

Keck Hospital gets A for safety

By Mary Dacuma

Keck Hospital of USC is one of 844 hospitals nationwide to receive an “A” grade from The Leapfrog Group, a national patient safety watchdog, during the Fall 2016 release of Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades. The grade places Keck Hospital of USC among the safest hospitals in the United States.

“Our “A” hospital safety grade from The Leapfrog Group reflects the daily

efforts of our physicians and staff, who make patient safety and well-being a top priority,” said Rod Hanners, CEO for Keck Medical Center of USC and COO of Keck Medicine of USC. “We are thrilled that our efforts are being recognized as we continue our commitment in delivering exceptional patient experience.”

Developed under the guidance of an Expert Panel, the Leapfrog Hospital

Safety Grade uses 30 measures of publicly available hospital safety data, thus providing the most complete picture of patient safety, to assign A, B, C, D and F grades to more than 2,600 U.S. hospitals twice per year. Grades are calculated by top patient safety experts, peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public.

Keck Hospital’s “A” grade is the result of strict adherence to comprehensive quality and safety programs, as well as a

number of successful initiatives aimed at eliminating patient harm and achieving high reliability. The hospital uses two Xenex robots as an additional measure against hospital-acquired infections. The “Catch a Falling Star” program reduced the number of patient falls with harm by almost half. In 2015, Keck Hospital was recognized by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) for

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Visitors stop by for tricks, treats



James Walker, left, participates in the Halloween parade Oct. 31 on the Health Sciences Campus with his daughter Mirjana, who is dressed as a unicorn with wings.



Lulu Wang, left, participates in the Halloween parade Oct. 31 on the Health Sciences Campus with Grace, dressed as Snow White.

Photos by Ricardo Carrasco III

Sign-ups open for USC health care plan

By Douglas Morino

World-class expertise. Convenient locations. Compassionate care.

The USC Network Medical Plan offers patients access to world-renowned physicians, modern facilities spread across Southern California and cutting-edge treatments in an environment of safety and compassion.

Physicians, nurses and staff are encouraged to enroll in the USC Network plan during Open Enrollment, which will be held this year from Monday, Nov. 7, to Sunday, Nov. 20. All changes will take effect on Jan. 1.

Enrolling in the USC plan provides patients with convenient locations and exceptional customer service, along with direct access to unparalleled specialists at one of the top health care systems in California, said Stephanie L. Hall, MD, MHA, chief medical officer at Keck Medicine of USC.

“Keck Medicine gives patients not only direct access to exceptional primary care physicians and world-class specialists, but also to high-end complex care,” Hall said. “The USC Network Medical Plan offers the cutting-edge, innovative care that only an academic medical center can provide.”

Patients enrolled in the USC Network medical plan have access to self-referrals to specialists, convenient locations at the University Park Campus and Health Sciences Campus, highly ranked, integrated care, same-day appointments and an international travel clinic.

With locations across Los Angeles and Orange Counties, Keck Medicine health care facilities are among the safest in the state

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USC signs pact with Chinese university for occupational therapy program

By Mike McNulty and John Hobbs

USC and Peking University have forged a partnership that could boost the quality of life for millions of Chinese individuals living with, or at risk for, a disability.

USC Provost Michael Quick, PhD, joined a delegation of senior leaders from the Peking University Health Science Center to formalize a new partnership between the academic institutions to develop one of China’s first graduate programs specializing in occupational therapy.

Alongside Qimin Zhan, MD, PhD, president of the Health Science Center, Quick formally established the China Initiative partnership between one of China’s most prestigious universities and the USC Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.

“Occupational therapy enables people throughout the world to lead healthier, happier, fuller lives,” Quick said. “By advancing occupational therapy education, research and clinical care in China, this new partnership with

Peking University has the potential to transform the quality of life for millions of people.”

The announcement caps more than two years of intercontinental exploration and travel by USC Chan faculty members, including Associate Dean Florence Clark, PhD, and the China Initiative’s Interim Director Julie McLaughlin Gray, PhD, to better understand the nuances of occupational therapy within China’s health care system and to identify an optimal partner

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\$24.9 million in grants tapped to tackle Alzheimer’s disease

By Zen Vuong

Berislav Zlokovic, MD, PhD, a pioneer of the theory that fixing the brain’s leaky blood vessels will prevent Alzheimer’s disease, has received four grants totaling up to \$24.9 million over five years.

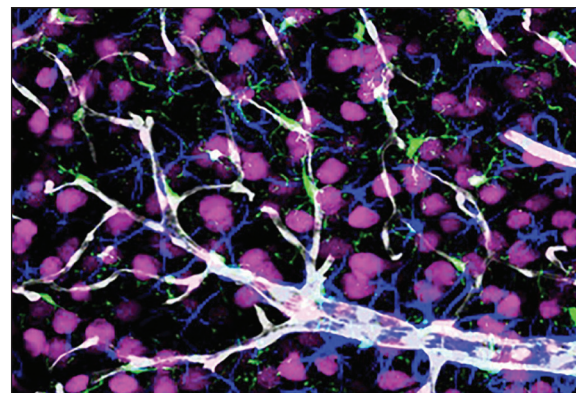
The funding allows Zlokovic, director of the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute, to attack from different fronts the blood-brain barrier, a gatekeeper that prevents toxic substances from entering the brain.

“The brain contains 400 miles of blood vessels that can stretch from Los Angeles to San Francisco,” said Zlokovic, chair and professor of physiology and biophysics and holder of the Mary Hayley and Selim Zilkha Chair in Alzheimer’s Disease Research at the Keck School of Medicine of

USC. “If there is a leak along this vascular tube and the pothole is, for example, near the hippocampus — the center of learning and memory — that can contribute to the development of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. We can delay the onset or slow the progression of Alzheimer’s if we are able to fix leaky capillaries when they first start, some 10 to 15 years before Alzheimer’s symptoms even surface.”

The National Institute on Aging in the National Institutes of Health awarded Zlokovic and Arthur Toga, PhD, director of the USC Mark and Mary Stevens Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute, \$12.3 million. NIH’s National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke presented Zlokovic with \$3.6 million. The

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The blood-brain barrier is seen in this image.

Image/The Zlokovic Lab

Massry Prize winners visit for lecture event

By Hope Hamashige
Sleep is an essential function of the human body. But the mechanisms that induce animals, including humans, to fall asleep are poorly understood. Gero Miesenboeck, MD, a physiology professor at the University of Oxford, explained that optogenetics, a new technology that allows scientists to turn on and turn off electrical activity in specific brain cells by making them reactive to light, has uncovered the specific neurons involved in the sleep homeostat, the so-called sleep switch, that compels us to hit the hay. Three of the scientists whose pioneering research helped create optogenetics — Miesenboeck, Peter Hegemann, Karl Deisseroth — all were named the winners of the 2016 Massry Prize. In a series of lectures at the Keck School of Medicine of USC on Oct. 20, the trio of scientists focused on a few of the ways that optogenetics, considered one of the most significant advances in brain research in generations, is advancing understanding of the inner workings of the brain. Hegemann, PhD, professor of biophysics at the Humboldt University of Berlin, discussed ongoing

research on channelrhodopsins, proteins that make cells respond to flashes of light. Hegemann has engineered a variety of opsins which are helping to improve the quality of research done by neuroscientists around the world. Diesseroth, MD, PhD, professor of bioengineering and of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Stanford University, described the research in his laboratory that has revealed which neurons are involved in risky behavior and those that bring about anxiety. He also discussed advances in optogenetics that allow scientists now to activate several cells at once and to control the intensity of the activation, which is lending further nuance to their research. Though developed to illuminate the mysterious workings of neurons and neuronal connections in the brain, optogenetics is being used to understand and possibly treat other parts of the body. Hegemann pointed out that optogenetic technology is being tested as a possible treatment for deafness. The Meira and Shaul G. Massry Foundation established the Massry Prize in 1996 to recognize contributions to the biomedical sciences and the advancement of health.

Family medicine department founder remembered at service

By Claire Norman
The Keck School of Medicine of USC recently honored the life and accomplishments of Peter V. Lee, MD, who died July 26 at the age of 93. The memorial service was held Oct. 3 at Aresty Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus, where family, friends, students and community members gathered to pay their respects to Lee’s legacy. Lee was an accomplished physician, educator and leader at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Well-known for his commitment to social justice, person-centered care and interdisciplinary teaching, he oversaw the creation of the Department of Family Medicine in 1983 and became its inaugural chair. He taught students in medicine, pharmacy, geriatrics, physician assistant studies and nursing about pharmacology and family medicine. Additionally, Lee was a national leader in crafting ways to engage medical students in hands-on learning, including conducting research on best practices in medical education



Claire Norman

Department of Family Medicine Chair Laura Mosqueda speaks at a memorial service for Peter V. Lee, held Oct. 3 at Aresty Auditorium.

in the early 1960s as well as being one of the creators of the Introduction to Clinical Medicine (ICM) program in 1969. At the celebration of his life, many told stories about Lee as a mentor, boss and role model. Lee’s son Peter V. Lee Jr., spoke on behalf of the family sharing their personal memories. Speakers also included Laura Mosqueda, MD, chair and professor of family medicine; former medical school dean Robert Tranquada, MD; Samuel Matheny, MD; and retired faculty members Peter Katsufraakis, MD, Maureen Strohm, MD, and Allan Abbott, MD — all of whom spoke of Lee as a wonderful teacher, friend and mentor. “It was lovely to see such an impressive array of people from all stages of Dr. Lee’s life gathered in one spot to remember and pay tribute,” Mosqueda said. “He clearly had a wonderful influence on many people, both personally and professionally. His impact lives on.”

Calendar of Events

Saturday, Nov. 5
7:15 a.m.-4:15 p.m. Department of Medicine Continuing Medical Education. “2nd Annual USC Contemporary Topics in Internal Medicine,” Ron Ben-Ari, MD, and Jennifer R. Marks, MD. The Westin Pasadena. Info: Anika Bobb, (323) 442-2547, anika.bobb@med.usc.edu. RSVP: Chelsea Michel, (323) 442-2555, uscmcme@usc.edu, <http://www.usc.edu/cme>

10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. USC Marshall School of Business Master of Medical Management Program. “USC Master of Medical Management Info Session & Lunch,” Maeleine Mira, director, Master of Medical Management Program. Popovich Hall 201, University Park Campus. Info: Maeleine Mira, (213) 740-9577, maeleine.mira@marshall.usc.edu, <http://marshall.usc.edu/mmm/>. RSVP: Adam Tekurio, (213) 740-8947, tekurio@marshall.usc.edu

Sunday, Nov. 6
8 a.m.-Noon. USC Comprehensive Epilepsy Center. “Walk to End Epilepsy.” Rose Bowl, Pasadena. Info: Sandra Correa, (323) 865-9873, <http://bit.ly/2e3FyNK> sandra.correa@med.usc.edu

Monday, Nov. 7
7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The DHS Endocrinology Specialist Care Workgroup Continuing Medical Education. “3rd Annual DHS Diabetes Day,” Theodore Friedman, MD, PhD, David Geffen School of Medicine. The California Endowment, 1000 N. Alameda St. Info: Anika Bobb, (323) 442-2547, anika.bobb@med.usc.edu. RSVP: Chelsea Michel, (323) 442-2555, uscmcme@usc.edu, <http://www.usc.edu/cme>

Tuesday, Nov. 8
12:30 p.m. USC Immigrant Health Initiative, USC Center for Health Equity in the Americas and USC Institute for Global Health. “Promoting Cancer Health Equity for Chinese Immigrant Women:

How Culture & Access to Care Intersect,” Judy Huei-yu Wang. Tutor Campus Center (TCC) 350. Info: Larissa Puro, (323) 442-7233, puro@usc.edu. RSVP: <https://globalhealth.usc.edu/2016/10/05/cancer-health-equity/>

3:35 p.m.-5 p.m. USC Caruso Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery Seminar. “High-End Audio: Neuroethology of Ultrasonic Communication in Amphibians,” Peter M. Narins, PhD. Eli and Edythe Broad CIRM Center Auditorium. Info: Jacqueline Jimenez, (323) 442-5579, jimenez1@med.usc.edu

5:30 p.m. Department of Ophthalmology Grand Rounds. Luv Patel, MD. HCC4 Conference Room, 6th Floor. Info: Lina Poyzner, (323) 442-6383, lina.poyzner@med.usc.edu, <http://eye.keckmedicine.org>

Tuesday-Wednesday, Nov. 8-9
7 a.m. Department of Emergency Medicine. “DEM Faculty Retreat.” Ponte Family Estate Winery.

Wednesday, Nov. 9
Noon. The Saban Research Institute Seminar. “Current Concepts of Ureaplasma spp. Respiratory Infection in Preterm Infants: Time to Treat?” Rose M. Viscardi, MD, University of Maryland School of Medicine. Saban Research Building Auditorium, 4661 Sunset Blvd. Info: Ritu Gill, (323) 361-8715, tecpad@chla.usc.edu, <http://chla.org/tecpad>

3-5 p.m. Office of Research Workshop. “Successful Strategies for a Mission Agency Young Investigator/Early Career Award,” James Murday, PhD, associate director, Washington, D.C., Office of Research Advancement. CUB 329, University Park Campus. Info and RSVP: (213) 740-6709, usccer@usc.edu, <https://research.usc.edu/for-investigators/training/younginvestigator/>

Thursday, Nov. 10
10:30 a.m.-Noon. Amgen and the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC. “R&D Insights from Lab Bench to Patient Bedside.” Broad CIRM Center First Floor Conference Room. Info: qliumich@usc.edu, karenw03@amgen.com. RSVP: www.usc.edu/esvp, Code: amgenlecture

Noon. Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute Seminar. “Communicating Your Research: Demystifying the Editorial and Peer Review Processes at Nature Research Journals,” Brett Benedetti, PhD, assistant editor, research manuscripts at *Nature Medicine*. Herklotz Seminar Room, ZNI 112. Info: Emily Chu, (323) 442-3219, Emily.Chu@med.usc.edu, <http://www.usc.edu/zni>

Noon-2 p.m. Office of Research Workshop. “Negotiating Tactics for Women in the Sciences,” Peter Carnevale, PhD, USC Marshall School of Business. CHP 157, Sullivan Technology Center. Info and RSVP: (213) 740-6709, usccer@usc.edu, <https://research.usc.edu/negotiating-tactics-for-women-in-science/>

1:30 p.m. Keck Medicine of USC Stroke Support Group Meeting. “Speech and Language Treatment After Stroke,” James Pazak, speech pathologist. Keck Hospital, 3 North, Day Room (3261A). Info: Melody Sharifi, (323) 442-0049, msharifi@med.usc.edu. Snacks provided and parking validated — all are welcome.

Tuesday, Nov. 15
Noon. Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds. Herklotz Seminar Room, ZNI 112. Lunch will be provided.

Noon. Department of Radiology Grand Rounds. “Interventional Radiology.” NRT LG503/4 – Harlyne Tower. Info and RSVP: Rosy Diaz, (323) 442-7469, rosaura.diaz@med.usc.edu,

<http://keck.usc.edu/radiology/divisions>. Lunch will be provided, reservations requested.

Wednesday, Nov. 16
Noon-2 p.m. USC Institute for Global Health and GlobeMed at USC Discussion. “Redefining Leadership: A Conversation on the Future of Global Health,” Jessica Mack, MTS. Soto Street Building (SSB) 115/116. Info: Larissa Puro, (323) 442-7233, puro@usc.edu, <http://globalhealth.usc.edu/redefining-leadership>

Thursday, Nov. 17
Noon-1:30 p.m. USC Institute for Global Health and GlobeMed at USC. “Redefining Leadership: A Conversation on the Future of Global Health with Global Health Corps,” Jessica Mack, MTS, moderator. Rosen Family Screening Room at Tutor Campus Center, TCC 227, University Park Campus. Info and RSVP: Larissa Puro, (323) 442-7233, puro@usc.edu, <http://globalhealth.usc.edu/redefining-leadership>

Noon-3:30 p.m. Office of Research Workshop. “Revising Strategies for Proposal Success,” Bonnie Lund, professional grant writer. USC Norris Medical Library West Conference Room. Info and RSVP: (213) 740-6709, usccer@usc.edu, <https://research.usc.edu/revising-strategies-for-proposal-success/>

Tuesday, Nov. 22
12:30 p.m. USC Immigrant Health Initiative, Center for Health Equity in the Americas & USC Institute for Global Health. “Striving for Health Justice: The Reality of Syrian Refugees & Displaced Populations,” Steve McAndrew. Soto Street Building (SSB) 117. Info and RSVP: Larissa Puro, (323) 442-7233, global.health@usc.edu, <https://globalhealth.usc.edu/striving-for-health-justice/>

Varma honored by AAO for life achievement

Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, interim dean of the Keck School of Medicine of USC and director of the USC Gayle and Edward Roski Eye Institute, received the Life Achievement Honor Award from the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO).

The AAO, which held its annual meeting Oct. 14-18 in Chicago, presents the award to recognize “contributions to the Academy, its scientific and educational programs, and to the advancement of ophthalmology.”

In a letter announcing the award, the AAO states that Varma’s “contributions have been instrumental in supporting the Academy’s mission to protect sight and empower lives.”

Eighteen medical and scientific experts from the USC Roski Eye Institute presented breakthrough research and clinical innovations at the AAO annual meeting, highlighting the most advanced treatments and procedures that focus on the future



Sevan Torossian

Rohit Varma is seen Oct. 16 during the “Best of Anterior Segment Society Meeting” at the American Academy of Ophthalmology annual meeting, held Oct. 14-18 in Chicago. Varma gave a talk, titled “An Ab-interno Gelatin Stent for the treatment of Primary Open Angle Glaucoma: 3 Year Follow Up.”

eye health of Americans across the lifespan. They covered a wide range

of topics addressing ophthalmic issues — refractive surgery and the

latest in the FDA-approved corneal cross-linking; pediatric glaucoma and retina; neovascular age-related macular degeneration (AMD); uveitis and scleritis, oculofacial plastic and cosmetic surgical techniques; hyperspectral imaging; vitreoretinal surgery; and a case study on pseudotumor cerebi.

“For more than 40 years our mission has been to preserve, protect and restore sight for the more than 26 million Americans over age 40 impacted by vision impairment as well as millions of children and young adults affected by myopia, amblyopia, strabismus, ptosis and other vision conditions,” Varma said. “In their AAO presentations this year, our faculty showcased their groundbreaking research in complex eye diseases and the latest treatments that will help end blindness and restore sight in our patients.”

PLAN

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— Keck Hospital earned a grade A safety score from Leapfrog in 2016.

They also are among the best. Keck Medical Center of USC, which consists of Keck Hospital of USC and USC Norris Cancer Hospital, maintained its No. 3 ranking on the 2016 *U.S. News and World Report* list of Best Hospitals in metro Los Angeles. Keck Medical Center also increased its rankings among the Best Hospitals in California to No. 8.

The medical center also performed well in a number of specialty rankings, securing a Top 50 placement in seven specialties, including the USC Roski Eye Institute, the USC Institute of Urology and the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center.

USC employees enrolled in the network plan also have appointment scheduling assistance with the Trojan Family Navigator at (323) 442-8102.

For more information, go to <https://benefits.usc.edu/>.

GRANTS: Studies include multi-institutional, transatlantic project

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Alzheimer’s Association will give Zlokovic and Toga up to \$3 million, and the Foundation Leducq in Paris asked Zlokovic to be the North American coordinator of a multi-institutional transatlantic program, supporting his work with up to \$6 million.

“Berislav Zlokovic is a very creative scientist who forges partnerships across disciplines, paving the way for innovation in varied areas ranging from basic Alzheimer’s research to clinical trials,” said Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, interim dean of the Keck School of Medicine and director of the USC Gayle and Edward Roski Eye Institute. “He is an internationally renowned clinician-scientist recognized for

his contributions to age-related changes and diseases of the brain. Dr. Zlokovic’s work has the potential to help millions of people who have or may develop Alzheimer’s disease.”

More than 5 million Americans currently live with Alzheimer’s, a disease that kills more people than breast and prostate cancer combined, according to the Alzheimer’s Association. Alzheimer’s is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States.

USC researchers in multiple disciplines are seeking to untangle intractable diseases and conditions attached to aging, including Alzheimer’s and dementia.

Many Alzheimer’s disease researchers focus on the tangles of tau proteins in the

brain or beta-amyloid plaque that may block cell-to-cell signaling at synapses. Zlokovic, however, believes vascular dysfunction predates and contributes to these manifestations.

“The blood-brain barrier’s leaks allow many blood-derived toxic products, cells and pathogens to enter the brain and directly damage brain circuits involved in memory and learning,” Zlokovic said. “Additionally, bad proteins that normally are ejected from the brain, such as beta-amyloid, have to struggle against the flow of traffic. This situation can eventually lead to ‘a second hit’: Beta-amyloids and tau tangles remain in the brain and cause damage that become evident years later.”

SAFETY: ‘Excellence requires continuous daily commitment’ from all

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outstanding improvements in performance in the AHRQ Patient Safety Indicators, as well as being designated a Center of Excellence by over 70 organizations.

“Quality and safety in health care are not static conditions. Excellence requires a continuous daily commitment from the entire staff. I am proud of all of our teams and their accomplishments,” said Stephanie Hall, MD, chief medical officer of Keck Medicine. “Keck Hospital remains committed to delivering the safest and highest quality care using cutting-

edge technology, evidence based research and a culture of accountability.”

In 2016, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Keck Medical Center among the Top 20 hospitals in the United States in ophthalmology, urology and cancer care, and among the Top 50 hospitals for geriatric care, orthopaedic care, nephrology and cardiology.

To see Keck Hospital’s full grade, and to access consumer-friendly patient tips for staying safe in the hospital, visit www.hospitalsafetygrade.com.

PROGRAM: China Initiative began in 2014 as part of gift from USC Trustee Ronnie Chan, wife

Continued from page 1

capable of fostering the profession’s growth within the country.

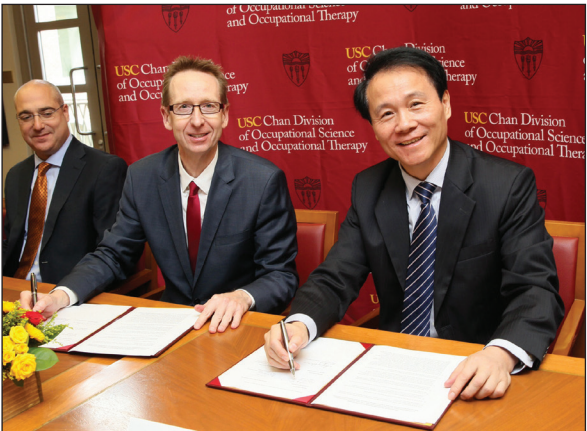
The China Initiative began in 2014 as part of a multimillion dollar gift from USC Trustee Ronnie C. Chan, MBA, and his wife, Barbara, to endow and name USC’s occupational therapy division and to establish a partnership with an elite Chinese university to expand occupational therapy research, education and practice.

“We would not be here today without the foresight and generosity of USC Trustee Ronnie Chan, his wife, Barbara, and their family,” said USC President C. L. Max Nikias, PhD. “Thanks to the Chan family, we will be able to extend USC’s faculty expertise across the Pacific in order to fortify the global occupational therapy community.”

Currently, there is just one occupational therapy graduate-level program in China. Typically occupational therapy — as we know it in the United States — falls under the auspices of general rehabilitation therapy — which is a bachelor’s degree program.

The China Initiative partnership builds upon that educational foundation, establishing one of China’s first graduate-level programs in occupational therapy. The program offers students a master’s in rehabilitation (with an emphasis in occupational therapy) from the Peking University Health Science Center through a program that will replicate the world-renowned curriculum at USC Chan.

Graduates of the master’s program will then be eligible



Philip Channing

USC Provost Michael Quick and Peking University Health Science Center President Qimin Zhan formalize the partnership between the two institutions.

to apply to the post-professional occupational therapy doctorate program at USC.

During the first two years of the partnership, USC Chan and PKU/Peking University Health Science Center faculty members will collaborate to develop the contours of the program, making sure it is responsive to the specific health needs of the world’s most populous nation.

The program’s first faculty members will be individuals appointed by the Peking University Health Science Center to spend two years at USC Chan, earning both a post-professional master’s degree and a post-professional

occupational therapy doctorate. These faculty members will then return to China to launch the Peking University Health Science Center program.

In addition to establishing the master’s program, the partnership paves the way for Chinese PhD students to study at USC Chan.

Once established and implemented, the partnership promises to continue the educational evolution of occupational therapy in China, training a new generation of practitioners to provide high-quality clinical services to the estimated 85 million Chinese living with, or at risk for, a disability.

Occupational therapy is a health care profession focused on enabling people to better manage chronic disease and disability through sustainable, health-promoting activities and routines in order to live more satisfying and productive lives.

USC has been ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as the nation’s No. 1 occupational therapy graduate educational program for more years than all other programs combined, and USC has a legacy of professional leadership, including founding the nation’s first two-year, entry-level master’s degree in occupational therapy in 1962.

Peking University is China’s first national university and the highest ranked in mainland China, according to the annual QS World University Rankings. Built in 1912, the Peking University Health Science Center was the country’s first school to teach Western medicine in the style of the British medical education system and now is among China’s most selective and respected medical schools.

HSC Newsmakers

A roundup of news items related to Keck Medicine of USC, which may include philanthropic donations, research grants, publication in academic journals and mentions in the news media:



Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

J. Jacques Carter, past-president of the Harvard Chan Alumni Association and chair of the Nominations Committee, presents Carol Peden with the 2016 Public Health Innovator Award.

Professor recognized for public health innovation

CAROL PEDEN, MD, MPH, professor of clinical anesthesiology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC and executive director of the USC Center for Health System Innovation, received the 2016 Public Health Innovator Award from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health at a special ceremony held at the school on Sept. 24. The award recognizes a significant innovative contribution to public health made by a distinguished graduate of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, with Peden being recognized as “a passionate and effective innovator in improving outcomes in perioperative care using data and evidence-based science to reduce surgical deaths among those who are elderly, have co-morbidities, and are undergoing emergency surgery, a leading cause of death in the U.S. and worldwide.” — **L. Alexis Young**



Ziva Santop/Steve Cohn Photography

Panelists and co-hosts of the Trojan Society of Hospitals annual luncheon, from left, are Ashley Wysong, Marc Weigensberg, Carol Mollett, Sharon Orrange, Rod Hanners, Caroline Hwang and Helena Chui.

Trojan Society of Hospitals holds annual luncheon

IT WAS A PACKED HOUSE FOR the Trojan Society of Hospitals annual luncheon, where some of Keck Medicine of USC’s leading physicians discussed integrated health and collaborative medical care in a lively panel on Sept. 22. The society helps raise funds for the hospitals on the Health Sciences Campus while acting as ambassadors and volunteers for the medical enterprise. The society’s president, Carol Mollett, shared plans for the proposed Sky Garden, which would transform part of Keck Hospital’s roof into a relaxing and therapeutic sanctuary for patients and their families, as well as Keck Medicine staff. Event co-host Rod Hanners, COO of Keck Medicine and CEO of Keck Medical Center of USC, spoke about Keck Medicine’s recent accolades and thanked the society for being strong supporters of the medical enterprise. Tom Jackiewicz, MPH, senior vice president and CEO of Keck Medicine, also spoke about Keck Medicine’s commitment to wellness not only for patients but for staff as well. — **Amanda Busick**

Study: Modified natural cycle IVF more cost-effective

RESEARCHERS AT USC FERTILITY at Keck Medicine of USC have determined that modified natural cycle in-vitro fertilization (IVF) is a more cost-effective fertility method than controlled ovarian stimulation and traditional IVF. Depending on the treatment strategy, modified natural cycle IVF could save up to \$7,000 over conventional IVF for each live birth. This provides hope to women and couples who would normally be deterred by the high up-front costs of the more widely used treatments. The findings were presented Oct. 19 at the American Society for Reproductive Medicine 2016 Scientific Congress. “We know that of the one-in-six couples who will experience difficulties getting pregnant, a significant portion of them will not be able to afford the treatments that could help them conceive,” said Richard Paulson, MD, director of USC Fertility and senior author of the study. — **Mary Dacuma**



Steve Cohn

HONORING SCHOLARS: At left, Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, Keck School of Medicine of USC interim dean and director of the USC Gayle and Edward Roski Eye Institute, is seen with third-year medical student Amy Komure and Senior Associate Dean for Student and Educational Affairs Donna Elliott, MD, EdD, at the Keck School’s 11th annual Scholarship Luncheon in downtown Los Angeles. More than 150 people gathered during the Oct. 19 event to honor the medical school’s donors and provide a chance for the benefactors to meet the students they support. Attendees heard updates on the Keck School from Varma and Elliott, while Komure shared her path to medical school and her work toward earning a medical degree and master’s degree in public health.

Meet Meghan McCullough, Tsao Global Surgery Fellow

By Larissa Puro

As a pre-medical student at Harvard University, Meghan McCullough faced a life-changing decision: to train for a chance to make it to the Olympics or fulfill her ambition to become a doctor. Her choice to retire from competitive ice dancing at age 21, while difficult, led her to where she is today: a USC plastic surgery resident and Tsao Global Surgery Fellow. In college she discovered a passion for global health while taking a course taught by Paul Farmer MD, PhD. “It opened my eyes,” she said, to the ways communities treated their ill and deformed — especially children with craniofacial disorders.

Before starting medical school at Emory University, she traveled on surgical missions, volunteered aboard a U.S. Navy hospital ship and advocated on Capitol Hill for HIV/AIDS research. The gap year highlighted different aspects of medicine and exposed her to a new perspective of surgery as a public health tool to combat disease internationally. She chose USC for her plastic surgery residency in part because of its Tsao Global Surgery Fellowship, organized by Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, Operation Smile and the USC Institute for Global Health.

The two-year program “really gives you the time to immerse in the experience and come to appreciate all the cultural, social, political and economic factors involved in global surgery work,” she said. Fellows develop academic, clinical and administrative skills while simultaneously gaining master’s degrees and managing international research. In 2016 McCullough became the program’s fifth fellow. With residency on hold, she is juggling classes, travel and several global projects.

One project, a cleft lip and palate severity index, uses an iPhone application to better standardize discussions, guide treatment decisions and improve conversations with families about cleft disease. Another focuses on building surgical capacity in Vietnam. In addition, McCullough is helping to develop Operation Smile’s educational curricula. Next up, McCullough plans to travel to Nicaragua, Morocco, Madagascar, Vietnam, Bolivia and India to follow up on research and attend conferences. Long-term, she hopes to specialize in pediatric plastic surgery and continue her global surgical work.



Larissa Puro

USC plastic surgery resident Meghan McCullough is leading research and education projects around the world for Operation Smile as the newest Tsao Global Surgery Fellow.

USC Health Sciences
Public Relations and Marketing
2011 N Soto Street - SST-2830
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