Net Patient Revenue	\$460,628,000	\$538,474,000	17%

The figures above, contained in the recent executive report, highlight key signs of progress in boosting the hospitals' revenue and admissions.

Longitudinal primary care curriculum launches at Keck School

By Alison Trinidad

In an effort to woo more medical students into primary care, the Keck School of Medicine has launched a longitudinal curriculum in community medicine that began this school year.

The pilot study, coordinated by the Keck School's Introduction to Clinical Medicine program, consists of 12 first-year medical students who will be able to follow a patient's care through their four years at USC. The students are paired with community faculty mentors who teach them how to develop patient-doctor relationships and spot disease progression over the course of time. The approach runs contrary to the episodic nature of the clinical rotation model historically used at U.S. medical schools.

"Most students will see patients at the hospital but likely will not see them again," said Jo Marie Reilly, associate professor of family medicine and co-director of the Primary Care Community Medicine Program at USC. "In this program, students will be in the same place, have the opportunity to see the same patients and work with the same physicians. We're

bringing in reality to medical education."

Experts project a nationwide shortage of doctors to occur within the next decade if current rates of training do not change. The American Academy of Family Physicians estimates that a typical accredited family medicine residency program would need to increase from an average of 21.7 residents to 24 to meet population demands in 2020.

"We are entering a period of health care reform, which is going to require a greater number of primary care doctors," Reilly said. "Our pilot program is trying to address this problem by educating more students about what kind of career this is. Research shows that students who engage in such programs in med school are more likely to enter a primary care career."

Incoming Keck School students applied for the longitudinal experience in July, and 12 were selected by lottery. In August, they were assigned to community health centers, where they will train during their first two years of school. They will have the option to complete their mandatory third-year clerkship at the same center and follow their patients from the center the

following year. Each is also part of an interdisciplinary team (comprising medical, pharmacy, physical therapy and occupational therapy students) that meets with a geriatric patient at an independent living facility during the first two years of school.

The coursework takes the place of other electives within the school's Introduction to Clinical Medicine program, in which all Keck students participate.

Although literature on longitudinal curricula for family medicine goes back some 20 years, there are barriers to changing the norm, according to The Society of Teachers of Family Medicine. More recently, longitudinal curriculum tracks with multidisciplinary emphases have been gaining traction at universities like Harvard and Cornell, but the focus has been on students' last two years of training. At USC, students start seeing pa-

tients in their first year, which gives them the opportunity to observe how continuity in care can develop over a longer period of time.

"Longitudinal curricula are a new movement in education across the board," said Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito. "The Keck School of Medicine of USC is dedicated to educating and preparing the next generation of academic clinicians using the most innovative techniques available. This pilot program answers a need."

The longitudinal curriculum is an offshoot of the Keck School's Primary Care Community Medicine Program, funded through a grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration. If well received, the curriculum will begin recruiting for its second cohort of students in the summer of 2012.

'We are entering a period of health care reform, which is going to require a greater number of primary care doctors.'

—Jo Marie Reilly, associate professor of family medicine and co-director of the Primary Care Community Medicine Program

Henri Ford honored by Neighborhood Legal Services

Henri Ford, vice dean for medical education at the Keck School of Medicine and vice president and surgeon-in-chief at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, has received the Leadership Award from the Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County (NLSLA).

The award ceremony was hosted by author and NPR commentator Sandra Tsing Loh on Sept. 10 at the Chandelier Ballroom in Arcadia.

"I am deeply touched and humbled to be honored by the NLSLA," said Ford. "As one who has shifted from the pursuit of excellence to the quest for significance, the leadership award is a testament that I am pursuing the correct priorities in trying to make a greater difference in the lives of others. This award is particularly meaningful to me coming from an organization that endeavors to empower, support, represent and advocate for the disenfranchised members of the Los Angeles community."

NLSLA helps impoverished members of the community obtain legal representation, advice and education. Assistance is available at no cost to qualifying residents in the areas of family law, immigration law, administrative (public benefits) law, housing law, employment law, health law and community and consumer law. The group also offers free workshops to assist with tax returns, naturalization applications, worker's rights concerns and foreclosure prevention. More information can be found at www.nls-la.org.

T-shirt sale to support breast cancer research

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and to celebrate, the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and Hospital are offering a specially designed pink T-shirt for purchase now available at any USC Bookstore and the USC hospitals' gift shops.

Proceeds from T-shirt sales will support breast cancer research at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center. You can also purchase them online at uscbookstores.com.



AUTISM: Study focuses on genetic links

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one gene," said Levitt, who is also provost's professor of neuroscience, psychiatry and pharmacy, and chair of the Department of Cell and Neurobiology at the Keck School of Medicine.

He added, "The study shows that previously identified risk genes may actually team up normally to control important aspects of brain development. When these genes together carry mutations that impact their function, together they may create more of a risk for autism than each one individually. This has been the challenge in autism, and even in other

brain disorders—to define the networks of genes that increase disorder risk through their biological relationships."

The study utilized a variety of experimental methods, including analysis of frozen tissue samples and growth of nerve cell progenitors, to produce its results.

"We are nearing a time when we can extend beyond the simple-minded idea of single gene causes of complex brain disorders, thanks to the use of new experimental strategies and important collaborations within and across universities to enhance our chances of important discoveries," said Levitt.

New IT website offers tech discounts

A new website with IT-related applications, reference guides and program discounts is now available for all university employees.

The USC Health Sciences Information Technology page—hsit.usc.edu—offers a reference library where users can access helpful guides and manuals on widely used campus programs, such as Cerner, Lawson, Citrix, Kronos and other applications.

Also available on the site is a page dedicated to special discounts for employees on programs and services, including: a free home antivirus program; Microsoft Office Professional for your home PC or Mac for \$9.95 (retails at nearly \$500); and monthly specials on Dell computers.

The Weekly

Next Issue: Sept. 30

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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Medical homes linked to better health, school performance

By Alison Trinidad

Undocumented children who have access to health insurance are healthier and more engaged in school than those without insurance, according to researchers at the Keck School of Medicine.

Their data is the first to show a direct health benefit to children from what primary care practitioners call a “medical home,” which is medical care that is accessible, continuous, comprehensive, coordinated, family-centered, compassionate and culturally effective.

“If you can connect kids to medical homes, there are potentially big payoffs,” said Gregory D. Stevens, assistant professor of family medicine at the Keck School and lead author of two recently published studies about medical homes. “We found that there is a strong association between high-quality medical care and health improvement and school engagement.”

A family-centered medical home, as defined by the American Academy of Pediatrics, is not a building or service, but an approach to provide patients with comprehensive primary care. Dubbed by some as the future of family medicine, the medical home and other patient care models are encouraged in the health reforms passed into law by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010.

While those health reforms do not apply to undocumented immigrants, co-authors Stevens and Michael R. Cousineau, associate professor of research in the Keck School’s Department of Family Medicine, were tasked with evaluating the efficacy of Healthy Kids, a decade-old county-led program that provides affordable health insurance for children of low-



Patricia Casas, a dental technician at Alliance Medical Center in Northern California, prepares a Healthy Kids patient for a dental cleaning.

Ray Holley/Alliance Medical Center

income families who do not qualify for state insurance programs like Medi-Cal and Healthy Families—namely, undocumented children.

At the time of data collection in 2009, Healthy Kids was offered in 24 of 58 California counties, providing about 70,700 children statewide with comprehensive medical, dental and vision coverage.

The researchers surveyed 4,011 children from 21 of the 24 Healthy Kids programs (including the largest in Los Angeles). The sample consisted mostly of Latino children in low-income, undocumented and predominantly Spanish-speaking families. Nearly 95 percent of the 2,230 families actually reached cooperated. The sample was divided into three groups: established enrollees (in the program for one year or longer), new enrollees (less than one year) and children on a waiting list.

In a study that appears in the September issue of *Medical Care*, the researchers found that those enrolled in Healthy Kids were more likely to have a regular source of health care and reported better medical home experiences than the children on a waiting list. Children who were enrolled in the program for more than a year reported the best medical home experiences among the three groups.

In a separate study that was published online by Health Services Research, the researchers found that children who reported better medical home experiences missed fewer days at school and performed better overall, in math and in reading. Among measured indicators of medical home quality, access was most strongly associated with improved health and school engagement.

“It supports the argument to keep providing affordable health insurance

for undocumented kids,” said Stevens. “Since these children are going to be left out of health care reform, the studies show the unique value of these public-private programs—like Healthy Kids—that were created to give them coverage.”

Public health officials say they agree. “These families who have no other access to health insurance, they are so grateful to get their child into the health care system,” said Kena Burke, former director of the Healthy Kids program in San Luis Obispo, Calif. “For the most part, children are well. But, if they contract an ear infection or common cold, and their parents don’t have access to insurance and have to pay cash — economic choices have to be made: Should I pay rent or give medical care to my children? It’s hard.”

Due to reduced funding, the Healthy Kids program has shrunk in some counties. But Alison Lobb, an analyst with California Coverage & Health Initiatives (the state association of local organizations that connect low-income people with health insurance), says they are exploring alternatives to keep all kids—regardless of immigration status or income—connected to medical homes.

“We won’t abandon these kids who can’t take advantage of these health reforms,” Lobb said. “We feel the ideal way is through insurance coverage, but when that’s not possible, we are seeking other ways of connecting kids with care—and we feel the medical home is the ideal way to do it.”

Stevens and Cousineau’s research was funded by The California Endowment, a private health foundation, and First 5 California, a tobacco tax-funded state agency focused on providing children’s services.

REPORT: Highlights include acquisition of new clinics, addition of new satellite locations in community

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disciplinary Doctors of USC satellite location in Pasadena, with more than 20,000 square feet of licensed clinical space;

- Focused efforts on expanded development of the Patient Experience Department;

- Build out of an integrated, centralized medical call center for the clinical enterprise;

- Implementation of a Hospitalist program to provide

guaranteed, around-the clock coverage by a USC faculty physician at USC University Hospital;

- Acquisition of four new hospital-based clinics;

- Build out of a robust, comprehensive Electronic Health Network (EHN) that will serve as an up-to-date, all-encompassing patient-centered record;

- Opening of a Doctors of USC satellite location in La

Canada; and more.

Physicians and staff alike agree the accomplishments are testaments to the increasing level of collaboration within the medical center.

“There is a new sense of teamwork between physicians, nurses and other employees,” said nurse Veronica Acevedo. “The boundaries that were here before have come down—the walls are down—and now we’re working

together to move forward and do what we can to provide our patients with the best possible care.”

Edward D. Crandall, chair of the Department of Medicine, echoed Acevedo’s sentiments, specifically referring to the three-year strategic plan that focuses on organizational improvements in six key areas: electronic health network, quality health care, patient experience,

employee satisfaction, research and education.

“I am pleased that our faculty and staff have been able to work together so well over the last 12 months, making significant strides in planning the direction of our USC hospitals,” Crandall said. “The commitment to excellence in clinical care, teaching and research is outstanding. ... I am certain of (our) success going forward.”

The Weekly NEWSMAKERS

A Sept. 19 article on the ABC News Good Morning America website featured research led by **Kathleen Page**, assistant professor of clinical medicine in the Keck School’s division of endocrinology, who found that low blood sugar influences the body’s ability to resist high-calorie food, especially in obese people. “Our results suggest that obese individuals may have a limited ability to inhibit the impulsive drive to eat, especially when glucose levels drop below normal,” Page told *Daily Mail* (U.K.).

The study was also featured by *Time*, Reuters, *Consumer Reports*, CBC News (Canada), *The Globe and Mail* (Canada), HealthDay News and MyHealthNewsDaily.

A Sept. 17 article by United Press International featured a study led by **Sue Ann Ingles**, associate professor of preventive medicine at the Keck School of Medicine, and **Gloviell W. Rowland**, a post-doctoral fellow in the Keck School’s Department of Preventive Medicine. They found that a high intake of calcium is associated with prostate cancer among African-American men who are genetically good absorbers of the mineral. Men who reported the highest intake of calcium were two times more likely to have localized and advanced prostate cancer than those who reported the lowest consumption, the story reported. *Asian News International* and Heal Blog also featured the research.

A Sept. 15 broadcast on CBS News affiliate KCAL-9 covered the successful kidney transplant from one friend to another at the USC Transplant Institute of USC University Hospital.

A Sept. 15 article by Reuters featured research by **Howard Hodis**, professor of medicine and director of the Atherosclerosis Research Unit, that found soy supplements may not prevent artery hardening among postmenopausal women. “If a woman goes on this stuff, especially at this dosage ... she still needs to see her gynecologist,” Hodis said. “Those things need to be monitored.”

Calendar of Events

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

Saturday, Sept. 24

7:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. KSOM Continuing Medical Education Symposium. “Multimodality Treatment of Brain Cancer: Current Concepts and Recent Advances,” Various speakers. Tuition is \$75. Los Angeles Marriott Hotel. Info: (800) 872-1119

Tuesday, Sept. 27

4:45 p.m. – 7 p.m. Cancer Center Grand Rounds. New time and format. Joe Gray, Knight Cancer Institute, and Peter Laird, USC. NRT Aresty Aud. Info: (323) 865-0801

Wednesday, Sept. 28

8:30 a.m. “Exercise 1,” Ami Oren, USC. IRD 732-734. Info: (323) 226-7923

4 p.m. – 6 p.m. Center for Excellence in Research. “DoD/DoE/NASA Young Investigator Proposal Workshop,” James Murday, USC. UPC: RTH 526. Info: (213) 740-6709

Thursday, Sept. 29

Noon. Immigrant Health Initiative Seminar. “Health Disparities and the Immigrant Health Initiative,” William Vega, USC. UPC: TCC 450. Info: (323) 442-1636

Noon. Research Center for Liver Diseases Seminar. “Maf1: A New Molecular Link Between Metabolism and Cancer,” Deborah Johnson, USC. HMR 100. Info: (323) 442-1283

Friday, Sept. 30

8 a.m. Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Grand Rounds. “The Role of Heat Shock Proteins in Hepatitis C Viral Infection,” Samuel French, UCLA. NOR 7409. Info: (323) 442-1180

8:30 a.m. “Exercise II,” Ami Oren, USC. IRD 732-734. Info: (323) 226-7923

3 p.m. – 5 p.m. Program in Medical Humanities, Arts and Ethics Seminar. “The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness,” Elyn Saks, USC. KAM Mayer Aud. Info: (323) 442-1763

Noon. Center for Excellence in Teaching Seminar. “Regulating Laptops in the Classroom,” James Green & Michelle Tomkoviczs, USC. UPC: Leavy Library Aud. Info: (213) 740-9040

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 email 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.

Monday, Oct. 3 – Wednesday, Oct. 5

7 a.m. – 5 p.m. 2011 World Stem Cell Summit. Various speakers and presenters. Pasadena Convention Center. Info: (323) 442-2605

Wednesday, Oct. 5

Noon. Center for Excellence in Research. “Technologies for Empowering Research Collaboration Across & Beyond the Institution,” Susan Metros, USC. UPC: HNB 100. Info: (213) 740-6709

Friday, Oct. 7

6:30 a.m. “Fluid Management in Clinical Practice: One Size Does Not Fit All,” Gerard Manecke, UC San Diego. MCH 256. Info: (323) 409-6856

Noon. Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar. “Genetic Knockout of Pept1 and Pept2 in Mice: Impact on Peptide/Mimetic ADMET and Pharmacologic Response,” David Smith, University of Michigan. PSC 104. Info: (323) 442-1445

Saturday, Oct. 8

8 a.m. – 6 p.m. The 10th Annual Moving Target Symposium. “Aging and Oxidative Stress,” Various speakers. UPC: Davidson Conference Ctr. Info: (323) 442-2157

Monday, Oct. 10

9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Molecular Microbiology and Immunology and Institute for Emerging Pathogens and Immune Diseases Symposium. “30 Years of HIV/AIDS – An LA Perspective,” Various speakers. Broad Center 1st Floor Conference Rm. Info: (323) 442-1710

Tuesday, Oct. 11

Noon. Psychiatry Grand Rounds. “Does the Practice of Geriatric Neuropsychopharmacology Constitute Fraud, Assault and Racketeering Despite its Substantial Evidence-base?” Lon Schneider, USC. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-4065

Tuesday, Oct. 25

Noon. Psychiatry Grand Rounds. “Publicly-funded Outpatient Care for Childhood ADHD,” Bonnie Zima, UCLA. GSC 250. Info: (323) 442-4065

MEET THE NEW KECK SCHOOL FACULTY COUNCIL

The Keck School of Medicine hosted a town hall meeting Sept. 13 to discuss the function and purpose of the new nine-member Faculty Council, which aims to promote excellence in clinical care, research and education.

Right, Yves DeClerck, the first president of the council, introduces his fellow council members: Ron Ben-Ari, Paula Cannon, Peter Conti, Glenn Ehresmann, Charles Gomer, Donald Larsen, Victoria Marx and Paul Pattengale.



Jon Nalick

Hamm-Alvarez, El-Khoueiry join CTSI leadership

By Ryan Ball

Thomas Buchanan, director of the Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), has announced that the CTSI has added two new members to its leadership team. Sarah Hamm-Alvarez has joined as director of the Office of Research Development (ORD), and Anthony El-Khoueiry is now serving as interim director of the Center for Human Studies (CHS).

Hamm-Alvarez brings key experience in team building and research development in her roles as chair of the Department of Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and as associate dean for Research Affairs for the USC School of Pharmacy.

She also leads a nationally recognized team conducting translational research in the area of lacrimal gland function and the diagnosis and treatment of dry eye syndromes. Hamm-Alvarez replaces Carlos Pato, who directed the ORD during its initial year of funding under the CTSI’s Clinical and Translational Science Award from the National Institutes of Health.

“We are really excited to have Sarah join our team,” said Buchanan. “She has a wealth of experience in translational research, and she has some great ideas for creating and advancing new interdisciplinary research teams. She will definitely help the CTSI

create a culture of translational research at USC and across the CTSI partnership.”

The ORD is charged with identifying needs and opportunities in clinical and translational science, putting together interdisciplinary teams to address those needs and opportunities, and overseeing the CTSI pilot grant program.

El-Khoueiry comes to CTSI with extensive experience in clinical trials support through his roles as director of the Clinical Investigations Support Office and director of the phase I drug development program in the USC Norris

Comprehensive Cancer Center. The nationally recognized investigator in hepatobiliary cancers replaces Fred Sattler, who established the CHS during development of the CTSI and directed the CHS during the initial year of funding.

“Anthony has real vision and talent when it comes to supporting high-quality clinical research,” Buchanan noted. “He will provide crucial leadership in the transition from the GCRC model to the new Clinical Trials Units that are at the heart of the CTSI Center for Human Studies.”

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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.