summer 2006

pathways

news about UB’s School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences and its Alumni, Faculty, Students and Staff

Lema to Serve as President of Anesthesiology

Mark Lema, MD, PhD ’78, professor and chair of anesthesiology at UB and Roswell Park Cancer Institute, will begin serving a one-year term as president of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) in October 2006. Lema is the past editor of the ASA's publication, Anesthesiology, and is currently editor of the American Society of Anesthesiologists’ ASA Newsletter. He is past general chair of the Postgraduate Assembly for the New York State Society of Anesthesiologists and a consultant for Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

Freudenheim Named Chair

Jo L. Freudenheim, PhD, has been named chair of the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine in the School of Public Health and Health Professions at UB following a national search. Freudenheim joined the department as an assistant professor after serving as a postdoctoral fellow in cancer epidemiology at UB from 1987-88. She was named a professor in 1998 and has served as interim department chair since 2003. As chair she will concentrate on expanding the department’s research program, hiring new faculty and developing the epidemiology teaching program.

Her research focuses on the epidemiology of nutrition and cancer, in particular, the relationship between diet and breast cancer. She holds concurrent appointments as professor in Roswell Park Cancer Institute’s Department of Cancer Pathology and Prevention and as research scientist with the UB site of the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis.

She also has appointments at UB’s Research Institute on Addictions and in the UB Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences.

Freudenheim currently is principal investigator on a $2.39 million grant from the National Cancer Institute to investigate methylation and oxidation in breast-cancer epidemiology. She also is the principal investigator on a project examining the observed association of alcohol consumption with breast-cancer risk. The project is part of a larger study based in the Breast Cancer Center of Excellence at Georgetown University.

Freudenheim received her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and completed master’s degrees in the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the Erie County Medical Center and the Western New York Vascular Society.

He was a founder and the first president of the Western New York Physicians Executive Group and the president of the Buffalo Academy of Medicine, the Buffalo Surgical Society, the Erie County Medical Society and the Western New York Vascular Society.

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema

Lema has been a member of the American Medical Association’s National Palliative Care Faculty and has served on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Pain Panel, the American Pain Society’s Clinical Practice Panel, and the NYS Partnership to Improve End-of-Life Care task force. Currently he serves on the NCCN End-of-Life panel.

He received his medical degree from the State University of New York, Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn (Downstate) and completed residency training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, he holds a PhD in Physiology.

S. A. Unger

Lema
Cognitive Deficits in Lupus

Herbert Hauptman Receives the Isaac Asimov Award
Herbert A. Hauptman, PhD, Nobel Laureate and president of the Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute, is the 2006 recipient of the American Humanist Association’s (AHA) Isaac Asimov Science Award. According to the AHA, the award “recognizes a person or team of researchers whose scientific work has contributed significantly to the advancement of humanist values. It also is to recognize those scientists and advocates of science who have increased the public awareness, understanding and appreciation of science and the scientific approach.”

In response to receipt of the award, Hauptman, who also is professor of structural biology at UB, stated: “The spectacular advances of science and technology in the 20th century and the current trends hold enormous promise for good and an equally great threat to our very survival. The promise is that the fruits of science will be used for the benefit of mankind, leading to never-ending improvement in the quality of life for everyone; the threat is that the fruits of science will be used for destructive purposes, leading to consequences ranging from devastating pollutions of the environment to the destruction of human life by nuclear holocaust. Thus it is more important than ever that the public be aware of current scientific progress and assume the responsibility of ensuring that this progress be used for the benefit of man, kind, not its destruction. The scientist can do no less.”

Hauptman joined the staff of the Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute in 1970 (then known as the Medical Foundation of Buffalo). In 1985 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for development of a formula known as “direct methods.” By utilizing the direct methods technique, the structure of thousands of molecules have been solved, which in turn has led to the design of many new drugs.

Tara Ellis
Henderson Honored for Outstanding Hearing Research

Donald Henderson, PhD, professor in the Department of Communicative Disorders and Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, and clinical professor of otolaryngology, received the 2006 Outstanding Hearing Conservation Award from the National Hearing Conservation Association at the association’s annual conference in Tampa, Florida. This work has led to two patents for new drugs to prevent or reverse the loss. Henderson’s research group was the first to show that noise exposure increases the level of oxygen free radicals in the cochlea, which destroy hair cells.

—Lois Baker

Pathways

EUROSCIENTISTS in the Department of Neurology/Jacobs Neurological Institute at UB have received $1.2 million from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke to study the cognitive deficits that are frequently observed in the working memory of people who have lupus. In particular, they will attempt to link these deficits to specific electrical activity and anatomical changes in the brain. The researchers will take a multifaceted approach that has never been used to study this disease: magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans of the brain, neuropsychological tests and a process called cued-relevant brain potentials, which measures processing speed and the efficiency of response.

The study will involve persons with lupus, referred to in medical circles as systemic lupus erythematosus, or SLE, who do not have overt central nervous system manifestations of the disease, such as stroke, seizures or psychosis. Researchers will compare this “non-CNS SLE” group with a healthy control group.

“Since the late 1980s, there has been considerable interest in the cognitive deficits associated with systemic lupus erythematosus,” says Janet L. Shucard, PhD, UB assistant professor of neurology and lead researcher on the study. “As many as 60 to 80 percent of all individuals with SLE have been reported to exhibit cognitive deficits. Recent studies suggest that the most frequently observed cognitive deficits are in the areas of attention, speed of information processing, learning (encoding) and working memory.” Working memory is a system for temporarily storing and managing the information required to carry out complex cognitive tasks such as learning, reasoning and comprehensions. “These impairments in working memory and processing speed, which are often subtle, can significantly disrupt an individual’s ability to carry out activities of daily living,” notes Shucard.

Lupus is an autoimmune disease that currently affects 1 to 2 out of 1,000 Americans, accounting for the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. It occurs much more frequently in women than men. Young African-American women are especially at risk, with an estimated prevalence of the disease in this group of 1 in 262.

The researchers will use MRI scans to determine brain-tissue injury and will employ event-related brain potentials to measure processing speed and the efficiency of neurons during working-memory tasks in lupus patients and controls. Neuropsychological tests will determine the pattern of cognitive deficits in persons with lupus. “By studying a non-CNS SLE group and a healthy control group with these methods, we will be able to address theoretical questions pertaining to the neurobiological basis of deficits in attention and working memory that characterize many SLE patients,” explains Shucard.

David Shucard, PhD, professor of neurology, is the principal investigator on the project, Robert Zaidel, MD, PhD, and Ralph Benedict, PhD, from the UB Department of Neurology, and Julian Ambrose, MD, from the UB Department of Medicine, both in the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, along with James Donnelly, PhD, from the Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology, UB Graduate School of Education, are coinvestigators.

—Lois Baker

In nutritional sciences and preventive medicine at the University of Wisconsin, where she earned a doctorate in nutritional sciences in 1986.

She is an author or co-author on more than 150 publications in refereed journals and is a member of several professional organizations.

She has received numerous honors and awards, including the 2005 SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Research and Scholarship.

—Lois Baker

Szyzerski Shares NMR Prize

Thomas Szyaperski, PhD, professor of chemistry and biochemistry at UB, and co-founder of Bruker BioSpin, a leading supplier of NMR spectrometers, is a recipient of one of the most prestigious prizes awarded in the field of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy, the Gunther Laukien Prize. The prize was awarded April 24, 2006, at the 47th Experimental Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Conference in Pacific Grove, California. The Laukien Prize was established in 1999 in memory of Gunther Laukien, a co-founder of Bruker BioSpin, a leading supplier of NMR spectrometers. It carries a monetary award of $15,000.
The Louis A. and Ruth Siegel Awards for Excellence in Teaching

The Louis A. and Ruth Siegel Awards for Excellence in Teaching are the foremost means for recognizing extraordinary teachers in the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. A student award committee made up of representatives from each medical class reviews nominations provided by students and selects awardees in four categories. Considerations for this prestigious annual award include instructional skill, ability to stimulate thinking and develop understanding, demonstration of sensitivity toward the human condition, and serving as a role model for students.

The 2006 Siegel Award recipients are:

- Full-Time Teaching in the Basic Sciences
  - Linda Pessar, MD, professor of psychiatry

- Full-Time Teaching in the Clinical Sciences
  - Elie Akl, MD, research assistant professor, Department of Medicine

- Resident Teaching
  - Arundathi Prasad, MD, Department of Gynecology-Obstetrics

- Volunteer Physician
  - Chad Strittmatter, MD, clinical instructor, Department of Gynecology-Obstetrics

Louis A. Siegel received his medical degree from UB in 1923 and served as assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology for 24 years. He was a dedicated clinical teacher who was able to inspire both medical students and house officers with enthusiasm and the spirit of inquiry.

Bhangoo Honored by India’s President

At the 50th Annual Conference of the International College of Surgeons held in New Delhi, India, KHALWAT S. Bhangoo, MD, chief of plastic surgery at Mercy Hospital and clinical assistant professor of plastic surgery at UB, was honored by the president of India, the Honorable A. P. J. Kalam. Bhangoo was recognized for his contributions toward the development of cosmetic surgery in India and for training Indian plastic surgeons in the subspecialty of aesthetic surgery.

Health Care 50 Honorees

Congratulations to the following faculty, staff, alumni and friends of the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences who were named by Buffalo Business First to its “Health Care 50” list for 2006, recognizing their role as “health-care community leaders.”

Allen Barnett, PhD ’69, CEO, Kines Pharmaceuticals

Gregg Broffman, MD ’76, medical director, Western New York Lifetime Health Medical Group

William Duax, PhD, Distinguished Scientist at Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute, and UB professor of structural biology.

Vijay Kumar, PhD ’73, president and CEO of Immo Diagnostics, Inc.

Leon Lewis, MD ’65, founding partner, Eye Care and Vision Associates, LLP

Louis A. A. Mota, director of the Library Consortium of Health Institutions in Buffalo, UB Health Sciences Library.

Janet Sung, MD, president of Windsor Radiology Group.

Mauricio Tovíman, MD, professor and dean of the UB School of Public Health and Health Professions.

Niescierenko Receives AMA Leadership Award

Michelle Niescierenko, MD ’96, has been named a recipient of the American Medical Association Foundation’s 2006 Leadership Award. The award, which is presented in association with the Pfizer Medical Humanities Initiative, provides medical students, residents/fellows, young physicians and international medical graduate physicians from the around the country special training to develop their skills as future leaders in organized medicine.

The AMA Foundation honored 35 individuals with the award at its annual Excellence in Medicine Awards ceremony on March 12 in Washington, DC. Recipients demonstrate outstanding non-clinical leadership skills in advocacy, community service and/or education.

Niescierenko is the founder and director of the Lighthouse Insurance Initiative, which strives to improve access to health care and insurance enrollment. She has served as New York State Lobby Day coordinator and is an active member of the AMA. In addition to participating in the Leadership Award training, Niescierenko attended the AMA’s National Advocacy Conference, also held in March.

“If through their committed efforts in advancing health care in their communities, these men and women have shown tremendous potential for being part of the next generation of medical leaders,” said Linda B. Ford, MD, president of the AMA Foundation. “Whether the issues are political or social, I am confident that these talented people will provide solid leadership in the interest of improving health-care delivery in our country.”

Pictured, LEFT TO RIGHT, are Linda B. Ford, MD, president, AMA Foundation; Michelle Lynn Niescierenko, MD ’96; J. Edward Hill, MD, president, AMA Board of Trustees; and Mike Magee, MD, director, Pfizer Medical Humanities Initiative.

The 2006 Siegel Award recipients: Full-Time Teaching in the Basic Sciences Linda Pessar, MD, professor of psychiatry Full-Time Teaching in the Clinical Sciences Elie Akl, MD, research assistant professor, Department of Medicine Resident Teaching Arundathi Prasad, MD, Department of Gynecology-Obstetrics Volunteer Physician Chad Strittmatter, MD, clinical instructor, Department of Gynecology-Obstetrics

Pediatric Urology Study NIH funds $2.5 million vesico-ureteral-reflux trial

ESIJO-URETAL REFUX, in which urine flows from the bladder back up the ureter to the kidneys, is diagnosed in 50,000 children annually in the U.S. Not only does the reversed urine flow cause recurrent urinary-tract infections that can lead to kidney damage, but in some cases the damage can result in hypertension and renal failure, either in childhood or later in life. Optimum treatment for vesico-uretal reflux (VUR) is the focus of a clinical trial that will begin this fall by UB pediatric urologists with the support of a five-year, $2.5 million grant from the National Institute of Health. Saul Greenfield, MD, clinical professor of urology and director of the Division of Pediatric Urology at Women and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo is principal investigator. Treatment options for VUR include surgery, long-term antibiotic prophylaxis or observation. Greenfield says there are no well-established guidelines for all children with this condition and that many controversies remain.

“We have already shown in Buffalo that kidney disease and high blood pressure are reduced by early recognition and treatment of VUR,” he says.

“We hope to be able to learn more about how to handle reflux from this study. It might be possible to tailor treatment to children, so that not every child will need surgery or medication that has to be taken for many years.”

“The Department of Pediatric Urology at Women and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo has had a longstanding interest in this condition and has contributed substantially to the literature on this topic,” Greenfield adds. “We have conducted basic and clinical research and we are a regional referral center for Western New York. We’re hopeful that lessons learned from this study will result in continued improvements in care and keep us on the cutting edge.”

Children in the study will be assigned randomly to different treatment groups and followed for three years. Wayne R. Waz, MD ’88, assistant professor of pediatrics and director of the Department of Pediatric Urology at Women and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo, is co-investigator on the project.

—Lois Baker

—S. A. Unkles

—S. A. Unkles

Louis A. and Ruth Siegel Awards for Excellence in Teaching

The Louis A. and Ruth Siegel Awards for Excellence in Teaching are the foremost means for recognizing extraordinary teachers in the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. A student award committee made up of representatives from each medical class reviews nominations provided by students and selects awardees in four categories. Considerations for this prestigious annual award include instructional skill, ability to stimulate thinking and develop understanding, demonstration of sensitivity toward the human condition, and serving as a role model for students.
Correction

In the spring issue of Buffalo Physician, an obituary of Dennis Higgins, PhD, professor of pharmacology and toxicology, incorrectly listed his survivors. Dr. Higgins is survived by his wife, Cheryl, his daughter, Kerry, and her husband, Jake; his son, Devel; his grand- daughter, Kaylee; and his sister, Maureen Conshuhes.

Steven H. Noyes, MD

Steven H. Noyes, MD, an attending physician in the Department of Medicine at Erie County Medical Center (ECMC), died on February 11, 2006, following a brief illness. He was 58.

An accomplished clinician-educator who taught both medical students and residents, Noyes served as the coordinator of the third- and fourth-year medicine clerkships at ECMC. He was recognized for his dedication to medical student education in internal medicine and was the recipient of the Siegel Teaching Award in 1985 and 2002. His students have evaluated their sessions with him as “some of their best learning experiences.”

Noyes earned a bachelor of arts degree in zoology at Syracuse University in 1969 and completed his medical school training at Upstate Medical Center in 1973. Three years later, he completed his residency in internal medicine and a medical oncology fellowship at the E. J. Meyer Memorial Hospital. He then joined the UB Department of Medicine at ECMC as a medical oncologist. At UB, he served on several university committees including the Admissions Committee, the Curriculum Committee, and the Faculty Council.

To family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors, Noyes was noteworthy and remarkably kindhearted. He dedicated his life to helping people.

He is survived by his mother, Helen Phares Noyes, who is 91, five siblings, and five grandchildren.

In Memoriam

Roy Slaunwhite, PhD

(WILSON) Roy Slaunwhite, PhD, a retired professor of biochemistry who was active in United University Professions (UUP), died February 8, 2006, in his home in Scottsdale, Arizona. He was 86.

A native of Waltham, Massachusetts, Slaunwhite earned degrees in biophysics and chemistry from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He helped design the radar system that ended the U-Boat threat in the Atlantic Ocean during World War II.

Slaunwhite moved to Buffalo in 1953 to work at Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI). He was a principal cancer research scientist at RPCI in 1967 when he became research director of the Medical Foundation of Buffalo, now known as Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute.

Slaunwhite joined the UB faculty in 1969 as professor of biochemistry and also served as director of the endocrine laboratories at what is now Women and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo. He retired from the university in 1987.

A specialist in steroids, Slaunwhite authored more than 100 scholarly articles, contributed chapters in 15 books and wrote a textbook on biochemical endocrinology. One of his significant contributions was the delineation of the androgenic pathway to determine how male hormones are made. He also discovered how to separate and analyze urinary estrogens, a measurement useful to obstetricians in determining when immediate delivery is needed to avoid loss of pregnancy.

Slaunwhite served as president of UUP’s Health Sciences Chapter from 1981–1986, and was an active member of the board from 1979–1997, when he moved from Buffalo to Arizona. His union leadership earned him the Regina Kociecki Award from the local chapter and the Nina Mitchell Award from the statewide UUP.

Slaunwhite served as president of UUP’s Health Sciences Chapter from 1981–1986, and was an active member of the board from 1979–1997, when he moved from Buffalo to Arizona. His union leadership earned him the Regina Kociecki Award from the local chapter and the Nina Mitchell Award from the statewide UUP.

Correction

In the spring issue of Buffalo Physician, an obituary of Dennis Higgins, PhD, professor of pharmacology and toxicology, incorrectly listed his survivors. Dr. Higgins is survived by his wife, Cheryl, his daughter, Kerry, and her husband, Jake; his son, Devel; his granddaughter, Kaylee; and his sister, Maureen Conshuhes.

—Sue Wuestehre