

Keck students inspired to think beyond borders

By Ryan Ball

Moving beyond the metropolis of Panama City and into the rural provinces, Keck School of Medicine of USC student Javier Sotelo was struck by the disparity in health-care accessibility he witnessed. He was surprised to find himself handing out emergency kits to midwives and educators, who provide primary care in areas where physician visits involve traveling several hours over dirt roads.

Sotelo was one of 32 students who studied abroad last semester as part of USC's Master of Science in Global Medicine program. He and some classmates recently participated in the inaugural Global Citizenship Roundtable, where they shared their experiences and encouraged Keck School of Medicine of USC students to broaden their perspective.

In addition to Panama, students visited Taiwan, Honduras and India.

Global Medicine Program Director Elahe Nezami, PhD, commented, "By immersing them in the different cultures to observe the health-care systems available to such populations, our students return to USC brimming with ideas about how they can positively affect the world's health needs and, more importantly, eager to share those ideas and involve others."

Shirin Heydar, one of the students visiting Taiwan, returned inspired by

the words of Tzay-Jinn Chen, MD, MPH, an internist at Taipei Medical University Hospital.

Summing up the Taiwanese approach to medicine, Chen said, "A doctor who treats a disease is mediocre. A doctor who treats a person holistically is sufficient. But a doctor who treats a community is superior."

Student Andrew Florin said he saw talent, determination, and grit in abundance in the physicians he observed in India. "Despite a major lack of resources that would all but cripple a weaker nation, the physicians and other health-care professionals of India somehow push forward with confidence, ingenuity and resolve," he said.

During the 2013-2014 school year, Global Medicine students will be visiting nine countries, traveling with medical students from the Keck School and students from the USC Primary Care Physician Assistant (PA) program.

To get a preview of what his PA students would experience,



Global Medicine students Niloofar Sheshebor (left) and Natalie Reyes (right) teach the children of Popa Uno, Panama, about proper wound care during the students' time overseas as part of the USC Master of Science in Global Medicine program.

Karissa Nguyen

Christopher Forest, MSHS, assistant professor of clinical family medicine, accompanied the group to Honduras, where he saw the students grow in a number of ways.

When the students realized that some patients had to wait a while for medical attention, they went out and bought coloring books, crayons and powdered milk, Forest recalled. "The simple gesture of our students handing out cold milk to children

in a part of the hospital that had no air conditioning was something that touched me," Forest said.

Photos from the various trips will be on display in a special exhibit in the Hoyt Gallery in the Keith Administration building in October.

For more information about the Global Citizenship Roundtable or the Master of Science in Global Medicine program, visit <http://keckmed.usc.edu/msgm>.

USC Verdugo Hills Hospital hosts VIP reception

By Leslie Ridgeway

Celebration and fanfare continued for USC Verdugo Hills Hospital as leaders from the organization welcomed more than 150 dignitaries from throughout the community at a reception held Aug. 19 at the Glendale, Calif., hospital, the University of Southern

California's newest addition to its growing clinical enterprise.

Following a rousing entrance by the USC Trojan marching band, USC Health Senior Vice President and CEO Tom Jackiewicz, MPH, kicked off the event with a special greeting and introduction of elected and community officials and guests and the hospital's new CEO Debbie Walsh, RN, MSN.

C. L. Max Nikias, PhD, USC president, spoke about the important place USC Verdugo Hills Hospital holds within the Keck Medicine of USC organization, particularly as the academic medical center positions itself as a leader in a changing health-care reform environment.

"I assure you that what we have accomplished individually will be nothing compared to what we will achieve by working together," Nikias said. "I am convinced that USC Verdugo Hills Hospital will provide patients with the very best of both worlds."

Elected officials in attendance included U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff and Michael Antonovich, member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. They applauded the partnership between Verdugo Hills Hospital and USC and noted the positive impact it would have on the surrounding community and the broader Southern California region.

Each organization brings significant, complementary strengths, enhancing the level of care available to residents of the Foothill

See **VERDUGO**, page 2



(From left) USC Health Senior Vice President Tom Jackiewicz, USC Verdugo Hills Hospital CEO Debbie Walsh and USC President Max C. L. Nikias join in the celebration of the partnership between USC and Verdugo Hills Hospital.

Steve Cohn

USC stem cell researcher receives a \$1 million donation for "eureka moments"

By Cristy Lytal

Chinese businessman Yong Chen has presented \$1 million to USC stem cell researcher Qi-Long Ying to support his future "eureka moments."

"When I talked to Mr. Chen, I told him that groundbreaking discoveries often come from unexpected directions," said Ying, PhD, associate professor of stem cell biology and regenerative medicine at the Eli and Edythe Broad Center

for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC. "You suddenly have a very creative and unusual idea, and you test it. And it works."

Ying and a team of researchers had one such moment — which ranked among *Science* magazine's "Top 10 Breakthroughs of 2010" — when they used embryonic stem cell-based technology to produce the world's first "knockout"

See **EUREKA**, page 3

Changes Ahead for *The Weekly*

In the coming months, you'll be seeing more — and less — of *The Weekly*.

Big plans are in the works. Soon we'll be going digital and you'll find us online! But, don't worry — you'll still find us in print. **Starting on Sept. 13, *The Weekly* will appear every two weeks on paper at our customary campus outlets and through the mail. You'll still find all news stories posted at [www.theweekly.usc.edu](http://theweekly.usc.edu).** It's all part of our plans to develop new ways to communicate with our readers.

Many exciting changes are ahead, including our digital edition. Read all about it in our Sept. 13 issue!

Second annual Roxanna Todd Hodges lecture highlights stroke reduction

‘If we could appropriately treat hypertension, for example, we could effectively reduce the risk of stroke in 360,000 people.’

— Cheryl Bushnell, MD, MHS, associate professor of neurology, Wake Forest School of Medicine

The second annual Roxanna Todd Hodges Visiting Lectureship in Stroke Prevention and Education was awarded to Cheryl Bushnell, MD, MHS, associate professor of neurology at Wake Forest School of Medicine. Bushnell is director of the Wake Forest Baptist Stroke Center and a thought leader in issues regarding women’s health and stroke, and performing community interventions for reducing stroke risk.

Bushnell’s lecture, “21st Century Stroke Prevention: What will it look like?” was presented at Neurology Grand Rounds held the morning of Aug. 6 at the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute, part of the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

During the lecture, Bushnell focused on how stroke prevention might be accomplished in the near future if physicians focus on changing the way people behave to lower known risk factors, including hypertension, smoking, obesity, diabetes, alcohol and cardiac causes.

“We know from large studies that these are the main risk factors in population-attributable risk,” said Bushnell, “and that they can explain about 82



Nerses Sanossian, MD, assistant professor of neurology and co-director of the Roxanna Todd Hodges Comprehensive Stroke Clinic and TIA program, introduces 2013 Roxanna Todd Hodges lecturer Cheryl Bushnell, MD, MHS, associate professor of neurology at Wake Forest School of Medicine.

Amy E. Hamaker

percent of stroke risk. “We pretty much know what to do to lower the risk,” she continued. “If we could appropriately treat hypertension, for example, we could effectively reduce the risk of stroke in 360,000 people.” Bushnell’s focus for stroke prevention was on adherence to prescribed medication and treatment routines, and how simply continuing to take their medicine can improve the risk for many patients. Factors that affect adherence

can range from negative side effects to medication to the instructions given by and the accessibility of medical personnel. Twenty-six guests attended a dinner in Bushnell’s honor the previous night at the Los Angeles Athletic Club. The lectureship is part of an integrated vision to provide exceptional education in stroke prevention. Nerses Sanossian, MD, assistant professor of neurology and co-director of

the Roxanna Todd Hodges Comprehensive Stroke Clinic and TIA Program, introduced Bushnell before she began, and presented her with a plaque and a token of appreciation. “We are honored to have such a distinguished lecturer receive this award that supports the mission of the Roxanna Todd Hodges Foundation, to reduce the burden of stroke in Southern California through prevention and education,” he said.

VERDUGO: Hospital well-positioned to deliver exceptional patient care in competitive landscape

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communities. Verdugo patients benefit from the research, clinical, organizational and financial support afforded by a world-class academic medical center, while patients of Keck Medicine of USC and others who live in the area gain enhanced access to the system, Jackiewicz said. “In an increasingly competitive health-care landscape, we are well-positioned to capitalize on our combined assets and deliver exceptional patient care that is unparalleled in this region,” Jackiewicz

said. “It is absolutely the right move at the right time for both our organizations.” The opening festivities concluded with the dramatic unfurling of a banner revealing the hospital’s new name at the top of the hospital, as the USC Trojan band played the familiar “Fight On” anthem, streamer cannons fired and doves ascended into the skies. The guests then adjourned to a seated luncheon and a program featuring remarks from outgoing USC Verdugo Hills Hospital CEO Leonard LaBella and hospital

Foundation board chair Rod Dorman. At the luncheon, Jackiewicz presented a video showcasing the story of the two organizations, and guests also got a first glimpse of USC Verdugo Hills Hospital’s new brochure. The celebrations will continue with a planned community-wide event on Saturday, Sept. 28, featuring a health fair and activities designed for kids and families, as well as tours of the newly renovated hospital. For more information, visit www.uscvhh.org.

TheWeekly

Next Issue: Sept. 13

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USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center

Part of the Keck School of Medicine of USC

Did you know?
Researchers at the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, led by Brian Henderson, MD, distinguished professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, launched the Multiethnic Cohort Study of Diet and Cancer in 1993.

One of the largest studies to examine lifestyle risk factors, as well as genetic susceptibility, related to cancer risk, the Multiethnic Cohort Study enrolled more than 215,000 men and women, primarily of African-American, Japanese, Latino, Native Hawaiian and Caucasian origin. The ethnic diversity of Hawaii and California made it possible to develop this large study with its unique representation of minority populations.

Data sets collected in this study have provided researchers with valuable insights into cancer incidence rates and their variation by racial and ethnic groups.

Don't miss the launch of the newly branded Keck Medicine of USC website at **www.KeckMedicine.org**.
Look for the updated site after Labor Day!

USC researchers discover biomarkers to help prevent failure after tissue transplants

By Josh Grossberg

Researchers at the Keck School of Medicine of USC have found a way to identify patients who may be susceptible to certain complications while recovering from large wounds and complicated reconstructive surgeries. His team's findings have been published in August in the Public Library of Science's online publication *PLOS ONE*.

The team, led by Alex Wong, MD, assistant professor of clinical surgery at the Keck School, discovered five genetic biomarkers that can identify patients who could be susceptible to vein failure after receiving "flaps." Flaps are tissues that are teaming with tiny blood vessels, which can be moved from one part of the body to another to help the healing process.

"We can transfer a piece of tissue with its own blood supply and sometimes even nerves," said Wong. "What we're doing is essentially a transplant."

While nearly all such patients recover without incident, 5 to 8 percent will experience flap failure because their veins are prone to kinking and collapsing, Wong said.

The information is especially important as surgical

procedures become more complicated and intricate.

"The nature of plastic surgery is to restore form and function," added Wong. "By our reconstructions, we do everything from repairing wounds to face and hand transplants."

While arteries that supply the blood are generally strong enough to handle the procedure, veins that carry it away are weaker and fail more easily. The biomarkers can alert physicians that a patient is at risk of vein failure, which can appear just a few hours after a procedure.

"If an artery goes down, the color of the tissue changes, the pulse disappears, and the transplanted tissue becomes cold," Wong said. "By comparison, when a vein fails, it's often not recognized until it's too late to salvage."

Although still in the early stages of investigation, Wong hopes to be able to identify patients before complications arise. "If we prove our theory, we can create a routine test to maybe change that 5 percent failure rate to 1 percent," Wong said. "And for the 4 percent of people who could potentially benefit, it could make a 100-percent difference."

Campus Premiere: New Television Spots for fall coming for Keck Medicine of USC

After years of limited advertising in the market, Keck Medicine of USC will hit the airwaves this fall with two 30-second television commercials featuring 15 physicians, researchers, nurses and support staff.

The two ads promote Keck Medicine of USC by showcasing Keck Hospital of USC and the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center. They will air on major networks and cable outlets the week of September 7 and will continue through May 2014. (Schedule to be announced.)

"The new television spots will build brand awareness for Keck Medicine of USC, establishing name recognition and building our reputation in the Los Angeles market," said Deborah S. Fullerton, MBA, associate vice president of USC Health Sciences Public Relations and Marketing. "Viewers will realize that Keck Medicine is a leading academic

medical center and will see that we are transforming medicine with our research and innovative patient care.

"This project was a team experience," she continued. "Nearly 50 employees assisted our marketing team in the creation of these ads, and we are very grateful for everyone's support."

Want to see the commercials before they break? Attend a special premiere on the Health Sciences Campus:

Date: Thursday, Sept. 5

Time: 4–5 p.m. and 9–10 p.m.

Locations: Keck Hospital of USC, NIT Café; USC Norris Cancer Hospital, Topping Tower, room 7409

Showings will be repeated every 10 minutes, and light snacks will be provided for the audience at each event.



King & Country

Keck Medical Center of USC employees are featured in this still from one of two new 30-second commercials for Keck Medicine of USC.

EUREKA: Businessman, USC researcher discover common success philosophy

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rats, laboratory animals modified to lack one or more genes. Knockout rats allow scientists to model and study a wide range of genetic diseases that also occur in humans.

Chen has had his own share of breakthroughs in business as the owner of the Zhongmei Group. The international company, which owns several hospitals and specialty centers in China, promotes medical education, training, investment, research and development. The Zhongmei Group is currently partnering with several U.S.-based institutions to further advance medical care, research and education.

Chen and Ying, who first met in February at USC, realized that they shared a common philosophy that led to their success.

"If you want to achieve big, you first have to think big," said Chen. "I'm delighted to support Dr. Ying's research because of his impressive track record of past success and his ambitious vision for future discovery."

Chen's gift will support at least three previously unfunded projects in Ying's lab: deriving embryonic stem cells from other species, understanding how normal embryonic stem cells become tumor cells, and maintaining and genetically modifying blood-forming stem cells to potentially cure diseases such as HIV and leukemia. In recognition of Chen's gift, Ying's lab will be named the Yong Chen Stem Cell Research Lab.

"Gifts such as the one given by Mr. Chen



Cristy Lytal

Chinese businessman Yong Chen (left) recently donated a gift of \$1 million to the laboratory of USC stem cell researcher Qi-Long Ying (right).

allow our researchers to voyage into the most unexplored realms of scientific innovation and creative problem-solving," said Andrew P. McMahon, PhD, director the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research. "By supporting bold new directions in today's stem cell research, Mr. Chen is making an important investment in developing tomorrow's stem cell cures."

Carmen A. Puliafito, MD, MBA, dean of the Keck School of Medicine of USC, added, "Mr. Chen's investment in stem cell research will help to accelerate the pace of scientific discovery. It's through gifts like these that we will transform the future of medicine and eventually develop new treatments for the patients who need them the most."

The Weekly NEWSMAKERS

The Aug. 27 edition of *The Pittston (Pa.) Sunday Dispatch* carried an **Orange County Register** story that quoted **Jay Lieberman**, MD, professor and chair of orthopaedic surgery at the Keck School, about the latest in knee replacement surgeries and other orthopedic implants. "A lot of the patients will come in and think they're too old. And there's nobody who's too old for the operation anymore," Lieberman said.

An Aug. 27 story in *The Spokesman-Review* quoted **James Salz**, MD, clinical professor of ophthalmology at the Keck School, about how the technology of Lasik eye surgery has continued to improve.

An Aug. 26 article in *HealthDay* quoted **Leslie Saxon**, MD, professor of clinical medicine at the Keck School, about a new implantable defibrillator that works without wires touching the heart. "The subcutaneous defibrillator adds additional value for patients with indications for an implantable defibrillator who are poor candidates for standard systems," said Saxon, who wrote an editorial in the journal *Circulation* about the device. The article also was carried by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Saxon also was quoted in *Forbes*.

The Aug. 26 edition of *Physician News Network* noted that **Thomas McAfee**, MD, was appointed CEO of the newly forming Keck Medicine of USC Medical Foundation. "A critical function will be to establish the foundation and attract marquee groups and physicians to affiliate with Keck Medicine of USC," said **Shawn Sheffield**, MBA, MSHA, chief strategy and system development officer at Keck Medicine of USC.

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, Sept. 03

Noon. Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research Seminar. “Mechanics-Driven Self-Organization in Tissue-Scale Tubulogenesis,” Chin-lin Guo, CalTech. BCC Seminar Room. Info: (323) 442-8084

Thursday, Sept. 05

Noon - 2 p.m. Roxanna Todd Hodges Foundation. Stroke Awareness & Prevention Seminar, Nerses Sanossian, USC. USC Verdugo Hills Hospital Council Room B & D, Main Floor Lobby. Info: (949) 305-8450

4 – 5 p.m., 9 – 10 p.m. Keck Medical Center of USC. “Keck Medical Center of USC Television Spot World Premiere.” Keck Hospital, NIT Café; Norris, Room #7409 in the Topping Tower. Info: (323) 442-2830

Friday, Sept. 06

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Southern California Environmental Health Sciences Center. “Functional Annotation of Breast Cancer Risk Regions,” Gerry Coetzee, USC. SSB 116. Info: (323) 442-7732

Tuesday, Sept. 10

11 a.m. Keck Hospital of USC Guild Women’s Health Focus. “Keys to a Healthy Life,” Laila Munderspach, USC. Wilshire Country Club, 301 N. Rossmore Ave., Los Angeles. \$55 per person. 10:30 a.m. Silent Auction, luncheon immediately following speaker presentation. Info: (323) 254-0600

Noon. Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research Seminar. “Responding to SHH in the Absence of PTCH1,” Henk Roelink, UC Berkeley. BCC Seminar Room. Info: (323) 442-8084

Thursday, Sept. 12

Noon. SC CTSI Research Ethics Forum. “Risk, Consent and the Ethics of Comparative Effectiveness Research,” Alex Capron and Donna Spruijt-Metz, USC. NRT LG 503/504. Info: (323) 442-7289

2 – 4 p.m. SC CTSI Workshop. “Strategies for Successful Mentoring,” Emil Bogenmann, CHLA. Aresty Auditorium. Info: (323) 442-7289

Tuesday, Sept. 17

Noon. Psychiatry Grand Rounds. “Refining EEG Phenotypes and Biomarkers for Child Psychiatry: Examples from ADHD,” Sandra Loo, UCLA. ZNI 112. Info: (323) 442-4065

Thursday, Sept. 19

Noon. Medicine Grand Rounds. “Cancer Metabolism and the p62 Network,” Jorge Moscat, Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute. HMR 100. Info: (323) 442-1283

Thursday, Sept. 26

Noon. Medicine Grand Rounds. “A System’s Genetics Approach to Dissect Common, Complex Metabolic and Cardiovascular Disorders,” Jake Lusis, UCLA. Info: (323) 442-1283

6 p.m. 17th Annual Robert K. Kerlan, MD Memorial Lecture. “The Thrower’s Shoulder and Elbow – Biomechanics and Treatment,” G. Russell Huffman, University of Pennsylvania. NRT Aresty Auditorium. Info: (323) 226-7204

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.

New and returning Keck School students make a splash at welcome receptions



Photos/Steve Cohn

It’s the start of the fall semester, and Keck School of Medicine of USC students are back on the Health Sciences Campus! **Top left:** First-year Keck School student Anna Goebel from Salinas, Calif., shows off her surfing skills at the First-Year Students Welcome Reception on Aug. 13. **Top right:** Keck School of Medicine of USC Dean Carmen A. Puliafito, MD, MBA, and his golden Labrador Retriever Sandy officially welcome new students Lauren Rosenberg and Elizabeth Kaufman to USC. **Bottom:** Returning Keck School students Daniel Artenstein, Daniel Furlong, Samuel Hong and Thomas Carter Scott support Brian Karamian in the bounce house at the Returning Students Welcome Reception, held on Aug. 12.

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