

THE FOUNDATION'S OUTLOOK

SPRING/SUMMER 2004

South Jersey Edition

A PUBLICATION OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND DENTISTRY OF NEW JERSEY



(l-r)
Governor James Florio
with Senator Joseph A. Maressa

Honoring Our Beginnings

Through the leadership, foresight and dedication of Howard M. Levine, DO and Senator Joseph A. Maressa, the face of health care in South Jersey changed forever when the UMDNJ-School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM) was established.

It accepted its first class in 1977 as a “school without walls” enrolling 24 students. Today, the school boasts 1,300 graduates, more than half of whom remain in New Jersey to practice medicine.

Not only has SOM fulfilled its original mission to provide the South Jersey region with excellence in primary care, but it has been recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* as one of the top ten medical schools in the country for geriatric medical education. In addition, the school has been honored by *Philadelphia Magazine* for the past several years.

“Today, SOM is among the very best in caring for our aging population, from healing abused children to restoring quality of life to headache sufferers of all ages,” said R. Michael Gallagher, DO, dean, SOM. “These particular programs have all been named as Centers of Excellence by *Philadelphia Magazine* and have garnered national attention.”

continued on page 3

NORTH CAMDEN RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM GLAXOSMITHKLINE GRANT

Contents

- 1 Honoring Our Beginnings
- 2 North Camden Residents Benefit from GlaxoSmithKline Grant
- 4 Closing the Gap on Health Disparities
- 5 Grant Helps To Create Safe School Environment
- 6 Caring About Others Starts at a Young Age
- 6 Faculty Honors
- 7 Researcher Seeks Cure for Fatal Childhood Disease
- 8 Centers of Excellence

Visit our website at:
www.umdnj.edu/foundation

For more than 20 years, North Camden area Latino residents have been able to access quality medical care and information through the St. Luke's Catholic Medical Services, started by Jesuit priest and physician Mark Aita, MD.

Now, thanks to a generous grant from GlaxoSmithKline, these medical services can expand to include a bilingual nurse practitioner who will primarily help care for and educate patients with diabetes and will also work with those affected by obesity and other chronic diseases.

"GlaxoSmithKline's grant is tangible proof of our company's support for the North Camden community and the commitment GSK has to improving health care through educational initiatives," said Mary Linda Andrews, director, community partnerships, GlaxoSmithKline. "We look forward to seeing the positive results of having a nurse practitioner assist the residents of the local community."

Although Dr. Aita has since been reassigned, the program has continued to flourish under the guidance of Lesly D'Ambola, DO, a 1994 graduate and assistant professor of medicine at UMDNJ-SOM and medical director at St. Luke's Catholic Medical Services. In 2003, they logged almost 5,000 patient visits.

"The vision of our program is to bring excellent health care to those in need through a private medical practice concept."

—Lesly D'Ambola, DO

"We treat patients, many uninsured, who have complicated medical problems, providing them with medical, psychosocial and spiritual guidance. We bring a personal touch to health care that they may not find in a traditional clinic setting," said Dr. D'Ambola, who is also bilingual.

The role of the nurse practitioner includes assisting Dr. D'Ambola and focusing on the community at large by developing programs to educate residents about several diseases and illnesses, teaching preventive measures so that individuals can take charge of their own health care.

"In looking for a nurse practitioner we wanted to find a person who was superbly medically trained and culturally and linguistically competent so that they could identify with their patient's culture and lifestyle. We are very grateful to GlaxoSmithKline for their foresight in supporting such an important component in the medical process," said Thomas Cavalieri, DO, professor and chair, department of medicine, UMDNJ-SOM.

To help support this or similar programs, contact June Hampson, PhD, vice president of development, at hampsoju@umdnj.edu or (856) 566-6300. ■

continued from page 1



(l-r) Dean R. Michael Gallagher with honorees Senator Joseph A. Maressa, William F. Ranieri, DO and Howard M. Levine, DO

To pay tribute to Dr. Levine, Senator Maressa and William F. Ranieri DO, the founding chair in the Department of Psychiatry, and to announce newly created endowed scholarships in their honor, SOM and the Foundation of UMDNJ recently hosted “Honoring Our Beginnings,” an evening filled with warm sentiments, delicious food and delightful entertainment.

More than 130 guests attended to pay tribute to Dr. Levine, Senator Maressa and Dr. Ranieri, all of whom were in attendance. Stanley Bergen, MD, the first president of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Governor Brenden Byrne and Governor James Florio spoke of the three and their tremendous contributions to the health of South Jersey residents through their efforts to open the school. Each honoree was presented with a book of memories and testimonials.

Dr. Levine, who worked diligently to write the bill and convince legislators of the value of the project, was touched by the outpouring of gratitude.

“The evening far exceeded my wildest expectations. Hearing Governor Byrne and Dr. Bergen’s kind words brought tears to my eyes,” he said. “The students’ testimonials were the icing on the cake. Thank you so much for this wonderful honor.”

Senator Maressa, who sponsored the bills to establish the school, was equally touched.

“I was overwhelmed by the thoughtful words spoken about me that evening,” said the Senator. “I am so proud to have played a part in the history of SOM, a school that has grown to become one of the most outstanding medical education facilities in our country.”

Dr. Ranieri recently relinquished his position as the chair in the Department of Psychiatry when he was appointed Assistant Dean.

“To be included with the founders of the school was truly special,” he said. “Past students, residents, faculty and friends who participated made me feel that the hard work was all worthwhile. The money raised to endow scholarships for our students carries on our legacies.”

As a result of the dinner, more than \$38,000 was raised for the endowed scholarships recently created to honor each man. For more information about how to contribute to these scholarship funds, contact June Hampson, PhD, vice president of development, at (856) 566-6300 or via e-mail at hampsoju@umdnj.edu ■

CLOSING THE GAP ON HEALTH DISPARITIES

Her head fell into her hands as she heard the bad news about her medical condition.

“Ay de mí, ay de mí,” she moaned. “Impossible...impossible. What do I do now?”

The doctor sitting next to her gently touched her shoulder, offered her comfort and explained how the procedure she needed would save her life.

The patient in this case is an actress; the doctor is a medical student. They were participating in a lesson on cultural sensitivity being taught at the UMDNJ-School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM).

“Diversity may be our country’s greatest strength, but disparity in health status is one of our greatest challenges,” said R. Michael Gallagher, DO, dean, UMDNJ-SOM. “As health care professionals we must find ways to reduce or eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in heart disease, cancer, asthma and HIV infections.”

To help find ways to reduce those disparities, the Foundation of UMDNJ and UMDNJ-SOM hosted a roundtable discussion that brought together public officials, university faculty and health care industry executives to examine the issues underlying existing health care disparities in the state. Their objective was to work toward developing a consensus on the best approaches to providing better health care and improving access for minorities to clinical trials.

“A primary goal of ours is to ensure that all New Jerseyans have access to quality health care,” said Dean Gallagher. “This roundtable discussion was a huge step in helping us to move forward as a school and as a state to help

assure quality health care for all New Jersey residents.”

Health care disparities are a growing concern in New Jersey as evidenced by the state’s exceptional death rates and infant mortality, diabetes and HIV incidences in the African American population. Through UMDNJ-SOM’s highly regarded minority outreach programs, it is in a unique position to bring together leading constituents in multicultural health care. SOM has the

nation’s most advanced standardized patient lab for multicultural health training, is a national leader in student population diversity and is headquartered near many of the world’s leading pharmaceutical companies that conduct active clinical trials at SOM’s campus.

Represented were AstraZeneca, Aventis, CIGNA Foundation, CIGNA Healthcare, Eli Lilly, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson &

Johnson, the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, the New Jersey Office of Minority and Multicultural Health, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The conference concluded with a discussion on doctor/patient communication led by award-winning television host Steve Aduato.

“The entire UMDNJ disparities initiative is one of the most exciting developments I have seen in medicine,” said attendee Arnold W. Wright, Jr., vice president and executive director of the CIGNA Foundation.

Participants were so enthusiastic that a second roundtable discussion is imminent.

To learn more about advancing multicultural health care in medical education, call June Hampson, PhD, vice president of development, at (856) 566-6300 or via e-mail at hampsoju@umdnj.edu. ■



(l-r) Actress Rev. Gail Armstrong talks with Pamela Dickson, senior program officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; Arnold (Woodie) W. Wright, Jr., vice president and executive director of CIGNA Foundation; June Hampson, PhD, vice president of development, Foundation of UMDNJ; Sarah Harrison, vice president, customer integration strategy, AstraZeneca; and medical student Ilya Ivanov.

GRANT HELPS TO CREATE SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Through a generous grant from the Subaru of America Foundation, there is a plan for teachers and administrators in area school districts including Cherry Hill to receive important training on how to recognize and deal with bullying.

As we hear about too often, the effects of bullying on the social climate at school can be far reaching and tragic, impacting students and the community. One proactive response to handle this issue involves increasing teachers' knowledge and use of effective intervention skills to decrease bullying in schools. Studies have shown that many teachers do not act on bullying because they feel ill equipped to deal with the issue.

The *Creating a Safe School Environment Through Teacher Training on Bullying* Program is the brainchild of Eloise Berry, PhD, a mental health clinician with The Center for Children's Support, a joint program of UMDNJ-School of Osteopathic Medicine Departments of Pediatrics and Psychiatry. Dr. Berry has conducted numerous bullying workshops on the school district level and has experience working in the school system. While many individual schools would welcome the opportunity to provide training for their staffs, they are not able to afford it.

"Our philosophy to education is that the learning process should be interactive and we look for initiatives that enhance the overall learning experience. We especially liked Dr. Berry's program because once a teacher is trained on how to recognize and diffuse bullying situations, he or she can use that knowledge with all students for years to come. Addressing and diffusing bullying issues early helps to provide an overall better learning experience for all students," said Sandra E. Capell, community services manager, Subaru.

The program could not come at a better time, as school districts will need to develop responses and policies that prohibit bullying in accordance with a new law recently signed into legislation. Dr. Berry's program educates teachers on the scope of the problem of bullying while it outlines characteristics of bullies and victims and provides a multi-faceted approach to prevention and intervention strategies based on what is suggested by research.

"Bullying and its effects are issues that are not going to go away without appropriate intervention, making this program so essential to a positive, healthy school environment. There are many cases where an awareness of bullying issues by teachers and administrators could have changed the course of negative responses by those who have been victimized by bullying," said Dr. Berry.

If you are interested in supporting this program, contact Farah D. Stith, director of development, at stithfa@umdnj.edu or (856) 566-5072. ■



Eloise Berry, PhD, (center) with Center for Children's Support staff members Alissa Glickman, PhD (l) and Jennifer Perry-Bohan, MA (r).

CARING ABOUT OTHERS STARTS AT A YOUNG AGE

Summer will be here before we know it, and if you think back to when you were a kid, you'll remember that there was nothing better on a hot summer day than to hang out with your friends, playing, swimming and having fun staying cool. That is, unless you were concerned about kids less fortunate than yourself.

If you were, you would spend two hot summer days raising money to help other children. That's what Francesca Paparone and her friends Alanna, Tyler, Anahi, Jennifer and Caroline McIntyre did last summer.

"After watching my mom and dad, Don and Dawn Paparone, raise money for the Center for Children's Support, I decided it was my turn," Francesca said.



(l-r) Francesca Paparone, Anahi McIntyre, Alanna McIntyre, Jennifer McIntyre, Tyler McIntyre, Caroline McIntyre

"We hope our donation will help your Center in some way," she wrote in a letter to Martin Finkel, DO, director of the Center.

They decided to open a lemonade stand. Francesca said that by combining "lemonade, smiling faces, signs and customers," they raised \$158 for the Center to help abused and neglected children.

"That children this young would take it upon themselves to do so much for other children is truly wonderful," said Dr. Finkel. "Not only are we grateful for their gift, but everyone at the Center is deeply touched by their kindness and generosity."

To help the Center for Children's Support, contact June Hampson, PhD, vice president of development, at (856) 566-6300 or via e-mail at hampsoju@umdnj.edu. ■

FACULTY HONORS

David Kietrys, MS, assistant professor, department of developmental and rehabilitative sciences in the School of Health Related Professions; **T. Peter Stein, DO**, professor of surgery and nutrition at the UMDNJ-School of Osteopathic Medicine and **Vijay Rajput, MD**, assistant professor of medicine at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School-Camden, received 2003 Excellence in Teaching Awards, presented by the Foundation of UMDNJ.

Timothy Dombrowski, DO, assistant professor, department of internal medicine, School of Osteopathic Medicine, was named "Teacher of the Year" by the American College of Osteopathic Internists. **Martin A. Finkel, DO**, director of the Center for Children's Support, received the "Outstanding Professional Award" at the 11th annual meeting of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. **James Rogers, DO**, assistant professor of psychiatry at the UMDNJ-School of Osteopathic Medicine, has been named the recipient of the Seymour Diamond Clinical Fellowship in Headache Education. Dr. Rogers is the first osteopathic physician selected for the fellowship. ■

RESEARCHER SEEKS CURE FOR FATAL CHILDHOOD DISEASE

It's not difficult to find scientists at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) who work tirelessly each day to find treatments and cures for a wide range of serious diseases.

Paola Leone, PhD, associate professor of neurosurgery and director of the Cell and Gene Therapy Center, UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School at Camden (RWJMS-C), is an example of the quality individuals who help give UMDNJ the outstanding reputation it enjoys in the world of medical research.

As principal investigator at the Cell and Gene Therapy Center, Dr. Leone has dedicated much of her career and life to finding treatments and ultimately a cure for Canavan Disease, a rare, inherited neurological disorder caused by a defective gene found primarily in those of Jewish heritage. Since 1995, Dr. Leone and her team have been performing groundbreaking brain gene transfer surgery that pumps billions of copies of a healthy gene into the brains of children with Canavan Disease. She is now refining this technique through stem cell therapy, a procedure Dr. Leone strongly believes holds great therapeutic promise for brain diseases.

"Due to the rare nature of Canavan Disease, research development and laboratory studies are critical. UMDNJ-RWJMS-C has been very supportive of my work and has created an exceptional environment for all researchers," said Dr. Leone. "It is this type of support that will hopefully lead us to a cure for Canavan Disease and other

neurodegenerative disorders."

Canavan Disease is an extremely difficult disease to detect in its early stages since there is no easy marker or test to determine if a non-Jewish child carries a mutation in the Canavan gene. Once diagnosed, the disease progresses,

ultimately leaving children blind, paralyzed and prone to seizures. Death occurs, usually by age seven.

Dr. Leone has traveled the world speaking with other scientists and generously sharing her research and data in hopes that a cure can be found for Canavan Disease and other illnesses in the same family such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Tay Sachs, Batten Disease and Pelizaeus-Merzbacher Disease. Her reputation and dedication to research has earned her numerous grants including a recent \$2.3 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to conduct a clinical gene therapy study for Canavan Disease.

"Dr. Leone and her team members spend their days and their lives dedicated to science and exemplify the fine researchers we have at UMDNJ-RWJMS-C. We are proud of the facilities for our scientists and we look forward to bringing about many treatments and cures for a variety of diseases," said Paul R. Mehne, PhD, associate dean, academics and students affairs, RWJMS-C.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Cell and Gene Therapy Center, log on to www4.umdnj.edu/cgtcweb. To support this and other research conducted by UMDNJ-RWJMS, contact June Hampson, PhD, vice president of development, at (856) 566-6300 or via e-mail at hampsoju@umdnj.edu. ■



Paola Leone, PhD, with Lana Swancey



FOUNDATION

UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE &
DENTISTRY OF NEW JERSEY

Building Relationships for Life

www.umdj.edu/foundation

One Worlds Fair Drive

Somerset, NJ 08873

Non-profit Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Foundation of UMDNJ

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Philadelphia Magazine's issue honoring Centers of Excellence has commended three centers at the UMDNJ-School of Osteopathic Medicine:

The Center for Aging offers primary care and consultation services in geriatric medicine, psychiatry and neurology to meet the needs of well, older adults and those who have multiple health problems. Call (856) 566-6843 for more information.

The Center for Children's Support provides services ranging from medical treatment of physical injuries to psychological treatment for abused children and their family members. Call (856) 566-7036 for more information.

The University Headache Center, dedicated to helping headache sufferers by establishing the correct headache diagnosis and contributing causes, develops individual treatment plans and provides follow-up treatment. Call (856) 234-7421 for more information.

OUTLOOK

SPRING / SUMMER 2004

This issue of Outlook, published by the Foundation of UMDNJ, has been especially prepared to share news of our South Jersey campus for alumni, parents and friends in South Jersey.

George F. Heinrich, MD
Vice Chairman and CEO

James M. Golubieski
President

June Hampson, PhD
Vice President, Stratford Campus

Dale R. Heffler
Director of Communications

Debi Price
Writer

Please send change of address to:
One Worlds Fair Drive
Somerset, NJ 08873

www.umdj.edu/foundation

Please send comments:
d.heffler@umdj.edu