

Dean's Newsletter

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Respect and Dignity in Our Workplace

During my first year at Stanford I have tried hard to pay particular attention to the quality and dignity of the workplace within the School of Medicine. To me, an environment that fosters our missions in education, research and patient care and that values the success and dignity of our students, faculty and staff, is of the greatest importance. All who work at Stanford deserve this and should expect such. In tandem, I have and will continue to have a zero-tolerance policy for serious infractions, including harassment and discrimination of any kind. In a very real sense we are each responsible for shaping our workplace and for assuring it is one we value. During this past year, I am told that progress has been made although more still remains to be done. Accordingly, should you have any related concerns you wish to bring to our attention, I hope you will use the resources that are available. These include:

Ms. Martha Mckee, School of Medicine Ombudsperson, (650) 498-5744

Ms. Cori Bossenberry, Director of Human Resources, School of Medicine
(650) 723-5975

Dr. David Stevenson, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs,
(650) 724-6762

Dr. Julie Parsonnet, Senior Associate Dean for Medical Student Education

(650) 724-8074

Dr. James Nelson, Senior Associate Dean for Research, Graduate Student Education and Postdoctoral Affairs, (650) 725-9722

Dr. Norm Rizk, Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, (650) 725-3906

Dr. Ken Cox, Senior Associate Dean for Pediatric and Obstetric Clinical Affairs, (650) 725-3906

If you have a concern or question, I would encourage you to contact one of these individuals. **Your concerns will be addressed promptly since we are, as a leadership team, committed to doing everything we can to assure respect and dignity in our workplace.**

Report from the Executive Committee: Task Force on Translational and Clinical Research

At the Executive Committee meeting on Friday, April 19th, Dr. Charles Prober, Professor of Pediatrics, gave an update on the work of the Task Force on Translational and Clinical Research, which he has chaired since it was initiated in May, 2001. The charge of the Task Force was to address the state of clinical research at Stanford and to identify what the School needs to do to support its mission in translational and clinical investigation in the decade ahead. The Task Force has included approximately 50 members, including physician-scientists, basic scientists and hospital and research administrators. Approximately ten meetings were held and over 200 person hours were invested in assessing the current state of clinical research at Stanford and in determining what is necessary to make it as robust and successful as possible.

Clinical research is currently supported through the Research Management Group (RMG), the ACCESS Program, and the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR). Although there is considerable activity (e.g., ~320 active Clinical Trial Contracts, ~500 research coordinators) there is no central or focused coordination. Clearly this has raised the question of whether the overall clinical research efforts would be better optimized by greater institutional coordination and investment. Accordingly, the Task Force has made a number of recommendations, including those summarized briefly below. Because this is a work in progress, Dr. Prober and I welcome your input, comments and additional suggestions.

The Draft Task Force Recommendations to date include:

- Support the processing of all clinical research contracts by the Office of Sponsored Research, in parallel with the Research Management Group, with the goal to complete processing within 30 days of receipt.
- Support the institution in creating a process for tracking the status of clinical research contracts by the Office of Sponsored Research that is accessible to faculty in “real time”.
- Support the development of Research Process Managers who specialize in clinical research.

- Mandate that Principal Investigators and/or Study Coordinators participate in a formal review of the commitments demanded by their research protocols and the appropriate budgeting of all commitments and services specified in the contract.
- Support the relocation of the Office of Sponsored Research accounting staff to the School of Medicine to facilitate interactions with all other clinical research administrative staff.
- Establish an office within the hospital to facilitate enhanced communication between hospital administration and clinical research personnel.
- Standardize, formalize and centralize training for all staff (medical and administrative) involved in the conduct of clinical research.
- Centralize all support services (academic and administrative) involved with the design, implementation, and conduct of clinical research studies at the School of Medicine.
- Establish an Academic Support Core in the School of Medicine to include experts in the design, conduct, and analysis of clinical research studies. This core should be directed by an established clinical research scientist.
- Develop a consistent database strategy that is available to all major clinical research studies conducted by faculty across the School of Medicine and assure the availability of resources to support faculty needing to use the database for their clinical research programs.
- Develop formal training programs in the conduct of clinical research that are available and accessible to faculty and fellows interested in the conduct of clinical research studies.
- Develop didactic courses relevant to the design and conduct of clinical research for the curriculum of the School of Medicine and an apprenticeship program for students interested in the conduct of clinical research under the direction of faculty mentors.

Again, the recommendations provided above are being offered to you for comment and input. As we move forward with implementation of these or other recommendations, it will be essential to assure that we are using all of our resources in a coordinated manner. These include those from the NIH General Clinical Research award as well as other institutional or private resources. Importantly, it will be critical that we build synergy and coordination while, above all, avoiding fragmentation or redundancy. Thus, building on the current ACCESS model and the GCRC resources provides the most optimal approach.

We will next be considering how to implement these recommendations in an organizational and functional manner and, with that, determining the level of investments that will be necessary. We do this since we remain convinced that if Stanford is to fulfill its mission in translational and clinical research, we must have the infrastructure and related educational components to optimize our approach to clinical investigation.

Medical Student Health Policy Debate

On Tuesday, April 16th, I had the pleasure to moderate a debate on whether Stanford medical school students should support a single payer system or a competitive model for health care in the United States. This health policy debate was arranged by Everett Meyer and Unzila Ali (both SMS I) and included Dr. Donald Barr, Associate Professor of Sociology and Human Biology, and Sara Singer, Executive Director of the Center for Health Policy, Senior Research Scholar at the Institute for International Studies and Lecturer in Stanford's Public Policy Program.

The debate permitted Professors Barr and Singer to present their reasons for supporting a single payer system or a market driven one respectively and also offered an opportunity for medical students and other attendees to engage in the debate.

I found this to be a very successful format and was pleased by both the large number of students who attended and their engagement in the important questions being addressed. There is no doubt that such questions are as important as other academic issues confronting our students and that a debate format, which displays the pros and cons surrounding an important societal matter, offers an excellent forum for discussion. I hope this will be expanded to include other important societal and ethical issues facing medicine in the 21st Century.

Departmental Visits

During the past year I have attended faculty meetings of basic and clinical science departments in order to better understand the specific issues and challenges that are important to specific disciplines and departments and as a means for reaching out and engaging with faculty within the School. I am now beginning returns visits to departments and plan to do this on at least an annual basis. During the past two weeks I visited with faculty from the Departments of Pathology and Dermatology.

Pathology: Because of the strategic planning that has been going on in the Department of Pathology, this turned out to be my first visit. I learned on April 17th that during the past year the department engaged groups to address Research Programs, Housestaff Education and Clinical Services and Related Business Opportunities, asking each to assess current status, future directions and how to achieve them. Importantly, in each of these areas, the Department assessed how to also achieve its mission within the overarching umbrella of the School of Medicine's Strategic Plan. The current working Mission Statement for the Department of Pathology is: *To improve the diagnosis, treatment and basic understanding of human disease by clinical service, education and research.*

The Department of Pathology is enormously distinguished in its faculty and trainees. Despite its small faculty size (~40) compared to peer schools, it ranks #6 in the nation in overall NIH funding and, more importantly, #1 in NIH funding per faculty member. The department has a distinguished record of accomplishment in medical school teaching and an exceptional record of

attracting housestaff who are outstanding and academically oriented. In addition, the clinical success of the pathology department programs is among the best in the nation, including quality, efficiency and cost.

At the same time, like other departments, Pathology is challenged by limitations in space for research as well as aging facilities, especially the Blood Center. They are also limited by the need to recruit additional faculty and the challenges faced at Stanford by retention and cost of living.

Thankfully, the Department is guided by exceptional leadership under Dr. Steve Galli and the outstanding team he has assembled.

Dermatology: On Friday April 19th I had my second visit with the faculty in the Department of Dermatology. The Mission Statement for Dermatology is: *Sustained leadership in scientific investigation, patient care and in training future leaders of our specialty in an environment that fosters creativity and synergy.*

Like the Department of Pathology, the Department of Dermatology is also small compared to peer institutions in overall faculty size (~16) but it ranks #4 in overall NIH research funding. The department's research is both basic and clinical and includes a focus on epithelial biology, cutaneous malignancies and gene therapy – focusing on epidermolysis bullosa as a model. The department's investment in translational research is notable.

Dermatology also has an outstanding record of attracting top graduates to its training program and this year matched each of its positions with its top choices. The leadership in Dermatology has also played an important and valued role in advising medical students about career opportunities in dermatology, including positions at other medical centers.

The Dermatology Department is very active clinically, with 39,000 combined visits (including SHC, LPCH, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center and the Palo Alto VA). Indeed, the program at the VA is the largest clinical dermatology program in the nation. However, because dermatology is almost exclusively an outpatient program, with relatively few ancillaries, it is financially challenged, especially in a high cost hospital setting.

Like other departments, the challenges facing dermatology include lab space, the need for lower cost ambulatory space and faculty recruitment. Again, Dr. Al Lane has done an excellent job as the leader of Dermatology and has the deep respect and support of his faculty in addressing the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Update from the AAMC Council of Dean's Meeting: Physician Workforce

At the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Council of Dean's Meeting that was held from April 20- 23rd, a presentation and discussion was held on the physician workforce. The bottom line is that most of the surveys that have been conducted to date are flawed methodologically and have not been of true value in making accurate predictions. An economic and demographic trend analysis performed by Richard Cooper et al (Health Affairs, 2002; 21:140-154) offers a more robust analysis and presents an emerging shortage of physicians during the next two decades. This is especially true for specialty-trained physicians. While the roles of primary care physicians can be balanced to some degree by non-physician clinicians (e.g., Nurse Practitioners, Physician's Assistants) the gap for specialists will likely require an expansion of training programs. The projected needs that appear to be emerging are addressed, at least by Stanford, by the directions we have identified as part of our School-wide Strategic Plan.

President's Address to the Academic Council and Focus on Multidisciplinary Research and Education

On Thursday, April 18th, President Hennessy delivered his annual report to the Academic Council. The contents of his presentation are covered in the April 24th issue of the Stanford Report. As part of his presentation, I joined Deans Sharon Long (Humanities & Sciences) and Jim Plummer (Engineering) to review Stanford's evolving efforts and commitment to multidisciplinary research and education. In my remarks I highlighted why multidisciplinary programs are important to Stanford, and why Stanford is so unique and poised to carry them out. This is evidenced by the fact that we are already successful in this emerging arena. I cited that Stanford has a long and rich history in interdisciplinary programs and that faculty and students both enjoy and benefit from collaborations. More recent evidence of successful multidisciplinary programs in the sciences include BioX and, the Clark Center, which will open in the summer of 2003 at the crossroads of the Engineering & Sciences area and the School of Medicine campus. Further evidence will be the new joint Department of Bioengineering between the Schools of Engineering and Medicine that will include both programs in undergraduate and graduate education as well as research collaborations. Of course, within the School of Medicine, multidisciplinary research and education characterize our future, especially around translational research as will be increasingly evidenced by the formation of multidisciplinary "Institutes" (e.g., the Cancer Institute), the collaboration of basic and clinical scientists in medical and graduate student education and novel approaches to patient care. During the years ahead, Stanford will be distinguished by further novel approaches to multidisciplinary research and education and I am pleased to note that the School of Medicine will play a very important and central role in these new ventures.

Events

Dinner for Nobel Laureates: Stanford has a higher number of living Nobel Laureates (i.e., 17) than any other peer University. On Wednesday evening, April 17th, President Hennessy hosted a dinner in honor of this most distinguished faculty at the Hoover House. I had the privilege to attend that event. Drs. Paul Berg and Arthur Kornberg are the Nobel Laureates at Stanford and Dr. Joshua Lederberg moved from Stanford to Rockefeller University. Based on the exceptional work going on in the Medical School, it seems likely that in the hopefully not too distant future other current members of the Stanford Medicine faculty will join these ethereal ranks.

Welcoming Potential Students: April 19-21st was “Admit Weekend” at Stanford, including the School of Medicine. Beginning Friday, April 19th, Student Affairs hosted some 50 students who have been accepted to Stanford for a visit to the campus and the chance to learn more about the School and the opportunities it offers for a world-class education. I had the pleasure to meet the students and am confident that, thanks to the enormous efforts of Student Affairs and especially our current Year One students, that all who came had a wonderful impression of our School. I want to thank our faculty, staff and especially our students, for being such gracious and informed hosts and advocates.

Welcoming Dinner for Martha Marsh: On Wednesday evening April 24th, friends and supporters of Stanford Hospital & Clinics and the Medical Center joined me at a reception at the California Café to welcome Ms. Martha Marsh, new President/CEO of SHC. Ms. Marsh has been on the job for only three weeks but has already engaged with important and challenging issues. Her energetic and enthusiastic approach to problem solving and her commitment to excellence are already quite apparent. Her arrival at SHC was much appreciated by Stanford Health Partners, members of the Board of Directors and proffers an exciting future.

Second Faculty Luncheon: On Thursday, April 25th, I was pleased to host my second informal small lunch with faculty from basic and clinical sciences. These lunches afford an opportunity for us to get to know each other and to share ideas, concerns or issues that faculty feel are important. I welcome learning more about these matters and hope those who have not attended will come to a future luncheon. If you are interested please contact Ms. Sharon Olsen at sharon.olsen@Stanford.EDU.

Remembering Dr. Jess Shenson: On Friday, April 27th, colleagues, friends and students gathered for a Memorial Service to remember Dr. Jess Shenson, longtime benefactor, teacher and friend of the Medical School and Stanford University. The service included prayers and reflections on Judaica, thoughts and remembrances by faculty and friends about Dr. Shenson, and musical messages by Mozart and Tallis that were sung and played by students and faculty from Stanford. Dr. Jess Shenson loved art, music, medicine, Judaica, young people, friends and Stanford.

It is clear that he was also loved and will long be remembered for his contributions to institutions and, even more importantly, to people – especially students.

Announcements

- Denise L. Johnson, M.D., Assistant Professor of Surgery is one of this year's recipients of the **Women of Color in Health, Science and Technology Award**. Dr. Johnson received her B.Sc. in medical science from Northwestern University and her M.D. from Washington University of St. Louis, Mo. A Fellow of the Society of Surgical Oncology and the American College of Surgeons, she has been involved in numerous scientific studies and has supervised 16 research fellows in basic biomolecular research involving oncology issues. Dr. Johnson's hard work and dedication to research fellows and students is the clinician-researcher-teacher role model that will be critical to the future of medicine here at Stanford and nationwide.
- The **19th Annual Stanford Medical Student Research Symposium** to be held on Friday, May 3rd from 1 to 5 pm in the Dean's courtyard and M 100 classrooms.
This symposium provides a forum for medical students (MD and MD/PhD) to present their research to each other and the medical community. Basic, epidemiological and clinical research, either in progress or completed will be presented. Students will be giving oral and poster presentations in Fairchild Auditorium and lobby. This yearly event is an excellent opportunity for you to become familiar with the diversity of research activities undertaken by the medical student body. I hope you will take the opportunity to attend the Symposium and share your enthusiasm with the students about their research and how important it is to their future and to Stanford.

Appointments and Promotions

Linda E. Foppiano has been appointed to Assistant Professor of Anesthesia, effective 5/1/02 to 4/30/05.

Frank Hanley has been appointed Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery and of Pediatrics, effective 5/1/02.

Keith Humphreys has been promoted to Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences (Research), effective 5/1/02-4/30/08.

Frederic B. Kraemer has been appointed the Stanford University Professor of Endocrinology, effective April 8, 2002.

Bryan D. Myers has been appointed the Stanford University Professor in Nephrology, effective April 8, 2002.

Anthony Oro has been reappointed Assistant Professor of Dermatology, effective 6/1/02-11/30/05.

David Spain has been appointed Professor of Surgery at Stanford University Medical Center, effective 5/1/02-4/30/07.

Mark Welton has been appointed Associate Professor of Surgery at Stanford University Medical Center, effective 5/1/02-4/30/07.

Congratulations to all!