Dunn Named to BNMC Board

DAVID DUNN, MD, PhD, vice president for health sciences at UB, has been elected a member of the board of directors for the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC). Other new members joining Dunn are Edward Walsh, Jr., chair of the board; Kathleen Kaskie, president and chief operating officer for Kaleida Health; Donald Hess, chair of the board; Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute; and Kenneth Wilson, chair of the board, Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center. Each of the five new members replaces individuals from their respective organizations.

Board chair for BNMC is Thomas R. Beecher, Jr. BNMC is a consortium of the region’s premier institutes for health care, life-sciences research and medical education, includ-
ing UB; Roswell Park Cancer Institute; Kaleida Health; Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute; Olmsted Center for the Visually Impaired; Buffalo Medical Group, and Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center.

In 2003, these institutions came together in partnership with the City of Buffalo, the County of Erie, the Allegheny neighborhood and the Fruit Belt neighborhood, to form BNMC, Inc. to cultivate a world-class medical campus on 150 acres in downtown Buffalo. Also located at BNMC is a state-of-the-art research space for research, information technology, and technology transfer.

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over 3,800 active fellows and members. The recipient of this statewide award is selected by Junior Fellows of the College.

According to ACOG, the Professor of the Year is “an influential mentor . . . who inspires, instructs, develops and empowers the women’s health-care providers of tomorrow.” The Professor of the Year has a vision for the future of the specialty With a positive outlook, the selected candidate enjoys practicing the specialty and can easily pass that enthusiasm on to residents. The ACOG is the nation’s leading group of physicians board certified in the specialty of obstetrics and gynecology who are dedicated to advancing women’s health through education, advocacy, practice and research. It is a private, voluntary, nonprofit organization with a national headquarters in Washington, DC.

**Bullard Dunn Joins RPCI and UB**

Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI) has appointed Kati Bullard Dunn, MD, FACS, to the Gastrointestinal Service in the Department of Surgical Oncology and to the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics. She also has been appointed associate professor, Department of Surgery, in the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. Bullard Dunn comes to Buffalo from the University of Minnesota, where she served in the departments of Surgery and Laboratory Medicine and Pathology. She earned her medical degree at Harvard University, completed residency training at the University of California, San Francisco, and a fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at the University of Minnesota. She is certified by the American Board of Surgery and the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery. She holds a patent for a medical device that holds medical instrumentation.

Bullard Dunn’s research interests focus on the growth and progression of colorectal carcinoma. Her clinical research involves patterns of recurrence in colorectal cancer and surgical complications of endovascular therapy. Her basic science research investigates cell–matrix interactions in colorectal cancer cells.

Bullard Dunn is a member of the Society of University Surgeons, American College of Surgeons, Association for Academic Surgery, Association for Surgical Education, American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, American Medical Association and the Association of Women Surgeons. She has authored or coauthored more than 70 journal articles, abstracts and book chapters.

**Lovell Named President of BGH**

Kaleda Health has named Robert M. Lovell, president of Buffalo General Hospital, a 513-bed acute care medical center located on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus in downtown Buffalo and the largest teaching affiliate of the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. Prior to joining Kaleda, Lovell served as president and chief executive officer at Caritas Health Services. Prior to joining Caritas, Lovell served as president and chief operating officer at Caritas Health Services. Prior to joining the university, he was a division chief at the University of Minnesota, where he served as a director of Caritas Health Services.

Bullard Dunn is a member of the Society of University Surgeons, American College of Surgeons, Association for Academic Surgery, Association for Surgical Education, American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, American Medical Association and the Association of Women Surgeons. She has authored or coauthored more than 70 journal articles, abstracts and book chapters.

—Deborah Pettibone

**McMann Directs Office of CME**

Lori M. McMann has been named director of the UB Office of Continuing Medical Education (CME). In this capacity, she works closely with faculty to promote and expand access to quality, evidence-based education programs for physicians. Prior to assuming this position, McMann served in the UB Office of Graduate Medical Education (GME) as program coordinator for the departments of Orthopaedic Surgery and Radiology, as well as education coordinator for GME.

Before joining the Office of GME, she served as a human resource manager for University Orthopaedic Services, Inc., and in 2001 was given added responsibility as the residency program coordinator for the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery under Lawrence Bona, MD, program director and chair of the department. McMann holds a bachelor of science degree in sociology and a master of science degree in higher education from Buffalo State College.

She succeeds Barbara Mrzwa, who gained national recognition during her tenure as CME director and is now working as a development associate in the school’s Office of Advancement.

—S. A. Unger

**Kuzdale Joins Research and Biomedical Education**

Amy Kuzdale has joined the Office of Research and Biomedical Education as an administrative coordinator. In this capacity, she is responsible for coordinating and implementing the operational activities associated with graduate biomedical education and the Medical Scientist Training Program. This includes recruitment, orientation, admissions, graduate policy advisement, financial aid, commencement and day-to-day program management.

Prior to assuming her new position, Kuzdale worked in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at UB, where she was a staff assistant responsible for enrollment reports and statistics and for coordinating special projects for the director of admissions.

Prior to that, she worked in the UB School of Pharmacy’s Department of Pharmacy Practice, assisting fourth-year pharmacy students. Kuzdale received her...
Dee Named Associate Commercialization Manager

Timothy P. Dee has been named associate commercialization manager for the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Dee previously was a biotechnology marketing assistant and project support specialist with STOR during the time he attended the UB School of Management MBA program. In those positions, he performed technical and market analyses, marketed UB inventions to industry and assisted in commercialization and licensing activities. Prior to enrolling in the UB MBA program, Dee was a chiropractic physician and fitness specialist at AdvAntEdge Chiropractic and Wellness in North Carolina.

He earned a bachelor’s degree in biology, summa cum laude, from Canisius College; doctor of chiropractic, cum laude, from New York Chiropractic College; and a master of business administration with distinction from the UB School of Management.

— Lorraine O. Stinebiser

Draper Recognized as “Rising Star”

David Draper, director of development in Office of Advancement at the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, received the 2006 Rising Star Award presented by the Achievement Awards Committee for District II of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education. The Achievement Awards recognize the contributions of members of the district, including campus leaders and advancement professionals, as well as volunteers.

Draper joined the Advancement Office in November 2003. He was the lead staff person for the successful Clinical Competency Center Capital Improvements Campaign and works with alumni and several academic departments to raise private philanthropic support for the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

— S. A. Unger

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D. P. Niescierenko Receives AMA Foundation Scholarship

ICHELLE LYNN NIESCIERENKO, Class of 2006, is one of four medical students in the country to be awarded an American Medical Association National Foundation Scholarship in recognition of her academic excellence.

Created last year as part of the AMA Foundation’s ongoing effort to provide financial assistance to medical students, the scholarship provides each of the awardees $10,000 to help defray school expenses. The award is highly competitive, with nearly 800 nominees nationwide in 2005.

A native of Rochester, NY, Niescierenko graduated from Ithaca College with a bachelor of arts degree in biology. Her goal is to pursue a career in pediatrics and to practice in an academic setting after completing her residency training. “I’d like to teach medical students, serve the community and continue to do clinical research,” she says.

A decrease in federal funding and a limited number of new sources of scholarship assistance in recent years have caused higher out-of-pocket costs for future physicians. On average, medical students in the United States graduate more than $100,000 in debt, according to the AMA. When the costs of residency training are added, debt can rise to $120,000 or more.

“The situation is dire for many students, and it has a real impact on the quality of our health care as a nation,” says AMA Foundation President Linda Feud, MD. “If costs are so high that colleges have a hard time attracting the most qualified students to become physicians, the medical profession’s future is put in jeopardy.”

The new National Scholarship was created in addition to the Foundation’s extensive yearly distribution of financial assistance to medical students nationwide.

— S. A. Unger
symposium in honor of Leon Farhi, MD, SUNY Distinguished Professor and past chair of the UB Department of Physiology, was held in Buffalo September 29 to October 1, 2005.

Farhi was internationally recognized for his research accomplishments in pulmonary physiology and for his leadership in the American Physiological Society, as well as at UB. Although research was among his highest priorities, Farhi was also devoted to education. His lectures and papers were meticulously prepared and were valued for their literary flair as well as for their scientific content.

The symposium—which was attended by over 110 invited faculty, colleagues, former students and interested scientists—had two goals. The first was to present cutting-edge science by leaders in the field of pulmonary medicine, and the second was to present important new research by his former students.

Toward the first goal, contemporary studies were presented that addressed potentially novel strategies for treating patients with cystic fibrosis. These included studies of transport-protein trafficking (M. Caplan, Yale University), CFTR channel function (K. Kirk, University of Alabama, Birmingham) and mucus clearance (R. Boucher, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).

Other presentations focused on the molecular and cellular aspects of the pathophysiology of asthma, chronic obstructive lung disease, and pulmonary hypertension (S. Weiss, Harvard University; J. Drazen, Harvard University and editor-in-chief of the New England Journal of Medicine; F. Barnes, National Heart and Lung Institute, Imperial College, London, U.K.; and M. Rabinoivitch, Stanford University).

Toward the second goal, presentations were made by Farhi’s former students, including D. Sheehan (UB), M. Hlatala (University of Washington) and J. Farber (Oklahoma), as well as his colleagues P. Cerretelli (Italy), J. Pipper (Germany), Y. Cassuto (Israel), E. Egan (UB), D. Linnarson (Sweden), P.E. di Prampero (Italy, editor, European Journal of Applied Physiology) and U. Boutellier (Switzerland), S. Tamaya (Japan) and C. E. G. Lundgren (UB).

These presentations—all of which represented fields in which Farhi had pioneered, or in which he had made seminal contributions—focused on pulmonary gas exchange, effects of gravity on pulmonary circulation, distribution of ventilation and perfusion, gas exchange in the unsteady state, effects of dead space on gas exchange, assessment of gas exchange by multiple inert gases and environmental physiology.

In closing, a dinner was held in Farhi’s honor and attended by many colleagues, friends and family members, including his wife, Haya; son, Eli Farhi, MD; daughter-in-law, Emily Friden, MD; daughter, Nitza Farhi-Ellis, MD; son-in-law, Avery Ellis, MD; and his grandchildren. The dinner included very poignant and representative portrayals of Leon Farhi “the man” given by his daughter and by Charles Paganelli, PhD, past chair of the UB Department of Physiology.

The symposium clearly emphasized Farhi’s giant intellect, his contributions to science, his concern for his colleagues, students and fellows, and his wonderfully dry sense of humor.
New Approaches to Cancer Therapeutics

NCI awards $6.7 million for nanotechnology studies

By Ellen Goldbaum

University at Buffalo and Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI) are two out of only 12 institutions in the nation where the National Cancer Institute (NCI) has chosen to pioneer a new generation of cancer diagnostics and treatments based on nanotechnology. The NCI, part of the National Institutes of Health, announced on October 17, 2005 the awarding of two technology platform grants totaling more than $6.7 million over the next five years to researchers at the institutions.

The goal of the grants is to facilitate rapid clinical and basic research advances to generate products for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer for clinical trials or clinical use within the next five years. Paras N. Prasad, PhD, SUNY Distinguished Professor and director of UB’s Institute for Lasers, Photonics and Biophotonics, was awarded a $3.46 million grant for research aimed at developing nanotechnologies for earlier diagnosis and more effective treatment of pancreatic cancer. The work also will involve scientists at The Johns Hopkins University.

The second grant, for $3.3 million, has been awarded to Allan Oseroff, MD, PhD, chair of the departments of dermatology at RPCI and the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. It will fund research by a team that will include Prasad and researchers at the University of Michigan, and will develop nanotechnology platforms for photodynamic therapy (PDT) to improve treatment for several cancers.

“This funding for our cancer research and treatment efforts is tremendously significant for UB and for our research partners, and will play a very meaningful role in advancing the fight against cancer,” said UB President John B. Simpson, at the time of the announcement.

The award to Prasad is aimed at reducing deaths from pancreatic cancer, now the fourth most deadly cancer in the U.S., accounting for approximately 31,000 cancer deaths each year, according to the NCI. Fewer than five percent of patients with pancreatic cancer live for five years after being diagnosed. In addition, family members with two first-degree relatives with pancreatic cancer have an 18-fold greater risk of developing the disease than the general population, while those with three first-degree relatives with the cancer have a 57-fold greater risk, according to research from The Johns Hopkins University, UB’s partner in the research.

“This award marks a critical juncture in the maturation of our nanoparticle research program,” says Prasad. “It is extremely gratifying to see that these technologies developed at UB are being applied to a disease where the need for earlier detection and more effective treatment is so pressing.”

“We are very excited to be working with our Johns Hopkins’ colleagues in this project designed to accelerate nanotechnology’s move out of the laboratory and into the cancer clinic where its potential can be fully realized.”

Prasad and his team will develop diagnostic and treatment methods for pancreatic cancer that capitalize on its demonstrated expertise in developing targeted hybrid ceramic-polymeric nanoparticles to better image pancreatic cancer in vivo and to deliver drugs more effectively to treat it.

The award is a partnership between Prasad’s group at UB and groups at The Johns Hopkins University led by Anirban Maitra, MD, at the Sol Goldman Pancreatic Cancer Research Center and by Martin Pomper, MD, PhD, at the In Vivo Cellular and Molecular Imaging Center. The grant to Oseroff capitalizes on his expertise in photodynamic therapy or PDT, a treatment that originated at Roswell Park Cancer Institute. PDT exploits the propensity of tumors to retain higher concentrations of photosensitive drugs than normal tissues. When exposed to laser light, these drugs generate toxic molecules that destroy the cancer cells.

Oseroff’s research team will use tumor-seeking photosensitizers to target delivery of nanoparticles, facilitating both diagnosis and guided therapy in models of cancers of the breast, colon, prostate and lung.

“Roswell Park shares the National Cancer Institute’s vision for the potential of nanotechnology to contribute to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer,” says David C. Hohn, MD, president and chief executive officer at RPCI.

“This NCI initiative offers our world-class photodynamic therapy group the opportunity to collaborate with other academic institutions to make significant clinical advances.”

The nanotechnology work at UB has received critical funding from the John R. Oishei Foundation. It also has received seed funding from the Office of the Vice President for Research at UB.

The nanomedicine program of the Institute for Lasers, Photonics and Biophotonics operates in collaboration with UB’s New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences. Research at the institute also has been supported by special New York State funding sponsored by State Senator Mary Lou Rath.

For more information on PDT, visit Buffalo Physician’s web site at www.ams.buffalo.edu/bp. Click on “Past issues” and up to the Autumn 2004 issue, featuring “Photodynamic Therapy, an Idea That’s Taken on a Light of Its Own.”

Scientific American’s Top 50 Scientists

Paras N. Prasad, PhD, named to the 2005 list

Scientific American has named Paras N. Prasad, Ph.D., to the 2005 list of Scientific American’s Top 50 Scientists. Prasad is a professor and chair of the Department of Chemistry, to its annual “Scientific American 50” list, which recognizes individuals who have contributed “outstanding acts of leadership in science and technology from the past year.”

Those included on the list are selected by members of Scientific American’s board of editors and outside experts. “The ‘Scientific American 50’ is our annual opportunity to salute the people and organizations worldwide whose research, policy or business leadership has played a major role in bringing about the science and technology innovations that are improving the way we live and offer the greatest hope for the future,” says John Rennie, editor-in-chief of Scientific American.

Prasad, who is executive director of UB’s Institute for Lasers, Photonics and Biophotonics, was selected for his research using customized nanoparticles developed to achieve gene therapy, avoiding the need to rely on potentially toxic vectors. This research, conducted by a multidisciplinary group, including Michael K. Shatrukov, PhD, associate professor of pathology and anatomical sciences in the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, also demonstrates that the nanoparticles can serve as promising models for studying the specific mechanisms of the brain (see following page).

Prasad holds the Samuel P. Capen Chair at UB, as well as joint appointments in the departments of biology in the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

In addition to his nanomedicine research, he conducts pioneering research in the development and application of new photon technology for biophotonics and 3-D microfabrication.

The list of the “Scientific American 50” appears in the December 2005 issue of Scientific American.

Thomas Szyperski, PhD, a UB professor of chemistry who holds dual appointments in the department of biophysical and structural biology in the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, was named to the “Scientific American 50” list in 2003. His protein-structure determining research involving magnetic resonance was featured on the cover of the autumn 2005 issue of Buffalo Physician.