



NEWS ABOUT UB'S SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES AND ITS ALUMNI, FACULTY, STUDENTS AND STAFF

A U T U M N 2 0 0 6

Pathways

Pendergast Recognized for Outstanding Contributions



Pendergast

David R. Pendergast, EdD, professor in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics, has received the Albert R. Behnke Award, the most prominent honor bestowed by the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS).

The award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding scientific contributions to advances in the undersea or hyperbaric biomedical field. The UHMS is the primary source of information for diving and hyperbaric medicine physiology worldwide.

An adjunct professor in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, UB School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Pendergast also serves as associate director of the Center for Research and Education in Special Environments in the UB

School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. A UB faculty member since 1973, Pendergast studies a broad range of human adaptations to exercise on land, in water and in outer space. He received an Exceptional Scholar Award for Sustained Achievement from UB in 2004.

Pendergast and UB colleagues Joseph Mollendorf, professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, and Budd Termin, head coach of the UB men's swim team, developed a low-drag swimsuit that is licensed by TYR Sport and was worn by a number of 2004 Olympians from around the world.

Pendergast received a bachelor's degree from Brockport State College, a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and a doctorate from UB.

—SUE WUETCHER

Cherr Receives Career Development Award

Gregory S. Cherr, MD, assistant professor of surgery and research assistant professor of social and preventive medicine,

has been selected to receive the 2006 Jahnigen Career Development Award.

The Jahnigen Career Development Scholars Awards Program, funded by The John A. Hartford Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropies, currently provides two-year grants of \$200,000, including an institutional match, to assist young faculty initiate and ultimately sustain a career in research and education in the geriatrics aspects of his/her discipline.

According to the program, Cherr was selected "because of the promise demonstrated in his proposal, *Determinants of Health-Related Quality of Life in Patients with Peripheral Arterial Disease*; the sponsorship of



Cherr

his mentors, James Hassett, MD, Jo Freudenheim, PhD, and Bruce Naughton, MD; and the support of his institution."

For more information, visit <http://www.americangeriatrics.org/specialists>.

Stehlik Elected Governor of ACP Upstate Chapter

Edward A. Stehlik Sr, MD, associate clinical professor of medicine at UB and chair of the Department of Medicine at Kenmore Mercy Hospital, has been elected governor of the New York Upstate Chapter of the American College of Physicians (ACP), the national organization of doctors of internal medicine.

He was elected governor by his peers in the Upstate Region of the ACP—which includes Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Binghamton—and will serve a four-year term.

ACP governors work with a local council to supervise chapter activities, appoint members to local committees and preside at regional meetings. They also represent members by serving on the ACP Board of Governors.

Stehlik is a founding member of Northtowns Medical Group in the Town



Stehlik

of Tonawanda, where he has served as its president and managing partner since its formation in 1989. He also serves on the board of directors and the executive committee of Independent Health Association.

A graduate of Johns Hopkins University and Tufts University School of Medicine, Stehlik completed his internal medicine residency training at UB. He is board-certified in internal medicine and has been a Fellow of the American College of Physicians (FACP)

since 2001. He is the recipient of several honors including the Siegel Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the Norman Chassin Award for Excellence in Internal Medicine.

—S. A. UNGER

Nagowski Named President of BGH

Michael Nagowski, formerly president of Millard Fillmore Gates Circle Hospital, has been named president of Buffalo General Hospital.

"Mike is a great leader and hospital administrator,"



Nagowski

said James R. Kaskie, president and CEO of Kaleida Health, at the time of the appointment. "He is being recognized for his success at Gates Circle Hospital. Buffalo General is the largest asset of the Kaleida Health family and we are anticipating that he can duplicate his success there."

Don Boyd, Kaleida Health's vice president of

ambulatory services and business development, has been named the interim president of Millard Fillmore Gates Circle Hospital while a search is undertaken to select a permanent replacement.

Kaskie said that Robert Lovell, who had been dividing his time as Kaleida Health's chief operations officer and the president of Buffalo General Hospital, will now devote full-time efforts to his duties as COO.

—MICHAEL HUGHES

Nielsen, Foels Named to Leadership Positions at Independent Health

New Office of the Medical Director established

Nancy H. Nielsen, MD '76, PhD, senior associate dean in the UB Office of Medical Education, has been named chief medical officer at Independent Health, and Thomas J. Foels, MD, MMM, has been named medical director.

The announcement was made in July by Michael W. Cropp, MD, president and CEO of Independent Health, who explained that Nielsen and Foels make up a newly created office of the medical director.

Nielsen was appointed Independent Health's interim chief medical officer in October 2004 and, prior to that, served as the organization's associate medical director for quality.

Nielsen is well-known nationally for her work in health-care quality. She is a board member of the Hospital Quality Alliance, the Ambulatory Care Quality Alliance and the National Quality Forum. Recently, she was named to the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services' working group devoted to consumer empowerment in health care, and to an Institute of Medicine roundtable on evidence-based medicine. She coauthored the American Medical Association's (AMA's) principles on physician pay-for-performance, and speaks nationally on this topic.

Nielsen is the Speaker of the House of Delegates of the AMA and past president of the Erie County Medical Society and the Medical/Dental staff at Buffalo General Hospital.

An internist who holds a doctorate in microbiology, she continues in her role as senior associate dean in the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Foels, who joined Independent Health in 1994 as associate medical director for special projects, has also served as the organization's director of practice management and associate medical director. His primary responsibilities



Nielsen



Foels

have included Independent Health's reimbursement program design, implementation and operation for more than 3,100 participating physicians. The performance-based incentive program he helped develop, Practice Excellence, is recognized nationally and considered innovative in the health-care industry.

Foels graduated from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry and earned his master's of medical management degree from Tulane University. He has served as assistant clinical professor of pediatrics at UB and is a member of the American College of Physician Executives, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Medical Society of the State of New York and the New York State Perinatal Association. **BP**

—DAVID BERTOLA



Aliotta Elected President of Medical Society

Philip J. Aliotta, MD, MHA, clinical instructor in urology and associate clinical professor in neurology, is the new president of the Medical Society of the County of Erie.

A native of Buffalo, Aliotta is founder and medical director of the Center for Urologic Research of Western New York and managing partner of Main Urology Associates. He also serves as director of bladder and pelvic floor disorders at the Jacobs Neurological Institute, where his main area of study and treatment is multiple sclerosis.

Aliotta earned bachelor of arts degrees in biology and

sociology-anthropology from Canisius College in 1976 and a medical degree from the Autonomous University of Guadalajara School of Medicine in 1982. He completed two years of a general surgical residency in the Millard Fillmore Hospital System and a urology residency at UB. In 1994, earned a master of science in health-care administration at the University of Colorado at Denver.

Aliotta also is a delegate from Erie County to the House of Delegates of the Medical Society of the State of New York and president-elect of Sisters of Charity Hospital.

—LYNELLE NOWAKOWSKI

In Memoriam

Douglas E. Sinensky, MD



Douglas E. Sinensky, MD, former professor of radiology at UB, died on July 8, 2006.

A dedicated radiologist and a passionate teacher, Dr. Sinensky loved sharing his knowledge with his students and colleagues.

Dr. Sinensky earned his undergraduate degree at the City College of New York in 1953, after which he attended New

York University Medical School, graduating in 1957. He trained in radiology at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City from 1957 to 1960. In 1983, he joined the faculty at UB, where he taught until his retirement in 1999.

He is survived by his wife, Marlene, his four daughters (including Donna Sinensky Ferrero, MD '94), and eight grandchildren. **BP**

Best Treatments for ADHD

By Lois Baker

\$5.8 million in grants fund two new studies

WILLIAM E. PELHAM JR, PhD, professor of psychology, pediatrics and psychiatry at UB and a leading expert in the treatment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children, has received \$5.8 million to begin two new studies of treatment approaches for the condition.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have estimated that approximately 4.4 million children in the U.S. between the ages of 4 and 17 have been diagnosed at some point with ADHD.

Results of both studies are expected to help teachers, physicians and families better determine the best treatment plan for each child.

In one study, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health for \$3.15 million, Pelham is examining the effectiveness of different amounts of behavior modification for young children with ADHD who are not receiving medication at present. Treatment began in August and will last for three years.

In the other study, funded by the Institute of Education Sciences for \$2.7 million, Pelham is investigating the interactions of medication and behavior modification, as well as the effect of changes in one intervention on the other's effectiveness and on their combined effectiveness. Children in this study will be involved for one school year, and will enter the study in August 2006, 2007 or 2008.

The three-year study will involve 150 children who will be in kindergarten or first grade in September 2006 and who meet criteria for ADHD. Because many parents do not know at this young age whether their children have ADHD, children with symptoms of distractibility, impulsivity, difficulty completing tasks and following rules can be referred and

“THESE STUDIES WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARD ANSWERING TWO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS: DO YOUNG ADHD CHILDREN NEED MEDICATION, AND WHAT TREATMENT SHOULD BE USED FIRST WITH ADHD—MEDICATION OR BEHAVIORAL APPROACHES?”

will be evaluated for ADHD, says Pelham, who is director of the UB Center for Children and Families.



Pelham

The children will be assigned to one of three groups: a “community comparison group” that receives careful monitoring and medication if needed; a “standard-behavior-modification group” that receives a typical package of parent-training sessions, teacher-consultation sessions and social-skills sessions for the child; or “enhanced-behavior modification,” which involves intensive intervention for the parents, teachers and children, including the center’s highly regarded Summer Treatment Program that has been conducted at UB for the past decade.

The researchers aim to evaluate whether the need for and/or dose of medication can be minimized by beginning behavioral treatment early and continuing it over the long term.

The one-year study will involve a total of 144 children ages 5–12 in the three cohorts.

These children will have been diagnosed with ADHD and may be receiving medication.

This study aims to determine how a treatment strategy that includes either initial treatment with medication or initial behavior modification (parenting sessions,

teacher consultation, social-skills training for the child) influences response to treatment. It also will assess the relative benefits of augmenting the initial treatment versus adding the other treatment, when additional treatment is needed.

“These studies will go a long way toward answering two important questions: Do young ADHD children need medication, and what treatment should be used first with ADHD—medication or behavioral approaches?” says Pelham.

“These are the questions that parents, schools and doctors face every day, but there is not a lot of evidence to guide them in this critical choice,” he notes. “Given growing concerns about the dramatic increases in use of medication for ADHD and its short- and long-term safety, knowing whether alternatives work just as well is key.”

Parents interested in enrolling their children in either study or learning more about the studies may call the Center for Children and Families at 829-2244, ext. 5, or visit the center in 106 Diefendorf Hall on the UB South (Main Street) Campus. Additional information about ADHD for parents and teachers can be found at <http://www.wings.buffalo.edu/adhd>. **BP**

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2006 Faculty/Staff Awards

Dean's Award

The **Dean's Award** is given in special recognition of extraordinary service to the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.



Blumenthal

The recipient of the 2006 Dean's Award is Kenneth Blumenthal, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Biochemistry.

"Ken is really an altruistic citizen of UB," said Interim Dean Frederick C. Morin III, MD, at the time the award was presented. "He runs an excellent department in which faculty and staff work well together.

"In addition, Ken has served the university and school in a number of other capacities," explains Morin. "He chaired the search committee that brought David Dunn to UB as vice president for

health sciences and served as a member of the search committee for the school's dean."

Morin notes that Blumenthal also played an integral role in writing the proposed plan for how the school will implement its goal to develop bioinformatics and molecular recognition in conjunction with UB 2020, the university's strategic planning process.

"Ken was the motivating force in putting together this plan," says Morin. "He worked above and beyond what was expected of him and always kept at heart the interests of the university as a whole."

Blumenthal—whose laboratory research focuses on structure-function relationships in ion channels—came to UB in 2000 to serve as professor and chair of biochemistry. He holds a degree in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin and a doctorate in biochemistry from the University of Chicago. He completed a three-year NIH postdoctoral fellowship in biological chemistry at the UCLA School of Medicine before joining the faculty of the University of Florida College of Medicine as assistant professor of biochemistry. Prior to coming to UB, he served as professor of molecular genetics, biochemistry and microbiology at the University of Cincinnati.

Naughton Award

The **Naughton Award**, which recognizes a non-faculty individual who has made significant contributions to the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, was established in 2000 by John Naughton, MD, dean of the school from 1976 to 1996. Such an individual, the award states, "is one who, day in and day out, in his or her own quiet way, makes our school, with its affiliated teaching hospitals, a stronger, healthier and happier place for the rest of us to learn, work, conduct research, provide patient care and teach."

This year's winner of the Naughton Award is Barbara Mierzwa.

Mierzwa joined the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences in 1974 as assistant to the chair in the Department of Biochemistry.

In 1989, she moved to the North Campus, where she was an assistant to then-UB President Steven Sample.

In 1990, Mierzwa returned to the medical school as assistant to the director of Continuing Medical Education (CME). In 1992 she was named assistant dean and director of CME, a position she held for 13 years. In addition, she served as a volunteer CME program reviewer for the National Accreditation Council for CME.

Mierzwa also served the broader university and school communities in a number of ways. She was a member of the SEFA Administrative Committee for many years, representing the medical school, and was a member of the university's Master Landscape Committee.

In 2005, Mierzwa joined the staff of the Office of Advancement, where she served as a development associate until her retirement in May 2006.



Mierzwa

Stockton Kimball Award

The **Stockton Kimball Award** honors a faculty member for academic accomplishment and worldwide recognition as an investigator and researcher. Stockton Kimball, MD '29, was dean of the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Science from 1946 to 1958, and his contributions to the training of physicians spanned more than a quarter of a century.

The 2006 recipient of the Stockton Kimball Award is Paresh Dandona, MD, DPhil, head of the Division of Endocrinology and Distinguished Professor of Medicine and Pharmacology in the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Dandona, who joined the faculty at UB in 1991, has dedicated his career to the care and treatment of patients with endocrine disorders, especially diabetes and metabolic diseases.

"From his earliest days in Buffalo, Paresh's dream was to build a top-flight clinical center here," notes Suzanne Laychock, PhD, senior associate dean for research, who presented the award to Dandona at the Annual Faculty Meeting. "He fulfilled that goal in 1995, when he founded the Diabetes-Endocrinology Center of Western New York at Millard Fillmore Hospital-Gates Circle, currently one of the largest diabetes clinics in New York State."

In addition to serving as medical director of the center, Dandona also is founder of the online Diabetes Forum, a patient resource for information about diabetes.

Dandona received his bachelor of science degree in chemistry from Allahabad University, India, and his medical degree from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. In 1975, he completed a DPhil degree at Oxford University, where he also was a Rhodes Scholar at Magdalen College.

He then was named a Wellcome Research Fellow at the University of Oxford. Dandona has more than 425 publications. He has pioneered the use of insulin infusion in reducing inflammation and increasing cardioprotection and

cerebroprotection in heart attack and stroke. His current research interests include inflammation related to insulin resistance and atherosclerosis. In addition, his laboratory investigates the pro-oxidative and pro-inflammatory effect of macronutrients and pursues lines of investigation that include the anti-oxidative and anti-inflammatory effect of insulin and insulin sensitizers.

Dandona's research laboratory recently moved downtown to UB's New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences, where, according to Laychock, "his group will provide a rich resource in translational research at the Center of Excellence."

Dandona holds many honors, among them the Distinguished Service Award from the American Diabetes Association (1993 and 2001), the Valor Award from the American Diabetes Association, and the 2002 Pharmacia Award of the Endocrine Society.

He has served as editor-in-chief of *Metabolic Syndrome and Related Disorders* and on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, and *Current Diabetes Reviews*.

Dandona has also served on numerous committees at UB, including the Buswell Fellowship Committee and the Harrington Committee, and on the board of directors for the American Diabetes Association's New York Affiliate.

"Paresh's dedication to scientific investigation is tireless, and the research community in Buffalo is the better for it," says Laychock. "He has organized many world-class symposia that have brought outstanding scientific investigators to our city and enhanced the intellectual climate.

"In addition, he has contributed generously to teaching medical and graduate students and residents. Several of his former students are department chairs, division chiefs and professors at other top universities.

"In summary," she says, "Paresh Dandona embodies the high ideals of the Stockton Kimball Award. His research and clinical activities will likely continue to bring acclaim to the Buffalo academic community for years to come." **BP**



Dandona