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TODAY

Friday, August 27, 2010

Volume 23, Number 11

HEALTH SCIENCE RESEARCH

\$2.1 million NIH grant will enable pharmacy professor to study HIV/AIDS prevention

By James Ponder

Sometimes you have to think small to dream big. Take microbicides, for instance. An assistant professor in the Loma Linda University School of Pharmacy thinks the tiny molecules—which kill bacteria, fungi, protozoa, and viruses—have potential for saving thousands, perhaps even millions, of lives by preventing the spread of sexually transmitted HIV.

Richard Maskiewicz, PhD, hopes that combining a unique matrix containing one or more microbicide molecules into a novel drug delivery system might halt transmission of the disease at the point of contact.

According to the December 2009 edition of the *United Nations' AIDS Epidemic Update*, approximately two million AIDS-related deaths were reported worldwide in 2008. Another 2.7 million individuals became infected with HIV that year, bringing the total number of

people living with HIV to an estimated 33.4 million.

To visualize the impact of that many fatalities, imagine the entire population of San Bernardino County or Riverside County dying of AIDS in a single year.

Although barely past the planning stages, Dr. Maskiewicz' research on the use of subliming solids—compounds that transition directly to a gaseous state without becoming a liquid—for sustained release of drugs recently brought the School of Pharmacy its first-ever National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant. The \$2.1 million "request-for-applications" research award will enable researchers at LLU and two other facilities to conduct a four-year, pre-clinical evaluation of a universal sustained-release system for anti-HIV microbicides.

The idea fell into place as Dr. Maskiewicz wondered what pharmaceutical researchers might do to help end

the AIDS epidemic. He conceived the idea of formulating almost any microbicide in a subliming solids matrix to ensure stable, consistent delivery of the anti-viral agent for a month or longer.

Dr. Maskiewicz pursued the idea at a modest pace without an extramural research grant until he saw an announcement from the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) at the NIH last summer. It was for a one-time research grant competition to evaluate highly innovative tactics for interrupting HIV transmission. It seemed like perfect timing.

"I had already obtained preliminary data at LLU," says Dr. Maskiewicz, "so I decided to apply. But first I needed to do some networking to find the right collaborators. I contacted Jim Turpin at NIAID, who referred me to Kevin Whaley in San Diego. He, in turn, suggested Charlene Dezzutti in Pittsburgh."

The names he drops are highly regarded in the research community: Jim Turpin, PhD, is a microbiologist and grant administrator at the NIAID; Kevin Whaley, PhD, is CEO of Mapp Biopharmaceutical, Inc., of San Diego; and Charlene Dezzutti, PhD, wears many hats:

In addition to serving as associate professor of obstetrics/gynecology and reproductive sciences at the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Dezzutti is an associate investigator at the MaGee-Womens Research Institute in Pennsylvania and principal investigator of the network laboratory for the Microbicide Trials Network, a clinical trials program of the NIAID and NIH.

The offer to serve as a co-investigator on the study intrigued Dr. Dezzutti because of her enthusiasm for evaluating the effectiveness of subliming solids microbicide formulations. While working at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, she had developed an innov-



Richard Maskiewicz, PhD, assistant professor in the LLU School of Pharmacy, recently brought the school its first-ever grant from the National Institutes of Health—a \$2.1 million research award to conduct a four-year, pre-clinical evaluation of a universal, sustained-release system for anti-HIV microbicides.

ative cervical explant model for testing the anti-HIV properties and tissue toxicity of topical microbicides; it seemed an excellent vehicle for the LLU investigation.

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EXCELLENCE

Loma Linda University Medical Center sweeps its categories at Pacific Southwest Emmy Awards

By Heather Reifsnnyder

Loma Linda University Medical Center won three Emmys on June 26, 2010, taking home an award for each of its nominated categories at the 36th Annual Pacific Southwest Emmy Awards in San Diego.

The awards were for "Loma Linda 360," the documentary-style broadcast show developed and produced in the office of university relations.

Each of the nominated stories features outreach programs of Loma Linda University Medical Center.

The story "Surgeons of Hope" won in the category of health/science program or special. Directed by first-time winner and second-time nominee Maranatha Hay, video

production specialist, office of university relations, "Surgeons of Hope" tells the story of Holman Velasquez, a 14-year-old boy born with a fatal heart disease in Nicaragua.

With no money to explore foreign options, Holman must undergo open-heart surgery in a country that is in the process of developing a successful pediatric heart surgery program. In order to have a chance at reaching adulthood, Holman and his mother must undergo a test of faith that nearly shatters their deep strength of spirit. Doctors from Loma Linda partner with Surgeons of Hope, a foundation devoted to bringing surgical care to indigent children in developing countries. This means survival for kids who wouldn't have a chance otherwise. Holman continues to do well.

"Armed for the Challenge" won in the documentary-cultural category. First-time-nominated winner Patricia Thio, associate director of university relations, directed this project about Willie Stewart—a man of steel ... and, yes, carbon fiber.

"One Arm Willie" is set to defy his physical limits while training for the physically challenged triathlon USA championships. Determined to help others with disabilities as director of the PossAbilities outreach program at Loma Linda University Medical Center East Campus, this world-class athlete demonstrates that anything is possible.

In the human-interest category, the Academy recognized "PossAbilities," also directed by Ms. Thio. In the film, four PossAbilities members

share their take on life after their injuries. From "normal" good lives to broken dreams, they discovered that despite how people treat them, they can still achieve their goals—they just have to do it differently.

"These compelling films demonstrate

the impact we strive to have on all people who come to us for care at Loma Linda University Medical Center," says Richard Hart, MD, DrPH, president.

To watch the Emmy-winning docu-
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Maranatha Hay (left), video production specialist, and Patricia Thio, associate director for public relations video, win LLU's first Emmy Awards.

CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS

The future of parking at LLU

By Nathan Lang

The new Loma Linda University parking structure will be completed in 18 months, upon approval of the LLUAHSC Board of Trustees. Six months later, a driver will pull her car into it, and it will say, "Good morning, Ms. Doe. There's available parking in the east section. There are 125 open spots."



Steve Hertel, executive director of LLU transportation, parking, and traffic

About a year before this, 10 months from now, each parking lot at LLU will have a camera at its entrance to identify incoming cars.

Altogether, there will be four modifications to the old LLU parking system. While the fourth stage involves voice-activated parking structures, the LLU parking system is currently in the first stage: initiating license plate recognition (LPR) technology. Before the later stage of LPR cameras at the entrances of LLU parking lots, parking officers now drive through parking lots scanning cars with handheld cameras.

Last May, license plate information for the LPR system was collected through online self-registration. Like LPR, online registration was a new feature for the LLU parking system, and the functions of the online registration database are highly integrated and complex.

The database automatically checks and updates the details of each registration according to various information systems, including the LLU parking, employee, and student—as well as the Department of Motor Vehicles—information systems. The various functions of the parking registration database continue to be tested by

the LLU department of transportation, parking, and traffic (TPT), as any necessary corrections are made before moving on to the next stage of the LLU parking system.

After the database is finalized, LPR will bolster LLU security by instantly identifying car license plates that aren't registered at LLU. With the old parking system, LLU security struggled on a daily basis with stolen cars being dropped off in LLU parking lots. With LPR cameras installed at the entrance of parking lots, unregistered license plates will automatically be crosschecked

with law enforcement hot sheets for stolen cars and cars of suspects.

The registration database also strengthens security by identifying individuals who are avoiding outstanding parking tickets. Some employees and students who had outstanding tickets in the old system have registered different cars for the new system, as if avoiding their previous fines.

However, the LLU registration database cross-checks unregistered vehicles with outstanding

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mentaries online, visit <www.llu.edu/360>. To obtain a DVD of these films, contact the office of university relations at (909) 558-4526. "Loma Linda 360" is a broadcast show that takes viewers straight to the action of Loma Linda University and LLU Medical Center. It airs on the PBS affiliate KVCR, Loma Linda Broadcasting Network, and Hope Channel. The show can also be viewed on its website <www.llu.edu/360> and YouTube.

In addition, the office of university relations is proud to announce its new show, "Life on the

Line," which will begin airing next year. Replacing "Loma Linda 360," this new show will feature the essence of LLU by telling stories of hope and transformation through individuals whose lives are on the line. The show will feature gripping documentary footage taken minutes after the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the story of endangered sea turtles and the biologist who strives to keep them alive, and other documentaries that take place at home and across the globe.

For an exclusive preview of the program, visit <www.llu.edu/outoftherubble>.

\$2.1 million NIH grant will enable pharmacy professor to study HIV/AIDS prevention ...

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With Dr. Dezzutti aboard, Dr. Maskiewicz contacted Sandy Hilliker, PhD, MBA, senior proposal advisor in the department of research affairs at LLU. "Dr. Hilliker offered to help me identify other potential collaborators who were major researchers in the microbicides area," he recalls.

By reviewing the recently approved grant applications which Dr. Hilliker uncovered, Dr. Maskiewicz found the final investigator for his study: Philippe Gallay, PhD, an associate professor of immunology and microbial sciences at The Scripps Research Institute in the San Diego suburb of La Jolla.

"Dr. Gallay has several new and ongoing R01 grants," Dr. Maskiewicz adds, referring to the most important type of NIH research grants. "He also designed one of the most potent HIV microbicides to date." Dr. Gallay will serve as principal investigator for the project's HIV infection studies.

Dr. Hilliker notes that "NIH's multiple principal investigator option is commonly used for managing cross-disciplinary research between different institutions. Under this project, Dr.

Maskiewicz is the contact principal investigator responsible for submitting the grant application and for future communication with the NIH about the project." She also points out that no HIV infection studies will be conducted at Loma Linda University.

When Dr. Maskiewicz learned that his project had been approved in June 2010, it was big news not only for the School of Pharmacy, but also the entire university.

Ron Carter, PhD, provost of Loma Linda University, observes that research is a team effort. "Under the leadership of Dr. Rashid Mosavin, chair, department of pharmaceutical sciences, and with ongoing financial support for research from Dean Hughes, faculty members are encouraged to engage in novel research with both university and external collaborators. It is exciting to see Dr. Maskiewicz awarded the NIH R01 funding. As the newest clinical doctoral school, this represents another step in a rich tradition of research excellence."

Anthony Zuccarelli, PhD, associate vice president for research affairs at LLU, adds his congratulations to Dr. Maskiewicz for his outstanding achievement.

"NIH has made only seven awards nationally," reports Dr. Zuccarelli. "We can gain a true appreciation for the quality of his proposal by the fact that it placed Loma Linda University among such research-intensive institutions as Massachusetts General Hospital and the University of California at Irvine. This is an auspicious beginning for research in the School of Pharmacy."

For his part, Billy Hughes, PhD, dean of the School of Pharmacy, affirms Dr. Carter's comments about the role of Rashid Mosavin, PhD, MBA, and says there's still lots to do to maximize opportunities the grant affords.

"The NIH grant awarded to Dr. Maskiewicz is an important step toward developing research excellence in the School of Pharmacy," says Dr. Hughes. "Dr. Rashid Mosavin, during his tenure as chair of the department of pharmaceutical sciences, has systematically nurtured teaching and research excellence among his faculty. Dr. Mosavin has worked with the dean's office to secure seed money to enable faculty to pursue research that is foundational to the pursuit of federal and private grant funding. As dean, I am excited for Dr. Maskiewicz—the real work now begins to ensure that goals are met as

required to continue funding."

Dr. Maskiewicz' study aims to correct a flaw in the way AIDS-preventing microbicides are administered. Ultimately, he hopes it will reduce fatalities.

"The problem with the current delivery system is that people don't take their microbicides on time," he notes. "They need to be taken before and after intercourse, but women often neglect, or are unable, to do that. Our grant is designed to demonstrate a delivery system that will continuously release any microbicide for up to a month."

Perhaps no one summarized the importance of Dr. Maskiewicz' research better than David Yaeger, MPA, administrative assistant to the chair of pharmaceutical sciences at LLU School of Pharmacy (LLUSP).

In an e-mail distributed campus-wide the week the award was announced, Mr. Yaeger observed, "This grant marks the arrival of LLUSP as a research institution of note, not only on campus, but among similar institutions in the state of California. Congratulations to Dr. Maskiewicz on this outstanding achievement."



Faculty and staff of the LLU School of Pharmacy raise their glasses to assistant professor Richard Maskiewicz, PhD, for securing a \$2.1 million research grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—the first-ever NIH grant for the School of Pharmacy. The event was a celebratory luncheon hosted by Billy Hughes, PhD, dean of the school (center, standing), at Gul-Naz Cuisine of Pakistan in Colton. Dr. Maskiewicz is seated directly to Dr. Hughes' left.

NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH

Researchers at Loma Linda University School of Medicine and George Mason University find promising biomarker source in early detection of Alzheimer’s

By James Ponder

Neuroscience researchers at Loma Linda University School of Medicine (LLUSM) in California and George Mason University (GMU) in Virginia have found a trail of biomarkers they hope will lead to the early detection of Alzheimer’s disease.

Should that happen, the findings would rank among the greatest medical achievements of the new century.

“Rather than a single protein marker,” notes Claudius Mueller, PhD, “we found the whole heme degradation pathway to be a very promising source of serum biomarkers for the early detection of Alzheimer’s disease.”

Heme—a key constituent of hemoglobin in red blood cells—is defined as “a complex red organic pigment containing iron and other atoms to which oxygen binds.”

Dr. Mueller says the team used mass spectrometry to screen for low-abundance serum proteins and protein fragments, which he describes as “garbage shed into the blood,” in search of products connected to the existence of Alzheimer’s disease.

At the time the bulk of the research was conducted, Claudius Mueller was a graduate student affiliated with the Neurosurgery Center for Research, Training and Education (NCRTE) at LLUSM.

He is currently a research assistant professor affiliated with the Center for Applied Proteomics & Molecular Medicine (CAPMM) at GMU. Proteomics is the large-scale study of protein structure and function.

Principal investigator Wolff M. Kirsch, MD—who is also a professor of neurological surgery and biochemistry at LLUSM, and founder of the NCRTE—describes the process. “Inflammation of the brain causes a reaction,” Dr.

Kirsch explains. “Blood cells break down and are digested by the body. These signal production of enzymes that break down the blood even more. Fragments of these enzymes are getting into the blood. There’s going to be some collateral damage.”

Lance Liotta, MD, professor of life sciences, and co-director of the CAPMM at GMU, notes that “There is a great need to develop biomarkers for early stage Alzheimer’s disease—the only time it may be treatable. This study provides some new candidates for that purpose.”

LLUSM graduate student Matthew Schrag observes that “a biomarker for the existence of Alzheimer’s would be the Holy Grail. The other Holy Grail would be a cure for the disease.”

The team of Dr. Mueller, Dr. Kirsh, Dr. Liotta, and Mr. Schrag published its findings in the *Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease*, volume 19, pages 1081-1091.

According to Dr. Mueller, the group is excited to be on the cusp of an important discovery. One might ask if they’ve found the Holy Grail of Alzheimer’s research.

The answer, he explains, is a resounding and qualified maybe. “It is still too early to correctly evaluate the significance of our findings,” he says. However, he stops far short of saying no.

“If, based on our discovery, we are able to diagnose Alzheimer’s disease before the onset of neurodegeneration,” Dr. Mueller adds, “then yes, this would turn out to be the Holy Grail.”

The idea for the study emerged from a 2005 dining room conversation between Dr. Kirsch, Dr. Mueller, and Rodney L. Levine, MD, principal investigator of the biochemistry laboratory at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

The future of parking at Loma Linda University ...

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tickets through the DMV database, and based on common information—such as name and address—individuals in the registration database are identified as parking violators. The unregistered vehicles are then added to their account.

Another attempt to avoid outstanding tickets has been license plate removal, yet this attempt also fails. While LPR cameras generally scan license plates, in the case of new cars or other vehicles without license plates, the cameras are capable of scanning VIN numbers, which are located on every vehicle.

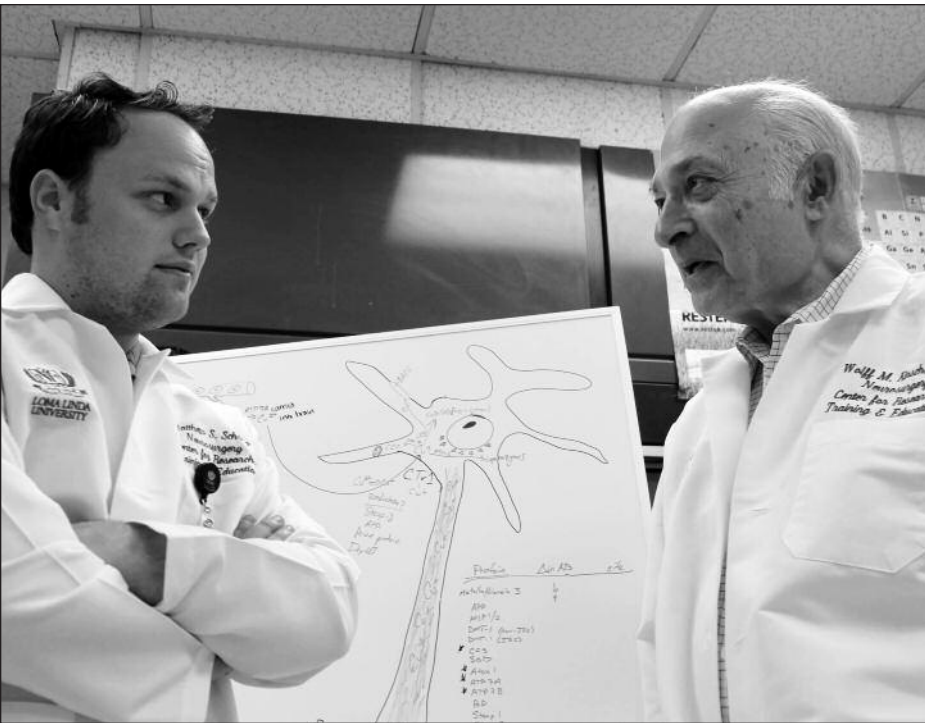
Beyond enhanced security, the new parking system was motivated by convenience for employees and students. Before the new system, common complaints included the limits of only registering one car at a time, the physical parking permit that had to be transported from one car to the next, and the commute to the parking office that was necessary to register a car.

While most parking systems continue to struggle with these types of problems, by upgrading to recent technology, each of these problems at LLU has been resolved through LPR and the online registration database.

This accomplishment marks a milestone, as the need for these changes has been addressed for years. About two-and-a-half years ago, the position of executive director of transportation, parking, and traffic, and therewith the TPT, was created especially to solve these problems. For the position of executive director, Steve Hertel was chosen, and he continues to serve in this role.

Mr. Hertel presented his proposal for the new parking system 18 months ago, and during the first six months in his position, he completed the extensive research necessary for this proposal.

“We knew there was a parking problem, but my role was to find out how to fix the problem,” explains Mr. Hertel, “so I identified three major



Matthew Schrag, a graduate student pursuing his PhD and MD degrees at Loma Linda University, consults with Wolff Kirsch, MD, professor of neurological surgery and biochemistry at Loma Linda University School of Medicine (LLUSM), and director of the Neurosurgery Center for Research, Training, and Education. With Claudius Mueller, PhD, and Lance Liotta, MD—both currently at George Mason University (GMU) in Virginia—Mr. Schrag and Dr. Kirsch recently discovered a chain of biomarkers that may lead to early detection of Alzheimer’s disease. Dr. Mueller is a research assistant professor at GMU, and Dr. Liotta is co-director of the Center for Applied Proteomics & Molecular Medicine at GMU.

Dr. Levine recommended that Dr. Kirsch contact Dr. Liotta. To capitalize on the opportunity, Drs. Kirsch and Mueller flew to Virginia to meet Dr. Liotta, and the project was underway.

“Together with his colleagues, Dr. Liotta provided the needed proteomics expertise,” Dr. Mueller remembers. “He was instrumental in the experiment design process and also the analysis.”

Dr. Mueller continues, “We collected and analyzed a lot of data, but it wasn’t until December of 2008 that we were suddenly able to connect the dots.”

Currently, the team is hard at work trying to move the study to the next level.

Like a proud papa, Dr. Kirsch is pleased with the group’s progress so far. “The guys are doing a great job in the lab,” he beams. “They’re really doing beautiful work down there.”

Haiti ...

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room, they called the duo to assist in numerous procedures. “I scrubbed in on many hysterectomies,” Ms. Dickinson remembers. “Once they found out that Sylvia and I had clinical expertise, we were called upon to do several cases.”

On Wednesday morning, they went into town with Richard, the hospital driver and translator, to buy PVC pipes, electrical wiring, plumbing supplies, and refreshments for a party they were planning for the nursing staff later in the afternoon.

After finding what they needed and buying gas at \$9 a gallon, Richard took them to a collapsed, three-story concrete home where his aunt, uncle, and cousins perished in the earthquake. “They were essentially buried alive,” Ms. Dickinson reports.

At 3:00 p.m. that afternoon, Ms. Dickinson and Ms. Kohler called all the nurses into the chapel, and opened with a few words about why they had come to Haiti. Ms. Dickinson informed them that the nurses of LLUMC sent their love and monies to support their Haitian colleagues. The two Americans distributed gifts, cookies, and punch to the nursing staff. When everyone assembled out front for photographs, it was time to break out the handkerchiefs. “They took pictures, they cried, they were overwhelmed at this generous act,” Ms. Dickinson concludes.

MENTAL HEALTH

BMC administrator speaks out on the stigma of mental illness

By James Ponder

Give Jill Pollock, MS, RN, MFT, the undivided attention of everybody in the world, and she'll tell them it's OK to talk about mental illness and addiction.

As the administrator of Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center (BMC), Ms. Pollock says that even though mental illness and addiction are not things people normally discuss with others, there really shouldn't be a stigma attached to them.

"Society dictates that it's OK to say, 'My wife is a cancer survivor,'" she points out. "In fact, it can often be worn as a badge of honor, but it isn't that way with mental illness or addiction. People often suffer alone and in silence because of the strong stigma associated with these conditions."

Ms. Pollock notes that the question of why the stigma exists is not easy to answer, but shares a recent anecdote as evidence that it does.

"I actually had someone tell me they'd like to come and see our facility," she shares, "but they were afraid someone might see their car in the parking lot!"

Stigma or not, the shame associated with mental illness can be costly.

"When you add in the fact that managed care often won't pay for mental illness treatment, you have a double whammy," she observes. "Even so, let's have the courage to talk about mental illness and addiction. If people are willing to talk about them early enough—if they're able to take that courageous first step and walk through our front door or give us a call—we can make a huge difference in their lives, and in the lives of their families."

Mental illness and addiction are very real problems that affect people at every class and level of society.

"Mental illness and addiction are no respecter of persons," Ms. Pollock insists. "If we stop to think about it, we all have someone within our

circle who suffers with a mental illness or an addiction. Inpatient and outpatient mental health care aren't just for the seriously mentally ill. Our goal is to help decrease the shame so people will feel safe to seek help."

The staff of the Behavioral Medicine Center is equally adept at treating illnesses that don't require an overnight stay—such as certain types of depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and addictions—as well as more serious conditions that do. Untreated or improperly treated mental illness, however, can be dangerous.

"Suicide is the third leading cause of death for people between the ages of 15 to 24," she asserts. "It's currently responsible for 13 percent of deaths in that age group. It beats cancer, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, and a myriad of other killers. But it's not limited to young people: there's a suicide every 17 minutes in the United States. There are also 18 million alcohol abusers in this country, and 100,000 people die every year from alcohol-related causes. Mental illness is far too important a crisis to sweep under the rug."

While the BMC specializes in treating people of all ages, from children to seniors, Ms. Pollock observes that apart from the BMC, children and adolescents are underserved in the allocation of mental health services in the Inland Empire.

"As the only hospital in San Bernardino and Riverside counties that serves the inpatient mental health needs of children under the age of 13—and one of only two in all of San Bernardino County serving children between 14 to 17 on an inpatient basis—the BMC and its services are constantly in demand.

"The BMC," she continues, "recently increased its inpatient beds from 29 to 41 for children and adolescents. They come here for a variety of reasons ranging from behavioral issues to extreme depression, anxiety, addiction, or—sadly enough—sometimes because they've just had their first psychotic break.

"There's a great need in our community for inpatient youth services," she adds. "And not



Jill Pollock (left), MS, RN, MFT, administrator of Loma Linda University's Behavioral Medicine Center (BMC), shares a light-hearted moment with members of the BMC staff: (from left) Diana Deandrea, PharmD, director of the BMC pharmacy; William Murdoch, MD, medical director; Christopher Yuvienco, behavioral health specialist; and Moonyeen Zimmerman, pharmacy lead technician.

just in our area. We get calls from other areas of the state as well. This week, we got a call from a hospital in Oakland. Because of the economy, a lot of psychiatric hospitals have closed or are no longer choosing to care for children and adolescents."

Ms. Pollock says the BMC's goal is to reduce the amount of treatment necessary as quickly as possible.

"We step them down to partial outpatient hospitalization just five days a week as soon as we can," she notes. "We also offer intensive outpatient care where they come to treatment three nights per week and are still able to go to school during the day.

"What we really, truly believe in," she explains, "is working with the family. It's not just the child; we are healing a family. We talk with the parents and with the child or adolescent. It's not just the child who needs to be 'helped'—it often involves finding a solution that integrates the whole family."

Ms. Pollock is proud of a \$500,000 UniHealth grant the BMC recently received to provide treatment for kids who indulge in self-harm, such as cutting themselves.

"We have a very specialized, leading-edge

therapy for self-harm," she says. "Because of the grant, we have had the opportunity to educate our staff with this innovative therapy and have had great outcomes. The grant also allows us to treat many more patients, and offer scholarships to a broader group of people."

Members of the BMC staff take the message of recovery from mental illness and addiction seriously by sharing it with members of the community whenever possible. In addition, they offer a one-hour Hope Tour the fourth Tuesday of the month to acquaint interested members of the public with the work of the Behavioral Medicine Center.

"It is our mission," she concludes, "to decrease the stigma associated with mental illness and addiction, and we feel that education is a great place to start."

She continues, "We believe there is an urgency to connect with our community and make sure the BMC is not the best-kept secret in the Inland Empire, but rather a recognized leader in mental health and addiction—and a safe place to go for healing and recovery."

To view the BMC website, go to <www.llubmc.org>. To arrange a Hope Tour, contact Pauline Deeb at (909) 558-3554, or e-mail her at <pdeeb@llu.edu>.

HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES

LLU Medical Center boasts largest hyperbaric oxygen chamber on West Coast

By James Ponder

Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated team of health care professionals led by Takkin Lo, MD, MPH, Loma Linda University Medical Center is only the third institution in the world equipped with the new Sechrist 4100 monoplace hyperbaric oxygen chamber. There are four total.

"The first two are in a wound program in Connecticut," notes Dr. Lo, who serves as director of hyperbaric medicine. "The third is in El Paso, Texas, and we've got the fourth one. It happens to be the only one on the West Coast so far."

According to Lori Scott, RCP, RRT, manager of special procedures in the department of respiratory care, the process of acquiring the new unit was colorful and fun to watch.

"Like a Vegas high-roller, Dr. Lo negotiated the right price and ultimately landed the deal," she remarks. "He looked like a kid at Christmas opening a much-anticipated gift from Santa Claus."

Dr. Lo remembers things a bit differently. "I've been in negotiations with the manufacturer, a very good friend whom I've known for 20 years, for the last 18 months," he counters. "I was able to work out a very amicable deal in exchange for

allowing the company to bring prospective buyers here to see the 4100 in operation. I also continue working with the company in research and development.

"We also have the model 3200 and 3600 units," he adds. "We used to have a 2500 here as well, but it's now in the so-called 'hyperbaric museum' at Sechrist headquarters on La Palma Avenue in Anaheim."

At just under nine feet long, model 4100 is the largest single-occupancy hyperbaric chamber on the market. It's used to treat a variety of wounds and infections, such as diabetic skin ulcers, chronic bone infections, and soft-tissue radiation damage, to name a few. Dr. Lo is particularly pleased at how it works with skin ulcers and tissue damage.

"In the last 10 years," he says, "there have been a few significant new indications for hyperbaric

oxygen therapy. In 2003, Medicare gave us permission to use it for diabetic foot ulcers. It's made a real difference to our patients. We are now able to save many affected limbs that would have required amputation in the past."

The need for hyperbaric treatment for radiation tissue damage stems from the fact that radiation damages not only the cancer cells it targets, but surrounding tissues as well. "It can lead to internal and external ulcers," Dr. Lo insists, "and teeth can also fall out due to its devastating impact on capillary networks in the gums and jaws. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy can reverse some of the effect, and regenerate the blood supply to the radiated areas and hence promote healing in these challenging places."

Tipping the scale at a whopping 3,500 pounds, the new chamber is hardly small. But Dr. Lo says there's an important reason for the large size.

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“About 10 percent of our patients develop claustrophobia in the smaller chambers,” he points out. “For instance, the 2500 unit—which was the first chamber we had at the Medical Center—was more than 15 inches smaller in internal diameter, and nearly 18 inches shorter in inside height than the 4100.”

Photographs depict patients inside the 2500 unit looking crowded and cramped. The 4100, by comparison, is large and spacious. It can accommodate patients weighing up to 700 pounds. But the real test is measured in how patients feel.

To gauge that, Dr. Lo pointed to a veritable giant of a man, Val Simon, of Apple Valley. At seven feet tall and weighing 365 pounds, Mr. Simon looks huge, especially next to Dr. Lo, who measures in at five feet, seven inches.

“I was in the 2500 the first time I was here,” Val Simon says. “Later on, I was in the 3600, and now the 4100. I can stretch out in there. My shoulders touched the sides in the 2500, but the

4100’s much better.”

Ironically, even though his height consumed all but a fraction of an inch of the 2500’s length, Mr. Simon says he never felt claustrophobic. But he does prefer the 4100. “It’s much more comfortable,” he admits.

Like many of Dr. Lo’s patients, Mr. Simon travels to Loma Linda for therapy. “I make the trip from the High Desert because the doctors down here know what they’re doing,” he insists. “In fact, the best thing about Dr. Lo is his knowledge. He can look at a wound and say, ‘That’s infected.’ Or, ‘That’s getting better.’”

A veteran of 31 knee surgeries, Val Simon returned to Dr. Lo for hyperbaric therapy after a wound on his ankle refused to heal.

“It’s opened inside due to infection,” he reports. “I saw several doctors in the High Desert, but they couldn’t close it, so I came back to Dr. Lo. I’ve seen him before, and he’s great!

“Of course, for such a little doctor, he can cause

a lot of pain,” Mr. Simon says. “When he grabs a Q-tip, you cringe. He’s not afraid to dive in and go for it.”

“Don’t call it that; that’s a brand name,” Dr. Lo insists, grabbing one of the six-inch cotton applicator sticks and waving it in a mock-threatening gesture at Mr. Simon. “We use these on wounds routinely to look for infection, tunneling, and fluid under the skin.”

The history of hyperbaric oxygen therapy goes back more than 300 years. However, Dr. Lo says it was formerly used primarily for military applications such as treating scuba divers with decompression sickness. Clinicians began to seriously consider it for wound care applications after a number of studies showed that pressurized oxygen is useful for a variety of conditions.

Dr. Lo explains that most outpatient treatments are on a 90-minute, once-per-day basis for a period of one to two months, depending on the severity of the injury or infection. “Sometimes it takes three months,” he adds. “For more acute indications, it may take two or three 90-minute sessions per day.”

None of that seems to matter to Val Simon as he relaxes inside the giant tube. He alternates between dozing peacefully and watching television through the clear walls of the chamber.

And so it goes until the technician waves though the acrylic panel to signal that the treatment is over. Mr. Simon is all smiles as he exits the chamber and raises his enormous torso to full upright position.

“I have full confidence in you guys,” he says to Dr. Lo and the technician. “I wouldn’t go anywhere else!”



Ordinarily, Takkin Lo, MD, rises to any challenge, but the 5-foot, 7-inch physician can’t measure up to patient Val Simon, who stands exactly seven feet tall. Dr. Lo, medical director for hyperbaric medicine at Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC), and Mr. Simon stand in front of the new Sechrist 4100 hyperbaric oxygen chamber the Medical Center recently acquired. According to Dr. Lo, LLUMC now owns only the fourth Sechrist 4100 in the United States. “The first two are in Connecticut,” he says, “the third is in El Paso, Texas, and we’ve got the fourth. It happens to be the only one on the West Coast so far.”



When you’re seven feet tall and weigh 365 pounds, climbing into an enclosed chamber might seem a bit intimidating. Not if you’re Val Simon. Mr. Simon—shown here being assisted into Loma Linda University Medical Center’s new Sechrist 4100 monoplace hyperbaric oxygen chamber by Richard Sample, RCP, RRT, CHT, hyperbaric safety coordinator—says the new chamber is positively spacious. It is, in fact, the largest single-occupancy hyperbaric chamber on the market. LLUMC owns the fourth unit in existence and the only one on the West Coast.



The inside of the new Sechrist 4100 monoplace hyperbaric oxygen chamber recently acquired by Loma Linda University Medical Center doesn’t seem nearly so crowded as the outside.

EMPLOYEE SERVICE

Phil-Anne Krogman leaves the door open as she says farewell to the FMO

By James Ponder

Phil-Anne Krogman, RN, the recently retired director of nursing administration at Loma Linda University Health Care (LLUHC), only worked here 13 years, but during that time, she left an enormous impression on everyone who knew her.

Some say it was her zany sense of humor, which injected fun into everything she did. Others cite her habit of facing every task with vigor. A third group insists it was her gift of eliciting the very best from everyone around her.

At her retirement party on Friday, June 4, 2010, Ms. Krogman told the crowd of approximately 100 friends and co-workers gathered on a patio at the Faculty Medical Office (FMO) building that she plans to keep the door open by volunteering at LLU once she retires.

It’s not like she won’t have anything to do. Ms. Krogman plans to garden, sew, play in a senior softball league with her husband, James, and spend time with her five children, seven grandchildren, and Koko, her beloved chocolate Lab.

But she won’t just live a life of ease: Ms.

Krogman also plans to volunteer with the LLUHC spiritual life and wholeness program—where she’ll assist with cultural diversity, the week of prayer and spiritual emphasis, and tea for the soul—and at SACHS–Norton Clinic, where she plans to teach sewing to young people.

Born at Randolph Field Air Base in Texas, she moved to Europe when she was only three weeks old. Later, the family settled in Michigan where she attended Hemmeter Elementary School, and Arthur Hill High School, both in Saginaw.

“I actually always wanted to be a teacher,” Ms. Krogman shares, “but an auto accident in high school led me to nursing.”

After high school, she attended Henry Ford Hospital School of Nursing in Detroit, Michigan, graduating in 1966. Then she pursued her bachelor’s degree at Southern Illinois University, and also studied at Saginaw Valley State University.

In the early years of her career, Ms. Krogman served as director of nursing for the critical care Please turn to page 12

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Loma Linda University operators perform with skill and care

By Nathan Lang

A wife was frazzled. Her husband had just undergone surgery. She wanted updates about him but didn't know how to contact the right office.

She called from home and reached an LLU operator. The operator tried to locate the husband but the number was incorrect. The operator tried another number, and after a handful of additional calls, the operator found someone with information about the husband. The operator transferred the much-relieved wife's call.

This operator was Jeanna, but as Jeanna explains, "These are the types of things every operator in the LLU operator services department [OS] has experienced." She adds, "That woman made a point of calling me back just to thank me for helping her."

In the OS, there are eleven full-time operators, two supervisors, seven part-time operators, and one unscheduled operator. The department is open at all times throughout the entire year, as they are responsible for emergency activations. During peak hours, eight to ten operators work at once.

"My favorite time of the day is during rush hour, when we're being bombarded with phone calls," exclaims operator Eva.

Eva is the youngest member of the OS team. She began the fall after her high school graduation, almost five years ago. "I've really grown up here and have learned many lessons from my co-workers and supervisors," reflects Eva. "We

have great respect for one another and OS has become like my home away from home."

The nurturing and supportive atmosphere of OS extends from the operator team members to the clients they serve. In addition to outside callers who thank them, the OS team has received personal letters of thanks from employees in various LLU departments.

As expressed by LLUMC infusion nurse Ruby Bunch, "Over my 16 years in the position I hold, I have made multiple calls to many different hospitals, clinics, etc., and I have never received great service like the LLU operators provide."

This service also extends to Spanish-speaking clients, as almost a third of the operators are bilingual. Similar to Jeanna's story, operator Mary recalls two days ago when she received a call from a very concerned young Spanish-speaking boy; he was asking for his mother.

"After calming the boy down, I was able to get the answers I needed to find his mother," shares Mary. The boy told Mary that he came home from school, and his mother wasn't there or anywhere she would typically be. He remembered how his mother mentioned not feeling well that morning.

"Sure enough, after calling our emergency department, I learned that she was in our facility," affirms Mary. "I then connected the boy to a nurse, so he could speak with his mother."

Each weekday, the OS team receives around 5,800 calls. Of these calls, an average of nine per



Operator Terie (center) attends an emergency station, while bilingual operator Mary (right) assists a Spanish-speaking caller.

day involve emergency activations. Types of emergency activations include Code Blue (cardiac arrest), hyper acute stroke, rapid response and trauma (adult and pediatric for both), STEMI (a severe heart attack), and transplant/organ offers.

Emergency calls can be received at all ten OS operator stations, with four of these stations fully equipped as emergency stations. "Stations 4 and 10 serve as our back-up stations, as we often get many emergency calls at once," notes Eva. "Our emergency stations are high-pressured and often times overwhelmed."

Operator stations are constructed as cubicles with low walls, so that at all times each operator can see which stations are occupied by an operator and which of those stations are busy with another call. Different stations have different functions, and operators regularly rotate among stations in order to be proficient in each type of task.

Operators specialize in certain tasks according to the time of day they work, serving either day, swing, or NOC (night) shifts. The latter two shifts involve less calls and more data entry work.

"NOC is primarily data entry, as you can imagine," informs supervisor Jan. "We enter data for around 13,000 employees enterprise-wide."

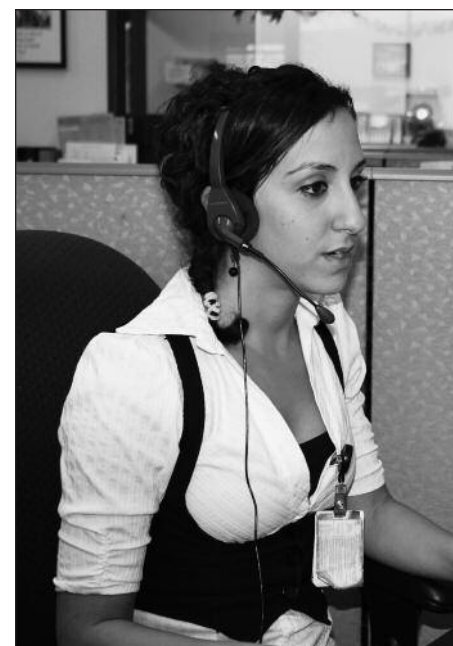
In addition to employee updates, data entry includes updating on-call schedules for physicians, as well as ranked lists of the various ways in which each physician prefers to be contacted. A large portion of daily OS calls comprises LLU employees, whether a physician or nurse, trying to contact someone on call; the database equips operators to provide this support.

"Data entry is what I enjoy most about my job," beams NOC shift operator Isabel. "Our work is never finished, but I tend to be very meticulous and detailed in the things I do, so it really makes me happy to correct and update our database."

Like Isabel, other OS team members convey a sense of mission when reflecting on their various daily assignments.

"The greatest pleasure I get here [at OS]—and I don't know if it's a calling or if it's just coincidence—but it just happens that the callers I receive are the ones who have questions about the disabled," confides operator Maria.

Maria herself raised a disabled son with spina bifida, so she provides very helpful and thor-



Operator Eva, the youngest member of the OS team, enjoys peak hours most, when she and her colleagues respond to a fast-paced wave of callers.

ough tips for callers who are making transitions in their lives related to a disability.

"I spoke with one mother who had a daughter with spina bifida," recalls Maria. "They were moving here from out of state, and she was a new single parent. I directed her to resources with the State of California, and she called me back a few times to ask about my son and get more advice."

For Jeanna, this sense of mission stems partially from the suspense and challenge involved with an operator's duties. "Exciting moments at work?" prompts Jeanna. "Well, any time you are required to think clearly and quickly, like if you've sent a page for a Code Blue or trauma and the team page failed to sound off, as well as if we lose any of our systems such as paging, computer, or phone."

Dedication to a mission is also encouraged by the rewards of challenging tasks. "I feel most rewarded when I have a frustrated, or even angry, caller who I have made calm and have been able to assist successfully," adds Jeanna.

Ultimately, the mission returns to the people who work alongside each other and how they interact. Here, the OS team is rightfully proud.

"Training another operator over the course of two weeks is really challenging, yet very rewarding," concludes Jeanna, "especially when the operator you've trained turns out to be an exceptional employee."

FAREWELL AND BEST WISHES

School of Public Health dean takes new role at ADRA

By Heather Reifsnnyder

After four years leading Loma Linda University School of Public Health, David Dyjack, DrPH, departed in August to serve as director of health for the nonprofit Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), a global organization of more than 6,000 employees working in some 120 countries.

Richard Hart, MD, DrPH, president of Loma Linda University, is leading a search committee for the next dean. He hopes to fill the position by fall, but he says the search for the right person could take several months.

"Dave Dyjack has done well as dean," Dr. Hart says, "certainly marked by a significant increase in external research funding and strong financial leadership. We wish him well in his new leadership role with ADRA."

He also notes that Dr. Dyjack was instrumental in establishing Loma Linda University's CDC-funded Center for Public Health Preparedness while he served as associate dean for public health practice.

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Dr. Dyjack, an ardent Lakers fan, receives a parting gag gift of a Celtics jersey at his going-away party August 11, 2010.

PHILANTHROPY

Dart Foundation approves grant of \$24,780 to Si Se Puede program

Contributed report

The Dart Foundation, located in Mason, Michigan, has approved a grant of \$24,780 to support the educational activities of Si Se Puede (“yes, you can”) at Loma Linda University.

Si Se Puede is a program that brings Hispanic and other minority high school juniors and seniors to the university campus for one to five weeks each summer for awareness-building about the health professions and a review of the basic sciences and math. The program is designed to encourage youth to do their best while in high school and to aptly prepare themselves for the rigors of college. While the students are on campus, the program is a full-time daily endeavor. The program has been implemented by the university over the past five summers.

The program was founded in the summer of 2005 by the university’s vice president for community partnerships and diversity, Leslie Pollard, PhD, DMin, MBA. Dr. Pollard comments that Si Se Puede is a vital link between Loma Linda University and the hopes and dreams of the families of our community. The program opens pathways of new opportunity for underserved young people.

During the summer of 2010, from June 20 to July 23, the program attracted 35 youth from regional private and public high schools. During this time and through the efforts of many volunteer faculty members on campus, participating youth become aware of the work involved in all of the health professions. This year, Si Se Puede also provided a 5-week review of the basic sciences—biology, anatomy, chemistry, physics, and mathematics.

“In addition, the program invites students’ parents to participate as they become aware that with appropriate financial aid, a college education is possible for their children,” notes Juan Carlos Belliard, PhD, who coordinates the program.

“It is inspiring to see how motivated the high school students become,” Dr. Belliard adds. “During the course of the program, you can see their wide-eyed anticipation as they consider the professional possibilities before them. More than the information Si Se Puede shares, it’s really about inspiring students and their parents about what might be possible for them as they plan their futures.”

“The Dart Foundation’s support of Si Se Puede is critical,” notes Albin Grohar, PhD, executive director of philanthropy at the university.



Yasmin Chene, DHSc, School of Allied Health Professions, instructs students in the Si Se Puede program.

A private family foundation established in 1984 by William A. and Claire T. Dart in Mason, Michigan, the foundation supports many programs regionally and nationally, but has a focus on youth and their development, especially dedicating its philanthropy toward science and math education.

“For the foundation to see the possibilities that Si Se Puede offers to Hispanic youth in Southern California, an area more than 2,000 miles from Mason, Michigan, is significant and a testimony to the foundation’s dedication to affirming youth and fostering their development,” adds Dr. Grohar. “The foundation’s grant is great news and most life-affirming to

the program’s participating youth in 2010.”

Si Se Puede has already seen tangible results from the youth’s participation, notes Dr. Belliard. Although this is not an explicit student recruitment program for the university, three students from past years have already enrolled in health professional programs at Loma Linda University.

“We hope to see more of them in the future, but would also be pleased if some of the students pursued a higher education at places other than Loma Linda,” says Dr. Belliard. “Striving for college and grasping the professional opportunities open to them, that is what’s important.”

TOMORROW’S HEALTH CARE WORKERS

LLU opens up health science world for area high school students

By Heather Reifsnnyder

A lucky few in life know from the time they’re young what they want to grow up to be. For others, the struggle to determine a career lasts well into adulthood. With the goal of bringing more Latinos into health-science careers, Loma Linda University’s annual *Si Se Puede* (Yes You Can) summer program helps area high school students make more informed decisions about their path.

This year, 28 Latino juniors and seniors from across Southern California, as well as Texas and

Washington, spent the week of June 20–26 on campus with LLU faculty members who offered insight into the wide variety of specialties in the realm of health sciences. The teens also learned some elemental skills for studying, writing, and college preparation.

A favorite part of the week for students was the two hours they each spent shadowing a health professional in their personal area of interest, says Si Se Puede coordinator Johanny Valladares, MBA. They chose to follow professionals in fields such as molecular research, neonatal intensive care, and psychology.

Students also enjoyed visiting the anatomy and physiology lab, where they saw how LLU students learn about the human body. Other stops during their campus tour covered disciplines from health geoinformatics to occupational therapy to pharmacy.

Students admitted to Si Se Puede must be considering a health career—even if they are unsure of a specialty to pursue. The week at

LLU helps them narrow their field of interest, as well as learn to adapt to new environments.

“Most of the students were outgoing and proactive, yet we had some that at the beginning did not look interested nor participated in the group activities,” says Ms. Valladares. “Toward the end of the program, we noticed how they started to integrate and feel comfortable sharing their thoughts.”

PROFESSIONAL EXCHANGE

Japanese and American exchange brings increased understanding of OT

By Heather Reifsnnyder

Life in Japan and the United States may differ in many ways, but when it comes to recovering from a stroke, brain tumor, other disease, or brain injury, the same care is needed. For three days in May, 25 occupational therapy (OT) students from Jikei College in Osaka, Japan, visited Loma Linda University to compare OT practices in the two countries.

This is the seventh year students from Jikei College have traveled to LLU, but this year the group had a new opportunity to participate in an academic and cultural project with LLU OT students in addition to the 25 hours of classroom interactive sessions that addressed conditions and challenges of clients across the lifespan.

The joint project centered around the fact that life’s myriad daily tasks, or occupations, require certain physical capabilities and cognitive func-

tions. Simple tasks become complicated when clients sustain some form of brain damage, which varies from person to person but can happen to anyone at any age, says Karen Pendleton, MA, assistant professor of occupational therapy and coordinator of international study tours such as this one.

“When we brush our teeth, how many of us must mentally process through each of the many steps involved?” she asks. “We usually perform these tasks automatically.”

A client with brain damage, however, may have trouble with the necessary sequence and related cognitive functions. The following are a few of the skills involved with this simple act.

- Following a familiar route to the bathroom (topographical orientation)
 - Recognizing and locating items needed for
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The visiting high school students spend some time in the microbiology lab learning from Hansel Fletcher, PhD (right).

ALL FOR THE KIDS

Luke the Lion comes clean about helping kids at LLU Children's Hospital

By James Ponder

Luke the Lion, the affable mascot of Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, recently sat down for an interview a few days after his birthday party, hosted by the Big Hearts for Little Hearts Guild on June 16, 2010.

In the article, "T" stands for Today, and "L" stands for Luke the Lion.

T: Mr. Lion, thanks for taking time to talk with us. We know you're busy . . .

L: Call me Luke. I'm never too busy to share a little bit about what I do here at Children's Hospital.

T: And what is that?

L: I have the awesome job of helping sick kids feel better. Technically I'm an ambassador for Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, but the kids think of me as a professional party animal.

T: What's your main function as official mascot for Children's Hospital?

L: I roam the halls, playrooms, and sleeping quarters looking for kids who need some cheering up. Maybe a girl just learned she's not going home tomorrow. Maybe a boy just found out he's got to have an operation. Now suppose a seven-foot lion comes along and tells them not to worry, and does his best to make them smile. Would it make any difference in the way they feel?

T: I suppose it would. But are you really seven

feet tall?

L: To a kid, I might as well be 15 feet tall. All they know is, I'm larger than life and on their side. Before you know it, they're feeling better. Sometimes that's all it takes. There's evidence-based support to show that laughing and having a good time actually help patients recover from illness.

T: So tell us about your birthday party. I hear it was pretty spectacular this year.

L: Unbelievable! The Big Hearts for Little Hearts Loma Linda Guild loves planning fun things for the kids to do, but this year, they outdid themselves! They're a wonderful, unselfish group of ladies—and a few men—who raise money to benefit the patients of LLU Children's Hospital. Carol Hartnell, a member of the guild board, flew in from Las Vegas to coordinate the event. Man, can she decorate! She and other guild members threw the most amazing birthday party ever!

T: How so?

L: Well, they had a classic car show with no less than 29 glorious vehicles. I couldn't believe my eyes! I would have been overjoyed with five or six cars, but there were 29. I had to count twice to be sure. They had all kinds—hot rods, muscle cars, Model A Fords, '57 Chevys—this was a world-class event!

T: Sounds like it . . .

L: Ms. Hartnell and her friends transformed the lobby into a 1950s-style diner with games and



Luke the Lion, the affable mascot of Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, waves to his fans at the classic car show held in celebration of his birthday party on Wednesday, June 16, 2010. In an exclusive interview for *Today*, Mr. Lion said that helping a hospitalized child feel better is "the greatest feeling in the world."

art projects for the kids. They gave the kids storybooks, coloring books, and goodie bags; they brought out platters full of delicious snacks. They even arranged for Hansen's Juices to set up a booth and serve delicious and healthy drinks for the kids. Those ladies are remarkable!

T: Did Ms. Hartnell bring the Wonderelles back this year?

L: She did; this must have been the third or fourth year in a row. If you ask me, the Wonderelles can really sing! They dress up in swirly pink skirts like they just stepped out of 1955, and sing their hearts out. Have you heard them?

T: I have; they're terrific! But how come the guild throws a party for you?

L: It's not for me; it's for the kids! They can't host a party for every kid in the hospital; that would take all year. So they designate me as the birthday boy and throw one humongous soiree every June. The kids get it: they know it's really for them, and they have a ball.

T: Do you get paid for what you do at LLUCH?

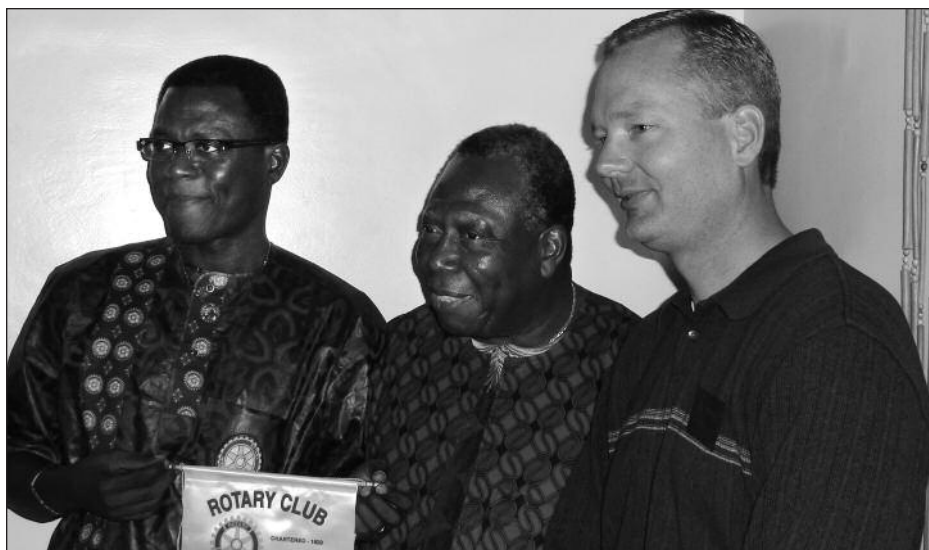
L: Technically, I'm a volunteer, but spiritually, I get paid a lot. Ask any member of the guild; they know what I'm talking about. You walk into a room and there's a kid with a big worried frown. And then, after he sees you, he gets a great big smile on his face . . . nothing compares to that! The greatest feeling in the world is helping a child find the courage to keep going!



Jeannette Jackson, a volunteer at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, helps a child celebrate Luke the Lion's birthday party on Wednesday, June 16, 2010. The party—which is sponsored by members of the Big Hearts for Little Hearts Loma Linda Guild—exceeded even Luke's expectations. It might be Luke's birthday, but—as the expression on the girl's face seems to indicate—there's more than enough fun to go around.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

School of Pharmacy employee named Rotarian of the Year in Redlands



Jim Pinder, JD, MBA, director of development, and assistant professor of pharmacy law in the LLU School of Pharmacy, was named "Rotarian of the Year" by the Rotary Club of Redlands on June 10, 2010. A member of the Redlands Noon Rotary Club, Dr. Pinder participated in the 5th Annual West Africa Project Fair in Cotonou, Benin, in November 2009. The group of 47 Rotarians from across North America vaccinated 3,313 children against polio in rural villages. Dr. Pinder estimates he personally vaccinated 20 children. Two Beninese Rotarians received a banner from the Rotary Club of Redlands during the hospitality dinner when Dr. Pinder was honored. Benin is located on the west coast of Africa between Togo and Nigeria. Rotary International plays a key role in helping to eliminate polio around the world.

CLINICAL RESEARCH

Pressure Ulcer Task Force lands a knockout punch at LLUMC

By James Ponder

What happens when a group of determined health care professionals steps into the ring against a nasty opponent at Loma Linda University Medical Center.

If the villain is pressure ulcers, they knock him

out with a series of powerful blows.

Known as hospital-acquired pressure ulcers (HAPUs), bedsores form when prolonged immobility—such as lying in a hospital bed for too long without changing position—produces constant pressure against skin tissue, which

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GLOBAL OUTREACH

Hospital administrator lends a hand in Haiti

By James Ponder

An administrator from Loma Linda University Medical Center and Highland Springs Medical Plaza recently dedicated nine days of her vacation to helping the people of Haiti recover from their country's devastating 7.0-magnitude January earthquake.

Elizabeth J. Dickinson, MPH, RN, senior vice president for patient care services at Loma Linda University Medical Center and administrative liaison to Highland Springs Medical Plaza in Beaumont, says that despite unconscionable devastation, she was gratified by the resilience of the Haitians.

"The devastation was horrific," she insists, "but the people are remarkable! The kids were especially amazing. They've been through so much, yet they were so open to everything we were trying to do for them."

Ms. Dickinson and traveling companion Sylvia Kohler, RN, thought they might be in trouble because their bags, which were stuffed with medical supplies, were overweight for the flights to Miami and Port-au-Prince.

But Ms. Dickinson credits divine intervention with helping them through the difficulty.

"God's leading started early in the journey," she shares. "We were never challenged by security, and didn't have to pay extra for our luggage."

After an all-night flight on Thursday, April 15, 2010, the ladies arrived in Port-au-Prince at 7:45 a.m.

"It's an amazing little airport," Ms. Dickinson observes. "The luggage conveyor belt was broken, there was luggage on carts, and luggage flying around everywhere—it was a chaotic mess. Fortunately, we found our driver from the hospital and managed to get through the mob."

Ms. Dickinson had seen the crumbled ruins of Haiti on the news, but found that it's a very different experience firsthand. "It's a lot more shocking in person," she says.

Another thing that surprised her was the orderly nature of the cleanup process. "The tent villages and the piles of concrete block, rebar, and junk along the road were something to see," she reports. "Also, the industry of the people. Haitians were busy raking, cleaning, and working. This seemed remarkable in the heat and humidity! We passed the palace, churches, hotels, and thousands of destroyed homes."

Once they arrived at Hopital Adventiste d'Haiti (HAH), a 70-bed facility on a hillside overlooking the capital city, Liz and Sylvia were given a thorough orientation to the hospital before being introduced to their sleeping quarters.

"Our bedroom, if you can call it that, was

located on the second floor in an open veranda," she recalls. "We shared the sleeping quarters with about 40 other volunteers. A local was at the front entrance squirting everyone who entered with hand sanitizer to prevent illness. This was a good thing!"

Although they were exhausted from the sleepless, all-night flight from the West Coast, the two nurses decided to forego taking a nap. Instead, they launched into a full-scale needs assessment at the hospital.

First, they consulted with Scott Nelson, MD, the LLU School of Medicine graduate who flew to Haiti immediately after the earthquake and is currently serving as relief medical director at the hospital.

Next, they conferred with Everose Morency, RN, director of nursing, and Poustin Jean Baptiste Yanique, RN, the assistant director.

After learning where their help was most needed, Liz and Sylvia got down to the business of visiting patients (many of whom lined the hallways in army cots), as well as touring the operating room, moving the decontamination area into a room of its own, and reorganizing the hospital's central sterile supply.

"There was so much to do," Ms. Dickinson notes. "We put in a lot of 14- to 18-hour days, but it was very rewarding."

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An exhilarated Liz Dickinson, MPH, RN, senior vice president for patient care services at Loma Linda University Medical Center, transports an 11-year-old surgery patient named Kimerlee through the halls of Hopital Adventiste d'Haiti two hours after LLU School of Medicine graduate Scott Nelson, MD, performed surgery to correct knee and leg contractures that had prevented Kimerlee from walking since birth.

Pressure Ulcer Task Force lands a knockout punch at LLUMC ...

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ultimately breaks down due to inadequate blood supply.

Carlos Prieto, MBA, project coordinator in the department of patient care services, says the Medical Center used to have a higher-than-average rate of pressure sores.

"Compared to other academic Level I trauma centers, our pressure ulcer rates were elevated," he notes.

Not anymore, however. Thanks to the determination of a pressure ulcer task force appointed by Liz Dickinson, RN, MPH, CNOR, senior vice president of patient care services, pressure sores are down for the count.

The group pummeled the villain into submission by launching an all-out, seven-pronged assault on the problem.

First, the department of staff development designed a series of pressure ulcer prevention classes. Then they expanded the curriculum for new employees to include education about the importance of prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of pressure sores.

Second, the task force evaluated all technology and products used in the patient care setting to see if they might either contribute to HAPUs or be enlisted to fight against them.

Third, the group developed an electronic triggering system, which notifies wound care nurses whenever a patient is documented electronically as having a pressure ulcer.

Fourth—and this is perhaps the most dramatic change—the group replaced a staggering 90 percent of all mattresses in the adult hospital with special pressure-reduction mattresses.

Fifth, the group updated its skin and wound care formulary to make sure that only patient-friendly products are used on patients. As a result, "breathable" under-pads, barrier creams, cleansers, and moisturizers are now in use throughout the facility.

Sixth, the group instituted important practice changes—such as weekly skin rounds, "wound care Wednesdays," and "take a photo Tuesdays"—to monitor the progress of patients with existing skin ulcers and keep the staff focused on preventing new ones.

Finally, the task force re-designed skin wound and pressure ulcer assessment forms for ease of use.

Apparently their systematic interventions spelled success.

"The outcome was a drop in the pressure ulcer rate, putting us ahead of many similar academic medical centers," Carlos Prieto reports. "As of the second quarter of 2010, we are actually below the California average for pressure ulcers."

Currently, the task force is looking for ways to drive the percentages even lower. They're also spreading the word to other facilities.

In June 2010, Mr. Prieto and Jeanine Sharkey, MSN, RN, CPNP, educator in

advanced practice services, shared the outcome of the battle against pressure sores at a San Francisco convention on the global reach of nursing quality. At the conference, which was sponsored by the Collaborative Alliance for Nursing Outcomes (CALNOC), the duo discussed their poster, titled "Saving Skin Under Pressure: Our Plan to Reduce Hospital Acquired Pressure Ulcers," with attendees.



Members of the Loma Linda University Medical Center pressure ulcer task force evaluate a patient at bedside. Formed at the request of Liz Dickinson, RN, MPH, senior vice president of patient care services, the group was charged with finding ways to reduce the rate of hospital-acquired pressure ulcers (HAPUs) at the Medical Center. The group launched a successful all-out assault. According to Carlos Prieto, MBA, project coordinator in the department of patient care services, pressure ulcer rates—which had been elevated when compared with other academic Level I trauma centers—are now well below the California average.

"We 'manned' the poster throughout the day," Ms. Sharkey recalls, "answering questions from participants related to our project and outcomes. We were able to glean information from other facilities in their methods and challenges of dealing with nursing quality issues."

They're also basking in the glow of a job well done. "Speaking on behalf of the task force, we can't thank our nurses at Loma Linda enough for all their hard work," Mr. Prieto concludes.

CHURCH CONNECTIONS

Loma Linda University and its various entities were well represented at General Conference Session in Atlanta



A replica of the "Come Unto Me" sculpture was a huge draw at the LLU booth, as indicated in the photo above. The original sculpture is located at the entrance to Loma Linda University Medical Center.



Cosmin Cosma (right), MA, video production specialist, office of university relations, is interviewed by two reporters from Hope TV-Romania.



Eight-year-old Joy Agwu from Bowie, Maryland, smiles for the camera with Dustin Jones, MA, associate director of public relations, office of university relations. Miss Agwu was the first person to decode a special message located in the LLU Children's Hospital coloring book. As a reward, she received an iPod shuffle.



During General Conference Session, held in Atlanta, Georgia, from June 23 to July 4, 2010, Loma Linda University was well represented. More than 70,000 individuals stopped by the LLU booth, which featured a replica of the "Come Unto Me" sculpture, a documentary screening area, and several park benches for meeting new people.

Japanese and American exchange brings increased understanding of occupational therapy ...

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the task (figure ground perception, visual object identification, depth perception, form discrimination, saccadic eye movement)

- ♦ Being able to start and stop each phase of the task (initiation/termination)
- ♦ Following an appropriate order of events (sequencing)

Prior to the trip, both LLU and Jikei students researched information related to traumatic brain injuries.

An assignment was developed and translated into Japanese.

Pairs of students from Osaka each teamed up with two LLU students, chose one of the cognitive deficits to explore, identified and addressed challenges a client with this deficit might face, and then designed an interactive exhibit showcasing intervention strategies from each of their cultures.

When the students arrived from Japan, they

spent the first afternoon meeting with their teammates and assembling their exhibits.

Two translators were present, but the students from both schools were encouraged to use various forms of communication in their interactions with each other, such as gestures, pictures, and demonstrations.

"This turned out to be a very successful strategy and laughter could be heard throughout the department," says Ms. Pendleton.

The final day of the visit, the interactive exhibits opened at Wong Kerlee International Conference Center to more than 100 participants.

The students' evaluations of the experience revealed it was both rewarding and positive. "Both groups of students enjoyed the cultural exchange and commented that they had an increased understanding of how a brain injury can affect so many occupations," Ms. Pendleton says. "Some students from Japan shared that they had been fearful at first because of the language barrier, but felt a warm welcome by the LLU students."



From left, Mike Brooksby, Jennie Milliner, one of the visiting Japanese students, and Andrea Cleckler play a game designed to improve memory, an essential brain function for any task.

GLOBAL IMPACT

School of Public Health graduates from Afghanistan improve health in their country

By Heather Reifsnyder

The field of public health is reemerging in Afghanistan, and Loma Linda University is playing a role in its development. In June, the School of Public Health granted master of public health (MPH) degrees to three physicians from Afghanistan who are working to raise health standards and health care access in their country.

"There is a dire need of experts in this field," says Mir Lais Mustafa, MD, MPH, director of medical research for the Afghan Public Health Institute, Ministry of Health. The World Health Organization sponsored his Loma Linda education.

Both he and Bashir Noormal, MD, MPH, earned their degrees online, with Loma Linda University providing a scholarship for Dr.

Noormal, who leads the Afghan Public Health Institute. They battled intermittent electricity, slow Internet service, and the demands of their full-time careers to earn their degrees.

"As director general, I needed such an education and qualifications," Dr. Noormal says. "In Afghanistan, we have many health problems in the community because of the long-lasting war, and we have many communicable diseases."

Abdullah Salam, MD, MPH, has spent the past three years in Loma Linda, California, earning his degree on campus through a scholarship from the university. Formerly president of Kabul's Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital, Dr. Salam will remain in the United States to secure international partnerships for improving public health in Afghanistan. But he looks forward to the day he returns home, both to his family and to the task of making Afghans more healthy.

"From our MPH degree, we learned most importantly about healthy lifestyle," Dr. Salam says. "You can see the underlying causes of diseases that are killing our children. It will be a great advocacy to just go to the country and tell people to change their lifestyle."

Since 2001, strides have been made in making Afghanistan a healthier country. Infant mortality, for example, has fallen from 165 to 111 per 1,000 live births, and child mortality dropped from 257 to 175 per 1,000 live births.

Dr. Noormal says the country is implementing a large-scale national survey to determine figures such as life expectancy and mortality rates, including maternal mortality and cause-specific mortality.

The three graduates became familiar with Loma Linda University through its long involvement in Afghanistan. From 1962 to the Soviet invasion of 1979, the university provided faculty and consultation to the graduate and other medical education programs in Jalalabad and Kabul. In 1999, Loma Linda University was invited again to help support the medical education at Kabul Medical University.

Several LLU faculty members taught the medical students at KMU and assisted Afghan faculty with their lectures and presentations.

Following September 11, 2001, Loma Linda's efforts in Afghanistan went on hiatus briefly. Eventually, LLU returned to the medical school to continue helping build its curriculum, and in the spring of 2005 Loma Linda assumed management of Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital for a four-year period, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Currently, LLU is looking at different options for returning to Afghanistan to help bring relief and hope to the Afghan people.

The LLU School of Public Health offers full online MPH programs in health education and public health practice for worldwide health professionals. For more information, contact Rafael Molina, MEd, director of distance learning and international programs, at <rvmolina@llu.edu>.



(From left) Drs. Abdullah Salam and Bashir Noormal, and LLU president Richard Hart, MD, DrPH, share a few words during a graduation reception held on campus for them June 14, 2010. Dr. Mir Lais Mustafa was unfortunately unable to attend graduation.

ETHNIC HEALTH DISPARITIES

10th annual Health Disparities Summer Symposium throws a demographic curve

By James Ponder

You can count on the leadership of Loma Linda University School of Medicine's

Center for Health Disparities and Molecular Medicine (CHDMM) to stir things up when it comes to hotly debated issues of race, culture, and health care.

Take the 10th annual Health Disparities Summer Symposium, which was held on Wednesday, August 4, 2010, for instance. The huge auditorium of the Wong Kerlee Interna-

tional Conference Center was jammed with the latest crop of student summer researchers—talented high school, college, and university students handpicked to spend the summer conducting important scientific research—and their parents, friends, and academic mentors.

The program started non-controversially enough. After a brief introduction from David Ergheligi, MA, MBA, project manager for the CHDMM, David L. Taylor, DMin, professor of religion and relational studies in the LLU School of Religion, offered the first of five official welcomes as well as the invocation. Dr. Taylor ended with a sobering insight: "Without vision, there will be supervision."

The next official welcome came from Daisy De Leon, PhD, co-investigator and core director for the CHDMM. Dr. De Leon called the summer research program "a moment in their lives to explore." Dr. De Leon introduced several public and community health luminaries from the Inland Empire and extended a special welcome to parents of the student researchers.

Lawrence E. Sowers, PhD, chair of the department of basic sciences at the LLU School of Medicine (LLUSM), told the summer researchers, "You represent our future faculty." Then he praised the excellence of the research posters flanking both sides of the auditorium. "The quality of the work on display is on par with research from any

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Connecting the pieces of the puzzle...

Have you heard about CPOE?

The Loma Linda Electronic Medical Record (LLEMR) is being enhanced. Computerized Provider Order Entry (CPOE) will soon transform the way physicians and other clinicians write orders for our patients.

Included are the following elements:

- **Electronic Medication Reconciliation** ensures that each medication order is reviewed when a patient is admitted or discharged.
- **Electronic Ordering.** Physicians will enter inpatient and ambulatory orders into LLEMR. Paper order sheets will become a thing of the past.
- **E-Prescribing** allows physicians to enter prescriptions into LLEMR for transmission to the pharmacy of the patient's choice.



**LOMA LINDA
UNIVERSITY**
MEDICAL CENTER

GLOBAL IMPACT

How his wife's smile helped an LLU School of Medicine graduate launch a massive anti-smoking campaign in China

By James Ponder

A 1955 graduate of the Loma Linda University School of Medicine credits his wife's smile with turning a casual encounter in the spring of 1988 into a career-defining moment for the two of them, and adding years to the lives of countless thousands of individuals in the People's Republic of China.

"At the March 1988 School of Public Health alumni banquet," explains Hervey Gimbel, MD, "Ann and I met a young junior physician from China who had come to LLU for one year of study."

In the course of conversation, Benchun Tian, MD—who, at the time, was assistant to the director of the National Health Education Institute in Beijing—told Ann Gimbel, MPH, that he would like to visit their home.

"He said it was because of her big smile," Dr. Gimbel recalls with a grin. "He wanted to get a feel for the American lifestyle."

Dr. Tian could hardly have picked better hosts. Over the course of the next few months, the Gimbels befriended him, taking him not only into their home, but also to the Grand Canyon and other destinations.

Eager to thank the couple for their hospitality and express his appreciation to Loma Linda University and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for the educational opportunities afforded him, Dr. Tian extended an invitation to Hervey and Ann to visit him in

China after he returned home in 1989.

From his point of view, the trip would accomplish multiple purposes. Not only would the Gimbels get to see China, but LLU and the General Conference would also benefit from broadening their spheres of influence within the most populous nation on earth. On top of that, the Chinese people would profit from exposure to American perspectives on medicine and public health.

The Gimbels, however, weren't initially very enthused. "We thought, 'China is a long way away,'" Dr. Gimbel remembers. "We weren't too excited about going."

Ironically, their reluctance met a most unlikely ally in the form of massive student protests that rocked Chinese society in April 1989.

"Tiananmen Square came along and squelched all plans on our part and invitations on his part," Dr. Gimbel shares. "But in 1991, Dr. Tian phoned us and said, 'Now I have an invitation for you to come, and I want you to come.'"

The invitation was very specific: Dr. Tian wanted Dr. Gimbel to speak at the first annual meeting of the Chinese Association of Smoking and Health, and Ann to lecture at the Chinese-Japanese Friendship Hospital.

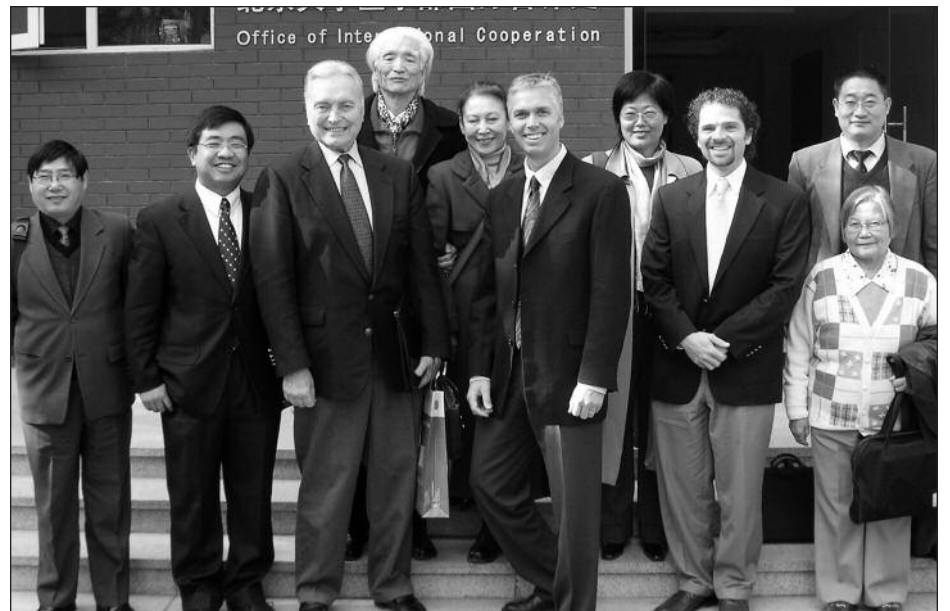
Since neither Hervey nor Ann spoke more than a few words of Mandarin, they solicited the help of Wilbur Nelson—then a part-time professor in the School of Public Health—who speaks the dialect fluently. They also brought J. Wayne

McFarland, MD, co-founder of the Five Day Plan to Stop Smoking, along.

"We three—Wayne, Wilbur, and I—each presented a paper at the Chinese Association of

Smoking and Health meeting. Providentially, a large number of power brokers from the Ministry of Health, and the newly created National Health Education Institute, attended the meeting, and liked what they heard."

With their clear message about the health risks of smoking, and their proven methods for kicking the habit, the American health educators were an overnight sensation, not only in
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In November 2006, Hervey Gimbel, MD, met with officials from Peking University Health Science Center (PUHSC) to help them implement a program designed to help Chinese physicians stop smoking and recruit their help in educating their countrymen on the health risks of smoking. The group included (from left) Jiguo Tao, deputy chairman of the department of education at PUHSC; Wensheng Li, vice president of PUHSC; Hervey Gimbel, MD, president of the China-USA Health Project; unidentified man, back row; unidentified woman; Marlin Gimbel, board member and project manager, China-USA Health Project; Yinghua Ma, deputy director, Institute of Child and Adolescent Health at PUHSC; Matthew McVane, board member and webmaster for the China-USA Health Project; Tao Wang, associate professor of epidemiology and health science statistics, PUHSC; and Xiyang Zhu, retired professor in the Institute of Child and Adolescent Health at PUHSC.

Phil-Anne Krogman leaves the door open as she says farewell to the FMO ...

Continued from page 5
units, pediatric units, and emergency department of St. Luke's Hospital in Saginaw.

Several years later, her 25th high school reunion brought romance—and the love of her life, a certain James Krogman—back into view.

"Jim and I had known each other since childhood," she remembers. "We reconnected at our 25th class reunion, and then married."

In 1989, the Krogmans moved their family to California, where she decided to apply for a job at LLU.

The problem was she couldn't find a place to park. She did, however, find a parking spot when she applied for a job at Beaver Medical Group, so she parked her career there the next six and-a-half years.

In 1996, Ms. Krogman decided to brave the parking situation at Loma Linda one more time in order to apply for the position of director of clinical operations. This time, she got the job. She also got—you guessed it—a parking ticket.

Ms. Krogman didn't let that deter her from attacking her new role with gusto. Later that same year, she advanced to her current position and has held it ever since.

According to Nikki Gaitan, executive assistant, she wore many hats.

"In addition to her role as director of nursing administration," Ms. Gaitan discloses, "Phil-Anne served as liaison for spiritual care and wholeness, infection control, surgery scheduling, and ambulatory regulations. She feels very blessed to have worked here, and we were blessed to have her."

According to David Wren, MHA, CEO of LLUHC, "Phil-Anne Krogman has been a key part of the care provided to the many patients in our faculty clinics. Her contribution over the many years is immeasurable." He goes on to say that her "caring and compassion have been the backbone of our ambulatory nursing program for many years. Our physicians have benefitted significantly from Phil-Anne's expertise, her ambulatory clinic mindset, and her strong commitment to making the experience better for our patients and physicians."

Mike Mahoney, executive director of operations at LLUHC, says Ms. Krogman is someone whose memory you cherish long after you cease working together.

"Phil-Anne brought life to her work," Mr. Mahoney insists. "She is a person who radi-

ates everything we want to be in our lives!" He goes so far as to say she even radiated new life into that most boring of office situations—the meeting.

"Meetings often have a way of draining your energy," he observes. "When Phil-Anne was in the meeting, you would find yourself enjoying every minute of it."

"Over the years," David Wren adds, "I have

grown to know Phil-Anne as an extremely capable nurse leader, as an advocate for our faculty physicians, as one who will do whatever it takes to care for a patient, and as one who is a great friend and example."

He concludes with a remark that garnered many hearty AMENS when he said it at Ms. Krogman's retirement party:

"She will truly be missed."



(From left) Phil-Anne Krogman, RN; David Wren, MHA; and Mike Mahoney have a difficult time keeping straight faces as Mr. Wren shares a humorous anecdote with the crowd at Ms. Krogman's retirement party on Friday, June 4, 2010. Mr. Wren, the CEO of Loma Linda University Health Care, and Mr. Mahoney, executive director of operations, were effusive in their praise of Ms. Krogman, who was the director of nursing administration for the organization.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Spina bifida supporters brave the heat for fun, fellowship, and inspiration

By James Ponder

An enthusiastic crowd of 80 friends and supporters of Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Spina Bifida Team Center



Sporting a tiger face from the face-painting booth, Sebastian Hernandez and his mom, Lourdes, enjoy themselves at a special day for patients and friends of the Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Spina Bifida Team Center. Despite the fact that the outside air temperature exceeded 95 degrees Fahrenheit, 80 people braved the heat for the special event.

braved the sweltering heat of Sunday, July 25, 2010, for an afternoon of food, fun, and inspiration on the grounds of Loma Linda University Medical Center East Campus.

As the event got underway at 12:15 p.m., the mercury sat at 95 degrees Fahrenheit, pushing participants out of the sun-drenched amphitheater in the center of East Campus Park to seek shelter under canopies, awnings, and trees.

After a warm welcome from Toyia Greene, MSW, clinical social worker at the LLU Children's Hospital Specialty Team Centers and organizer of the event, Cassandra Sperlein of Camp Paivika in Crestline, California, invited the group to visit the camp. She noted that Camp Paivika, which is operated by Ability-First, has been providing quality outdoor camping experiences for children and adults with disabilities for more than 60 years.

Next up was motivational speaker and former Oakland A's baseball player Kyle Massey. From his wheelchair, Mr. Massey told the crowd his life took an unexpected turn on October 27, 2007, when a 60-foot fall from a fifth-story hotel window left him with broken legs, back, and ribs, and a punctured right lung.

Prior to the accident, Mr. Massey was accustomed to a life of fitness and athletics. But now, after adjusting to the new reality of spinal cord injury, he actively continues his interests in sports and physical fitness. Currently, he's training for the 2012 Paralympics in London, England, by participating in wheelchair racing and hand-cycling competitions.

"I believe the accident that changed my life actually made me a better person," Kyle Massey



Ahmonie Lee gets a blue cupcake painted on her arm by an associate of Lollypop the Clown, who manned the very popular face-painting booth at a special day for friends and patients of the Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Spina Bifida Team Center on Sunday, July 5, 2010. Brother Ahmillio and father Douglas observe the progress of the artwork in progress.

said. "It has changed my values, and helped me see the importance of family, friends, and giving. If there were a magic pill that would completely restore my body, I wouldn't take it."

When Ravindra Rao, MD, took the stage, he needed no introduction. The man who has been the personal pediatrician for some 1,000 to 1,500 spina bifida babies the last 26 years enjoys rock-star status in this specialized community. As chief of general academic pediatrics at the Loma Linda University School of Medicine, Dr. Rao is widely known as an expert on the disorder.

Although his remarks to the crowd were words of welcome and encouragement, Dr. Rao took a few minutes to speak privately about the causes of the developmental birth defect.

"Spina bifida is a congenital condition that affects .06 babies out of every 1,000 born in the

United States," he says. "Another way to look at it is that 6 out of every 100,000 babies are born with it."

The cause is not known, but a folic acid deficiency has been suspected. However, Dr. Rao reported that some women who were taking supplemental folic acid gave birth to babies with spina bifida, so the jury is still out.

"Spina bifida babies are born with part of the spinal column—usually in the lower back, but sometimes higher up—exposed," Dr. Rao states. "We surgically place the spine back into the body."

He noted that other issues—including muscle weakness, bowel and bladder incontinence, and some types of mental dysfunction—are often associated with the defect. Because of the weakness in their lower extremities, many people with the condition have trouble walking.

"The babies often require a shunt in the brain to allow fluids to drain," he adds. "Despite the fact that they frequently have varying degrees of cognitive impairment, they are not retarded. In fact, they're often quite bright. My goal is to help them become fully functioning adults, able to get a job and make their own way."

At the conclusion of his remarks, Dr. Rao invited Robert Hicks to the microphone. As he bounded onto the stage, Mr. Hicks presented himself as a robustly healthy young adult. Had Dr. Rao not pointed out that Robert, a former patient of his, was born with spina bifida, it would have been impossible to diagnose the congenital disorder from Mr. Hicks' appearance or behavior.

Mr. Hicks thanked everyone for coming and noted that the sponsors of the event—Dr. Rao; David A. Chamberlin, MD, FACS, chief of pediatric urology at Loma Linda University Health Care; A-Med Health Care; CCS Medical; Astra Tech; Aqua Hydrate; Mayflower Transit; Total Transportation Logistics; and PossAbilities—had gone to great lengths to make the day memorable.

Before inviting guests to break for lunch, Mr. Hicks encouraged them to try their hand at the two-player NASCAR racecar simulator inside a hot rod Toyota Camry brought to the event by

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How his wife's smile helped an LLU School of Medicine graduate launch a massive anti-smoking campaign in China ...

Continued from page 12
Beijing, but also throughout the enormous nation.

At the end of the meeting, Wayne McFarland, MD, was invited to Shenyang in northeast China the following week to teach health officials to conduct the Five Day Plan. Once there, he phoned Dr. Gimbel with an urgent request.

"Hervey," he said, "you've got to come back here in August. They need you to help with a 10-county seminar to teach farmers to stop smoking in Yangi." Dr. Gimbel accepted, and suddenly requests for help came flooding in from all quarters of the Chinese world.

"That was the beginning of our teaching program for public health doctors in China," Hervey observes, expressing amazement at how Dr. Tian's simple request mushroomed into such a large movement at warp speed. "On the basis of that first meeting, we were invited year after year to this annual meeting, and we've gone back almost every year since 1991."

After returning home, the Gimbels—along with a team of bilingual volunteers—translated the Five Day Plan to Stop Smoking into

Chinese, modifying the text to fit the patterns of Chinese culture.

Today, they maintain a burgeoning public health outreach known as The China-USA Health Project. The program and its parent organization, Health Services International, Inc., have attracted more than 100 volunteers and supporters. In addition to publishing a newsletter aimed at developing public health leadership among Chinese medical students, the group conducts clinics, seminars, and stop-smoking workshops to educate physicians and health professionals.

Looking back, Hervey and Ann are amazed at the way God used her smile and their hospitality to bring sweeping lifestyle change to the people of China.

"We marvel," he reflects, "at how God brought this to life. We basically cover the entire country. We have been active in 20 major cities including Xian, Kunming, Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Guilin, Manning, Chengdu, and Lhasa, Tibet."

The newsletter—<www.leadershipclub.cn>—is available in both Chinese and English, and is

based at Fudan University in Shanghai.

"We're endeavoring to have many universities in China introduce their medical students to this website," Dr. Gimbel notes, "for ongoing information about how to be effective, anti-smoking change agents. Our hope is that a new generation of young physicians will know how."

Apparently, the strategy is working. At the conclusion of a stop-smoking seminar at Tongji Medical University in Wuhan, Dr. Gimbel asked university officials, "Why don't we make Tongji the very first university in all of China to have a smoke-free campus and student body?"

"There was deafening silence for at least a full minute," he notes. "Then they began talking excitedly and agreed to do it. They named a professor to be in charge, and a doctoral student to implement everything." For its part, The China-USA Health Project created videos and visual aids, and lectured on smoking and health throughout the university.

"In three years," he reports, "the smoking rate among male medical students at Tongji University fell from 33 percent to less than 5 percent," he notes. "I think that's astounding!"

PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH

Public health researchers finds risk in reusable grocery bags

By Heather Reifsnyder

Ryan Sinclair, PhD, MPH, a sanitation expert at Loma Linda University School of Public Health, co-authored a report on health risks associated with reusable grocery bags, released in June 2010.

The report demonstrated that reusable grocery shopping bags collected at random from

consumers contained high levels of microbial contamination, including *Escherichia coli* (or *e coli*) and other enteric bacteria, several of which are opportunistic pathogens.

The report was co-authored by Charles Gerba and David Williams of the University of Arizona, in Tucson.

Dr. Sinclair's report is available for download

at www.llu.edu/public-health/news/news-grocery-bags-bacteria.page.

To prevent cross contamination of foods, Dr. Sinclair recommends washing reusable grocery bags at least weekly, which reduces bacteria in them by more than 99.9 percent.

The study also found that geographic factors may play a role.

Contamination rates appeared to be higher in the Los Angeles area than in the two other locations bags were tested—a phenomenon likely due to that region's weather being more conducive to growth of bacteria in reusable bags.



SPH dean takes new role at ADRA ...

Continued from page 6

Dr. Dyjack's time as dean has also been marked by significant increases in community engagement and partnerships, as well as research and practice opportunities for students. He has emphasized scholarship, research, and an increase in bilingual faculty and staff. One of his final acts as dean was helping secure the school's recently announced seven-year accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health.

The School of Public Health held a going-away party for Dr. Dyjack August 11, during which he expressed his high hopes for the future.

"I truly believe this school is on the cusp of great things," he said. Dr. Dyjack will continue to help with one of the school's research grants, and he plans to teach a class online next year.

Haiti ...

Continued from page 9

Ms. Dickinson and Ms. Kohler didn't go to bed until midnight Friday, but that didn't stop them from being in church bright and early Saturday morning. "Sabbath services started at 7:30 a.m. in La Chapelle," Ms. Dickinson says in her best French accent. "It was lovely to hear the singing of favorite hymns, not only at church services, but throughout the week."

That afternoon, they visited patients and toured the campus of Universite Adventiste d'Haiti, located about half a mile up the road. They especially enjoyed distributing Beanie Babies, candy, and other toys to the children. "Their smiles made the whole trip worthwhile," she insists.

From Saturday night to Thursday at midnight, it was a never-ending round of sorting, reorganizing, and assisting with surgeries in the operating room. First, they unpacked and sorted the items they had sent to the hospital from California. Next they scoured the hospital for supplies stashed in forgotten cupboards, cardboard boxes, and containers. Meanwhile, workmen removed the decontamination sink, moved it to its new location, and installed plumbing.

Then it was time to sort approximately 15 to 20 thousand surgical instruments that had been donated to the facility.

Once Haitian surgeons discovered that Liz and Sylvia were experienced in the operating

Please turn to page 3

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE

Public health student campaigns for peace through interfaith collaboration

By Heather Reifsnyder

Loma Linda University School of Public Health student Ajarat Bada is leading a global initiative urging the United Nations to adopt a ninth millennium development goal: ensuring interfaith collaboration for the establishment of peace.

Ms. Bada believes that meeting some of the existing eight millennium development goals won't be possible in some countries without conflicts first being resolved through cooperation and understanding among different faiths. She and two colleagues presented the idea about this missing goal at the Third Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, held May 27–29, 2010, in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

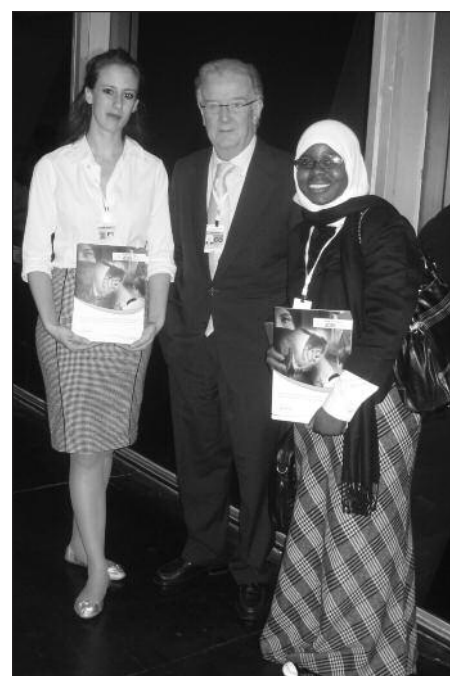
"After our presentation, we were personally approached by dignitaries from the United States, France, Finland, Iran, Jordan, and Mexico who wanted to know how they could support this initiative," Ms. Bada says.

Leading the initiative with Ms. Bada are Catherine Peter of South Africa and Bogdan Gogulan of Russia.

The three of them were ambassadors at the One Young World Summit held in London in February 2010 with the support of figures including activist and archbishop emeritus Desmond Tutu, former secretary-general of the United Nations Kofi Annan, and Grameen Bank founder Muhammad Yunus, PhD. Ms. Bada represented her home country of Nigeria.

The One Young World global consultation process has established interfaith dialogue as one of six priorities for global youth.

To sign a petition supporting the inclusion of the new millennium development goal, visit www.ipetitions.com/petition/missingmdg/. To learn about progress on the project, follow it on Twitter at twitter.com/missingMDG and Facebook at The Missing Millennium Development Goal.



Loma Linda University School of Public Health student Ajarat Bada (right) and colleague Catherine Peter discuss their idea of adding the missing millennium development goal with Jorge Sampaio, the United Nations high representative to the U.N. Alliance of Civilizations, and former president of Portugal.



THE BESSIE AND BEULAH COMEDY SHOW: Merry Medicine for the Heart

October 10, 2010
Registration begins at 6:15 p.m.
Dinner begins at 7 p.m.

Becky Baker (Bessie) has been a professional model and actress since 1977. She has been performing with her partner (Beulah) for 18 years, all over the United States. Since 1985, she has also traveled the country as a motivational speaker, presenting seminars on "Laughter, God's Best Medicine". Katie Blackburn (Beulah) has been working as an actress and comedienne for 25 years. She has frequently appeared with *Lamb's Players*, a Christian theater group based in San Diego, and has produced, written and directed large productions for churches in Southern California. Each of these talented, versatile women has raised three children.

"A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength." - Proverbs 17:22



Dr. Lee Berk

This proverb is backed by scientific research. Studies by Lee Berk, DrPH, MPH, a preventative care specialist and psychoneuroimmunologist, at the Center for Neuroimmunology from our own Loma Linda University, shows that laughter can decrease stress hormones and boost the immune system. Dr. Lee Berk will be our guest host, introducing our theme and superb entertainment.

National Auxiliary Fall Event – Sunday, October 10, 2010, 7 pm

STUDENT OUTREACH

The second student-established LLU School of Pharmacy Health Fair marks the making of an annual event

By Nathan Lang

A group of LLU School of Pharmacy students chased down a canopy tent, as gusty winds blew it over the brick wall of a nearby apartment complex. The forecast hadn't looked promising, but that didn't stop the pharmacy students from hosting the second annual LLUSP Health Fair on May 23, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

"This event is rather special, due to the involvement of all the pharmacy organizations coming together to provide services to the community," explains pharmacy student Jefmar Dickey.

Before last year's LLUSP Health Fair, LLUSP events were typically hosted by individual student organizations, and they would focus on a single type of service, such as blood pressure screening or cough and cold awareness.

However, with the founding of the LLUSP Health Fair, pharmacy student organizations have united for an annual event that offers multiple services.

Services include, in addition to those mentioned earlier, blood glucose screening, HIV awareness, osteoporosis screening, brown bagging—a type of service that evaluates a client's intake of diverse medications—and more.

The LLUSP Health Fair was founded by Larry Rutabeka, a pharmacy student who at the time was president of the LLU chapter of the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA). This year's LLU SNPhA president and second annual LLUSP Health Fair co-leader was Regie Tayaben.

In the summer of 2008, Mr. Rutabeka and Mr. Tayaben attended the SNPhA convention in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and both students were impressed by the more comprehensive health fairs that larger SNPhA chapters were hosting. The two LLUSP students noted how these other chapters pulled off these events through pooling resources by collaborating with other student organizations.

Apart from the SNPhA, other LLUSP student organizations include the California Pharmacists Association (CPhA), Rho Chi Honor Society

(RC), and Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) among others.

As this year's president-elect of the LLU AMCP, Alison Wong attended meetings with presidents of other student organizations so that each organization could plan for the second annual LLUSP Health Fair together. "Every organization was in charge of one health-related topic," explains Ms. Wong. "The AMCP was in charge of preparing a poster board and handouts for patients regarding cholesterol awareness."

Along with her fellow classmate Diana Yeung, Ms. Wong also planned to add flair to the

health fair by decorating the asphalt with chalk footprints and signs, and Mr. Dickey, RC president, helped prepare the brown bagging services as well as distribute volunteer shirts.

Headed by Mr. Tayaben and Thao Tran, CPhA president, who were grateful they didn't have to start from scratch this year, LLUSP student leaders chose many new features for this year's health fair. They obtained a license for students to perform blood glucose screenings. They promoted the event through community bulletin boards and local businesses. Also, they secured a sponsorship through Walgreens.



Regie Tayaben, SNPhA president (second from right), oversees the second annual LLUSP Health Fair, a unique event resulting from the collaboration of all pharmacy student organizations. Pictured students counsel at the heartburn awareness booth: Thomas Kim (from left), Shady Mansy, Tiffany Yee, Mr. Tayaben, and Karissa Jongsma.



At the second annual LLUSP Health Fair, balloons, tablecloths, and canopy banners flap in gusty winds moments before a canopy tent is blown over the brick wall to the right.

"The SNPhA is dedicated to increasing diversity in our profession at a national level," notes Mr. Tayaben. "Fortunately, it lets the chapter presidents know about Walgreens' donations to every pharmacy school for diversity and community projects."

Walgreens, beyond providing funds, offered a portion of the parking lot at its Yucaipa store as the location for this year's health fair, and the pharmacy donated leaflets to enclose with each prescription written at the fair.

There were also some unexpected changes from last year's health fair. "The strong winds, biting cold, and intermittent rain were the opposite of last year's, and even the previous week's extreme heat," recalls Mr. Tayaben. "How strong was the wind? Twice, we had tied-down poster-boards that were blown away."

These factors further resulted in this year's attendance being lower than last year, and the health fair had to close down half an hour early.

The attendees of this year's health fair were primarily seniors, and rather healthy people, according to Mr. Dickey. "I found it quite interesting and also uplifting to find healthy elderly individuals that utilize lifestyle modifications to prevent chronic illness," observes Mr. Dickey. "It was unique to find several patients stating that they are currently not on any medications."

Next year, Mr. Tayaben, as a fourth-year student, will hand over his leadership, yet being on a local rotation, he'll offer his help where needed.

"If I could suggest anything for next year's officers," states Mr. Tayaben, "I hope they can find neighborhoods where free health services are more needed and bring the third annual LLUSP Health Fair there."

FACULTY AND ALUMNI EXCELLENCE

Allied health faculty and alumni honored at CHIA convention

By Heather Reifsnyder

Colleagues of Marilyn Davidian, PhD, CRHIA, in the health information management field have recognized her for her skills as a teacher.

She received the 2010 Educator Award during the annual convention of the California Health Information Association (CHIA), held June 13–16, 2010, in Sacramento.

Dr. Davidian is assistant professor and chair of the department of health information manage-

ment, School of Allied Health Professions.

The award is given based on excellence and creativity in teaching, mentoring and role model skills in and out of the classroom, and research contributions, according to CHIA executive director LaVonne LaMoureux, RHIA.

LLU alumna Gayle Old-Smith, '77, was honored as well. She received the Literary Award for her work editing CHIA publications for the past 15 years.

In all, 18 alumni from the LLU health informa-

tion management department were present for the convention. They came together for a reunion June 14. The group comprised:

- Marylouise Applebaum, '90
- Connie Cagle, '90
- Pauline Calla, '05
- Daniel Castanon, '00
- Marilyn Davidian, '84
- Rocio Durand, '90
- Tracy Weber Elmer, '97
- Marilyn Freeman, '91
- Jean Hewes, '78
- Menghistu Hika, '03
- Anne James, '09
- Paula Kleiman, '91
- Debbie Lowrance, '94
- Catherine Myers, '82
- Gayle Old-Smith, '77

- Mary Rank, '09
- Chris Watanabe, '80
- Joan Ziegelmayer, '04

New LLU graduate Alan Gutierrez was awarded a student scholarship in recognition of academic excellence, professionalism, and professional promise. It was noted that he has already taken and passed the national certification exam.

In addition to Dr. Davidian, Ms. Calla teaches at Loma Linda University.

Debra Hamada, MA, RHIA, another instructor in the department, also attended the convention. Ms. Hamada is currently in the second year of her three-year term on the CHIA board.

HIGH SCHOOLERS REACH OUT

High school students warm the hearts of patients in Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital cancer unit

By Bryon Conner, guest writer

The Shamrock Club at Aquinas High School dedicates their free time raising money for community projects.

The students enjoy finding creative ways to serve others, including celebrating St. Patrick’s Day.

Every March for the past few years, they have distributed baskets filled with toys and blankets to the young patients on the Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital cancer unit.

Alana Harp, a graduating senior from Aquinas High School, serves as co-president of the Shamrock Club.

Alana says, “My favorite part about delivering the baskets is seeing the kids’ happy faces.”

The Shamrock Club at Aquinas High School was started by Casy O’Connor, a former student.

The club was formed in memory of Casy’s brother who was also a former student at Aquinas High School and who lost his battle with leukemia.

Along with their fundraisers, the Shamrock Club hosts three blood drives and has averaged 50 units of blood from the student body alone.

“The club,” says Alana, “inspires and encourages students to give back.”

Nearly 10 years after it was formed, the Shamrock Club continues to bless the patients at Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital.



Each year, members of the Shamrock Club at Aquinas High School deliver baskets filled with toys and blankets to the young patients receiving treatment on the Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital cancer unit.

PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH

School of Public Health takes on environmental justice for residents near polluted railyard

By Heather Reifsnyder

A team of researchers from the School of Public Health has just been awarded a two-year grant worth close to \$1 million to generate data on the health status of the several thousand people living closest to the one railyard out of California’s 18 deemed to present the most public health risk by the California Air Resources Board—the BNSF San Bernardino Railyard.

While epidemiologic studies indicate a range of health risks associated with inhaling fine partic-

ulate matter or living near heavy traffic, no actual health outcomes data exists on adverse health effects experienced by people living near facilities such as the BNSF San Bernardino Railyard—a major passageway to the rest of the country for goods imported through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

“Achieving a cleaner environment for the residents around the railyard will require interventions based on scientific data specific to the populations at risk,” propose principal investigators Sam Soret, PhD, MPH, and Susanne Montgomery, PhD, MPH. “This research

could provide the necessary impetus to mobilize the railroad companies to improve the air quality in and around their facilities.”

The researchers will collect primary data through longitudinal household- and school-based surveys on the prevalence of cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, respiratory symptoms, and biologic outcomes, including lung function and airway inflammation. They will also analyze secondary data from the California Cancer Registry to determine whether there is an excess of new and fatal cancers observed from 1999–2008 that could be attributed to diesel

smoke and other airborne emissions.

The researchers have chosen to use community-based participatory research (CBPR) methods for this investigation and will therefore work in close partnership with the area’s residents, who also live with high rates of poverty and violent crime. The goal is to develop an informed community response plan to reduce railyard exposures and related health outcomes. They will collaborate with the nonprofit Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice to ensure the involvement of people living near the railyard.

Other members of the research team are co-investigators Synnove Knutsen, PhD, MD, MPH; Larry Beeson, DrPH; John Morgan, DrPH; Rhonda Spencer-Hwang, DrPH; Seth Wiafe, MPH; and David Shavlik, MSPH.

TRAVELOGUE

Burros, bikers, and health care professionals converge on the great Southwest

By James Ponder

It doesn’t take long for the 11 Chinese and Malaysian physicians and health care professionals Greg Highton and I are escorting

around the Southwest to learn that the burros of Oatman, Arizona, are shameless moochers.

We’re scarcely out of the van before the four-footed panhandlers approach. The shaggy pack

animals, whose ancestors were abandoned by miners some 90 years ago, wander the streets of Oatman—and in and out of restaurants and stores—begging for handouts. They prefer carrots, which local merchants sell for a buck a bag, but will gladly accept anything edible.

This year, our April excursion—which is sponsored by the Global Health Institute of Loma Linda University—coincides with the enormous motorcycle jamboree known as the Laughlin River Run. That means, of course,

that the burros don’t have the streets entirely to themselves. Instead, 300 hot-rodded motorcycles, mostly Harleys, punctuate the silence with throaty, metallic thunder. The burros don’t mind; it just means more nice people with carrots.

Oatman marks the final leg of our journey to Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon. The purpose of the trip is to give visiting health professionals a break from their intensive, Please turn to page 18

Spina bifida supporters brave the heat for fun, fellowship, and inspiration ...

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Mayflower Transit. The simulator-equipped car, specially designed with hand controls for paraplegics to use, made its debut at the event.

Lunch was served up hot, fresh, and delicious from In-N-Out Burger’s mobile grill.

There were cookies, popcorn, and refreshments; kids of all ages—including Toyia Greene—enjoyed getting their likenesses transformed at the face-painting booth.

After the meal, motivational speaker and Lofric patient ambassador Jesse Billauer took the microphone to share his story of personal triumph after a 1996 surfing accident in Malibu shattered his spinal cord, but not his dreams of becoming a professional surfer.

Despite the fact that he is wheelchair-dependent, Mr.Billauer—who has become something of a celebrity, often seen in the company of Paris Hilton and other entertainment notables—has surfed some of the

world’s most dangerous waves, including those at the notorious Cloudbreak, off Tavarua in the Fiji Islands.

Mr. Billauer’s message to the crowd was to never give up on achieving one’s dreams.

He drew a chuckle when he told the audience that his girlfriend—who was with him, and blushed as he said it—didn’t always follow his advice.

According to Toyia Greene, the gathering was the brainchild of Dr. Rao.

“The summer event has been a vision of Dr.

Rao’s for quite some time,” Ms. Greene shares. “So many of our patients are socially isolated and have little to no interaction with other individuals who have spina bifida except for when they come to their clinic appointments.”

She continues, “It was our goal to create an opportunity for patients and families to network with each other and with spina bifida team members in a more casual setting.”

Ms. Greene concluded by noting that perhaps next year’s event should take place at the beach.

“It’s a lot cooler there,” she says, wiping the sweat from her face.



Students, faculty, family members, and friends crowd the exhibition halls of Wong Kerlee International Conference Center on Wednesday, August 4, 2010, to examine research posters for the summer research internship program. The poster display was held in conjunction with the 10th annual Health Disparities Summer Symposium.

10th annual Health Disparities Summer Symposium throws a demographic curve ...

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medical university anywhere in the world.”

Penelope Duerksen-Hughes, PhD, assistant dean in the department of basic sciences at LLUSM, got a laugh when she acknowledged the obvious: “When I looked at the program, I wondered why we needed five people to welcome you here.” Dr. Duerksen-Hughes told the audience she had enjoyed the opportunity to train in a similar program. “I know the difference it can make,” she said.

Roger Hadley, MD, dean of LLUSM, stressed the need for physicians to understand the unique cultural backgrounds of each of their patients, and noted he was very proud of Drs. Marino and Daisy De Leon and the entire CHDMM team as well as the diversity of the LLUSM faculty.

In his remarks and introduction of the keynote speaker, CHDMM director Marino De Leon, PhD, informed the audience that “it would be impossible to overestimate the importance we ascribe to our future students.” He then pointed out that Dr. Hayes-Bautista was the keynote speaker at the very first Health Disparities Summer Symposium at LLU back in 2001. “We thought it would be a great idea to bring him back tonight,” he observed.

Dr. De Leon added that David E. Hayes-Bautista, PhD, is professor of medicine at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, and director of the Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture, also at UCLA. He also noted that Dr. Hayes-Bautista is the author of numerous publications.

Right off the bat, Dr. Hayes-Bautista began to stir the pot. After announcing that the subtitle for his message—“Cultural Competence in Medical Research and Education”—should be, “The Next Big Thing: California Demo-

graphics,” he challenged a long-standing belief with a simple question.

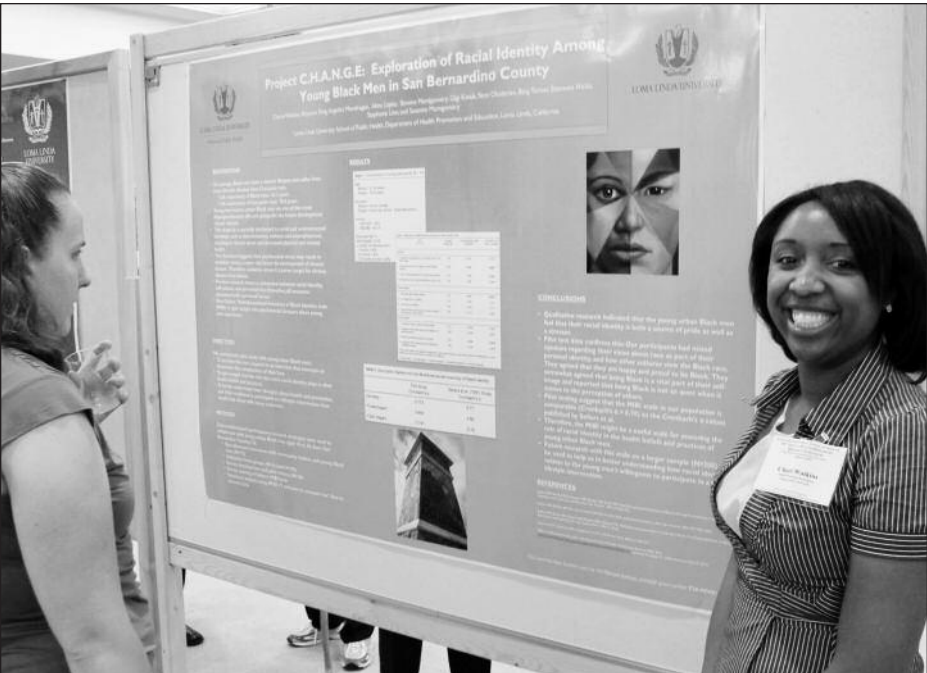
“Remember your fourth-grade history class?” he asked. “Remember who your teacher told you settled California and established Los Angeles? The Spaniards, right? But let’s take a look at historic epidemiology by examining the state of diversity on the day Los Angeles was founded: September 6, 1781.”

Before rolling out statistics on the demographics of L.A. on its birthday, Dr. Hayes-Bautista informed the audience that the city’s official name is El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles del Río de Porciúncula. Translation: “The Village of our Lady the Queen of the Angels of the Porciúncula River.”

When he displayed the numbers on the ethnicity of the founders, it became apparent that Spanish immigrants were only part of the mix. Of the founders, 38 percent were Indian, eight percent were African-American, eight percent were Asian, eight percent were European, and 38 percent were of mixed racial ancestry. Dr. Hayes-Bautista did not use the sometimes-divisive term “Native Americans,” but called them “Indians” instead.

He pointed out that the ethnic mélange of early Los Angeles served as a catalyst for cross-cultural medical exchange when Dr. Pedro Prat—a Spanish surgeon who came to California with noted explorer Fr. Junipero Serra—visited a local Indian doctor living in the Tong-Va culture village of Yang-Na. The reason? He hoped to solicit her wisdom in treating medical conditions he had never encountered in Europe. The woman taught Dr. Prat about local herbal cures, which he subsequently applied successfully to his patients.

At several points in his stimulating presentation, Dr. Hayes-Bautista said, “Diversity is



Cheri Watkins, a student in the Loma Linda University School of Public Health, proudly displays a poster about a study on racial identity among young black men in San Bernardino County. Ms. Watkins presented the poster at the 10th annual Health Disparities Summer Symposium on August 4, 2010.



“Is it the beans, or the tortillas?” David E. Hayes-Bautista, PhD, asks the audience at the 10th annual Health Disparities Summer Symposium, held in Wong Kerlee International Conference Center on August 4, 2010. The question underscores what Dr. Hayes-Bautista terms “the Latino epidemiological paradox.”

hardwired in California, both in the population and in medicine.” At one point, he turned to the summer interns and said, “You are the latest iteration of diversity in medicine in California, and I salute you for that.”

After sharing observations about the racial make-up of the miners who flocked to California for the ‘49er Gold Rush—it was a lot more diverse than is commonly thought—he pointed out that “almost three-quarters of the babies born in California today are what we used to call minorities.” In light of the Latino population boom, he raised a poignant question for the future. “Do we just do what we’ve always done in medicine?”

The real bombshell of the evening came when Dr. Hayes-Bautista said current models for predicting the relationship between racial/cultural factors and mortality rates don’t hold up in practice.

“You would think,” he noted, “that because of their lower income levels, lower education levels,



Marino De Leon, PhD, director of the Center for Health Disparities and Molecular Medicine at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, tells graduates of the summer research internship program that “it would be impossible to overestimate the importance we ascribe to our future students.”

and decreased access to health care that Latinos would have higher mortality rates from heart disease, cancer, and stroke than non-Hispanic whites. However, the opposite is true: Latinos have a 30 percent lower death rate from heart disease, a 40 percent lower death rate from cancer, and a 20 percent lower death rate from stroke. Overall, Latinos average 30 percent lower for all causes of death—except diabetes and homicide—than whites.”

After informing the audience that there has not been one science-based article on the effects of cultural competency education on patient outcomes, Dr. Hayes-Bautista dropped his final cryptic questions of the evening.

“Is it the beans, or the tortillas?” he asked. “Is it the Latino culture with its emphasis on family and spirituality? I honestly don’t know. We need to do a study on the relationship between culture, behavior, and health outcomes.

“We need to know what causes the Latino epidemiological paradox.”

FIRST PERSON ON THE SALTON SEA

Research adventure on the low seas

By James Ponder

Carl Person, Nathan Strub, and I drift through the ruins of a drowned pier and half-sunken sailboat at the south end of the Salton Sea. It's 3:20 p.m. the last Friday in July. Carl's piloting the 16' Boston Whaler, Nathan's scolding us for wasting gasoline, and I'm taking pictures like there's no tomorrow.

That's easy to believe out here. The abandoned skeletons of this silent community exude a menacing and eerie sense of desolation. Predatory waterfowl perch atop the rickety remains like a flock of vultures scouring the surface for dead fish. The scene reeks of apocalyptic gloom.

It's pushing 120 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade. But since the skiff doesn't have an awning, our only shade comes from our hats. Carl lost his three hours ago. He's going Bedouin with a towel around his head; he may think he looks like Lawrence of Arabia, but I doubt he'll make the cover of *GQ*.

Carl and Nathan are graduate students in the department of earth and biological sciences at Loma Linda University. I'm along because this expedition needs a scribe to chronicle the launch of a 12-month study Nathan is conducting on water quality issues at this, the largest inland body of water in California. At 226 feet below sea level and smack in the middle of the Colorado Desert, the Salton Sea is something of an anomaly—a sea nestled in a desert considerably below sea level.

The survey needs a different title if Nathan hopes to turn it into a major motion picture. "A Year-Long Study of Salton Sea Cyanobacteria Species and Toxin Production Correlated to Water Chemistry" doesn't have the same sparkle as, say, "L.A. Confidential," or "To Kill a Mockingbird."

Nevertheless, Nathan hopes to solve a long-standing murder mystery worthy of Hollywood's best. Call him the Alfred Hitchcock of the low seas, but a year from now, Nathan Please turn to page 19



If the Salton Sea has a signature motif, it just might be the floating tilapia. Members of the freshwater fish species—which have, ironically, proven to be more adaptable to these exceptionally salty waters than most saltwater fish—periodically die off in large numbers on the lake. The author lost track after his tally of floating fish exceeded 700 during a research expedition on July 31, 2010, with Loma Linda University graduate students Nathan Strub and Carl Person.



Nathan Strub, a graduate student in the earth and biological sciences department at Loma Linda University, checks his watch to record the time when water quality measurements were taken during a recent excursion to collect information and water samples from the Salton Sea. Mr. Strub hopes his 12-month research project will pinpoint the cause of the massive die-offs of fish and bird species at the inland lake.

Burros, bikers, and health care professionals converge on the great Southwest ...

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two-month-long mentorship program at Loma Linda University.

"What was it Jan Zumwalt said?" I ask Greg, referencing remarks the GHI's associate director recently made about these trips for visiting dignitaries. "Weekend experiences like these provide our international guests an opportunity to learn more about us and our country. Was that it?"

"I think so," Greg replies. "Too bad she didn't mention the donkeys!"

Oatman may not rank as high as, say, New York or Washington, D.C., on lists of places

overseas guests want to see when they come to the United States, but Zhou Yiru, RN, won't forget it anytime soon. The nurse manager for health promotion at Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital is having too much fun shopping and taking pictures in this Old West oasis. For some reason, she avoids the burros.

Two days ago, Greg was behind the wheel as we pulled out of Loma Linda at noon. Our guests napped while we crossed the desert, but woke up when we stopped at The Mad Greek in Baker, California, for a bite to eat. The food's not bad, but the zany, boardinghouse atmosphere and fresh cherry juice are terrific.

Just before sunset, the West's most ostentatious

city looms into view. With its exploding architectural scene, tawdry commercialism, and hype run amuck, Las Vegas is a love-it-or-hate-it proposition. Greg and I would rather be at the Grand Canyon, but our guests can hardly wait to see Sin City.

After a few hours exploring the sights of Las Vegas, we ride the crowded elevators to the 108th floor of the Stratosphere for 360-degree views of the city by night. On the way up, Khaw Poh Guan, MD, a pediatric intensivist at Penang Adventist Hospital, pokes me in the belly; a subtle reminder that I ate too much for dinner.

After breakfast at Whole Foods Market the next morning—yep, we ate at a grocery store; freshest breakfast bar in town—we hit the road for Grand Canyon. Halfway to Hoover Dam, a clump of magenta flowers grabs my attention.

"Beavertail cactus," I blurt out, pointing towards the blossoms. Everyone oohs and aahs as we pull off the road for pictures. The flowers are spectacular, the sky is blue, the air is warm. Is this the perfect antidote for Las Vegas, or what?

For some reason, the security officer at Hoover Dam orders us out of the car. Perhaps it's because Greg looks a bit grungy, or maybe he's got a quota of luggage inspections to fill. Either way, the guard is friendly and the inspection doesn't take long. He explains it's all in the name of national security.

To be nice, he also points out a herd of bighorn sheep grazing on a nearby hill. "The male stays up on that ridge to keep an eye on the females," he says.

"Apparently we're not the only species that likes Please turn to page 19



Appearances to the contrary, these are not the latest American Idol contestants. Instead, it's a group of visiting physicians and health care professionals from China and Malaysia having a good time in Oatman, Arizona. (Left to right, front row): a distinguished member of Oatman's famed burro brigade; Wang Yina, MD; Xu Chang; Xu Yong, MD; Zhao Lili, MD; Wang Jialing; Zhou Yiru, RN; Dai Liping; and Feng Xinchun, MD. (Back row): volunteer driver Greg Highton; Khaw Poh Guan, MD; and Tang Xiajing, MD. Not pictured: Maria Sangkong, RN.



The chasms, buttes, and crevices of the Grand Canyon reveal deep shadows in late afternoon light. The image was made during a recent trip for 11 visiting physicians and health care professionals from China. The trip was sponsored by the Global Health Institute of Loma Linda University to foster international goodwill, and provide a break from an intensive, two-month mentorship study program at Loma Linda University.

Research adventure on the low seas ...

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hopes to be able to say, with a high degree of scientific accuracy, just exactly who—or what—is responsible for the massive die-offs of fish and migratory birds that plague these waters on a semi-regular basis.

The reigning theory says temperature and salinity are the killers, but based on his study of the literature, Nathan believes the situation is far more complex.

“By analyzing both the algal concentrations and algal toxin concentrations over one year,” he says, “we hope to be able to correlate fish die-offs and to determine if fish die-offs are coincident with stop-overs made by migratory birds. In addition, by investigating the water chemistry—phosphates, nitrates, dissolved oxygen—we may be able to detect correlations between algal blooms and toxin increases with overall water quality.”

It doesn’t take a scientist to hypothesize that today’s heat is potent enough to melt a boatload of researchers. Earlier this morning, Carl predicted we would die of heat exhaustion. So far that hasn’t happened, but it’s way too hot for me. I’ve gotten intimately acquainted with every sweat gland in my body, including several I didn’t know I had. Fortunately, we brought plenty of water to drink.

Despite its nomenclature, the Salton Sea is actually a lake; an endorheic rift lake, to be precise. The term describes a body of water that receives an influx of liquid, but retains every ounce. This one was created in 1905 when the entire volume of the Colorado River was accidentally diverted into the Salton Sink. Despite the fact that the Colorado is a freshwater water-course, the Salton Sea is much saltier than the ocean. The reason? Extensive mineral deposits in the soil beneath it.

The salinity is so high that ocean fish can’t survive here. Three species that can—the Salton Sea tilapia *Oreochromis mossambicus*, desert pupfish *Cyprinodon macularius*, and sailfin molly *Poecilia latipinna*—must like this saline environment. Paradoxically, tilapias are freshwater fishes. How they adapted to this salt pond is anybody’s guess; ditto for how they got here in the first place.

The waterfront ruins are maybe a mile from our third stop of the day and since Nathan already finished his work there, it’s time to move on. He pre-selected five locations where he’ll test the water quality and collect samples at predetermined depths every month. Carl, in his self-appointed role as skipper of “The Floating Tilapia,” pinpoints our next destination using GPS coordinates. (OK, “The Floating Tilapia” isn’t really the name of our vessel, but it ought to be: the lifeless floaters are the icons on this lake. For \$95, you can even buy a framed dead tilapia from the Salton Sea on the Internet. Talk about a romantic gift for your sweetie)

Moments later, we’re flying across the water at blinding speed. Time to resume the mortality count; it’s the least I can do for science. We cruise for 10 minutes without seeing a single fish corpse then suddenly, they’re everywhere. There goes one; here come three more. Isn’t that six over there? My neck’s tired from turning left and right to compute every carcass. By the time we reach our next destination—a serene stretch of the bluest brine on earth—the tally stands at 254.

None of these fish are half as pretty as one we saw at the first site. With bright red fins, turquoise mouth and silvery body, it could have been a jewel in the right aquarium. Instead, it’s a grisly casualty of the forces of nature. Carl says tilapias are raised commercially as food and as pets. If I ever set up a tank, I’ll know where to find them. There must be millions of them here!

Afternoon light paints the lake in gorgeous hues. It’s positively beautiful right now. We’ve got the whole place absolutely to ourselves. We’re the only boat on this 35-mile by 15-mile body of water, and have been all day. That’s not the case on weekends, but for now, the sense of primeval solitude is delicious. In fact, aside from the heat, we couldn’t ask for better conditions.

But in case anybody gets the ridiculous idea that research is glamorous, let me put it this way: the three of us are exhausted, overheated, sun-glazed, and smelly. In a few hours, we’ll stumble into our homes, take a shower, and fall asleep exhausted, still rocking from the motion of the waves.

For Nathan, however, the work has barely begun. For at least the next year, he’ll be evalu-

ating water samples for planktonic algae with an inverted light microscope under oil immersion. He’ll also be counting specks of algae the way I’m counting dead fish, but with infinitely greater precision. He’ll record every specimen with a digital microscope camera, and painstakingly, methodically log everything into the computer. After that, he’ll start looking for correlations between the size and varieties of algal populations and toxin levels and the number of dead critters popping up on the surface and shores of the lake.

But that’s not all! He’ll also have to clean the boat and all his test equipment after every trip, and store it until the following month when it’ll be time to load up and head to the Salton Sea again. Multiply that by 12 months and you get some idea why research, as they say on TV, “ain’t no job for sissies!”

Fast forward to 8:01 p.m. and it’s time to head home. The boat’s loaded, our faces are washed, and we’re slightly cooler. The thermometer in Carl’s car says it’s only 102, but after baking in the sun and glare from the water for almost eight hours, we’re cooked to the core. We’d feel hot if we were sitting on icebergs.

Enough complaining! Overall, the trip was a raging success. Nathan got everything he needed to kick the study into high gear. Carl got

to drive a boat all day, and I got to take pictures and count fish. I lost track somewhere the far side of 700. To be honest, though, I wouldn’t have missed it for the world. In the final analysis, a boat trip beats sitting in the office any day of the week!



At the end of the day, Loma Linda University graduate student Nathan Strub reflects on a successful beginning to an extensive research project on the water quality of the Salton Sea.



Hold that hat! Loma Linda University graduate students Carl Person and Nathan Strub graphically illustrate the importance of holding on to one’s chapeau while speeding across the waters of the Salton Sea. Mr. Strub kept a firm grip on his broad-rimmed, solar radiation protection device (straw hat) while Mr. Person, who needed both hands to drive the boat, could not. His hat hasn’t been seen by anyone—except, perhaps, a few fish—since it blew into the drink.

Burros, bikers, and health care professionals converge on the great Southwest ...

Continued from page 18
to do that,” someone—I don’t want to name names, but it might have been Greg—observes.

For lunch, we stop at Cruiser’s Café, a 1950s diner in Williams, Arizona. Maria Sangkong, RN, orders fajitas. A life support educator at Penang Adventist Hospital in Malaysia, Maria waits until she takes a bite to allege two things: first, she’s never tried fajitas before; second, she’s really glad she ordered them today.

Suddenly, a bee zooms through an open doorway to buzz our table. Xu Chang, the 12-year-old son of Drs. Xu Yong and Zhao Lili, ducks for cover as the venomous insect careens past his head then dive bombs into Greg’s soda. The boy breathes a sigh of relief as I stretch a napkin across the opening of the glass, trapping the critter inside. Greg, for some reason, won’t

finish his soda.

An hour later, we arrive at Grand Canyon earlier than expected. The colors are muted and exotic as Mather Point glows in late afternoon light. Everybody’s snapping pictures left and right, but Tang Xiajing, MD, an ophthalmologist at Zhejiang University, seems almost ecstatic at the ever-changing spectacle.

Greg and I debate whether to stay here until sundown, or take the group to Desert View for grand, expansive vistas of the canyon and its immediate neighbors: the Vermillion Cliffs, Painted Desert, and Red Mountain. Being hardcore and inveterate road warriors, we opt for Desert View.

Once there, Dai Liping races down the trail

ahead of everyone else. In her role as co-director of the party office at Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in Hangzhou, Ms. Dai spends her days tending the interface of hospital personnel and Chinese Communist Party officials. Right now, however, she’s tending compositions in her viewfinder as she seeks the best angles on this magnificent place.

For most of the trip, Fang Xinchun, MD, a clinical hematologist at Anhui Provincial Hospital, has kept to herself. But here on the South Rim, with a million beautiful views to enjoy, she comes alive with a grin as wide as the Southwest.

Wang Jialing, vice director for administration at Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital, is also reveling in the landscape. Even with her impeccable command of English, Terry, as she is also called, finds herself at a loss for words. Perhaps there simply aren’t enough of them—in English or Mandarin—to describe the majesty of the Grand Canyon. There are many remarkable

places in the world, but if you ask me, nowhere else quite matches up to the Arizona’s big hole in the ground. We’re privileged to have it in our own backyard.

Just before we depart Oatman the next afternoon, Wang Yina, MD, a dermatology professor from the Zhejiang University School of Medicine, stops me on the sidewalk across the street from the fabled Oatman Hotel, where Clark Gable and Carole Lombard honeymooned in 1939.

With a roundhouse gesture that encircles the shops, saloons, hucksters, and burros of this ramshackle shantytown on Route 66, Dr. Wang grins from ear to ear. Then she says something so remarkable I have to give her a high five.

“I love it,” she beams, deftly avoiding the nose of a burro nuzzling her sleeve for concealed carrots. “This place is wonderful!”

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

School of Public Health receives maximum 7-year accreditation

By Heather Reifsnyder

On July 1, the Council on Education for Public Health informed Loma Linda University School of Public Health that it has

been granted the maximum seven-year accreditation. Extending through July 1, 2017, the accreditation was approved following CEPH's three-day site visit in October 2009 and subsequent favorable report.

ALUMNI ADVENTURES

The lion's endodontist

By Doug Hackleman

Big cats in captivity enjoy at least one advantage over their independent relatives: access to free dental care—sometimes even that of specialists such as endodontist Roderick William Tataryn, DDS, MS.

Recently this School of Dentistry alumnus was asked to perform two root canals on a famous Barbary lion.

Zamba, the former MGM actor and source of the studio's trademark movie-opening roar, was suffering at his retirement placement in Cat Tales Zoological Park, near Spokane, from two right canine teeth broken off at the gum line, exposing the nerves. The tissue around the lower cuspid tooth was infected and puss-laden.

Dr. Tataryn was chosen to treat the 650-pound lion, not only for his proximity and professional expertise, but because he had a portable root canal surgery setup.

Nevertheless, he had to special order 5-inch files to clean and shape the canal systems sufficiently deep to treat Zampa's compromised teeth, the largest dental procedure he has ever attempted.

Mike Wyche, Zamba's keeper at Cat Tales, put the lion to sleep with a shot to the flank from a dart gun, and eight workers and volunteers moved the cat to a makeshift operating table where Dr. Brian Hunter put the temporarily sedated animal under general anesthesia for the three-hour procedure.

With relief from his oral misery, Zamba's dispo-

sition has returned to the norm that allowed him before his retirement to appear in movies such as "Gladiator," television specials like NBC's "Noah's Ark," and commercials, such as one for Right Guard that featured Brett Favre.

Zamba's home, Cat Tales Zoological Park, was founded and licensed as a zoo in 1991 primarily to rescue and nurture big cats. Cat Tales is also home to the Zoological Training Center, the only school in North America that teaches exclusively zoo-keeping as a state-licensed trade school. Cat Tales boards a menagerie of animals that include bears, snakes, geese, parrots, lizards, and goats. But it is nearly 50 large cats (lions, tigers, pumas, panthers, lynx, and leopards) that are the park's biggest attraction and who eat the "lion's share" of the roughly 15,000 pounds of food its guests consume each month.

Zamba's British Columbia born and raised endodontist, Rod Tataryn, graduated from Walla Walla College, and earned his DDS degree from Loma Linda University in 1989. He returned to his alma mater for a two-year post-graduate residency in endodontics for which he received a master's of science degree in 1994, and then established Tataryn Endodontics in Spokane, Washington, where he continues to practice.

Dr. Tataryn has participated in research and published scientific and clinical articles in the field of endodontics. He is a contributing author to the sixth edition of Ingle's *Endodontics*. With his wife, Carol, Dr. Tataryn is raising their four sons: triplets—Alexander, Nicholas, and Christopher; and Zachary.



Rod Tataryn, DDS, MS, and his three endodontic assistants—Lisa Howard, Emily Ballensky, and Jerilynn Cunningham, pose with Zamba as he recovers from general sedation following his two root canal treatments.

The School of Public Health was founded in 1967 and has graduated approximately 5,000 students in its 43-year history.

The school offers 40 degrees and certificates in both traditional and online formats, as well as distance education programs around the world.

Currently, an MBA in health administration is being offered in both Guam and Hawaii. Next summer, an MPH program will begin in France, and there are a number of other potential sites being considered.

The school also has a strong research and public

health practice record, having attracted external funds for its investigative and outreach programs from NIH, the CDC, the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, and the California Department of Public Health, among others.

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EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

Loma Linda University celebrates employees with annual baseball game



Daniel Fontoura, MBA, vice president, Loma Linda University Medical Center, shares a moment with Bernie, the mascot for the Inland Empire 66'ers baseball team, during the employee appreciation baseball game held August 4, 2010. Out of the more than 2,500 entries for the raffle drawing, Mr. Fontoura drew Luke Feenstra's card. Mr. Feenstra, who works in the computer network services department, received a Hawaii getaway package.



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