

# Dean's Newsletter

## September 7, 2004

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### **Our New First Year Medical Students Arrive**

The rhythms that define our academic world are the arrival of new students, their personal and professional development and their graduation to commence new challenges and opportunities bearing the imprimatur of the Stanford University School of Medicine. On Monday, August 30<sup>th</sup> we officially welcomed our new incoming class of medical students. With the New Stanford Curriculum that began last year, our medical students start earlier than the rest of the university in order to accommodate all of the exciting changes that now constitute their new learning pathway. Our incoming graduate students will arrive in mid-September. This was the week to launch our new medical student class.

As with past years, our incoming class of 86 medical students is a highly selected and diversified group. According to Dr. Gabriel Garcia, Director of Admissions, 5336 applications were received. From these, 484 students were selected for interviews and 165 were offered admission. Our incoming class of 86 includes 73 of those admitted and 13 students who had deferred from prior years. As with prior classes, the incoming class has superb academic accomplishments, and 21 of the 86 students have advanced degrees (18 Masters of Arts or Science and three PhDs). The average age of the incoming class is 24 years (range 20-34). Women make up 46% of the class (which is less than the greater than 50% proportion that has characterized classes back to 1997). The class is also quite diverse; 24% are new Americans and 23% are underrepresented in medicine minorities. While 15 of the incoming class did their undergraduate work at Stanford and seven at UCLA, the remainder came from some 44 colleges and universities.

Our new students spent the early part of the week learning about Stanford and medicine including the resources available to help promote and safeguard their personal and professional lives and development. They had the opportunity to meet with their Faculty Advisors, learn about the New Stanford Curriculum and meet the course directors of the topics they will cover in the first quarter, which include Gross Anatomy, Cells to Tissues, Molecular Foundations of Medicine and Genetics. They also learned more about the community activities they might engage in as well as the underpinnings of professionalism and the practice of medicine in a multicultural society.

The orientation culminated in a festive dinner for our students and family members and guests who were able to attend the Stethoscope Ceremony. This event is supported by the Stanford Medical Alumni Association and represents a wonderful tradition. In most every medical school, new students participate in a “white coat ceremony” to mark their entrance into the medical profession. For some years Stanford has given stethoscopes rather than white coats – something that I believe represents special symbolism and values. While there is no doubt that a white coat does evidence a physician it can also symbolize something that separates the physician from the patient. In contrast, the stethoscope is something that connects the physician to her or his patient, allowing them to listen and make human contact – which after all is what should truly characterize the physician.

With orientation completed, our new students officially began classes on Thursday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>. I want to welcome them again to the Stanford family and encourage them to work hard to develop all of their knowledge and skills so that they can best serve patients, science and society.

## **The Stem Cell Debate**

During the past three years the controversies surrounding stem cell research and especially embryonic stem cell research has engendered strong reactions, in some ways pitting science against religion. Stanford has played a leading role in stem cell research and its related controversies. A number of our scientists have contributed fundamental and major discoveries, while others have participated actively in the dialogue around ethics, politics and religion. Our founding of the Stanford Institute for Cancer and Stem Cell Biology and Medicine, made possible by a very generous contribution from an anonymous donor, has put Stanford in the forefront and has stimulated other institutions to follow our lead (e.g., witness Harvard’s recent institutional commitment to stem cell research). Importantly, the stem cell debate is likely to feature prominently in this November’s presidential campaign and election as evidenced by the continuing stream of editorials, op-ed pieces and even a cover story in the August 31<sup>st</sup> issue of the Wall Street Journal on “How Stem Cells Became a Hurdle for GOP Campaign”. In California, stem cell research will be of particular interest because of Proposition 71. This proposition which will be one the ballot, offers the opportunity for considerable funding and support for stem cell research.

I fully recognize that the issue of stem cell research evokes strong feelings in people for a variety of reasons. As a School of Medicine, we are committed to do the best research possible in an impeccably ethical manner. We are also committed to educate each other as well as the public. Accordingly, the fall issue of Stanford Medicine will be virtually entirely devoted to stem cell research and will provide a highly balanced review of the issues – including the science as well as the ethics and the related issues that characterize the current controversy. This important issue will be available in the next couple of weeks and I encourage you to read it carefully.

### **Stanford Successful in NIH Interdisciplinary Award Competition**

The National Human Genome Research Institute at the NIH, announced on Tuesday that it would award grants totaling about \$20 million to four universities to support interdisciplinary centers devoted to studying the ethical, legal, and social issues raised by genetic and genomic research. I am most pleased to inform you that Dr. Mildred Cho and her colleagues, on behalf of Stanford University's Center for Integration of Research on Genetics and Ethics, will receive \$3.8 million to study the ethical, legal, and social consequences of uncovering genomic factors that may contribute to behavioral and neurological conditions. The other successful universities were Case Western Reserve, Duke and the University of Washington. The grants will be over five years, and will support the work of scholars in fields outside the disciplines of genetics and genomics, such as the behavioral and social sciences, clinical research, theology, public policy, and law. Congratulations to Dr. Cho and her colleagues and collaborators.

### **Stanford Medicine Fundraising 2004**

According to Martin Shell, Associate Vice President for University Development, Stanford achieved its second best year of fundraising, based on the figures that became available with the close of the fiscal year on August 31<sup>st</sup>. For the University as a whole, total gift receipts for the past year totaled \$529,130,062 – a remarkable figure that reflects the hard work of many and the enormous generosity of our community. The School of Medicine's totals came in at \$98,747,444, which was at the same level as FY03. Given all the changes we have faced in our Office of Medical Development during the past year, this is a remarkable accomplishment indeed. I would like to thank all of our OMD staff and faculty who have worked hard to secure gifts and foundation awards. I particularly want to acknowledge the efforts of Patricia McLeod, who served as interim director of the Office of Medical Development; David Glen, who returned from retirement to provide assistance during this transitional period; and John Ford, VP for University Development and our colleagues across the campus. As mentioned in my last Dean's Newsletter, we have been successful in recruiting Doug Stewart as our new AVP for Medical Development. Doug will be joining us on October 1<sup>st</sup>. While the opportunities before us are boundless, the hard work of our current staff and faculty have resulted in a great base to move forward from. Again, thanks to all – and especially to the wonderful donors who support our work.

## **Stanford Hospital & Clinics 2004**

In striking contrast to just three years ago, when the consequences of the Stanford-UCSF merger and then de-merger, among other factors, virtually devastated the financial performances of Stanford Hospital and Clinics, the picture is amazingly different today. On Tuesday August 31<sup>st</sup>, the Hospital's Board of Directors meeting reviewed data that showed SHC end of the year performance to be quite healthy. This is certainly good news for the Medical Center, especially when it is to be added to the very solid performance of the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital as well. There are a number of reasons for this. Certainly new leadership, improved financial systems, better contracts and improvements in quality and service have all made a significant difference. But certainly among the most important reasons for the improved success of both the inpatient and ambulatory services at SHC is the hard work of our faculty in each of the clinical departments. This includes the improved productivity of our faculty as well as the contributions from the various new recruits who have joined the Stanford clinical services during the past several years. Because of their efforts, clinical volumes and discharges are up, ambulatory clinics are busier and the operating rooms and various ancillary services are moving to peak performance. While there are still many challenges ahead, given the dynamic changes that continue to unfold in the cycles of health care (between payers, providers and consumers) it is certainly worth celebrating the success of the moment. In doing so, I want to thank, in particular, our clinical staff and faculty who have made such an important impact on the health of both SHC and LPCH. Thank you.

## **Announcing the Stanford Center for Clinical Informatics**

On September 1, 2004, Stanford University School of Medicine created a new academic entity called the Stanford Center for Clinical Informatics (SCCI). The core mission of the center is to foster the development of an interdisciplinary academic program focused on novel applications of information technology and computer science to health care, translational and clinical research, biomedical knowledge management and education. The SCCI will emphasize applied informatics, with the goal of contributing to the development of world-class information technology solutions supporting human health. The SCCI will be directed by Dr. Henry Lowe, Associate Professor of Medicine and Senior Associate Dean for Information Resources and Technology at the School.

Clinical Informatics is the scientific discipline that aims to enhance human health by developing novel information technology, computer science and knowledge management methodologies to prevent disease, deliver more efficient and safer patient care, increase the effectiveness of translational research, improve knowledge access and facilitate technology-enhanced education. It is truly an interdisciplinary field, involving clinicians, biomedical and computational scientists, knowledge management professionals, educators and healthcare consumers.

A key focus of the center's academic activities will be the Electronic Health Record (EHR). Healthcare is an intensely data-driven discipline. However, even today, most of the information used as part of the patient care process is paper-based. Important health information about individuals is scattered across many systems that do not, and

cannot, communicate with each other. New national and international initiatives aim to define and implement a secure, patient-centric, longitudinal electronic health record that will store an individual's past and present health status, care received and plan of care, and that can be appropriately shared to improve health outcomes and enhance patient safety. Equally important as a focus will be how the EHR can support the development of evidence-based medicine through clinical and outcomes-based research, while ensuring the security and privacy of individual patient information.

Technology alone will not achieve the promise of Clinical Informatics. Complex legal, economic, human factors and societal issues must be addressed if information technology is successful in improving human health. To ensure that these important areas are addressed, the SSCI will strongly encourage active participation from across the University, from the business sector and from the community at large. The SSCI will support the advancement of the field of Clinical Informatics by fostering multidisciplinary research programs, building industry-academic partnerships, hosting seminars and conferences, working with faculty to design undergraduate and post-graduate courses, developing internship opportunities, acting as an information resource and participating in global efforts to improve human health using information technology. Beginning in October 2004 membership in the SSCI will be open to all faculty, staff and students at Stanford University and its affiliated hospitals.

### **Moving to an Electronic IRB System**

Electronic systems are not only transforming health care delivery, they are also impacting virtually every facet of our academic medical center. Of note, Stanford University received NIH funding to develop an electronic IRB protocol application system that will allow for the online submission, review, routing, and tracking of human subjects research protocols. The first phase of this project is nearing completion. An electronic IRB system is already operational at the University of California at San Diego.

The current module supports the submission of "Regular and Expedited New" protocols. At this point in the electronic development, we are not yet able to process Revisions, Renewals, Reports, and Exempt protocols.

Please contact Ammy Hill in the Information Technology Systems and Services Department to set up a short training session to submit your next new protocol, electronically ([ammyh@stanford.edu](mailto:ammyh@stanford.edu) or call 725-6231). To access the electronic system, see: <http://hs.stanford.edu>. For information and job aids on submitting through the electronic system, see: <http://humansubjects.stanford.edu/education/jobaids>

### **Task Force to Address Ways of Expediting the Faculty Appointments and Promotions is Launched**

On Friday September 3<sup>rd</sup>, the first meeting of a Task Force on Faculty Appointments and Promotions was held to initiate an important effort to streamline as well make more functional our process for academic appointment and promotion. The

bottom line is that it simply takes too long to recruit and appoint new faculty members and to promote existing faculty. The current systems are too laborious and cumbersome and evoke multiple impediments or problems. It is my hope that this Task Force, benefiting from some reports dating back to 1999, can implement processes that are much more sophisticated, ideally taking advantage of electronic reporting, and that permit the evaluation system to be done fairly and with greater integrity and speed. The Task Force is chaired by Dr. Rob Jackler, Professor and Chair of the Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, and includes members from the faculty and staff who provide broad perspective and expertise. These include Brian David, DFA, Department of Surgery; Sarah Donaldson, Catherine and Howard Avery Professor in the Department of Radiation Oncology; Jason Irwin, Operations Manager, Department of Otolaryngology; Linda McLaughlin, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs; Julie Mosely, Manager, Organizational Development; Rick Myers, Stanford W. Asherman Professor Genetics; Annelies Ransome, Faculty Affairs, Administrator, Department of Medicine; Channing Robertson, Ruth G. and William K. Bowes Professor of Chemical Engineering and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, School of Engineering; Kim Thomas, Faculty Affairs Administrator, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences; Scott Walters, Faculty Affairs Administrator, Department of Medicine. Kathy Gillam, Special Assistant to the Dean, will serve as Staff to the Task Force.

The Committee plans to make a progress report to the Dean by November and is aiming to complete its work by the first quarter of 2005. This is an enormously important project and I am hopeful that this Task Force will have a major impact. That is certainly my intent. Obviously details will follow.

### **New Lane Library Website**

According to Debbie Ketchell, Associate Dean of Knowledge Management and Director, Lane Medical Library, the recent launch of the new web site by the Lane Medical Library & Knowledge Management Center is another step towards realizing our vision of a digital library available anytime and anywhere. It leverages our investment in online journals, books, reference, images, and other knowledge content through several new features.

Go to: <http://lane.stanford.edu/index.html> and discover easier off-campus access by SUNetID authentication; a single search for online books, journals, databases, and more; an article finder and new PubMed@Stanford links that connect you to more online journals than ever; and new clinical and research portals that include customized meta-searches across multiple reference sources.

Tabs across the top of the Lane Library Home Page offer five customized portals focused for clinicians, researchers, students, instructors and patients. The most popular resources such as PubMed remain as quick link buttons. The Clinician and Researcher portals offer a new “meta-search” that allows you to simultaneously search across multiple clinical or research databases and references repositories rather than going to each individually. The Clinical Core search queries UpToDate, SkolarMD, PubMed,

Harrison's, imagesMD, Micromedex, patient handouts and more. The BioResearch search queries PubMed, Entrez, OMIM, BIOSIS, SciSearch, Current Protocols, Protocols Online, and Methods in Enzymology. More search sources and tailored cores are planned in the future. Another future development is an "instructional hub" that brings together the "extra" curriculum across postdoctoral and fellowship programs in finding and manipulating information.

Per Debbie Ketchell, the Lane Library front page also keeps you abreast of the rapid changes in text content and services. A handy search box offers a drop-down menu of source options to search, including PubMed, e-Journals, the Lane catalog, Stanford Who, Goggle and more. Choose eResources if you want to search for online biomedical journals, books, databases, and selected websites. A new Article Finder search, found on the eJournals page, makes it easy to discover the availability of online articles in biomedicine and beyond. For example, if you are looking for an opinion piece on medicine in a recent issue of the New Yorker, fill out the journal title and the article title and you'll find it. Article Finder includes titles outside biomedicine license by other campus libraries. If there is no online available, Article Finder will check print holdings or offer an interlibrary loan form. Access to restricted access content from off-campus has been simplified to your SUNetID. Enter it once and all future requests for authentication during your browser session will take place seamlessly behind the scenes. Article Finder is now embedded in PubMed@Stanford, which connects you to many more online journals than our previous version. Be sure to use the PubMed@Stanford link rather than the generic PubMed URL to see all these direct article links.

The new library website foreshadows the customization, simplified access and smart searching that will be the hallmark of our knowledge management in the future. You can contact your library liaison for a personal guided tour for your faculty, students or staff. The link for your departmental liaison is also on the Lane Library front page.

I want to thank Debbie Ketchell and her staff for making these important and exciting changes.

### **Thanking Valerie (Su) Mersh**

On Tuesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, a retirement celebration was held in the Lane Medical Library Courtyard to honor Valerie (Su) Mersh for her nearly 25 years of service to Lane and the School of Medicine. As Deputy Director and Head of Public Service Valerie made significant and enduring contributions and won the respect of her colleagues both in the library and throughout the School. I too want to thank Valerie and wish her well in her retirement.

### **New Members of the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Education**

During the last weeks several changes have taken place in the office of graduate education and postdoctoral affairs. Kimberly Griffin, Director of Bioscience Diversity Programs, returned to graduate school to pursue a Ph.D. in the School of Education at

UCLA. During the time that she was with us, Kimberly did an outstanding job in enhancing and expanding the diversity program for graduate students. Her energy and enthusiasm was boundless and her accomplishments notable indeed. She certainly deserves all of our thanks – and best wishes for her own future academic success. At the same time, we are very fortunate to have recruited Anika Green to continued to build on Kimberly's work. A native Californian, Anika has been a key player in the Meyerhoff Scholarship Program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. There, she worked to enhance the recruitment and retention of undergraduate students studying science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and helped them move on to graduate study in those areas. Her office is in M105; phone 724-2815; email [agreen1@stanford.edu](mailto:agreen1@stanford.edu).

In the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, we have been engaged in a major, national search for a replacement for Michael Cowan who retired from that office some months ago. Chequeta Allen from the University of Southern California has been recruited to take on the leadership of that office as Assistant Dean of Postdoctoral Affairs. Chequeta holds an MBA and MPHE and has extensive experience in leadership positions in the academic environment and especially schools of medicine (e.g., the Medical College of Virginia and University of Tennessee College of Medicine). Most recently, she served as Executive Administrator, Pediatrics & Academic Affairs at the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles while also holding the position of Visiting Assistant Professor of Clinical Pediatrics in the Division of Research on Children, Youth and Families in the Department of Pediatrics at USC. Her combined experience in the teaching, research and clinical settings of academic medical centers makes her extremely well equipped for her new leadership role in the OPA. Her office location is CCSR Suite 4235; phone 725-5075; email [challen3@stanford.edu](mailto:challen3@stanford.edu).

The third new position is the Director of the recently established Career Center in the School of Medicine. This office will be dedicated to assisting graduate students and post-doctoral fellows in identifying the career path that best meets their individual interests and then landing the best position possible. We are very fortunate to have attracted Michael Alvarez to fill this position. Michael's professional work experience of more than 12 years spans both business and academic settings, and includes coaching and advising graduate students at Boston College, management consulting as part of Andersen Consulting's NYC practice and founding and directing the development of a career center serving all schools and disciplines at UCSF's health science campus. Michael has BS and MS degrees in Psychology. In his capacity as Director, Michael will assemble and develop career-related resources, initiate and formalize relationships with prospective employers across a wide range of industries and sectors, and provide individualized career development advising, support, and counsel to our graduate students & postdocs. His office location is CCSR Suite 4235; phone 723-2035; email [michael.alvarez@stanford.edu](mailto:michael.alvarez@stanford.edu)

Welcome to Anika Green, Chequeta Allen and Michael Alvarez.

## **Honoring Dr. Tom Merigan**

On Friday, August 27<sup>th</sup> a Festschrift was held to honor the life and career of Dr. Tom Merigan, the George E. and Lucy Becker Professor of Medicine. Dr. Merigan has been a leading and distinguished member of the Stanford School of Medicine for nearly four decades. His accomplishments have been far ranging and have made him one of the most cited scientists at Stanford. They have included his work on the interferons, viral pathogenesis, antiviral therapy, and, perhaps most notably, his leadership in AIDS research. The Festschrift entitled “Bridging Generations: Toward an Understanding of Infectious Disease Pathogenesis” was attended by a litany of luminaries in virology including a number of Dr. Merigan’s trainees. It was a wonderful event and featured wonderful science as well as great fanfare.

Having known of Dr. Merigan’s work and contributions for many years before I arrived at Stanford, I too want to add my praise and admiration for his many, many contributions – as a researcher and as a mentor. Well done!

## **In Memoriam: Dr. Bruce Stoker**

Bruce A.D. Stoker, M.D., Professor Emeritus Active, Microbiology and Immunology, died August 30, 2004 at the age of 87. Drs. Leon Rosenberg and Gary Schoolnik, colleagues of Dr. Stoker, have informed me that he worked actively in his laboratory until three months before his death pursuing scientific questions he had first begun to study in the early 1950’s. Following medical school and a stint with the British Army in India, he undertook a life-long study of Salmonella which culminated in a series of elegant reports describing how bacterial flagella work, how their expression is regulated, their relationship to virulence, and ultimately, how they can be used to construct living attenuated vaccines for the prevention of a variety of human and animal infections and cancers.

On a more personal note, Dr. Schoolnik has offered the following reflection “Bruce was as pure a scientist as I have yet encountered. He pursued science without concern for personal fame or money. He was ruthlessly objective. He stayed with the same basic question for over half a century--taking it to deeper levels. His brilliance, which did not shine quite so brightly recently (some of you may have joined the lab too recently to have experienced it), was clear to all of us who knew him for a longer time and from his original contributions. Please keep in mind his values, which are unfortunately not so common today, even in academia. I believe they are the right values. Please also reflect on what it means to age as a scientist and, as Bruce demonstrated, the ability of scientific investigation to sustain intellectual growth and an active life even into the ninth decade”.

There will be a memorial service for Dr Stoker on September 19th at 2:00 pm at the Stanford Faculty Club. A lectureship in microbial pathogenesis is being established to honor the memory of Dr. Stoker at the School of Medicine. Memorial gifts to the lectureship may be sent to the Office of Medical Development, Stanford University Medical Center, 2700 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park, CA 94025, and checks should be made payable to "Stanford University".

## **Appointments and Promotions**

- **Victor Henderson** has been appointed as Professor of Health Research and Policy and of Neurology and Neurological Sciences, effective 9/1/2004.
- **David Katzenstein** has been promoted to Professor (Research) of Medicine effective 9/1/2004.
- **Steven Leibel** has been appointed as Professor of Radiation Oncology at Stanford University School of Medicine, effective 8/1/2004.
- **David Miklos** has been appointed as Assistant Professor of Medicine (Bone Marrow Transplantation), effective 9/1/2004.