

Keck Hospital earns ‘A’ grade for patient safety

By Erica Rheinschild

Keck Hospital of USC is one of 832 hospitals nationwide to receive an “A” grade from the Leapfrog Group, a national patient safety watchdog, during the Fall 2017 release of the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade.

Developed under the guidance of an expert panel, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 30 measures of publicly available patient safety data to determine

whether a hospital is assigned an A, B, C, D or F grade. Data included in the calculations are derived from national performance measures from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other national organizations.

“We are delighted to receive another ‘A’ Leapfrog

Hospital Safety Grade,” said Rod Hanners, COO of Keck Medicine of USC and CEO of Keck Medical Center of USC.

“This achievement is the result of continuous improvements at Keck Hospital to provide the highest level of care to our patients, many of whom have complex medical issues.”

Keck Hospital’s “A” grade reflects its strict adherence to

See **SAFETY**, page 3



Keck Hospital of USC

Ricardo Carrasco II

Open Enrollment options available for employees

By Douglas Morino

Keck Medicine of USC faculty and staff will have a chance to save money and optimize their health care coverage during the 2018 Open Enrollment period.

There are a variety of new health care offerings, all of which offer high-quality, comprehensive coverage for employees and their loved ones. Additionally, enrollees will receive up to \$65 per month in financial incentives and discounts for taking health assessments and living healthy lives.

“We are committed to providing our employees with the highest-quality health care coverage,” said Tom Jackiewicz, MPH, senior vice president and CEO of Keck

Medicine. “As Keck Medicine continues to grow, we are pleased to offer members of the Trojan Family a variety of affordable and convenient care options.”

A key part of the offerings will be expanded care through Keck Medicine.

A new offering will be the USC Trojan Care EPO, which will provide access to Keck Medicine providers and high-quality specialists across the Los Angeles region.

Enrollment began Oct. 30 and runs to Nov. 21. New plans and rates take effect Jan. 1, 2018.

For more information, go to <https://openenrollment.usc.edu> or call the Human Resources Service Center at (213) 821-8100.

Grants fund research into Alzheimer’s disease risk factor

In partnership with the Alzheimer Disease Research Center of USC, Hussein Yassine, MD, assistant professor of medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, was awarded two National Institutes of Health R01 grants totaling \$6.7 million to conduct research that aims to further the medical community’s understanding of a genotype present in people with heightened risk of Alzheimer’s disease.

Yassine and his team will study how lipid metabolism varies by apolipoprotein (*APOE*) genotype in persons at risk for Alzheimer’s disease. The *APOE4* gene is a strong risk factor for Alzheimer’s disease but how it is involved in Alzheimer’s remains a mystery, Yassine said. Clues to this mystery may lie in the understanding of the basic

biology of the protein that is produced from *APOE4*, he said, explaining that the protein normally carries important lipids such as omega-3 fatty acids from the bloodstream to the brain. In the brain, these fatty acids such as docosahexaenoic acid, or DHA, are critical for memory functions.

“One in five people carry at least one copy of the gene variant but we still don’t know how it is involved in Alzheimer’s disease,” Yassine said. “In our first project we are looking at using high dose omega-3 supplements for prevention rather than



Hussein Yassine

See **GRANTS**, page 3



DAY IN THE LIFE: Keck Medicine of USC employees participated in a patient care simulation during a “Day in the Life” preview event held Oct. 26 at Norris Healthcare Center (HC3). Selected staff and clinical care providers conducted simulation-based testing events to prepare the new building for the arrival of patients in 2018.



Photos by Ricardo Carrasco III

Ultrasound technology targets dense tissue

By Mary Dacuma

A new research project at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center is actively recruiting women with dense breast tissue to examine the effectiveness of a novel breast ultrasound device. SoftVue is the world’s first 3-D, whole-breast ultrasound system that might better assist physicians in distinguishing normal breast tissue from cancers.

“While mammography is the best screening tool for women, we have known for years that breast cancers are much more difficult to see in women with dense breasts,” said Mary Yamashita, MD, assistant professor of clinical radiology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC and the national principal investigator of the research project. “Our hope is that this technology will enable us to detect cancers much sooner in women with dense breast tissue so that we can provide better outcomes for those with cancer and peace of mind for those with a negative study.”

More than 40 percent of women nationwide have dense breast tissue, which is unrelated

to weight or breast size. Because dense breasts can mask potential cancers on mammography, the sensitivity for detecting cancer is lower in women with dense breasts. Handheld ultrasound can detect cancers not seen on mammography, but these exams can be time-consuming and are operator-dependent. They also have a high rate of false positives, resulting in unnecessary biopsies.

SoftVue is a faster, more automated system that conducts scans while the woman is face down with her breast supported in a warm water bath. A 360-degree ring transducer images the entire breast in a single pass within two to four minutes per breast without radiation exposure or compression. Unlike handheld ultrasound, SoftVue can provide multiple distinctive tissue qualities to radiologists, allowing them to differentiate possible cancers



Mary Yamashita

Ricardo Carrasco III

See **ULTRASOUND**, page 3



Ricardo Carrasco III

CAMPUS ENJOYS MIDDAY PIANO RECITAL: The Health Sciences Campus community recently enjoyed a recital by internationally acclaimed concert pianist Zora Mihailovich. The performance was sponsored by the Provost’s office and organized under the Keck School of Medicine of USC’s Humanities, Ethics, Art, and Law (HEAL) program.

Keck School faculty promotions rise with new paths to success

By Amanda Busick

The number of clinical faculty promotions for the Keck School of Medicine of USC faculty has tripled since 2014. This increase is the result of a project undertaken by the Office of Faculty Affairs to improve the processes used to promote faculty. This has led to two new ways for faculty to successfully advance in their careers: the practitioner track and the clinician educator track. “These two new tracks,” explained Judy Garner, PhD, vice dean for faculty affairs, “are for clinician educators and practitioners. The first criterion necessary to be placed on one of these tracks is that you must spend 85 percent of your time either doing clinical work and mentoring trainees for clinician educator, or 85 percent of your time performing clinical practice for practitioner.” These specialized tracks are chosen by faculty primarily based on the profile of their activities and the area in which they demonstrate their greatest strength. Recognition of excellence in

clinical practice, educational ability and leadership are highlighted, as well as assessment of the candidate’s track record with students, the impact of their work and leadership positions they have held. Anonymous 360 degree surveys were developed to get a complete picture of their performance. The addition of these tracks has been very successful. The number of clinical track promotions increased from 31 in the 2014-15 year, to 93 in the 2016-17 year. The number of promotions also rose for faculty members on existing tracks. The result: the school has reduced the number of clinical assistant professors from 842 in 2014 to 510 today. Garner’s team is not taking this success for granted. Outreach to departments to help encourage faculty to actively pursue growth continues. “We love to talk to departments about the appointments and get people excited about doing this. The school is going in the right direction, and we are looking forward to continuing this tremendous growth.”

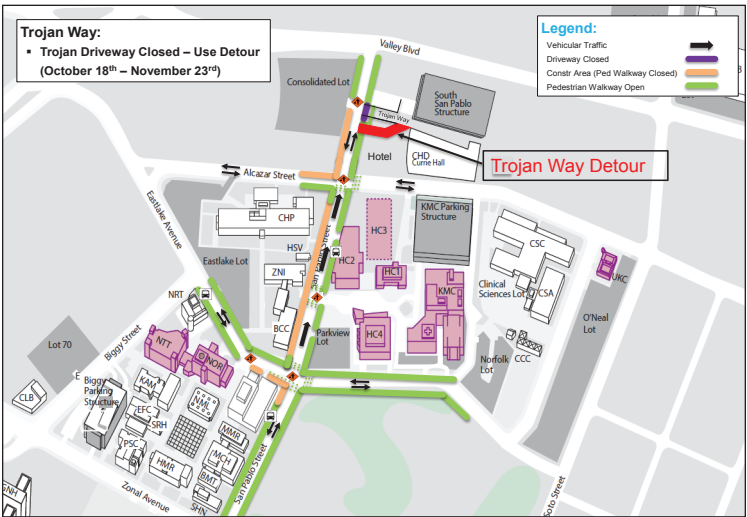
Construction continues on Health Sciences Campus

Employees and visitors to the Health Sciences Campus are advised of new and ongoing construction detours and closures. The Trojan Way driveway — the entrance road to the South San Pablo Parking Structure off of San Pablo Street — is scheduled to be closed for construction through Nov. 23. A detour into the structure has been constructed just south of the existing driveway. Pedestrian walkways will remain closed on the west side of San Pablo between

Valley Boulevard and Eastlake Avenue. Pedestrian walkways will remain open on the east side of San Pablo. Work, meanwhile, continues on San Pablo. Traffic control officers will continue to be stationed at the intersections of San Pablo and Eastlake /Norfolk Street, San Pablo and Alcazar streets, San Pablo at the Consolidated Parking Lot, the Hospital Drive pedestrian crosswalk on San Pablo and on Eastlake at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center driveway. The

officers will help guide traffic while sidewalk improvements and lane striping work occurs on the streets. Please be mindful of the following:

- When driving, slow down and watch for pedestrians. Many patients visiting the hospitals and clinics have limited mobility.
- The Health Sciences Campus is an active construction zone — please watch for hazards, especially while navigating sidewalks and crosswalks.



Calendar of Events

Friday, Nov. 3
8 a.m.-6:30 p.m. HTE@USC and SixThirtyGroup Conference. “Transforming Healthcare with Data.” Radisson Hotel Los Angeles Midtown at USC. Info: Nadine Afari, nafari@usc.edu, <http://bit.ly/2xjTlsl>

8:30 a.m. Hastings Center for Pulmonary Research Seminar. “Pathogenic Mechanisms of Subpleural/Peripheral Fibrosis in Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis,” Satish Madala, PhD, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. IRD 734. Info: Fereshta Saraj, (323) 409-7184, saraj@usc.edu

Noon. USC Research Center for Liver Diseases Seminar. “Nutrients and Fatty Liver Disease: What’s Good For Your Liver May Be Bad For Your Fat,” Jacquelyn J. Maher, MD, University of California, San Francisco. McKibben Lecture Hall, Room 156. Info: Dolores Mendoza, (323) 442-1283, dmmendoza@usc.edu

Saturday, Nov. 4-Sunday, Nov. 5
8 a.m.-Noon. Society of Graduate Radiologists, Department of Radiology and USC Office of Continuing Medical Education. “Advances in Radiology.” 100 Terranea Way, Rancho Palos Verdes. Info: Lysandro Valenzuela, (323) 442-2555, uscme@med.usc.edu, <https://cmetracker.net/KECKUSC/Catalog>

Sunday, Nov. 5
8 a.m. USC Comprehensive Epilepsy Center. “2017 Walk/Run to END Epilepsy.” Rose Bowl, Pasadena. Info: Sandra Correa, (323) 442-5996, sandra.correa@med.usc.edu.

Monday, Nov. 6
Noon. USC Women in Management Luncheon. “From Model to Master,” Stefanie Blase and Carolina Goldberg. Health Sciences Campus. Info and RSVP: Ginger Mayerson, (323) 201-7147, mayerson@usc.edu, <http://uscwim.org/calendar.asp>. RSVP required for location information; \$18 for members, \$20 for non-members.

Tuesday, Nov. 7
11 a.m. USC Stem Cell Seminar. “Genetic Regulation of Developmental and Regenerative Growth,” Iswar Hariharan, MBBS, PhD, University of California, Berkeley. Eli and Edythe Broad CIRM Center Auditorium. Info: Cristy Lytal, lytal@med.usc.edu

Noon. Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds. “Thinking Outside (and Beside) the Conventional Neuroimaging Box.” Alex Leow, MD, PhD, University of Illinois. GNH 1645 1st floor lecture hall. Info:

Gretchen Heidemann, (323) 442-4021, gretchen.heidemann@med.usc.edu

4 p.m. USC Caruso Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Seminar. “The Optical Cochlear Implant,” Claus-Peter Richter, MD, PhD, Northwestern University. Eli and Edythe Broad CIRM Center Auditorium. Info: Jacqueline Jimenez, (323) 442-5579, jimenez1@med.usc.edu

Wednesday, Nov. 8
1 p.m. The Saban Research Institute Seminar. “Discovery & Innovation Seminar: Pathways Regulating Hematopoietic Stem Cell Self-Renewal and Migration,” Leonard I. Zon, MD, Harvard Medical School. Saban Research Building Auditorium, 4661 Sunset Blvd. Info and RSVP: Sandy Wang, (323) 361-7489, tecpad@chla.usc.edu, <http://chla.org/tecpad>

Thursday, Nov. 9
11 a.m. Hastings Center for Pulmonary Research Seminar. “The AGE of the Fibroblast,” Anne-Karina T. Perl, PhD, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. IRD 734. Info: Fereshta Saraj, (323) 409-7184, saraj@usc.edu

11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. USC Stem Cell Seminar. “Postdoc Seminar Series: Preparing for the Faculty Job Market — Preparing for the

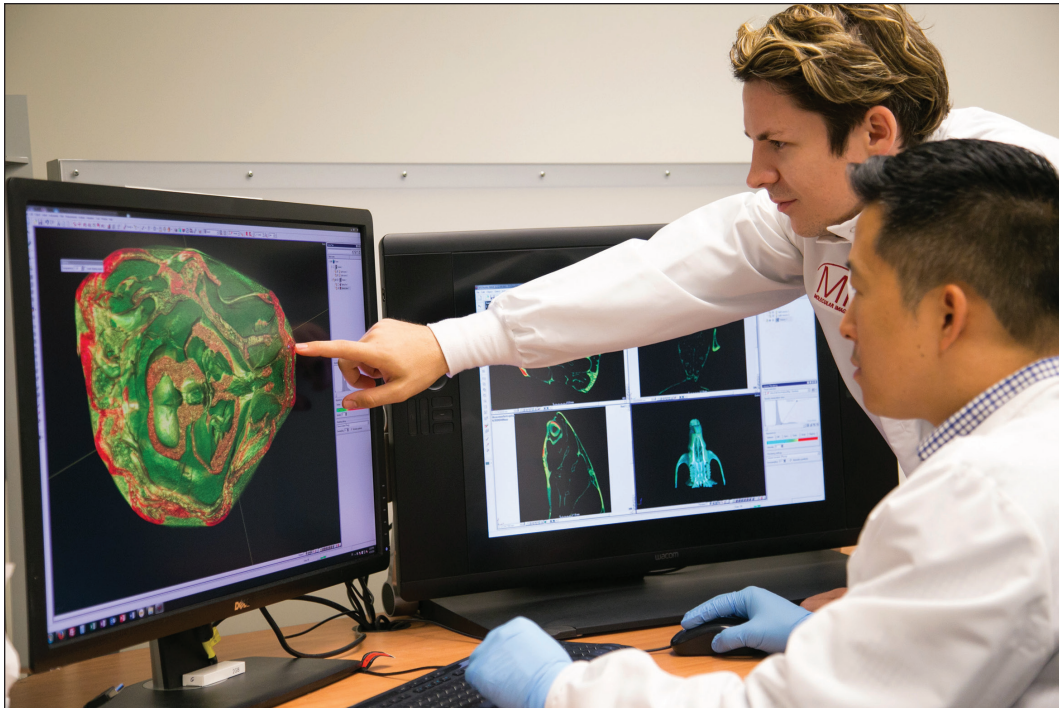
Interview,” Francesca Mariani, PhD; Gage Crump, PhD; Rong Lu, PhD; Amy Firth, PhD. Eli and Edythe Broad CIRM Center Auditorium. Info: Cristy Lytal, lytal@med.usc.edu, <http://stemcell.usc.edu/events>

Saturday, Nov. 11
8 a.m.-5 p.m. Department of Radiology Conference. “The International Contrast Ultrasound Society Presents CEUS: Basic Training for Novices,” Edward Grant, MD, and Hisham Tchelepi, MD. Mayer Auditorium. Info and RSVP: Susana Fung, (323) 442-8541, <http://icuskeck.eventbrite.com>

Tuesday, Nov. 14
11 a.m. USC Stem Cell Seminar. “Epigenomics of Aging in Vertebrates,” Bérénice Benayoun, PhD. Eli and Edythe Broad CIRM Center Auditorium. Info: Cristy Lytal, lytal@med.usc.edu. Live webcast at <http://keckmedia.usc.edu/stem-cell-seminar>.

Noon. Diabetes and Obesity Research Institute, USC Endocrinology and Diabetes Grand Rounds/Seminar. “Can We Reprogram B-Cell Metabolism to Prevent and Rescue Type-2 Diabetes?” Matthew Merrins, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Hastings Auditorium. Info: Christina Ayala, (323) 442-2500, trujillc@usc.edu

Notice: Calendar items are due at least 10 days before publication date. Timely submission does not guarantee publication in print. See more calendar entries at hscnews.usc.edu/calendar-of-events. Submit items at tinyurl.com/calendar-hsc. Include day, date, time, title of talk, first and last name of speaker, affiliation of speaker, location and a phone number/email address.



The Molecular Imaging Center houses a variety of technologies available for use by faculty on the Health Sciences Campus.

Ricardo Carrasco III

Center offers expanded imaging capabilities for faculty research

By Hope Hamashige

The Molecular Imaging Center (MIC) on the Health Sciences Campus has been helping to advance faculty research by providing in vivo imaging technology for nearly three decades. What started as a small animal imaging core has evolved into a multimillion-dollar, state-of-the-art imaging center with multimodal capabilities.

“The opening of the new cyclotron last year has taken what we can do to a different realm because we can produce tracers that aren’t commercially available,” explained Edward Grant, MD, chair and professor of radiology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

The cyclotron, which allows for the production of radionuclides such as 18F, 11C, 13N and 64Cu, produces isotopes used in positron emission tomography (PET) imaging, which can help researchers doing translational research that may ultimately be used in clinical trials on humans.

One example of a compound that was developed through a collaboration between a faculty member of the Keck School and the MIC is called 18-FMAU. That compound now is being tested for use in humans with prostate cancer in a clinical trial at Keck Medicine of USC.

The MIC also houses a Preclinical Imaging Core that provides several imaging technologies

— PET, CT, MR, optical and ultrasound scanning — that can help researchers answer a wide variety of biomedical questions and design research that can move from preclinical to clinical settings.

“In vivo preclinical imaging has revolutionized biomedical research and drug delivery and development, and has become an invaluable tool for both academia and industry researchers,” said Peter Conti, MD, PhD, professor of radiology at the Keck School and director of the MIC.

Over the years, the team at MIC has collaborated with colleagues across USC studying tumor metabolism, angiogenesis, Alzheimer’s disease and research on teeth and bones.

The MIC has applied for a license to produce clinical compounds that are not commonly available because they have short half-lives. One example is 13N ammonia, which is used to perform cardiac scans to produce images that are superior to existing technology and are not widely available.

“This facility is a transformative resource for USC because we have one of the leading translational imaging facilities in the world,” said Grant Dagliyan, MPH, associate director of the MIC. “This provides a unique resource to advance research on a number of fronts that cannot be done elsewhere.”

Stem cells offer hope for children with Hurler syndrome

By Lex Davis

Without enzyme replacement therapy or a blood or marrow transplant, children born with Hurler syndrome usually die before they reach 10 years of age. The rare genetic disease leaves the body without an enzyme that breaks down large molecular building blocks of bones and tissue, causing organ damage and physical difficulties.

Results for transplants and enzyme replacement therapy have been mixed and usually don’t help with skeletal or brain development issues. Toshio Miki, MD, PhD, assistant professor of research surgery at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, and his team have been researching a therapy that offers patients a better quality of life. In their work with mice, they have discovered that transplanting human placental stem cells offers a long-term solution.

In a study published in *STEM CELLS Translational Medicine* and conducted with the support of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, Miki’s team found that transplanting healthy stem cells directly into the livers of newborn mice resulted in significant restored enzyme function for more than 20 weeks. The mice that received stem-cell transplants had better coordination than those that didn’t and also had greatly reduced issues with bone development and joint stiffness. Researchers even noticed that mice that received transplants were more likely to engage in normal grooming behavior and interact with their cage mates.

Since this type of placental stem cell is readily available, this research offers some real hope for children born with this condition, Miki said.

SAFETY: Quality initiatives include infection prevention, compliance

Continued from page 1

comprehensive quality and safety programs, as well as a number of successful initiatives aimed at preventing patient harm and achieving high reliability. Among the hospital’s quality and safety initiatives is a physician-led team that is focused on everything from infection prevention strategies to clinical care improvements. The hospital also has a smart sepsis alert system that ensures compliance with evidence-based sepsis care and a program for reducing hospital-acquired venous

thromboembolism.

“Patient safety and quality improvement are top priorities in health care, and at Keck Hospital, we are always challenging ourselves to find new opportunities to elevate care and eliminate patient harm,” said Stephanie Hall, MD, chief medical officer of Keck Medicine of USC. “All of our teams have made tremendous strides in quality and safety, and I am proud of what of they have accomplished.”

To see Keck Hospital’s detailed review, visit www.hospitalsafetygrade.org.

GRANTS: Both projects to look at function of genotype variant

Continued from page 1

treatment, while in our second project we are studying the function of *APOE4* in the brain.”

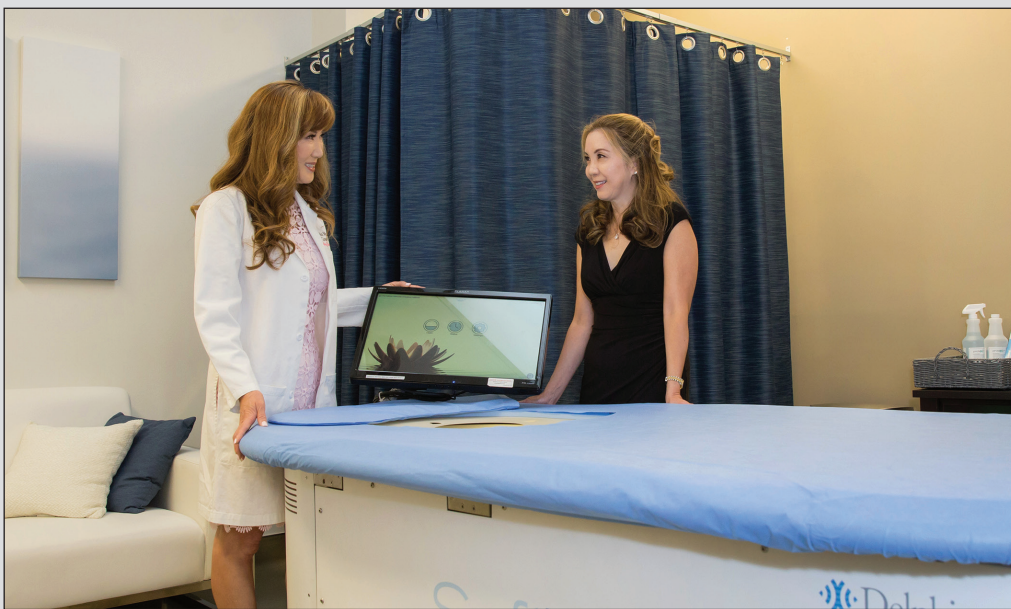
In the first project, the team hopes to obtain information to help tailor omega-3 supplementation in people who carry the *APOE4* gene to help prevent or delay the onset of Alzheimer’s disease.

“We believe that DHA may be a protective factor against Alzheimer’s disease but that it does not penetrate into the brain well enough in persons carrying the *APOE4* gene,” Yassine said. “We have given omega-3 to people with Alzheimer’s but it doesn’t work because once your brain cells die, it’s too late. So we turned it around to see if we could use omega-3 for prevention in people at heightened risk based on *APOE* genotype.”

In the second project, Yassine will measure the functional activity of *APOE* in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF)

among persons with and without the *APOE4* gene. This project will monitor associations between Type-2 diabetes and CSF amyloid, tau and cognitive decline for five years.

The USC team includes Helena Chui, MD, chair and professor of neurology; Lon Schneider, MD, MS, professor of psychiatry and the behavioral sciences; Wendy Mack, PhD, professor of preventive medicine; Meredith Braskie, PhD, assistant professor of research neurology; Duke Han, PhD, associate professor of family medicine (clinical scholar); Meng Law, MD, professor of radiology; and Paul Thompson, PhD, professor of ophthalmology, neurology, psychiatry and the behavioral sciences, radiology and engineering. Collaborators from Pasadena’s Huntington Medical Research Institute include Michael Harrington, MB, ChB, and Alfred Fonteh, PhD.



Mary Yamashita, left, and Shauna Lee talk in front of the SoftVue machine

Ricardo Carrasco III

ULTRASOUND: Exam was ‘comfortable,’ patient said

Continued from page 1

from normal to benign findings.

“I was not sure what to expect, but the SoftVue exam was both easy and comfortable,” said Shauna Lee, the first patient enrolled in this arm of the clinical trial. “I am hopeful that this

ultrasound could be the new standard of care for women with dense breasts, and I would encourage other women who qualify to enroll in this trial.”

The 10,000-patient nationwide clinical trial will be open at eight sites across the United States, with USC

Norris being the only site in Southern California.

Women who have been notified about having dense breast tissue on mammography are encouraged to enroll by calling (323) 442-9299 or emailing softvue@usc.edu.

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:



Modern Healthcare

From left, Mark Ganz, Tom Jackiewicz and Kate Walsh speak during a panel at the second annual Leadership Symposium held Oct. 20-21 in Arizona and organized by Modern Healthcare.

Executives discuss care at leadership symposium

TOM JACKIEWICZ, MPH, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT and CEO of Keck Medicine of USC, joined health care executives for a panel at the second annual Leadership Symposium organized by Modern Healthcare. The session, held during the Oct. 20-21 event in Arizona, included discussions with Mark Ganz, CEO of Cambia Health Solutions, and Kate Walsh, CEO of Boston Medical Center, about the challenges behind providing value-based care to patients.



Claire Norman

Students from the Class of 2019 and 2020 joined forces to pack kits to be donated to the Union Station Homeless Services Adult Center in Pasadena in celebration of PA week.

Students, faculty, staff celebrate PA Week, anniversary

THE PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PA) Program at the Keck School of Medicine of USC celebrated PA Week beginning Oct. 6. This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the creation of the physician assistant profession. To celebrate this special anniversary year, the PA Program kicked off PA Week with a service project. The Classes of 2019 and 2020 joined together to pack shampoo bottles, soap bars, razors, socks, toothbrushes and toothpaste into more than 100 care packages. These packages were then donated to the Union Station Homeless Services Adult Center in Pasadena. The program also celebrated on PA Program Day with a special luncheon on Oct. 12 for the 50th anniversary of the profession. — **Claire Norman**



Ricardo Carrasco III

Interim Dean Laura Mosqueda, center, speaks to students during the Keck School of Medicine of USC Student and Postdoc Appreciation International Food Truck Festival, held Oct. 26.

Students, scholars enjoy food truck festival

THE DEAN’S OFFICE OF THE KECK SCHOOL of Medicine of USC held an appreciation event on Oct. 26, bringing an array of food trucks to the Health Sciences Campus to celebrate students and postdoctoral scholars. Administrators, including Interim Dean Laura Mosqueda, MD, and Donna Elliott, MD, EdD, senior associate dean for student and educational affairs, were at the event to talk to attendees. This was one of several events held throughout the school year for the Dean’s Office to connect with students and postdocs.



Ricardo Carrasco III

USC NORRIS ORGANIZES DONATION TO MEDICAL CENTER IN PUERTO RICO: On Oct. 23, volunteers from the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center gathered to package essential pharmaceutical and medical supplies to donate to the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) Medical Center, which is still recovering from the devastating effects of Hurricane Maria. The donation was coordinated by Larissa Rodriguez, MD, associate provost for faculty and student initiatives in health and STEM and professor of urology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, center left in the photo, and Mariana Stern, PhD, professor of research preventive medicine and urology, center right in the photo, to assist a colleague at UPR Medical Center.

Patients are family for Choi Award winner

By Douglas Morino

Adrian Dobrowolsky, AMD, works to build a connection with each patient he treats.

Dobrowolsky, assistant professor of clinical surgery at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, was named the resident/fellow winner of the 2017 USC Choi Family Awards for Excellence in Patient-Centered Care.

“I think of my patients as part of my family,” Dobrowolsky said. “How would I want members of my family to be cared for?”

A native of Ottawa, Canada, and a graduate of the Stritch School of Medicine at Loyola University in Chicago, Dobrowolsky joined Keck Medicine of USC under a fellowship in minimally invasive upper GI, general and bariatric surgery.

Dobrowolsky, whose mother is an obstetrician, said he works to ensure patients understand the care they are receiving — especially if they are unfamiliar with treatment options or have had a difficult diagnosis.

“I make it a priority to sit down with each patient, not rushing any discussion and being real with them like they are a member of my family,” Dobrowolsky said. “I think they appreciate that extra effort.”

Taking extra time — despite a busy schedule — to sit down and connect with a patient helps put them at ease and builds trust, Dobrowolsky said.

“Just by taking an extra minute or two, our patients are better informed, more comfortable and we reduce risks,” he added. “Being in health care is not a selfish endeavor — it’s a community, patient-based endeavor.”

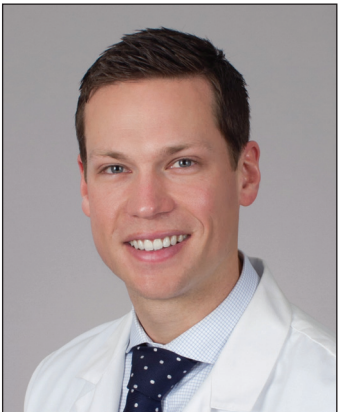
The Choi Awards are part of the USC Choi Family Excellence in Patient-Centered Care Endowment, established in 2016 by Keck Medicine of USC through a generous gift from the Choi family. The endowment provides funding for education and training focused on compassion, empathy, advocacy and patient-centered care.

Each Choi Award winner received \$2,000, along with an additional \$2,000 for their department to be used for programs, training and activities that support and foster a culture of excellence in patient-centered care. Additionally, each recipient’s name will appear on a “perpetual plaque” installed in a place of prominence at Keck Medical Center of USC.

The Choi Family Awards are open each year to all health care professionals at Keck Medicine.

Dobrowolsky said he’s honored to receive the Choi Award, but doesn’t feel he is necessarily deserving over his colleagues.

“We all work hard, but I don’t know if I do anything different from other people,” he said. “I’m very grateful for my colleagues and having people support me through tough times.”



Ricardo Carrasco III

Adrian Dobrowolsky

“Being in health care is not a selfish endeavor — it’s a community, patient-based endeavor.”

— Adrian Dobrowolsky

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