



**DIWALI DANCING**—First-year Keck School of Medicine student Ruth Montes performs at Harry and Celesta Pappas Quad on Nov. 21 as part a student celebration of Diwali Day. Diwali is the annual Indian festival of lights that signifies the victory of good over evil.

## Peter Jones receives American Cancer Society's top honor

By Leslie Ridgeway

The American Cancer Society (ACS) has awarded Peter Jones, former director of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, its highest honor for his contributions in fighting cancer.

The ACS, the nation's leading voluntary health organization and largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, gave Jones its Medal of Honor on Nov. 10 for his research into the epigenetics of the disease.

He shares the award with Stephen Baylin of Johns Hopkins University, with whom he discovered reversible epigenetic silencing of tumor suppressor genes and the stable epigenetic alteration of gene expression.

"It's very unusual for this award to be shared," said Stephen Sener, chief of the division of surgical oncology at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and former national president of the ACS. "I believe the awards committee recognizes that epigenetics and these investigators in particular have made significant advances in discovering the key mechanisms of cancer biology that will be the basis of therapeutics in the near future."

The discovery by Jones and Baylin showed that potentially modifiable lifestyle, dietary and environmental factors play a key role in cancer risk. This has changed the way scientists think about prevention and early detection of cancer and is leading the way toward personalized cancer prevention and

treatment by emphasizing that cancer is not just a genetic disease.

"This honor will not stop with Peter Jones," said Christy Russell, director of the USC Norris Breast Center and a member of the current member of the ACS Cancer Action Network Board of Directors. "It will circulate among those he has trained and will train, to re-gather their scientific plan and move it forward in a more rapid method."



From left, at the American Cancer Society's Nov. 10 event honoring key individuals in the fight against cancer, are: Stephen Sener, chief of the division of surgical oncology at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center; awardee Peter Jones; and Christy Russell, director of the USC Norris Breast Center and a member of the ACS Cancer Action Network Board of Directors.

## Keck Medical Center forms partnership to improve care

By Tania Chatila

Blue Shield of California is providing \$300,000 in support of a groundbreaking partnership between the Keck Medical Center of USC and other local health care entities to provide seamless coordination of care between providers, payers and patients.

The partnership, which takes similar form to an accountable care organization, brings together the two USC-owned hospitals, USC physicians, the Catholic Healthcare West hospital chain and Methodist Hospital of Southern California. Together, they are known as The Greater Los Angeles Care Innovation Corridor, with a goal to expand access to and improve health care through collaboration.

"By bringing together all parts of the delivery of care, we believe we can improve patient safety, outcomes and the overall quality of care for the people we serve," said hospitals CEO Mitch Creem, who was a driving force in the creation of the Greater Los Angeles Care Innovation Corridor. "We're collaborating with our health care partners—physicians, hospitals, health plans and payers—to come up with the best ways to provide health care in our community."

Created in the last year, the Innovation Corridor was one of 18 partnerships across the nation that received money from Blue Shield. For patients, the Innovation Corridor will mean a more engaged, personalized experience when they visit their doctor, see a specialist or are admitted into the hospital for a procedure.

"For most patients right now, you find your own network physician. When you visit their office, they don't know who you are. They refer you to a specialist, and your information isn't carried forward. The experience is very transactional and disjointed," said Sanjit Mahanti, hospitals associate administrator, who is involved in the partnership. "With the Greater Los Angeles Care Innovation Corridor, we're creating a network with providers of care and providers of coverage that is focused on the patient."

USC leaders and experts in the field say this concept could not only improve care,

**'By bringing together all parts of the delivery of care, we believe we can improve patient safety, outcomes and the overall quality of care for the people we serve.'**

**—USC hospitals CEO Mitch Creem**

but also lower costs and expand access to care and coverage. It will also align providers on common goals and provide increased accountability for patients.

"In many ways, it is like what a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) strived to be, but didn't become," said Leslie Margolin, president and chief executive officer of The Margolin Group, the firm that will facilitate the collaboration among USC, the Catholic Healthcare West hospital chain and Methodist Hospital of Southern California.

"To our knowledge, no one in the nation is doing anything as ambitious and breakthrough as this strategy," she said.

She added that although the partnership is still in early stages of development, it is catching the attention of some state and federal legislators. The group is working now to complete a project plan in the next six to 12 months that will help outline specifics of the program and next steps.

"The magnitude of this partnership for patients and for the Keck Medical Center of USC is significant," said Tarek Salaway, executive administrator of surgical services and cardiovascular specialties, who is also involved in getting the Innovation Corridor off the ground.

He added, "When you combine the entities of Catholic Healthcare West hospitals and Methodist Hospital with the USC hospitals and the USC physicians, there are so many lives you can touch, and collectively we can change how care is delivered in the community to make a real difference."



# USC establishes the USC Clinical Research Organization

By Jon Nalick

To better support its research faculty and greatly reduce the length of time it takes to begin clinical studies, the university recently established the USC Clinical Research Organization. Led by Executive Director Steve Mackey, the group has already made substantial improvements in the clinical study process.

“The reason we exist is to facilitate the administrative and financial aspects of clinical research so the scientists can focus on research,” Mackey said.

The Clinical Research Organization performs various clinical research administration tasks—including contracting, Medicare coverage analysis, budgeting, fiscal management, purchasing, interim project staffing and research billing compliance.

Keck School of Medicine Dean Carmen A. Puliafito said that the new organizational structure will improve transparency and accountability, but emphasized that ultimately, “it will provide a new reason for patients to come to USC—to participate in clinical trials that they cannot find elsewhere.”

The new group replaces the Health Research Association (HRA), a wholly owned subsidiary of USC that was founded in 1947 to provide clinical trial support services to the Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center. Because the Clinical Research Organization was created as a unit within the university, it sidesteps the administrative, legal and financial barriers that bogged down the HRA’s clinical study process, Mackey noted.

“The change really brings us into alignment with the University’s strategy for the health sciences,” Mackey said. “It actually brings us into the USC fold so

that our researchers aren’t dealing with an outside organization. As a result, we’re going to be able to service more principal investigators and more contracts without increasing costs.”

The need for a major change stemmed in part from a customer survey that showed researchers’ concerns about the HRA’s administrative process. Specifically, the process for joining multisite clinical trials stretched so long that trials would reach their capacity for human subjects before USC researchers could gain the appropriate contracts and approvals required for participation. Mackey found that the lengthy time frame also meant the HRA was leaving 30 to 50 percent of potential business on the table.

Mackey promised the new group will address those issues: “One of the things I’d like principal investigators to know is that we hear their concerns, and our priority is to fix those problems and focus on enabling them to do their jobs. For investigators who may have stopped using the HRA because it was inefficient, we invite them to come back.”

Mackey added that those researchers already have good reason to return—since the Clinical Research Organization opened in early September, the group has reduced the number of HRA contracts in negotiation over 90 days by more than 25 percent. Additionally, clinical trial start-up times that used to stretch several months or longer have been significantly reduced, with the goal being 60 days from contract execution.

Michael Bowdish, a cardiothoracic sur-

geon at Keck Hospital of USC who recently implanted the first two total artificial hearts in Los Angeles, said, “Steve and his group at CRO did indeed help me put a trial together in a very expeditious fashion. To discharge these patients, an investigational device is required. [Contracts and Grants Manager] Nancy Ingle and her team got the contracting and budget negotiated before I could finish the IRB submission.”

Bowdish’s project is one of about 500 studies involving about 190 investigators currently handled by the Clinical Research Organization. Mackey said he expects the group to handle at least 150 more each year—although he would like to see that number grow.

Moreover, the organization is more focused now on serving as an effective liaison between industry and the clinical research community, facilitating

quick start-ups, developing and enabling strategic partnerships and strengthening relationships between the two by effective communication.

Mackey noted that patients might benefit from the increased contacts between the two groups, because through clinical trials “they will be gaining access to novel treatments and drugs that they otherwise might not. So it’s important that the Clinical Research Organization is fostering these relationships.”

Located at 1640 Marengo St. on the 7th Floor, the Clinical Research Organization can be reached at (323) 223-4091, smackey@usc.edu and <http://keck.usc.edu/CRO>.



Steve Mackey

**‘The reason we exist is to facilitate the administrative and financial aspects of clinical research so the scientists can focus on research.’**

**— Steve Mackey, executive director of the USC Clinical Research Organization**

## USC researchers create database to link molecular mechanisms of disease

By Laurie Moore

Keck School of Medicine and USC Dornsife researchers will help create the world’s most comprehensive database documenting the shared molecular basis of diseases. A \$5.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will fund the study of disease connections as part of a collective of research centers.

Edward Crandall, professor

and chair of the Department of Medicine at the Keck School, and Jasmine Zhou, associate professor of biological sciences and computer science at Dornsife, are co-principal investigators of the five-year grant, funded by the NIH’s National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute.

“We have entered the age of molecular medicine, in which understanding of mechanisms underlying diseases takes on a

more important role in translational/clinical research,” Crandall said. “One of the goals of this work will be to enhance opportunities for personalized treatment strategies based on knowledge of genetic and epigenetic mechanisms involved in each patient’s disease.”

The USC team will establish a coordination center for the consortium of Cross-Organ Mechanism-Associated Phenotypes for Genetic Analysis

(MAPGen), a newly founded collective of research centers that aims to redefine heart, lung, blood and sleep disorders based on their molecular mechanisms at the genetic level.

Each of the consortium’s research centers will focus on examining the mechanisms of individual diseases and relay its findings to the coordination center, called the MAPGen Knowledge Database (MAPGenKB), which will be based at USC.

“Our role is to coordinate activities and integrate the findings of MAPGen to discover the connections among diseases in different organ systems,” said Zhou. “Once we determine the signature

molecular operations of each disease, we can then establish a network of diseases based on their shared molecular mechanisms.” The MAPGenKB group at USC will be responsible for identifying such connections.

Crandall and Zhou will collaborate with Michael Waterman, USC Associates Chair in Natural Sciences and professor of biological sciences, computer science and mathematics at USC Dornsife; Fengzhu Sun, professor of computational biology at USC Dornsife; Preet Chaudhary, professor of medicine at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center; and Andrey Rzhetsky, University of Chicago.

The Weekly

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### CTSI Partnership event set for Dec. 16

Register now for the Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute Partnership Conference, a daylong complimentary, catered conference for clinical and basic researchers and staff. The event will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Dec. 16 at the Hilton Pasadena, 168 S. Los Robles Ave. in Pasadena.

Conference keynote speakers are Thomas A. Buchanan, chief of the Keck School division of endocrinology and diabetes, and Elizabeth McGlynn, director of the Kaiser Permanente Center for Effectiveness and Safety Research. Register online at [www.kpsymposia.com](http://www.kpsymposia.com).

For questions or to RSVP, contact Karen Coleman at [karen.j.coleman@kp.org](mailto:karen.j.coleman@kp.org).

# USC School of Pharmacy to double presence in safety-net clinics, medical homes

By Kukla Vera

The USC School of Pharmacy has announced that it will double its presence in clinics and medical homes that deliver health care services to the uninsured, the poor and the homeless. The school began providing clinical pharmacy services in safety-net clinics in 2002 and currently is a key partner with 12 such clinics in Southern California. The new USC Medication Therapy and Safety Initiative aims to increase the school's coverage to 24 clinics and medical homes by 2013.

USC School of Pharmacy Dean R. Pete Vanderveen said, "The USC School of Pharmacy's work in safety-net clinics enables us to have a direct and positive impact on the city's most at-risk residents. And, since these economic problems face the entire country, we are urging our fellow pharmacy schools to increase their outreach efforts as well." School officials feel this increased commitment to community is desperately needed, with the continuing economic crisis making these clinics even more vital to

meeting the health needs of underprivileged communities, as demand increases and public funding decreases. New census statistics show that more than 15 percent of Americans live below the national poverty level. In California the numbers are even worse, with more than 16 percent in poverty and nearly 20 percent lacking health insurance. Los Angeles County alone is home to more than 2.7 million uninsured. A USC clinical study demonstrates that integrating pharmacy services into safety-net clinics and medical homes results in measurable improvements in care. For example, hypertension patients had reduced blood pressure, and patients with diabetes showed improvements in blood-glucose control. This new initiative recognizes the profession's crucial role in improving patient care. Pharmacists help patients maximize the benefits of their medications by managing

drug therapy and by identifying, preventing and resolving medication-related problems. Pharmaceutical care services include educating and monitoring patients with chronic diseases—such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, high cholesterol and heart failure—who often take multiple medications for their conditions. Once diagnosed by a physician, patients are referred to a staff pharmacist for medication therapy management and ongoing monitoring of their drug regimen. Steven Chen, associate professor of clinical pharmacy and one of the school's leading faculty serving in safety-net clinics, observed that "staff pharmacists, working under protocols, adjust prescribed therapies and provide patient education to help ensure that each patient reaches treatment goals safely and effectively." The improved patient outcomes and cost savings that occur when pharmacists are part of patient-centric,

health care teams have been shown in clinical settings ranging from hospitals to the Department of Veterans Affairs. A healthier population, in turn, should help drive down the health care costs that have risen so alarmingly—by keeping patients healthier and out of the emergency room and hospital. Further, having a pharmacist manage medication therapy for the most complicated patients increases access to health care, as it frees up the physician to see more patients. Pharmacy students and residents benefit from the program as well, since the clinics provide ideal training for a diverse population and a wide range of diseases and conditions. For the faculty members who provide services, the clinics also offer opportunities for research and to collect data regarding health outcomes, medication safety, health literacy and cultural competency that ultimately will lead to further advances in care.



Carol Omouni

**HELPING ENSURE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY**—USC's multidisciplinary physician practice in La Cañada offered a free health fair on Nov. 12, which attracted about 130 community members for free flu shots, glucose, blood pressure and BMI screenings, as well as bone density, cholesterol/lipid and body composition testing. Ongoing physician services offered at the La Cañada office include cardiology, endocrinology, internal medicine, mammography, physical and occupational therapy, and rheumatology. Above, USC occupational therapist Ashley Halle counsels a screening participant on body mass index testing. Visit [keckmedicalcenterofusc.org/lacanada](http://keckmedicalcenterofusc.org/lacanada) for more information about the La Cañada practice.

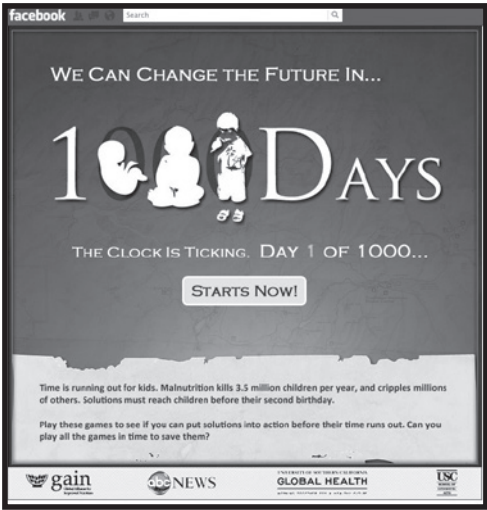
## Facebook game takes aim at malnutrition in children

Ryan Ball

Mundane status updates and silly cat photos may dominate Facebook, but there are some who see social media's potential to bring about real social change and even save lives. With malnutrition killing an estimated 3.5 million children and crippling millions more each year, the USC Institute for Global Health turned to the leading social network for a creative, viral approach to education and awareness. The institute partnered with the USC School for Cinematic Arts and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) to create an engaging Facebook game

titled "1,000 Days." The game is supported by the ABC News initiatives "Be the Change, Save a Life" with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and "Million Moms Challenge" with the United Nations Foundation. "What's interesting is that there are a lot of global health programs out there right now but they're not doing this," said Heather Wipfli, director of the USC Institute for Global Health. "USC is really taking advantage of the expertise and the skills of its faculty and its campus. This represents the innovations we want to make in the field, and it's just the beginning of our using social networking and media technologies to impact global health." Wipfli is one of the game's creators, along with a number of USC students and faculty who worked closely with experts, developers and designers from the other organizations involved.

Through a series of mini games and competitive challenges, "1,000 Days" players learn about the importance of nutrition for pregnant mothers and babies during the first 1,000 days of life. They also explore the complex interactions between global health stakeholders by interacting



The image above is a screenshot of the new Facebook game, "1,000 Days."

with nongovernmental agencies, government, industry and the community to implement interventions that will improve the nutrition and livelihood of a family. In addition to bringing other Facebook users into the fold for some friendly competition, players are encouraged to take action by liking the Facebook pages and visiting the websites of real-life organizations fighting to save lives around the world. Wipfli said that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has funded development of a second, more robust viral global health game. The game is more of a cross between Facebook favorite "Farmville" and the immersive virtual world of "Sim City"—immersing players in real-world challenges and helping them to improve the future. For more information visit <http://tinyurl.com/7gkfhw5>.

## Bennett C. Hiner, first-year medical student, 26

Bennett Carroll Hiner died unexpectedly in his sleep on Nov. 9 in Los Angeles. He was 26. In 2008, he received his bachelor of science degree in biology at DePaul University in Chicago. In 2010, he graduated with a master of science degree from Tufts University in Boston. He worked in neuroscience research from 2009 to 2011 at Northwestern University and was proud to be published in *Nature* with the article, "Embolus extravasation is an alternative mechanism for cerebral microvascular recanalization." He enrolled at the Keck School of Medicine in August 2011 and was heavily involved in the student-run clinic. He was remembered at a service in Mayer Auditorium on Nov. 15. At the service, classmate Vanessa Kreger eulogized him as a "goofy, loving, intelligent person" who loved medicine and reveled in its study. She told of a time in a recent anatomy lab in which Hiner so single-mindedly and meticulously performed a dissection that when he finished, "It looked like he had just come out from a month in the jungle. His glasses were steamy ... his hair was all over the place—and he had a gigantic smile on his face as if he had never done anything so remarkable in his life. In that moment I couldn't decide if Bennett was a total rock star or a complete mad scientist. And I think we'd all agree that he was both." A video of the 70-minute service is viewable online at <http://tinyurl.com/c5abe4o>. Contributions may be offered in honor of Bennett Hiner's Memorial for a medical student participating in research at the Keck School, 1975 Zonal Ave., KAM-300, Los Angeles, CA 90033.



Bennett Carroll Hiner



# Calendar of Events

This Calendar of Events is also online at [www.usc.edu/hscalendar](http://www.usc.edu/hscalendar) for the Health Sciences Campus community

## Monday, Dec. 5

**11:40 a.m.** Keck Research Advancement: Faculty Town Hall Meeting, various speakers. NRT Aresty Auditorium. Info: (323) 442-7874

**11:45 a.m.** Southern California Environmental Health Sciences Center Seminar. “Adult Glioma: Genome Wide Association Studies Expand Research Horizons,” Margaret Wrensch, UC San Francisco. SSB 116. Info: (323) 442-7732

## Tuesday, Dec. 6

**Noon.** Psychiatry Grand Rounds. “The LORS Enabled Dialogue: A Collaborative Intervention to Promote Insight & Recovery in Psychotic Disorders,” Sharon Sousa, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-4065

## Wednesday, Dec. 7

**Noon.** ZNI Seminar Series. “Neurotrophic Interactions During Visual System Development: From Axons and Dendrites to Synapses,” Susana Cohen-Cory, UC Irvine. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-2144

**2 – 4 p.m.** Center for Excellence in Research Workshop. “Developing NIH Grant Applications,” Steve Moldin, USC. NML West Conference Room. Info: (213) 740-6709

**4 – 6 p.m.** Center for Excellence in Research Workshop. “Developing and Submitting a DoD & DoE Basic Research Grant Application,” James Murday, USC. NML East Conference Rm. Info: (213) 740-6709

## Friday, Dec. 9

**8:30 a.m.** Surgical Grand Rounds. “Ultimate Multi-Tasking: Teaching, Supervising, and Assessing in the OR,” Debra DaRosa, Northwestern University. DOH 100. Info: (323) 442-2506

**8:30 a.m.** Center for Lung Biology Seminar. “Getting the Most from Pleural Fluid Analysis,” Steven Sahn, Medical University of South Carolina. IRD 732-734. Info: (323) 226-7923

**Noon.** Medicine Grand Rounds. “Carotid Intima Media Thickness,” Do Khuyen, USC. IPT Conference Rm. B. Info: (323) 226-7556

## Monday, Dec. 12

**8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.** The Edmond G. “Pat” Brown Institute of Public Affairs’ Health Policy Outreach Center Summit. “eHealth: Impact, Policy, Reality,” various speakers. Cal State Los Angeles. Info: (323) 344-8787

## Tuesday, Dec. 13

**8:15 a.m.** Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Grand Rounds. “Mycoses: Challenges in Anatomic & Clinical Pathology,” Gary Procop, Cleveland Clinic. NOR 7409. Info: (323) 442-1180

**11 a.m.** Keck Hospital of USC guild USC Speaker Series and Luncheon. “Why the Surge in Diabetes?” Elizabeth Beale, USC. DEI 3rd Floor Auditorium. Luncheon at noon: \$30. Info: (323) 254-0600

## Friday, Dec. 16

**Noon.** Center for Applied Molecular Medicine. “The Physical Biology of Circulating Tumor Cells and Thrombosis,” Owen McCarty, Oregon Health & Science University. CSC 250. Info: (310) 272-7640

**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](mailto: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.

## Henri Ford receives national humanism award

By Leslie Ridgeway

As the son of a minister in Haiti, Henri Ford was accustomed to people coming to the family home for help.

Watching his parents respond to others’ needs for food or spiritual assistance taught Ford that giving to others was a prerogative of human beings.

“The concept of caring and sharing are principles that I grew up with,” said Ford, professor of surgery and vice dean for medical education at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. He also serves as vice president and chief of surgery at Keck School-affiliated Children’s Hospital Los Angeles.

That devotion to service has resulted in Ford being awarded the Association of American Medical Colleges’ (AAMC) Arnold P. Gold Foundation Humanism in Medicine Award, presented at the association’s annual meeting in Denver on Nov. 5.

Medical students nominate the faculty member honored with the award. In their nomination, students called Ford “a true hero [who] exemplifies the professional and personal qualities of a great doctor.” They also praised Ford for his mentorship and compassionate care of his patients.

“We admire and appreciate Dr. Ford’s generosity to medical students in helping them reach their highest potential,” said Keck School Dean Carmen A. Puliafito. “His work in Haiti is an example of his commitment to service, and he has been inspirational to our students. We agree with them that he very much deserves this prestigious award.”

Ford is one of nine clinicians and educators honored by the AAMC for their exemplary contributions to academic medicine. He was chosen for his mentorship of young people, especially medical students, as well as his work as a pediatric surgeon, his efforts to treat victims of the 2010 Haiti earthquake and his contributions to improving the health care structure of that nation.

Ford was lauded for his commitment to young people, whom he mentors in his lab and encourages through medical school. The opportunity to help shape the future of medical care drives Ford’s guidance of students to find the careers that best suit their potential.

“This is a great opportunity

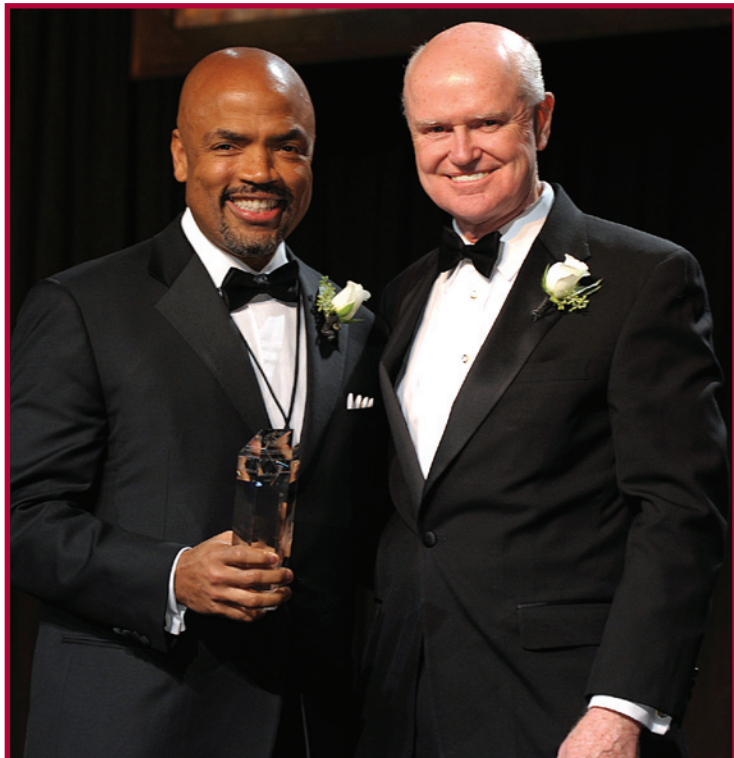


Photo courtesy AAMC

Henri Ford accepts the Arnold P. Gold Foundation Humanism in Medicine Award from AAMC Chair Thomas J. Lawley at the group’s annual meeting on Nov. 5.

to help mold the next generation of caring, compassionate and competent physicians,” he said. “Through medical education, we can have a tremendous impact on global health because these students will deliver care, shape health care policy and promote advances in biotechnology and biomedical research. As medical educators, we need to inspire them and make sure they are on the right path.”

The award also recognized Ford’s work to discover and implement surgical alternatives for several pediatric disorders, as well as his research in the areas of pediatric trauma and necrotizing enterocolitis, a life-threatening gastrointestinal disease affecting newborns.

His contributions to the relief effort in Haiti received

special mention. Ford was one of the first surgeons on the ground after the quake devastated the small Caribbean country.

Ford continues to travel to Haiti to help improve the country’s health care infrastructure. He works in partnership with Project Hope and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health to lead a group of medical educators working to promote reform in medical education and training. He also is working with the Haitian Ministry of Health, Project Medishare and the Interim Commission for Haiti’s Reconstruction, co-chaired by former President Clinton and Haiti’s prime minister, to help establish a trauma and critical care system in the country.

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## 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.