

Pharmacy Assn. names Vanderveen dean of the year

By Kukla Vera

USC School of Pharmacy Dean R. Pete Vanderveen has received the 2013 Outstanding Dean Award from the American Pharmacists Association, the largest association of pharmacists in the United States.

According to the organization, the award was established in 2004 to recognize the dean of a school or college of pharmacy who has made significant contributions to the association's chapter and promoted the welfare of student pharmacists through various community service, leadership and professional activities.

The organization stated in a release that "Vanderveen was selected in recognition of his contributions to the profession and to the USC School of Pharmacy, having paved the way for novel opportunities for both prospective and current students to experience opportunities beyond the classroom."

The award recognizes Vanderveen's longtime dedication to expanding the role of the pharmacist in safety net clinics, which provide care to underserved communities.

Since taking on his leadership role at USC in 2005, Vanderveen has been instrumental

in implementing an innovative practice model that encourages faculty and students to work in safety net clinics. This model benefits those involved in hands-on education and also has resulted in improved health outcomes for underserved patients and a decrease in health care spending.

Also during his term as dean, Vanderveen launched the Diversity Initiative at USC as a proactive effort to increase diversity among students.

"This initiative shows the dean's genuine desire to advocate for the minority population in Los Angeles by spreading



R. Pete Vanderveen

awareness among Latinos and African-Americans about the profession of pharmacy," said a student who nominated Vanderveen for the award. "He is a trend setter in the profession, opening doors for underrepresented minorities to enter the field."

Vanderveen 'paved the way for novel opportunities for ... students to experience opportunities beyond the classroom.'

—Statement from the
American Pharmacists Association

STOP CANCER helps USC Norris researchers advance cancer care and treatment

By Amy E. Hamaker

Three researchers at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center have received STOP CANCER grants totaling \$325,000.

Guests and cancer researchers gathered to celebrate the future of cancer care at the annual STOP CANCER 2013 Research Career Development Awards presentation on Feb. 7 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills.

The annual event allows STOP CANCER members and guests to meet new and past awardees and hear about cutting-edge research. Eleven 2013 awardees whose studies cover a broad spectrum of cancer research were selected to receive STOP CANCER awards and grants. Three of the recipients were from the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center:

Preet M. Chaudhary, program director of the USC Norris stem cell transplant



At the Feb. 7 STOP CANCER award presentation are (from left) Preet M. Chaudhary, the Ronald H. Bloom Family Lymphoma Research Award recipient; Stephen B. Gruber, USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center director; Giridharan Ramsingh, the Marni Levine Memorial Research Career Development Award recipient; and Julie Lang, the Marni Levine Memorial Seed Grant recipient.

program, associate director for translational research and co-leader of the leukemia-lymphoma program at USC Norris, received the Ronald H. Bloom Family Lymphoma Research Award for \$150,000. Chaudhary's team works to understand the molecular basis of human cancer and translate the information into clinical practice. One of his major areas of interest is the role of proteins encoded by human

viruses in the development of lymphoproliferative disorders, including lymphomas and multiple myelomas.

Giridharan Ramsingh, an assistant professor of medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, received the Marni Levine Memorial Research Career Development Award for \$150,000. Ramsingh focuses on genome sequencing of therapy-related acute myeloid leukemia, a sub-

type of leukemia that is the result of a complication from receiving chemotherapy or radiation and has a poor survival rate.

Julie Lang, an associate professor of surgery at the Keck School, received the Marni Levine Memorial Seed Grant for \$25,000. Lang has developed a method to isolate in the bloodstream rare cancer cells that are shed by a primary breast cancer tumor. She can then study the molecular biology of these cells to determine their potential to spread.

Stephen B. Gruber, director of the cancer center, was on hand to congratulate USC's recipients. "We are incredibly proud of the groundbreaking work our researchers at USC Norris accomplish," he said. "All of us greatly appreciate the support that STOP CAN-

CER has given to help us fulfill our mission to make cancer a disease of the past."

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, STOP CANCER is a nonprofit volunteer organization that funds promising and innovative scientists in their early research on all forms of cancer prevention, treatment, cures and clinical applications.

STOP CANCER works with National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers and other hospitals in the United States to carry out this mission.

STOP CANCER has funded more than 187 grants for cancer research to 146 researchers, with support valued at more than \$58 million. Every grant the organization makes is matched with in-kind support from the recipient cancer center.

Nobel prize winner Stanley Prusiner to speak at Keck School

Nobel Laureate Stanley B. Prusiner, director of the Institute for Neurodegenerative Diseases and professor of neurology at the University of California at San Francisco, will present "A Unifying Role for Prions in Neurodegeneration" at 3:30 p.m. at Mayer Auditorium on March 14.

Prusiner discovered prions, a class of infectious self-reproducing pathogens primarily or solely composed of protein, and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1997 for his prion research.

To RSVP, visit at www.usc.edu/esvp (code: Prusiner). For more information call (323) 442-2722. To view the live webcast, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/aahrez7>.



Stanley B. Prusiner

Keck Medical Center presents strategic plan

Leaders from the Keck Medical Center of USC will present the vision and plan for the next three years at upcoming "Keck Huddles," town hall meetings held in March.

Scott Evans, CEO of the USC hospitals; Shawn Sheffield, chief strategy and business officer; and Tom Jackiewicz, senior vice president and CEO for USC Health, will discuss the medical center's three-year plan and its importance for hospital employees and the Health Sciences campus, as a whole.

Upcoming meetings will be held on:

- Monday, March 11, at 4 p.m. in the Norris Inpatient Tower Café (Keck Hospital)
 - Tuesday, March 26, at 7:15 a.m. in NRT LG 503/504
- Snacks and light refreshments will be provided.

Young adults' lack of health coverage belies serious risks they face

'Our goal ... is to provide data ... to make informed decisions about broad health care coverage and health prevention interventions in emerging young adults.'

—Lawrence Neinstein, professor of pediatrics and medicine at the Keck School

In a newly published white paper, a professor at the Keck School of Medicine of USC has issued an urgent national call for health care coverage of adults from the ages of 18-26—a group that he says is facing “a perfect storm of health risks.”

In his paper, Lawrence Neinstein, professor of pediatrics and medicine at the Keck School and chief of the division of college health, maintains that the health status of emerging young adults in this age group “is a major concern facing our nation.” According to Neinstein, these “new adolescents”:

- face greater behavioral and non-behavioral health risks than either adolescents aged 12-17 or young adults aged 26-34;
- have the highest rates of motor vehicle injury and death, homicide, mental

health problems, sexually transmitted infections and substance abuse;

- have the lowest perception of risk; and
- have the least access to care and the highest uninsured rate in the United States.

Neinstein said that those in this age group are too often considered “the ‘young invincibles’ needing only catastrophic health coverage when in fact they need broad comprehensive health coverage. ... Our goal in producing this chart book is to provide health care providers, health care networks and vendors, institutions, and policy makers with the data they need to make informed decisions about broad health care coverage and health prevention interventions in emerging young adults.”

According to his white



Lawrence Neinstein

paper, Neinstein concluded that a national emerging young adult health agenda must be developed for this at risk age group. “This should include thoughtful health care research, programs, and national and state policies regarding delivery and access to health care,” he wrote.

The full report is posted online at <http://usc.edu/1sx>.

Neinstein is executive director of the Engemann Student Health Center, and

a USC senior associate dean of student affairs. Neinstein, who is board certified in both internal medicine and adolescent medicine, is a past president of the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine and recipient of the society’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

Other contributors to the project were Yang Lu, Keck School and the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy; Lauren Perez, Engemann Student Health Center; and Bryan Tysinger, Price School.

Support for the project came from the California Wellness Foundation, the USC Leonard D. Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics, The Saban Research Institute of Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, the Keck School Department of Pediatrics, and the USC Division of Student Affairs.

Projected pixels may offer improved sight for the visually impaired

Images transformed into pixels and projected onto a headset can help the visually impaired in everyday tasks such as navigation, route planning and object finding, according to a study led by researchers from the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

Researchers hope the pixels, which were developed using a video camera and mathematical algorithm, can provide more information and enhance the vision of patients already fitted with retinal implants.

“Blind people with retinal implants can detect motion and large objects and have improved orientation when walking. In most cases, they can also read large

letters,” said James Weiland, associate professor of ophthalmology at the Keck School and lead author of the paper.

“At the moment, retinal implants are still low-resolution. We believe that our algorithm will enhance retinal implants by providing the user with more information when they are looking for a specific item.”

The findings were published in the March 1 issue of the *Journal of Neural Engineering*.

Involved in the study were 19 healthy subjects, each of whom undertook training to get used to the pixelated vision. During the study, they were fitted

with a head-mounted display (HMD) and took part in three different experiments—walking an obstacle course, finding objects on an otherwise empty table, and searching for a particular target in a cluttered environment.

A video camera was mounted onto the HMD, which collected real-world information in the view of the subject. Mathematical algorithms converted the real-world images into pixels, which were then displayed onto the HMD’s screen in front of the subject.

The algorithms used intensity, saturation and edge-information from the

camera’s images to pick out the five most important, or salient, locations in the image. Blinking dots at the side of the display provided the subjects with additional directional cues if needed.

All three of the experiments were performed with and without cues. When subjects used the directional cues, their head movements, the time to complete the task and the number of errors were all significantly reduced.

The subjects learned to adapt to pixelated vision in all of the tasks, suggesting that image processing algorithms can be used to

provide greater confidence to patients when performing tasks, especially in a new environment.

It is possible that the device could be fitted with voice description so that the subjects are provided with cues such as “the red target is to the left.”

“We are currently looking to take this a step further with object recognition, so instead of telling subjects that ‘the red object is to the left,’ it will tell them that ‘the soda can you want is to the left,’” Weiland said.

The paper is available at <http://www.iopscience.iop.org/1741-2552/10/2/026017>.

New websites launched to promote Spine Center, Orthopaedic Surgery

Two new websites launched recently for the USC Spine Center and USC Orthopaedic Surgery in concurrence with radio, print and digital ads.

Spine.usc.edu launched on March 4 for the USC Spine Center offering comprehensive, coordinated care for degenerative spine conditions, spine deformities, trauma, tumors and other conditions. The center brings together the expertise of neurosurgical and orthopaedic specialists as well as rehabilitation support services.

The Department of Orthopaedic Surgery launched ortho.usc.edu earlier in the year to showcase services for joint preservation and replacement, sports medicine, hand, and foot and ankle services.

Both websites feature consumer-friendly health condition and treatment information, patient testimonial videos, news, physician profiles, and information for referring physicians.

The sites went live in conjunction with promotional campaigns for both spine and joint services featuring radio ads that ran on KNX (1070), KRTH (101.1), KOST(103.5), KSPN (710), KABC (790) and KTLK (1150). Digital ads appeared for the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery’s Center for Joint Preservation and Replacement on LATimes.com, WallStreetJournal.com, WebMD.com and the Precision Health Network.

The Weekly

Next Issue: March 15

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Multidisciplinary undergraduate team wins USC Global Health Case Competition

By Larissa Puro

Competing against their peers, a team of multidisciplinary undergraduates won the USC Global Health Case Competition on Feb. 15, and will represent the university at the international level on March 23.

The annual cross-campus challenge, which began in 2012, is coordinated by the USC Institute for Global Health and a partnering organization—this year, it was the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Each year, the top team competes at the International Emory University Global Health Case Competition in Atlanta.

Morgan Cheeks, Priya Gupta, Payal Mukerji, Kevin Shen and Anupama Tadanki—all juniors studying at the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, the USC Viterbi School of Engineering and the USC Marshall School of Business—are members of the winning team.

“I think this is one of the best opportunities to learn how to problem-solve, to form interdisciplinary teams and learn from multiple perspectives,” said



Larissa Puro

From left, members of the winning USC Global Health Case Competition team Kevin Shen, Priya Gupta, Morgan Cheek, Payal Mukerjia and Anupama Tadanki.

participant Roece Astor, a senior in the Baccalaureate/M.D. program. “You can never learn just from your own discipline.”

That is precisely the purpose of the competition, according to Heather Wipfli, associate director of the USC Institute for Global Health.

“This event embodies both the institute’s mission statement and USC’s strategic vision to address interdisciplinary collaboration and connect students to real-world, global challenges,” said Wipfli, who noted that students from 11 USC schools registered for the event. “The case competition here and at Emory gives all students

in diverse fields a stake in global health.”

By contending for first place with their peers, the students learned to collaborate with others under pressure.

Instead of handpicking a team to go to Emory University—which some universities, in fact, do—USC leaves it up to the students, which motivates them to think creatively, said Wipfli, who will prepare the winning team before the students go to Atlanta.

On competition day, 20 teams presented simultaneously to several rooms of USC faculty and expert judges at the Soto Street Building on the

Health Sciences campus.

Four days earlier, the students received the case, which was written by the USC Institute for Global Health and the CDC’s Influenza Division.

The case asked teams to design and present strategic plans to increase global vaccine supply and use in low- and middle-income countries. Each team needed to establish a sustainable business model that would promote increased vaccine production, research and development by the pharmaceutical industry.

The winning presentation proposed the “Shot 4 Shot” campaign, a pilot program based in Ethiopia. Taking advantage of the country’s active coffee economy, the team presented a five-year plan focused on building partnerships, community engagement, vaccine distribution and an interactive SMS flu surveillance system.

Several CDC officials tuned in remotely to judge the competition, including Joseph Bresee, epidemiology and prevention branch chief; Ann Moen, associate director of the Extramural Influenza Program; and epidemiologist Sara Mirza.

Judges in attendance

included Steven Teutsch, chief science officer of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health; Duc Vugia, chief of the Infectious Diseases Branch at the California Department of Public Health; Carol Teutsch, medical consultant at the Johnson & Johnson Health Care Institute; and Jonathan Samet, director of the USC Institute for Global Health and chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

“Global health classes usually involve the study of the past and present, but this case competition allowed us to take part in the future by providing a solution for a real-time problem,” Gupta said, after her team won. “It was a truly amazing learning experience, and we’re really looking forward to learn from an even more diverse group when we travel to Emory.”

Gupta and her teammates will compete at Emory University on March 23 for a chance to win \$6,000. During their trip, the students will also tour CDC headquarters and meet the judges who observed their presentation at USC.

The Weekly NEWSMAKERS

A March 4 article by the Associated Press quoted **Patricia Harris**, assistant professor of clinical medicine at the Keck School of Medicine, about the survival odds of the elderly who receive CPR.

A March 4 broadcast on CW News Los Angeles-affiliate KTLA-TV interviewed **Glenn Ault**, associate dean for clinical administration at the Keck School of Medicine, about the Keck Medical Center of USC’s partnership with the LA Marathon and general medical tips for marathon preparation.

A March 4 broadcast on Fox News Los Angeles-affiliate KTTV-TV interviewed **Jacqueline Szmuszkovicz**, assistant professor of clinical pediatrics at the Keck School of Medicine, and **Nina Lightdale-Miric**, assistant professor of clinical pediatrics at the Keck School, about a 4-year-old patient of theirs at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles.

A March 3 op-ed in *The Free Press Journal* (India) by **Jay Desai**, assistant professor of clinical pediatrics, discussed whether India should implement universal health coverage.

A March 2 article in *South Coast Today* reported that **Vincent Fortanasce**, clinical assistant professor of neurology at the Keck School of Medicine, will be part of a 13-part series on the Catholic station EWTN about Alzheimer’s disease.

A March 1 column in the *Press-Enterprise* noted that **Daniel Campbell**, assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the Keck School of Medicine, is slated to speak about genetic research on autism at the Riverside Medical Clinic Foundation’s annual Dr. Richard N. Boylan Memorial Lecture.

A March 1 article in *The Herald* noted that the Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center is a teaching facility for the Keck School of Medicine as well as the largest single provider of health care in the county. *The Californian* also ran a story.

A March 1 article in RedOrbit featured work by **James Weiland**, associate professor of ophthalmology at the Keck School of Medicine, and colleagues, who developed an algorithm to improve the capacity of retinal implants to deliver images to blind patients. “At the moment, retinal implants are still low-resolution,” Weiland said. “We believe that our algorithm will enhance retinal implants by providing the user with more information when they are looking for a specific item.”

A Feb. 28 broadcast on KPCC-FM interviewed **Stephen Gruber**, director of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, on how the federal sequester could cut cancer research funding. The story ran a photo of a student working in a Keck School of Medicine stem cell research lab. Gruber’s interview also was cited by *California Healthline*.

A Feb. 28 article by CNN quoted **Johanna Olson**, assistant professor of clinical pediatrics at the Keck School and medical director of the transgender clinic at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, about the differences between gender identity and sexual orientation. CNN ran a second story that quoted Olson, who also was quoted by the *Colorado Springs Gazette* about gender awareness among children. “What families tell us about these children is that when they are allowed their gender identity preference they do a lot better in life,” Olson said.

ASCO honors USC resident

The American Society of Clinical Oncology has awarded Mehmet Hepgur, a fourth-year hematology resident at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, a Conquer Cancer Foundation Merit Award in Genitourinary Cancer.

The award, designed to promote clinical cancer research by young oncology investigators, was presented at the 2013 Genitourinary Cancers Symposium in Orlando, from Feb. 14-16.

Hepgur’s work focused on the changes in circulating tumor cells (CTC) and markers of inflammation after sipuleucel-T treatment.

USC gives the GIFT of free parking

Under a program designed to reduce theft from vehicles, the USC Department of Public Safety (DPS) and USC Transportation are offering free parking in the UPC Parking Center and the HSC Biggy Parking Structure.

The Group Initiative For Theft-prevention (GIFT) is a crime prevention campaign designed to eliminate theft of and from motor vehicles within the surrounding USC community by removing vehicles from the public streets and open private parking lots.

To that end, free parking is available at the Parking Center (UPC) and the Biggy Parking Structure (HSC) to faculty, staff and students Thursday, March 14, after midnight through Monday, March 25, before noon.

Parking passes are available online. There are a limited number of available parking spaces.

For more information, please visit <http://usc.edu/13s>.

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, Mar. 12

11:30 a.m. Cancer Center Grand Rounds. "Molecular Targets for Breast Cancer Therapy: Present and Future," Debu Tripathy, USC. NRT Aresty Auditorium. Info: (323) 865-0801

2 p.m. Breast Cancer Educational Forum. "Fact or Fiction: Exercise and Lymphedema," Marisa Perdomo, USC. Forum moderated by Debu Tripathy, USC. NRT G-501. Info: (323) 865-3520

Wednesday, Mar. 13

8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Beyond the PhD 2013: PhD and Postdoctoral Career Conference. Academic round table discussions led by distinguished USC faculty. UPC: TCC Grand Ballroom. Info: (323) 442-2722

8:30 a.m. "Nutrition in the ICU Patient," Cortney Montgomery, USC. IRD 732-734. Info: (323) 226-7923

Noon – 2 p.m. USC Center for Excellence in Research Workshop. "Developing and Submitting a NIH Grant Application," Steve Moldin, USC. NML East Conference Room. Info: (213) 740-6709

Thursday, Mar. 14

Noon. Cellular Homeostasis Lecture. "Detecting and Responding to Mitochondrial Dysfunction: The Mitochondrial UPR," Cole Haynes, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. MCH 156. Info: (323) 442-7732

3:30 p.m. KSOM Special Seminar. "A Unifying Role for Prion in Neurodegeneration," Nobel Laureate Stanley B. Prusiner, UC San Francisco. KAM Mayer Auditorium. Info: (323) 442-2722

Friday, Mar. 15

7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Many Faces of Dementia. "New Developments in Diagnosis and their Implications for Care," Helena Chui, Michael Jakowec, Collins Liu and Carol McCleary, USC. UPC: USC Davidson Conference Center. Info: (323) 442-7600

8:30 a.m. Surgical Grand Rounds. "Mitral Valve Surgery: Then and Now," Randolph Chitwood, East Carolina Heart Institute. DOH 100. Info: (323) 442-9064

8:30 a.m. Department of Pathology. "Interstitial Lung Disease," Michael Koss, USC. IRD 732-734. Info: (323) 226-7923

Monday, Mar. 18

Noon. KSOM Research Seminar. "Discovery of the Extra Cellular Role for Heat Shock Protein-90 (Hsp90) in Wound Healing and Tumor Progression," Wei Li, USC. NRT Aresty Auditorium. Info: (323) 442-2722

Wednesday, Mar. 20

8:30 a.m. USC Division of Cardiovascular Medicine. "Approach to 12-Lead Electrocardiogram Analysis," Jerold Shinbane, USC. IRD 732-734. Info: (323) 226-7923

Thursday, Mar. 21

3 p.m. LA Chapter of Oxbridge Biotech Roundtable. "How Do We Make Los Angeles a Better Biotech Hub?" Various speakers. NRT Aresty Auditorium. Info: (323) 442-4352 or is.gd/labiotech

4 p.m. The 2013 Donald I. Feinstein Distinguished Lectureship. "Hematologic Disorders of ER to Golgi Transport," David Ginsburg, University of Michigan. NRT LG 503/504. Info: (323) 865-3913

Friday, Mar. 22

8:30 a.m. Surgical Grand Rounds. "History of Parathyroid Surgery for Sporadic Primary Hyperparathyroidism: Re-Examination of the 85%/15% Rule," Melanie Goldfarb, USC. DOH 100. Info: (323) 442-9064

Noon. Physical Sciences in Oncology Center Seminar. "Manipulating and Measuring Cell Mechanics for Medicine," Dino Di Carlo, UCLA. CSC 250. Info: (323) 442-3849

Noon. The 2013 Donald I. Feinstein Distinguished Lectureship. "Identifying Novel Genetic Determinants of Hemostatic Balance," David Ginsburg, University of Michigan. LAC+USC IPT 2nd Floor C2J104, Conference Room B. Info: (323) 865-3913

Tuesday, Mar. 26

Noon. Global Health Lecture. "From Policy to Implementation – Challenges in the Field," Joel Lamstein, John Snow, Inc. UPC: TCC 450. Info: (323) 865-0419

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 eblauw@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.

School of Dentistry gives kids reason to smile

By Keni Nooner

Nearly 100 children from kindergarten to fifth grade had joyous expressions during Give Kids a Smile Day on Feb. 1, thanks to Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC students and faculty. All the kids received free oral health screenings, and 70 of them received prevention treatments.

The event, part of the nationwide American Dental Association initiative that annually kicks off Children's Dental Health Month, brought the Ostrow School's Neighborhood Mobile Clinic vans to visit the children of Weemes Elementary School, one of the USC Family of Schools.

More than two-thirds of California's youth suffer from poor oral health by the time they reach the third grade, and 7 percent of children miss school due to dental issues, according to the California Health Care Foundation.

The Neighborhood Mobile Clinic program, which seeks to provide continuous dental care, will return to Weemes Elementary later in the spring to do sealant procedures, staying



A young Weemes Elementary student meets the Tooth Fairy.

as long as it takes to see every child in need.

Many of the children in attendance said they were pleased with the results. Mo-nyae, a third grader, exclaimed, "I have no cavities!"

Students who experienced significant tooth pain received a \$100 voucher to go toward additional dental care.

After finishing their screenings, the children received goodie bags with toothbrushes, toothpaste and toys—a smiley face ring, temporary tattoo and tooth-shaped bubbles. They each received a free book from the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, which

donates books to clinics around the area.

The tooth fairy also visited, reminding the children to take care of their teeth and be ready for their big-kid teeth.

Third-grader Jasmin Truillo, who got the chance to take a picture with the tooth fairy, said, "I've lost a tooth before, so this is too cool!"

After getting her teeth screened, one young girl also happily exclaimed, "I didn't like the dentist before, but now I love it!"

USC launches new web site to deliver employee information

By Jandy Hardesty

A comprehensive "one-stop shop" for USC faculty and staff—and all things employee-related—is now online. USC Employee Gateway, at usc.edu, aims to put in one convenient location all the information employees need on benefits, policies, campus services, and news and events.

Diane Schrader, manager of public policy and communication for human resources, oversees the site. "Many faculty and staff members have told us that they can't find what they need," she said. "We talked to and surveyed employees all over the university, and we've tried to not only consolidate links to information they need, but also present it in a way that's easy to use."

The site allows users to log in to often-needed pages from one location, and Schrader hopes that will encourage employees to visit regularly. "This will be the best and quickest way to get important news that affects all employees," she added.

The site prominently features an employee photo

of the day, depicting a USC faculty or staff member on the job. A photographer has been visiting academic units and offices across the university to build a library of such photos.

The Employee Gateway also has a "talk to us" section, which allows feedback on timely employee issues. To start, the section is

soliciting feedback on the site itself.

"The great thing about the web is that we can quickly respond to suggestions to make this site better," said Schrader. "We hope all faculty and staff will bookmark the page—or even better, make it their default homepage."

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