

## Collaboration: Key to Our Success



Richard N. Fine, M.D.,  
Dean,  
School of Medicine

We have completed another successful academic year, and I congratulate the 112 who received M.D. degrees at our Convocation. Many of these graduates will enter top residency programs around the country, at institutions such as the Lahey Clinic in Massachusetts, Yale-New Haven Hospital, the University of Pennsylvania Health System, and Duke University Medical Center. Nearly one-fifth of our graduates will remain at SBUMC. Here they will receive specialty training in Emergency Medicine, Surgery, Dermatology, and other fields, as well as join a faculty that places a premium on collaborative work.

In this issue of *Medical Center News*, a number of excellent examples of collaborative initiatives and collective involvement are detailed. I draw your attention to two ongoing initiatives:

Our General Clinical Research Center (GCRC)-run clinical trials provide groundbreaking therapies for many patients. In 2006, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) evaluated our GCRC and graded the program as "outstanding." Because of this evaluation, we hope to be in line to receive a new NIH award that is designed to increase interdisciplinary collaboration and create an infrastructure that promotes the discovery of novel diagnostics and therapies.

With the revitalization of the Women in Medicine Program, all women faculty are invited to meet and discuss research and clinical activities on an ongoing basis. The program is part of an Association of American Medical Colleges initiative that assists medical schools in improving the pathways for women to contribute fully to academic medicine.

In clinical areas, our collaborative work is broad. With the recruitment of nationally recognized specialists in areas such as cardiology and oncology, the expertise of our multidisciplinary clinical programs has grown. In cancer alone, 11 disease-specific management teams are established and serve as a management model for other specialties.

We must continue to share our talents and ideas in all areas of research, education and clinical care. And let us remember that each collaborative effort has the potential to not only greatly impact our Medical Center, but also impact the community, the region, and the world.

## TOP NEWS

### New Pediatric Rotation in Cambodia

A new international rotation for pediatric senior residents is in place at the Angkor Hospital for Children (AHC) in Cambodia. A signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Pediatrics and AHC provides for elective rotations for residents. Each resident spends one month at the hospital training to treat tuberculosis, cerebral palsy, and other diseases common to children in the region.

Established in 1999 by Friends Without A Border, a non-profit organization headquartered in New York, the AHC is a 45-bed teaching and clinical service facility located in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The mission of AHC is to educate and train physicians and nurses in pediatrics and treat children in dire need of care.

"The rotation is a great opportunity for residents to provide care for children with diseases that affect development in an area of the world that desperately needs assistance," says Richard N. Fine, M.D., Dean of the School of Medicine. "The program embraces a world view approach regarding academic medicine and health care services," adds Dr. Fine, who plans to visit AHC in 2008 and seek ways to expand the alliance between the hospital and School of Medicine.

Alfred L. Scherzer, M.D., Ed.D., Clinical Professor of Pediatrics and Preventive Medicine, initiated the development of the program. Allan Dias, M.D., a Pediatrics/Medicine resident, participated this year. Dr. Scherzer says the next rotation is scheduled for January 2008.

The AHC has academic affiliations and/or agreements with other U.S. medical schools, including the University of Minnesota Medical School and the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. For more information about the program, contact Dr. Alfred Scherzer at (631) 727-6785, or at [AScherzer@notes.cc.sunysb.edu](mailto:AScherzer@notes.cc.sunysb.edu).



Dr. Allan Dias evaluates a child with cerebral palsy on a home follow-up visit in Cambodia.

### Clinical Skills Center Expands Training

Hands-on training at the Clinical Skills Center (CSC) has broadened since the facility opened in December 2006. Several hundred medical students and residents have completed training modules involving standardized patients (actors) or computerized manikins for a variety of conditions such as respiratory or kidney disease, cardiovascular events, and diabetes.

"The whole idea is to create realistic and difficult patient scenarios to challenge students and residents to think and react appropriately as physicians," says Christopher J. Gallagher, M.D., Associate Professor in the Department of Anesthesiology. "It is a true on-the-spot testing of their clinical and interpersonal skills," adds Dr. Gallagher, who heads up many of the resident Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCEs) at the CSC. A weekly

schedule of resident OSCEs began in March.

Dental students have also participated in CSC-run training, and 30 emergency medical service (EMS) providers from the Medical Center and 20 community EMS providers took part in a "Difficult Airways" course in March.

Eric Niegelberg, EMS Director, says that SBUMC is planning to be a Northeast training center for the course. He anticipates offering the course to the general EMS community this coming fall. The course is described in more detail at [www.theairwaysite.com](http://www.theairwaysite.com).

The CSC is offering patient scenario training for community physicians and other health-care professionals as well. A Family Medicine Update is scheduled for June 3.

For more information about the CSC and participation in training, call Pat Bley, Program Coordinator at (631) 444-2098.

## FACULTY INITIATIVES

## Achievement and Leadership

### Focus of "Research Day"

Stony Brook University Medical Center held its first Women in Medicine (WIM) "Research Day" on April 18. The one-day conference focused on the breadth of research and accomplishments by women faculty, residents, and medical students. The day also provided a forum for women faculty to discuss how to increase their leadership representation in academic medicine.

Keynote speaker Laura Schweitzer, Ph.D., Chief Academic Officer at Bassett Healthcare in Cooperstown, N.Y., and a faculty member of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Women in Medicine program, said that lack of representation of women in the highest levels of academic medicine is a problem nationwide.

Three professors addressed how to become leaders and shared their "Stories of Success" during a panel discussion. Panelists included M. Cristina Leske, M.D., M.P.H., Dsc, SUNY Distinguished Professor and SUNY Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Preventive Medicine; Sharon Nachman, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics and Director of Pediatric Infectious Diseases; and Marie Gelato, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Medicine and Director of the General Clinical Research Center.

The professors collectively emphasized that advancing in medicine requires perseverance, creativity, and communication. They suggested that faculty collaborate continuously with colleagues, mentor junior faculty, and inquire frequently about new academic and research opportunities.



Faculty at the first Women in Medicine Research Day share their success stories during a panel discussion.

Now in its second year of activity, WIM includes a series of initiatives and events scheduled for 2007 and beyond. Under the leadership of Latha Chandran, M.D., M.P.H., Interim Chair of the Department of Pediatrics, and Woman Liaison Officer for the School of Medicine, WIM closely mirrors the AAMC national initiative. The central theme of this initiative is to address gender-related inequities and improve the pathways for women to contribute fully to academic medicine.

"The overall goal of our program is to advance and retain women faculty and create networking and leadership opportunities," says Dr. Chandran.

Up next for the Women in Medicine Program is "Building Bridges," a series of informal monthly meetings to discuss specific networking and mentoring programs and support for research or clinical initiatives. Next session: June 5. The Women in Medicine Program will also hold a New Faculty Orientation. Tentative date: September 20. The program also provides a Faculty Survival Guide, targeted particularly toward new faculty at Stony Brook. The guide is available at [www.uhmc.sunysb.edu/som/academics/facultylinks.html](http://www.uhmc.sunysb.edu/som/academics/facultylinks.html).

## One-Day Clinical Course Centers on Procedural Skills

A one-day elective course instructed by Peggy A. Seidman, M.D., Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Anesthesiology, is designed to build the clinical and procedural skills of second-year medical students. The one-day instruction, initially held in early 2007, involves training on the necessary steps to properly complete procedures for airway management, lumbar puncture, and arterial blood gas/arterial line placement. There will be future training sessions.

"Less than five percent of medical schools in the country test students on specific procedural skills, such as putting in intravenous lines or feeding tubes, as a mandatory aspect of the curriculum," says Dr. Seidman. "Students need to be capable of doing these procedures, to the point where it is second nature to them before they graduate."

Dr. Seidman indicates that the course will become part of the School of Medicine curriculum in the near future. Instructors (Anesthesiology faculty) use a checklist detailing all the necessary steps to complete each procedure when evaluating each student's attempts. All procedures are completed on life-like manikins and body parts built with materials that mimic skin and bone.

For more information about the course and future sessions, call Dr. Seidman at (631) 444-2975 or at [pseidman@notes.cc.sunysb.edu](mailto:pseidman@notes.cc.sunysb.edu).

### Faculty Column

## Growing "Foundations"

By Iris Granek, M.D.

The Foundations of Medical Practice Course, in its third offering, has established a positive new identity and is gaining widespread recognition for its important contribution to a competency-based medical curriculum.

Foundations is an interdisciplinary course for first-year medical students and involves over 60 faculty members, as well as residents and fellows, who lecture and assist as preceptors or group facilitators. Participating faculty come from three of the HSC schools and all the medical school clinical departments.

The course stresses the biopsychosocial model and a patient-centered approach to care. Topics center on ways in which physicians can better understand patient needs, as well as understand their own abilities and needs. For example, a year-long small group experience provides opportunities to focus on interpersonal skills and communication, an important part of medical student professional development. In-depth discussions on topics such as physician-patient interactions, preventing teen suicide, and dealing with the obesity epidemic are part of the course.

New to the course are self-awareness and cross component sessions that emphasize skills in self-reflection, reflective learning, and self-assessment. Self-awareness topics include responses to stress, initial clinical experiences, handling conflict, using feedback, and personal health promotion. Cross component sessions use film and TV shows as triggers for reflective writing entries.

If you have ideas about competency-based, thematic learning activities and assessments, or would like to be involved in a teaching component of the course, please contact Course Director Iris Granek, M.D., Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine at (631) 444-9800, or at [iris.granek@stonybrook.edu](mailto:iris.granek@stonybrook.edu).



Dr. Granek and colleagues discuss "Foundations".

OFFICE OF SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

**GCRC is “Outstanding”**



Marie Gelato, M.D., Ph.D.

The General Clinical Research Center (GCRC) at Stony Brook University Medical Center received a score of 148 – its highest yet – and an “outstanding” evaluation by the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). A perfect

score is 100. Scores range from 100 to 500. A score between 100 to 150 is considered “outstanding.” All major components of the GCRC – leadership, diversity of research initiatives, collaborative efforts, and institutional support – were rated outstanding

According to Program Director Marie Gelato, M.D., Ph.D., the evaluative report specifically highlights the direction of the GCRC, its increased collaboration with Brookhaven National Laboratory, outstanding patient safety protocols, and exceptional plans for future research. The NCRR

termed the biostatistical and informational components of the GCRC as “a model of what bioinformatics should be.”

“We have the backbone for a broader initiative in the future, thanks to a strong foundation of excellence in basic and clinical sciences, and clinical investigations of the causes, progression, prevention, and cure of many diseases,” says Dr. Gelato.

Dr. Gelato adds that the NIH has already funded SBUMC with a planning grant to prepare and apply for the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA). The CTSA is a multimillion-dollar program that would build upon the GCRC to expand the resources investigators need to conduct clinical research. The award would increase translational research and create an infrastructure to promote accelerated biomedical discovery and application of novel diagnostics and therapeutics.

“This NIH initiative is to increase partnerships at academic medical centers with affiliated institutions and pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies,” says Dr. Gelato

Dr. Gelato anticipates submission of a full CTSA application by fall. In the meantime, the GCRC is likely to receive a three-year funding renewal from the NIH this year.

**OSA Web Link Connects Researchers**

A new search engine that investigators can use to find potential collaborators is on the Office of Scientific Affairs website under the menu section “Research Informatics.”

A keyword search for topics is used on the link “Research Informatics” to identify recent research grants in many areas and related areas of investigation, or by faculty name. When activated, the engine returns a list of faculty members matching the search criteria. The database includes information on current projects and publications by faculty. Another link, “Current Awards,” within the section lists awards by name of the principal investigator, department, grant sponsor, and award title.

The web link to the search engine is: <http://bioinfo.osa.sunysb.edu:8080/fdp/public/researchSearchIni.jsp>.

**Zickler Scholar Program Starts**



Kate Dickman, Ph.D.

The newly created Zickler Scholar Program in Translational Research is awarded to investigators involved in promising interdisciplinary research conducted in the Zickler Laboratory of Chemical Biology (LCB) in Pharmacological Sciences.

The first Zickler Scholar is Kate Dickman, Ph.D., Research Assistant Professor in the Departments of Pharmacological Sciences and Medicine. Her position lasts three years.

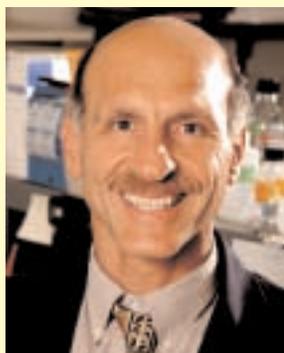
Appointed by Arthur P. Grollman, M.D., head of the LCB, Dr. Dickman is a renal physiologist. She is investigating aristolochic acid, a compound found in certain herbal medicines that is associated with renal disease and cancer.

“The goals of the research are to determine how aristolochic acid selectively damages the kidney and to identify genes implicated in that process,” says Dr. Dickman.

Studies will include animal and human models, microarray and proteomic analyses of the cells treated with aristolochic acid, genetic analyses, and epidemiologic studies.

**New Genomics Core Facility Created**

*An Announcement from the Vice Dean for Research*



Wadie Bahou, M.D.

I am pleased to announce the creation of a Genomics Core Facility that serves as a single point-of-contact in support of genetic research. This core facility represents a consolidation of services designed to facilitate genetic-based studies, including DNA sequence and microarray analysis, mutation screening, database development, and fundamentals of bioinformatics support.

The facility is directed by Eli Hatchwell, Ph.D., a geneticist interested in the molecular basis of human diseases, and a faculty member in the Department of Pathology. Jizu Zhi, Ph.D., provides bioinformatics support, and Mr. Jose Salcedo assists with database development.

Dr. Hatchwell is available to provide consultative support to faculty interested in applying genetics to the study of human diseases, and he will facilitate expansion of the facility as necessary to ensure our success in the post-genomic era.

The facility is located in the HSC T8 room 053 and represents part of a larger initiative to enhance our competitiveness in anticipation of obtaining an NIH Center of Excellence in Clinical Translational Sciences. For more information, please contact Dr. Hatchwell at (631) 444-1206 or at [eli.hatchwell@stonybrook.edu](mailto:eli.hatchwell@stonybrook.edu).

**Dr. Laura Hogan, Survivor, Brings Hope to Families**



Patient Megan Steimle, age 2, with her mother, Heather Steimle, and Dr. Laura Hogan (at right).

**M**ore than 20 years ago, Laura Hogan, M.D., was a girl overcoming acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). Now she is a Pediatric Resident at Stony Brook University Medical Center treating children with the same disease.

“I was always fascinated by science and medicine, even when I was being treated for

ALL as a little girl, so wanting to become a doctor was a natural course for me,” says Dr. Hogan.

Natural and easy are her ways around children too, as she works with pediatric patients stricken with all types of conditions and diseases. Dr. Hogan develops special bonds with young cancer patients and their

families during and after her work hours.

Dr. Hogan draws upon her experiences as a childhood cancer survivor to offer hope and perspective to the families of pediatric cancer patients. When Megan Steimle, age 2, was diagnosed with ALL in 2006, Dr. Hogan met with Megan’s family and shared her own pediatric cancer survivor story with them. Since then, Dr. Hogan has cared for Megan a few times in the pediatric intensive care unit.

Megan is now doing well, and Dr. Hogan has become a special friend to Megan and her family. She spends time with Megan when she can. As an athletic person, physician, and mother of a healthy baby girl, Gianna, Dr. Hogan is an obvious reminder to Megan’s family and others that life after ALL can be healthy, normal, and fulfilling.

Dr. Hogan, a graduate of Stony Brook University Medical School, will begin a three-year fellowship in pediatric hematology/oncology in July at New York University. She also hopes to research long-term survival issues of pediatric cancer patients, such as cognitive and physical functioning post-therapy.

**SOM Faculty Share Expertise With Colleagues in China to Transform Lives**

Marc Dinowitz, M.D., in the Department of Ophthalmology, and Alexander B. Dagum M.D., in the Department of Surgery, over the past few years have volunteered their medical expertise in China to change the lives of hundreds who cannot afford care. This year they are continuing to help patients in China and are collaborating with Chinese colleagues and others worldwide to provide additional care.

Dr. Dinowitz visited China last October and performed about 10 corneal transplants, cataract, and other surgeries at Yunnan Red Cross Hospital in Kunming in the Yunnan Province. He taught his Chinese counterparts how to perform these surgeries, lectured extensively to more than 150 community ophthalmologists, nurses, and technicians, and is mentoring the doctors and providing case-by-case consultation via a telemedicine initiative called “Cyber-Sight.” The endeavor, launched by the non-profit organization ORBIS, links ORBIS volunteer faculty with ophthalmologists around the world via the Internet.

“ORBIS provides me with a unique opportunity to share my ophthalmic knowledge and skills with my international colleagues, and at the same time, it gives me a way to help those in most need with no access to eye care,” says Dr. Dinowitz.

In 2005 and 2006, Dr. Dagum joined an international medical team from the Evangelical Medical Aid Society (EMAS) on a mission to China. The team performed surgery and cared for nearly 200 patients with debilitating conditions such as cleft lip and palate, burn contractures, rare infections, and benign and malignant tumors. Much of the volunteer care was completed at Yan An Hospital in the Yunnan Province.

“It is very moving to take care of these patients who have so little, and our care in many cases helps transform their lives,” says Dr. Dagum, who will partake in another volunteer mission to the same area of China with EMAS in May. “Some patients travel up to two days from all over the province and from outside regions just to be treated by our team.”



Top Photo: Dr. Dagum (left) examines a boy in China treated for burns. Bottom photo: Zhang Xiao Xing (center), age 11, received a corneal transplant from Dr. Dinowitz (left). Also pictured is volunteer nurse Gennie Mason.

## Dr. Jennifer Rosen

*Named to EIS*



Jennifer Rosen, M.D.

Jennifer Rosen, M.D., a 2004 School of Medicine graduate, has been accepted into the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She will be the first Stony Brook graduate to join the

EIS, a two-year postgraduate program of service and training for health professionals interested in practicing epidemiology.

Dr. Rosen, a resident at New York University Medical Center, hopes to work in the areas of malaria, tuberculosis, enteric diseases, or influenza epidemiology when she enters the field as an EIS officer in July. During the past 50 years, EIS officers have played pivotal roles in combating the root causes of major epidemics worldwide.

## SARAS Begins in July

The Science and Research Awareness Series (SARAS), a program that exposes high school students and undergraduates to biomedical sciences through lectures and workshops, will run July 9 to July 26, 2007. The popular education series brings nearly 70 faculty, allied health professionals, health administrators, and other experts together to introduce students to different careers in biomedical sciences. This year some residents and medical students will assist in workshops to help educate students and reinforce their own clinical training. Anyone interested in participating in the program should call Dr. Srinivas Pentylala, SARAS Coordinator, at (631)444-2974. For complete details on the 2007 SARAS program, go to <http://anes.anesthes.sunysb.edu/teaching/sas.html>.



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## Dr. Lynn Hallarman

*Directs Palliative Care Program*



Lynn E. Hallarman, M.D.

Lynn E. Hallarman, M.D., has been named Director of Palliative Medicine, a newly created position at Stony Brook University Medical Center. Dr. Hallarman, Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Hematology/Oncology, is board certified in palliative medicine and specializes in hospice and palliative care. She is developing an integrated approach to caring

for hospitalized patients with chronic, life-threatening or terminal illness who are experiencing pain and suffering related to disease progression or from the side effects of treatment.

The new Survivorship and Supportive Care Program (SOS) will integrate palliative medicine into mainstream medical therapies and offer expert sub-specialty support to patients and their families. The SOS is available for consults on an inpatient basis for patients with or without cancer. The SOS team can be contacted for consults through the page operator.

## Med Students Honor Donor Families



The ceremony included music and readings to honor the donors and their families.

First-year medical students held a ceremony in February for family members of those who donated their bodies for medical education.

The ceremony also provided an opportunity for the students to express their gratitude to the families and share with family members how much they have learned from their "first patient." Pictured are some of the 25 members from nine families who attended the ceremony, including spouses and children of donors.



## Dr. Shetal Shah

*Named Most Distinguished Young Physician*

Shetal I. Shah, M.D., Assistant Professor of Neonatology, Department of Pediatrics, is the recipient of the 2007 Most Distinguished Young Physician Award from the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI). The AAPI is the largest ethnic physician organization in the United States, consisting of 57,000 physicians, residents, and medical students. Chosen for his outstanding performance in patient care, research, and community service, Dr. Shah has worked to improve access to quality health care for underserved populations.

Dr. Shah is currently working with a hospital in India to educate residents and improve neonatal care as part of the Fulbright Senior Specialist Program. The Council for the International Exchange of Scholars and the J. William Fulbright Foundation has appointed Dr. Shah to the Senior Specialist Roster. The program matches specialists with overseas academic institutions, where specialists provide their expertise for one month. In April, Dr. Shah practiced in the NICU at Kashiben's Children's Hospital in India. There he treated patients, taught residents, and spearheaded an effort to adapt existing technology to current treatment modes.