**On Top of Their Game**

*Psychiatry residents triumph in Jeopardy-style competition*

OUT-BUZZING AND OUT-SMARTING TEAMS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA AND WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY, A THREE-PERSON TEAM FROM UB’S PSYCHIATRY RESIDENCE PROGRAM WON THE FIRST JEOPARDY-INSPIRED “MINDGAMES” AT THE 2007 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION HELD IN SAN DIEGO IN MAY.

Fast-forward to San Diego. A promotional film of the upcoming competition played in the hotel lobby to build excitement. As “Mind Games” got under way, a raucous cheering section of Buffalo partisans, made up of UB physicians, residents, former residents and alumni gathered to cheer on the UB team, decked out in UB blue and white. Even Susan McLeer, MD, the department’s former chair, stopped by.

Glen G. Gabbard, MD, Brown Foundation Professor of Psychiatry at Baylor College of Medicine and director of Baylor’s psychiatry clinic, stood in as emcee. Things did not look good for UB as the competition progressed. Going in to the final round, the home team had only 800 points compared to the University of Pennsylvania’s 3,000.

“The third round was when things turned around,” recalls Amarendran. Luckily, History of Psychiatry came up as a category. One of the attending physicians recently had presented a lecture on the topic. When the final buzzer sounded, UB had triumphed.

“When we won, it took a few minutes to sink in,” says Amarendran. “Then the celebration began. People were jumping up and down and cheering.”

The faculty treated the team to dinner at an Italian restaurant. The trophy now sits in the resident library.

“Now it’s back to regular life,” sighs Amarendran.

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**The Class of 2011: at a Glance**

**This Year’s White Coat Ceremony** was held on August 10, 2007, at Slee Hall on UB’s North Campus. During the ceremony, Charles Severin, MD, PhD, interim associate dean for medical education, shared the following statistics about the class.

- **NUMBER OF APPLICANTS:** 3,826
- **CLASS SIZE:** 135 (12 MD/PhD candidates)
- **FEMALE/MALE RATIO:** 73/62
- **AVERAGE MCAT SCORE:** 30.28
- **SCIENCE/NON-SCIENCE MAJORS:** 94/41
- **DEGREES: PHD/MASTERS:** 2/18
- **AVERAGE AGE:** 23
- **OLDEST/YOUNGEST:** 35/21
- **WHERE THEY CALL HOME:** Western New York (38), eastern New York (21), Upstate New York (12), Downstate New York (41), out-of-state (23)
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For more on the White Coat Ceremony, turn to page 46, which features photographs of donors coating students for whom they have provided scholarships.

—S. A. Unger

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**The Buffalo Physician**

**At a Glance**

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—S. A. Unger
Genetics and Genomics Symposium

Focus on UB 2020 strategic strength

MORE THAN 100 SCIENTISTS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY GATHERED IN BUFFALO ON SEPTEMBER 7 FOR A SYMPOSIUM ON “GENETICS AND GENOMICS IN DEVELOPMENT AND DISEASE” ORGANIZED BY THE UB 2020 STRATEGIC STRENGTH IN MOLECULAR RECOGNITION IN BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS AND BIOINFORMATICS. SPEAKERS AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS EXAMINED THE MOLECULAR EVENTS AND PATHWAYS THAT ARE ESSENTIAL TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND WHOSE MIS-REGULATION FREQUENTLY RESULTS IN HUMAN DISEASE.

The symposium took place on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and was hosted by UB’s New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences and the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

“Molecular Recognition in Biological Systems and Bioinformatics” is one of eight areas of strategic strength identified by UB 2020, the university’s research agenda for the next 13 years. It is the first of the UB 2020 strengths to host a thematic symposium of this sort.

Kenneth Blumenthal, PhD, professor and chair of the UB Department of Biochemistry and a member of the coordinating committee for the strategic strength, explains that certain genes must be either “turned on or turned off” (expressed or silenced) in order for an organism to develop and function properly. When this does not happen, developmental disorders and diseases occur.

“Because we are now able to look at genes being turned on and off throughout an organism, it is possible to identify groups of co-regulated genes that form developmental pathways,” says Blumenthal, adding that these same tools can be used to identify errors in pathways that give rise to cancer, cardiovascular disease and other human pathologies.

The symposium was the first of a series of thematic mini-symposia to be hosted by members of the group representing the strategic strength. The second, to be held in March 2008, will focus on recombinant expression of proteins for research and therapeutics. A third symposium next summer will focus on chemical biology.

A goal of the symposia is to identify potential cross-disciplinary interactions and collaborations among UB faculty members. For more information on the “Molecular Recognition in Biological Systems and Bioinformatics” strategic strength, visit the UB 2020 web site at http://www.buffalo.edu/ub2020/overview/ and click on “Building on Our Academic Strengths.”

SPEAKERS AT THE SYMPOSIUM
INCLUDED:
Thomas Dootschman
University of Arizona
AciL Menton
University of Cincinnati
Richard Maas
Harvard University
Kenneth Gross and Andrei Gudknev
Roswell Park Cancer Institute

UB SPEAKERS INCLUDED:
Richard Gronostajski and Marc Halton
UB Department of Biochemistry
Matthew Disney
UB Department of Chemistry
Denise Fenley
UB Department of Biology

FREQUENTLY RESULTS IN HUMAN DISEASE.

Nancy Nielsen, MD ’76, PhD, Named AMA President-Elect

In line to become the AMA’s second woman president

NANCY H. NIENLEN, M D ’76, PHD, senior associate dean for medical education in the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, was named president-elect of the American Medical Association (AMA) on June 23.

Following a year-long term as president-elect, Nielsen will assume the office of AMA president in June 2008. “The American Medical Association’s commitment to leadership, excellence and integrity are the bedrock of its pursuit of practical solutions to the nation’s health-care priorities,” says Nielsen, who will be the second woman to hold the AMA’s highest elected office. “It is a deep honor and privilege to be named president-elect of an organization that is committed to helping our profession and the patients we serve.”

Since 2000, Nielsen has served four consecutive annual terms as speaker of the House of Delegates, the AMA policy-setting body, and three consecutive annual terms as vice-speaker. She has been an active contributor to AMA policy discussions and currently represents the AMA on several quality initiatives, including the National Quality Forum, the AMA-convened Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement and the Ambulatory Care Quality Alliance.

A past member of the AMA’s Council on Scientific Affairs, Nielsen helped develop AMA policy on prominent health issues, such as alcoholism among women, colorectal cancer screening and safety in dispensing prescriptions.

In addition to her work at UB and with the AMA, Nielsen has long been active in healthcare issues important to New York. She was a trustee of the State University of New York and a chief medical officer for the New York State Department of Health’s Western Region. She has also served as an officer with the Medical Society of the State of New York, the New York State Society of Internal Medicine and the Erie County Medical Society.

—S. A. Unger