

# Dean's Newsletter

## September 29, 2003

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### **Welcoming our New Graduate Students**

On Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, our incoming class of graduate students had their official welcoming to Stanford. I want to thank Gilbert Martinez for all his work helping to coordinate the orientation of our new students. The tag line in Gilbert's email address affirms his commitment and reads, "No progressive change has ever occurred anywhere in the world without the energy and inspiration of young people." I certainly agree.

This year's orientation included valuable advice by Lucy Sun on Living in Palo Alto (not too difficult of course), an overview of "Making the most of your education" by ChaRandle Jordan; "The important issues surrounding finding faculty, choosing a lab and advisor – and staying focused" by Rebecca Ihrle; and finally, "Social life at Stanford" by Garret Heffner.

On Tuesday evening a lovely dinner for our new graduate students was held in the Arrillaga Alumni Center. In addition to providing the opportunity for our new students to meet each other and interact with faculty, they also heard helpful presentations by Professors Ellen Porzig, Tim Stearns and John Boothroyd on how to succeed as a graduate student and, equally importantly, how to take advantage of the unique and special resources that Stanford offers in biomedical research.

## **Important: Please Complete Your Faculty Alignment Survey**

Last week I sent a short survey to all full-time faculty regarding their alignment with the various interdisciplinary research or clinical programs that have been formed within the School, Medical Center or University. The survey also asked faculty to indicate research or clinical opportunities that they felt the School should consider addressing during the next several years. It is important that we hear from each of our faculty. If you have not yet filled out the survey, please do so now by going to <https://med-intranet.stanford.edu/faculty-survey/>. I would very much appreciate your taking the time to complete this survey as soon as possible – but absolutely no later than October 10<sup>th</sup>.

## **Executive Committee: Update on the Department of Surgery**

At the Executive Committee meeting on Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Tom Krummel, Emile F. Holman Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery, gave an update on the excellent progress being made in the various missions of the department over the past five years. He began by noting that the Department of Surgery was founded in 1925 when the School was in San Francisco. However, when the School moved to Palo Alto, most of the department's faculty (the then young Dr. Norm Shumway being a notable exception) remained behind and the department faced some challenging times. A bright spot was during the leadership of Dr. Robert Chase but other periods featured rapid chair turnover and lots of significant challenges. In fact, in 1998, when Dr. Krummel became chair, the department was in the unenviable position of having a \$5M clinical deficit and to make matters worse, ranked 30<sup>th</sup> in the nation in research and had a poorly rated clinical clerkship and a residency program that was on probation. Five years later, in 2003, thanks to the leadership of Dr. Krummel and the work of his colleagues, the department achieved a positive clinical financial performance (for the first time in many years), ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the nation in research, had a highly rated clinical clerkship and a top 10% rated residency program. Clearly significant progress during very challenging times!

According to Dr. Krummel, one of the key factors contributing to the department's move toward success has been the recruitment of new faculty. In fact, during this five year period, some 37 new clinical and research faculty have been recruited, many bringing important new areas of expertise and specialization. Given that the current department has 71 full-time faculty, these new recruitments clearly represent a major shift for the department.

Dr. Krummel highlighted the changes that have occurred by division, and I will summarize them briefly here:

- **Anatomy** currently has four faculty and is responsible for the school's education programs in anatomy as well as device design testing.
- **Emergency Medicine** has eight faculty and covers both the adult and pediatric emergency programs, currently numbering 38-40,000 visits/year. The faculty are also responsible for staffing the Level I Trauma Center and for supporting the Life Flight Transport (which includes approximately 600 flights/year). The Emergency Medicine program also hosts a highly sought after and highly rated

- residency program. They suffer however from constrained and antiquated facilities and from the inadequate separation between pediatric and adult care facilities – issues that will hopefully be addressed as part of the Hospital’s future facilities plan.
- **General Surgery** is currently comprised of 20 faculty (12 of whom have joined the department in the past five years) with new programs in colorectal surgery, minimal access surgery, surgical oncology and trauma/clinical care. In addition to the program at SHC, there is also a highly rated unit at the Palo Alto VA Hospital. Within a short time, progress has been made in several areas:
    - The Colorectal program, under the guidance of Drs. Mark Welton and Andrew Shelton (both recently recruited from UCSF) has become a referral center for Northern California, Oregon and Nevada and has assumed leadership on a national level as well.
    - Surgical Oncology will benefit from the new leadership of Dr. Jeff Norton (who joined the Department from UCSF). Also excellent collaborations have been established with the microarray facility and the clinical programs in breast and liver cancer.
    - The Trauma Program has grown from virtually non-existent three years ago to one now seeing >1500 patients/year and has achieved full accreditation from the ACS as a Level I Trauma Center thanks to the leadership of Dr. David Spain.
  - **Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery** is undergoing evolution with the recent recruitment of Dr. Rob Jackler with new programs in otology, laryngology, skull base surgery, audiology and cochlear implants.
  - **Pediatric Surgery** also has new leadership with the recruitment of Dr. Craig Albanese, an internationally recognized leader in minimal access surgery as well as fetal diagnosis and treatment. It is expected that these programs will grow during the years ahead along with other surgical subspecialties at LPCH.
  - **Plastic and Reconstructive Leadership** also has new leadership with the appointment of Dr. R. Vincent Hentz as chief and this program is already recognized as one of the top five residency programs in the nation. With the recruitment of Dr. Michael Longaker, an outstanding research program in tissue engineering and repair has been established as well.
  - **Solid Organ Transplantation** is a very strong program under the leadership of Dr. Carlos Esquivel, one of the world’s most premier liver transplant surgeons. This program boasts among the very best outcomes in kidney and liver transplantation, has been a pioneer in living donor liver transplantation and has made major contributions to reducing the need for steroids in the post-transplant immunosuppressive regimen.
  - **Vascular Surgery** has one of the top fellowship programs in the nation as well as a highly rated residency program. This division has a long history of pioneering work in device development – initially with Dr. Tom Fogarty and more recently with Chris Zarins. We are currently working with the department and division to form a Vascular Center at Stanford that will be a cooperative venture between the departments of surgery, radiology, medicine and cardiothoracic surgery.

While the department has made considerable progress during the past several years, it continues to face a number of challenges. These are related in part to the continued and very constrained health care funding environment. In addition, nationally surgery has faced some workforce pipeline issues largely due to the difficulty of attracting women (who as you know now comprise >50% of medical school graduates) to this specialty. With the efforts of Dr. Krummel and his colleagues, the Stanford department appears to be faring better and has, during the past several years, attracted both excellent women faculty and residents, ranking now well above the national average. It is hoped that by establishing a critical mass of successful female surgical role models – a process now well underway at Stanford.

The department also faces challenges in developing excellence in research but has also demonstrated progress in this arena as well. NIH funding is up significantly during the past several years and outstanding programs in haptics/robotics/simulation technology/virtual reality for education and training along with excellent programs in vascular flow modeling and device development as well as tissue engineering and regenerative medicine.

The presentation by Dr. Krummel made clear that considerable progress has been made in the department's missions in patient care, education and research. I want to thank him for his leadership and express our appreciation to the faculty, students and staff for their many contributions.

## **Medicine for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

On Tuesday evening, September 16<sup>th</sup> we held a community forum entitled “The Future is Now: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Medical Education” at the Arrillaga Alumni Conference Center. The goal of the forum was to demonstrate how medical education is changing as a consequence of new technologies and the instrumental role that Stanford is playing in helping to lead this change.

The conference began with a film entitled “The Future is Now” prepared by SUMMIT and featuring the role of the “interactive simulated patient” in medical student education, a project supported by the Wallenberg Foundation, in which student practices virtually all aspects of the patient encounter (history, physical examination, laboratory studies, etc.) to formulate a diagnosis and management plan. The examples used in this video were made possible by Ms. Jean Stringer, Associate Director of Learning Technologies in the Office of Information Resources and Technology along with Mr. Kingsley Willis, a Stanford Graduate Student and Mr. Oscar Otanez (SMS 3) who also participated in the video as an actor.

Following the video presentation I reviewed medical education in the United States during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries as a context of understanding its evolution in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The vast array of new knowledge coupled with the rapidly changing information technologies (including simulation, virtual reality, etc.) present a very different set of opportunities for the future. Stanford has been a pacesetter in this area and

the opportunities unfolding through the New Stanford Curriculum and the plans for the Stanford Medicine Information and Learning Environment (SMILE) put us in a position to truly influence the direction of medical education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. One of the important goals of course is to couple the best of the new technologies with the best principles of the “practice of medicine” including compassion, sensitivity and the human touch factor that helps define the doctor-patient relationship. Thankfully, the approaches planned for SMILE and the New Stanford Curriculum will make these goals aligned – to the benefit of our students and their future patients.

The evening featured small group discussions lead by faculty leaders on key topics including:

- ***Surgical Simulation*** by Dr. Tom Krummel, Professor and Chair of the Department of Surgery
- ***Internet-Based Medicine*** by Dr. Henry Lowe, Senior Associate Dean for Information Resources and Technology
- ***New Medical School Facilities: Catalysts for Innovation*** by Ms. Maggie Saunders, Program Planning Director for SMILE
- ***Translational Medicine*** by Dr. Paul Berg, Cahill Professor of Biochemistry, Emeritus and Special Advisor to the Dean
- ***Unique Student Research Projects*** by Dr. Julie Parsonnet, Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education. This section featured presentations by Ted Leng SMS V who is working with a team from the Department of Ophthalmology and the School of Engineering on the development of an artificial retina and Pam Mosher who is working with Dr. Lou Halamek from the Department of Pediatrics, on the use of simulation technology and the standardized patients to help educate medical students on how to approach the very challenging issue of death and dying.

The event was highly successful in conveying our excitement about the future of medical education and the very important role that Stanford will play in its future evolution.

### **Leadership Changes in the Department of Health Research and Policy**

I would like to begin by thanking Dr. Mark Hlatky who has served admirably and with distinction as the Chair of the Department of Health Research and Policy for the past seven years. During this time he has played an important role for the department as a leader as well as a highly productive faculty member and has also served the School through his leadership on the Reynolds Foundation Grant. Recently, Dr. Hlatky has indicated to me his interest in focusing more of his energies on research and education rather than administration and his desire to step down as Chair.

Accordingly, I am also pleased to announce that Dr. Rob Tibshirani has agreed to assume the responsibilities of Chair of HRP from Mark Hlatky beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>. He will be joined by Dr. Alice Whittemore who will serve as Associate Chair.

During the next several months we will continue the process initiated within HRP regarding the overall organization and structure of the department. Recognizing the important role that it plays in the School of Medicine, it is important to use this time to ask critical questions about the best way to optimize its composition for the future. I will let you know the outcome of these deliberations as they develop in the months ahead.

## **Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Provides Gift to Support a Biotechnology Core**

On Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Alan Krensky, Director of the Children's Health Initiative and Shelagh Galligan Professor of Pediatrics, announced at Pediatric Grand Rounds that the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital has given \$700,000 to the Stanford University School of Medicine to harness the rapidly evolving field of biotechnology research for advancing children's health. The gift will create a center that will allow basic scientists and clinicians to use the tools of biotechnology -- genetics, genomics and proteomics -- to create ways to diagnose childhood diseases earlier, predict which children will respond to treatment and determine which children will have serious side effects from therapies.

To help initiate this effort, the hospital and School of Medicine have recruited James W. Schilling, Ph.D., to serve as senior scientist and director of the Children's Biotechnology Core, a joint hospital and medical school appointment. Shilling comes from Sugen, Inc., now Pfizer, where he has served as principal scientist and director of protein chemistry.

We very much appreciate the vision and support of LPCH and its President & CEO, Mr. Chris Dawes, in bringing this exciting new initiative to fruition. It represents an exciting partnership between the School and LPCH to advance knowledge that will help to improve the health of children – and likely adults as well.

## **Briefing on the Stanford Institute for Cancer/Stem Cell Biology and Medicine**

On Monday morning September 22<sup>nd</sup>, we held another in our series of briefings about the Stanford Institute for Cancer/Stem Cell Biology and Medicine. This highly successful event offered the opportunity to provide an update to community leaders on our key initiatives now underway in cancer and stem cell biology research as well as a glimpse about how these programs will evolve during the next several years under the aegis of the Stanford Institute for Cancer/Stem Cell Biology and Medicine. Program speakers included myself as well as Dr. Robert Negrin, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the Bone Marrow Transplant Service, and Dr. Irv Weissman, Karel and Avice Beekhuis Professor of Cancer Biology and Director of the Institute. As I have discussed in prior Newsletters, the Institute for Cancer/Stem Cell Biology is one of four new Institutes that we are forming at Stanford, the other three being the Institutes for Neuroscience; Cardiovascular Medicine; and Immunity, Transplantation and Infection. Key to each of these new Institutes is the connection between research and clinical care

via bi-directional translational research. One of the major goals of the Institute of Cancer/Stem Cell Biology and Medicine will be to further benefit from the already superb programs at Stanford in cancer biology by seeking alignment with clinical programs and to further enhance clinical programs, especially in solid tumors. Success in these areas will be key to our planned application to the National Cancer Institute for designation as a Comprehensive Cancer Center, the application for which will be submitted in October 2004.

Important to the further development of the Institute for Cancer/Stem Cell Biology and Medicine will be the successful recruitments of the Associate Director for Research and the Medical Director of the Clinical Cancer Center. Both of these positions are now under active research and it is our hope to find successful candidates within the next several months.

### **Stanford Hospital & Clinics Program “Breakthrough Collaborative on Operational Excellence”**

On Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, SHC sponsored a forum on operational excellence for hospital and clinic managers and physician leaders. It is all too apparent that patient consumers and health care payers (both private and public) believe that the quality of the service being delivered is as important as the quality of care in selecting health care providers. The availability of service and ease of navigating ambulatory clinics or hospital environments impacts considerably on where patients choose to receive their care, where physicians refer their patients and, in the future, how payers will determine contracts and payments. Improved clinical service coupled with active efforts to reduce medical errors has become a major feature of many clinical practices and academic medical centers. Even if the quality of patient care is outstanding (as is nearly always the case at Stanford) inadequacies in service, both real and perceived, can diminish the patient’s experience and erode confidence in the overall clinical environment.

With the goal of aligning SHC with the School of Medicine, the “Collaborative” was initiated based on the considerable experience already gained and reported from the work of Institute for Health Care Improvement lead by Dr. Don Berwick (whom I know and have high regard for as both a former co-trainee and colleague). The major goals of the collaborative will be to:

- Improve the patient’s experience of care at SHC by improving access to the clinics and by decreasing the patient’s wait-times and delays in the clinic.
- Improve physician and staff satisfaction with their work in the clinics
- Create change leaders who can drive operational excellence.

During the past two years success in achieving such goals have been piloted and accomplished in the primary care clinic as well as the gynecology and gastroenterology clinics. The goal now is to further operationalize these and other improvements throughout the hospital and clinics. The steps involved in achieving performance

excellence are well delineated and achievable. However they require commitment, focus and leadership by physician leaders and staff. Accomplishing these objectives is enormously important. Martha Marsh, President and CEO of SHC, and I, as Dean, are in agreement that this collaborative and the improvements they will bring are essential for both the Hospital and Clinics as well as the School of Medicine.

Special thanks to Drs. Jerry Shefrin, Joe Hopkins and Ms. Sandy Rozmarin for their efforts in bringing this program forward.

## **Project to Implement a New Public Web Site for the School**

Dr. Henry Lowe, Senior Associate Dean for Information Resources and Technology, asked to let you know that the school is about to embark on a large scale project to redesign and restructure our public Web presence. As a major communication medium, the Web plays a critical role in presenting the school to the public. Indeed, the School's Web site is often the first point of contact for individuals and is vital for sharing information and forming impressions. However, our current Web presence, taken as a whole, has not been redesigned for many years and overall does not appropriately reflect the current strategic directions of the School. Accordingly, the major goal of the redesign effort is to present the school and its missions in an attractive and comprehensive manner, to make information easier to find, to unify the many disparate Web sites in the school, and to provide easier methods for building and maintaining web pages.

During the past year, the School's Office of Information Resources and Technology (IRT) has been working with many groups in the school to develop a design that can serve as a common platform for presenting information about our departments, institutes, divisions and interdisciplinary programs. Recognizing that many groups have expended considerable effort to create existing individual sites, the design is intentionally flexible so that it can properly meet the needs of each unit while presenting the School as a unified entity with common guiding missions. In the coming months, we will launch a new home page for the school and overview pages for education, research, patient care, and community. Over the next two years, IRT will work with each of the departments, institutes, and IDP's to collaboratively redesign web sites using a common framework. As each of these sites is launched IRT will provide ongoing training, tools, and support for content authors to ease the process of maintaining departmental web sites in the future.

A prototype of the new design will be made available soon. We had the opportunity to review the prototype and plans at the September 19<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee where it received an enthusiastic endorsement from our clinical and basic science chairs. If you have questions about the redesign project, or would like to discuss how the new design relates to your existing departmental web site please contact Michael Halaas (michael@med.stanford.edu).



## **New Videoconferencing Service for School of Medicine**

I am pleased to report that the Office of Information Resources and Technology (IRT) has installed a new videoconferencing facility in MSOB X348. This conferencing service runs on the Polycom platform. It has both ISDN conferencing capability and IP conferencing capability. On the ISDN side, the system supports a total bandwidth of 384 Kilobits per second, which yields good video resolution. Laptops can be attached to the system to present slide shows using Microsoft's PowerPoint application. The conference room will accommodate 20 people. For training and technical assistance in using this system please contact Bindu Madhava at 650-724-3371 or e-mail at [madhava@stanford.edu](mailto:madhava@stanford.edu). To schedule the Video Conferencing Facility in MSOB X348, please email [X348-conference@med.stanford.edu](mailto:X348-conference@med.stanford.edu) or call 725-1233.

## **Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Leadership Forum**

On Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, a Leadership Forum was held for members of the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital community in the Arrillaga Alumni Center. Chaired by Chris Dawes, CEO and President of LPCH, the forum addressed four major themes currently impacting the future of the hospital: financial sustainability, community satisfaction, patient satisfaction and space challenges. Discussions about these important topics were guided by data driven presentations and updates by Dr. Ken Cox, Senior Associate Dean for Obstetric and Pediatric Clinical Affairs and Ms. Sue Flanagan, Chief Operating Officer, LPCH. There was a very honest and candid discussion of the current challenges and limitations facing the hospital coupled with a discourse on how to improve or overcome them. In addition, Marissa Peterson, Executive Vice President, Worldwide Operations and Chief Customer Advocate of Sun Microsystems, gave a keynote address on "Consumer-Centered Excellence." Ms. Peterson is also a member of the Board of Directors of LPCH.

This Leadership is part of an ongoing series at LPCH and offers a very helpful way to secure a dialogue between faculty and staff about important issues. Future sessions will also tie these important issues to the academic challenges and opportunities facing the hospital and the Medical Center.

## **Agenda for the 2003-2004 Medical School Faculty Senate**

Anticipating the agenda for the next session of the Medical School Faculty Senate, the Committee of Five met on Tuesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. Foremost on the agenda will be continued focus on the New Stanford Curriculum addressing what has been achieved but also the enormous amount that remains to be done, especially with regard to the clinical rotations and their integration with the basic sciences. Equally important is the delineation of metrics to assess the impact of the changes that are being made with the New Stanford Curriculum on our students and school. Clearly the careful evaluation of our new undertakings is essential – and will feature prominently in future reports in the Newsletter.

## **Department Visits**

Over the past several weeks, I have begun my annual meetings with individual departments by attending one of their regularly scheduled faculty meetings. This is an attempt to better understand the issues facing clinical and basic science departments –and also to meet with faculty. During the past weeks, I have had the opportunity to visit with the faculty in the Departments of Biochemistry, Dermatology, Structural Biology and Urology. Over the months ahead I hope to have the opportunity to visit each department.

I also will continue to hold informal lunches on a regular basis with small groups of faculty, the sole purpose of which is to meet with faculty and address issues or concerns relevant to them. I hope you will sign-up for one of these lunches as the dates become announced.

## **Announcements**

- US Poet Laureate to Visit the School of Medicine on November 12<sup>th</sup>: On Wednesday, November 12<sup>th</sup> a Poetry Reading by Billy Collins, US Poet Laureate will be held at Noon in the Fairchild Auditorium. This is made possible by a generous gift from Helen and Peter Bing and is sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Medical Scholars Program and the Biomedical Ethics and Medical Humanities Scholarly Concentration. I particularly want to acknowledge Dr. Audrey Shafer, Associate Professor of Anesthesiology, for making this important presentation possible. I hope you will attend.
- Fall Forum on Community Health and Public Service: On Wednesday October 14<sup>th</sup>, the Fall Forum on Community Health and Public Service will be held in the Bechtel Conference Center (100 Encina Hall) from 5-7:30 PM and will feature poster and oral presentations being done by our Stanford Medical Students and their community partners. In addition, there will be a keynote address by Dr. Steven Schroeder, former CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and currently the Distinguished Professor of Health and Health Care, Department of Medicine, UCSF. I hope you will mark your calendars and make every effort to attend. Please RSVP at [stanfordfallforum@yahoo.com](mailto:stanfordfallforum@yahoo.com) by September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

## **Awards and Honors**

- Two members of our Department of Biochemistry will receive important awards from the American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology:
  - Dr. Ron Davis, Professor of Biochemistry, will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Yeast Research Community at the Yeast Genetics and Molecular Biology meeting to be held next July, 2004, as well as the Herbert A. Sober Award.
  - Dr. Per Harbury will receive the Schering –Plough Research Institute Award of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.
- Dr. David Stevenson, Harold K. Faber Professor of Pediatrics and Obstetrics and Gynecology and Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, has been accepted

to the Board of Directors of the American Board of Pediatrics beginning in  
January 2004.

Congratulations to all.