

Building the Medical Center to Best Train Future Physicians



Richard N. Fine, M.D.,
Dean, School of
Medicine

This year we welcome 108 new medical students to the School of Medicine. They hail from 50 undergraduate institutions from around the country and the world. Incoming and returning students have a unique opportunity this year to participate in a dynamic new educational and clinical

experience at *Stony Brook University Medical Center*—our new name that reflects our mission as a teaching hospital, center for research, and provider of specialized care.

In this first issue of *Medical Center News*, you will learn about initiatives set forth to reinvigorate our medical school curriculum, with a special emphasis on enhanced clinical training for students. For example, we are developing a new Competency and Skills Center that will use “actor” patients trained to simulate medical conditions for clinical training. The Center is designed to be a teaching module to expose first-year medical students to patient care in a realistic environment. Also, a new competency-based curriculum is being designed that sets forth higher standards for students upon completion of medical school.

Clinical research is poised to grow as we expect to develop more clinical trials that provide new treatments for patients. This will be achieved by working closely with industry to pinpoint promising treatments for diseases and building inter-departmental collaboration to maximize research and care for those diseases.

The opening of the Stony Brook University Cancer Center’s outpatient facility, adjacent to the Ambulatory Surgery Center, will be a major accomplishment for the Medical Center. The facility will add space and put outpatient medical services in close proximity. It will also provide faculty and students with a state-of-the-art facility and a more cohesive program in which to strengthen multidisciplinary training.

These advancements at the Medical Center place us in a position to train future physicians at the highest level possible. As the national need for physicians grows, we plan to increase the number of physicians we train each year. As we continue to enhance academic program, and build research and specialized clinical programs, the Medical Center will succeed in this endeavor.

TOP NEWS

Outpatient Cancer Center to Open

The Stony Brook University Cancer Center will move its outpatient services into a new facility located adjacent to the Ambulatory Surgery Center on the Medical Center’s campus. This move, scheduled for mid to late fall, brings the outpatient cancer services of the hospital and those in Tech Park, including the Carol M. Baldwin Breast Care Center, to one convenient location.

The new Outpatient Imaging Center located in the facility is equipped with a full range of advanced diagnostic services and state-of-the-art equipment for timely, comprehensive results. Use of a wide spectrum of imaging systems, including ultrasound, MRI, CT and PET scanning, and radiographic imaging, adds flexibility to diagnostic procedures and will speed up diagnoses for patients. Also, the Stony Brook University Pain Management Center is being relocated into the facility and offers comprehensive management and treatment of chronic pain for outpatients.

While the inner workings of the new facility bring outpatient services and specialty care into one dynamic setting, the design of the building places a premium on comfort, convenience and space. This is beneficial to patients and provides for a pleasant and efficient working environment. The spacious and modern 65,000 square-foot facility offers easy access, ample parking and valet services, bright and spacious treatment areas, tranquil lobbies, and on-site food services. A Community Resource Center provides patient education.

The new location is also an optimum setting for the multidisciplinary collaboration of 11 disease-specific cancer management teams in areas that include gastrointestinal (upper and lower GI tract), head and neck, prostate and other urologic cancers, breast, skin, lung, hematologic, pediatric, gynecologic, and neurologic cancers. In addition, an on-site cancer Clinical Trials Office will manage newly



The outpatient services of the Stony Brook University Cancer Center will move into a new facility, adjacent to the Ambulatory Surgery Center. This is a major step in building the cancer program as a “Center of Excellence.”

launched clinical trials conducted by the disease-specific teams.

“Having our outpatient services in one location, including imaging services, will cultivate the Cancer Center’s clinical strategy to build a ‘Center of Excellence,’” says Martin S. Karpeh, M.D., Director, Stony Brook University Cancer Center. “The outpatient center also gives students a wonderful opportunity to learn how modern oncology should be practiced. And we expect to involve students more in cancer outreach programs by helping with patient education.”

Other strategies to advance the Stony Brook University Cancer Center as a “Center of Excellence” include a research and business plan. These plans, along with the clinical strategy, are part of an ongoing three-point plan aimed at developing relationships with community physicians and hospitals, invigorating the multidisciplinary team approach to patient care, and providing a model teaching environment for health care professionals.

EDUCATION BRIEFS

New Competency and Skills Center

An exciting addition to the medical education program is the establishment of the Competency and Skills Center. Starting in October, the Center will use “actor” patients who are carefully trained to simulate medical conditions for instruction, clinical training, and evaluation of medical student performance. Students will be tested on clinical reasoning, clinical skills, and the physical assessment and diagnosis of each “patient” case. In addition to live patient simulation, the department has invested in “SimMan,” a computer-controlled mannequin that can be programmed to show signs and symptoms of disease.

Recharging the Curriculum

A three- to four-year plan to continue to strengthen the medical school curriculum is underway. Central to this is the creation of a competency-based curriculum. This new format will set levels of competencies—knowledge, attitudes, and skills that students are expected to be proficient in upon graduation—as a framework to the curriculum design.

More Training, More Lab Space



Dr. Margaret Parker

Medical students and residents will have additional training in both inpatient and outpatient settings through an initiative directed by Margaret Parker, M.D., Interim Chair, Department of Medicine. The

additional training will enhance and expand their clinical skills. Also, a greater emphasis on the critical evaluation of the literature is being incorporated into the teaching program at large.

Renovation of the department’s lab within the 17th floor of the HSC will increase lab space and carve out research stations for investigative teams. When completed, the area will include work stations for those involved in complementary research. The additional space will be a catalyst toward collaborative research efforts across divisions.

Heart Center

Specialty Care, Technology Fuels Training

Under the leadership of Heart Center Co-Directors David L. Brown, M.D., Chief of Cardiovascular Medicine, and Todd K. Rosengart, M.D., Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery, the Heart Center continues to build its specialty care programs and add new technologies that expand patient services and enhance specialty training.

One of the most recent additions is the **Electrophysiology (EP) Program**. Newly appointed EP Director Eric J. Rashba, M.D., nationally recognized for his technical and clinical skills, runs a program that provides the most up-to-date treatments for heart rhythm disorders. Dr. Rashba employs the latest electrophysiologic therapies including drugs, devices, or ablation to treat patients. As the program develops, he will train residents in EP technologies and methods.

With new heart imaging technology in place, the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine is now taking a more integrated approach to cardiac imaging that will be incorporated into clinical practice, research, and education. Therefore, a **Section of Cardiac Imaging**, led by Smadar Kort, M.D., is being developed. It will consist of four subsections: Nuclear Cardiology, Echocardiography, Cardiac CT and Cardiac MR. All specialists within the subsections will work closely with colleagues in the Department of Radiology.

The Heart Failure Service, under the direction of Hal Skopicki, M.D., Ph.D., has transformed the care of patients hospitalized with heart failure. Over 150 nurses who care for heart failure patients have received didactic training in heart failure management to optimize the care patients receive during their hospitalization and to reduce their risk of hospitalization after discharge.

An ongoing IRB-approved study (SEARCH: Sustaining Excellence And Results in the Care of Heart failure patients) is monitoring how specific documentation of patient care—such as that of daily weight, diuretic regimen, the heart’s ejection fraction, heart failure-specific medications, and incidence of adverse events—reflects changes as a result of the nurses’ training. In addition, a study at the offices of the Heart Failure and Cardiomyopathy Center at Islandia is offering a no-cost, nurse practitioner evaluation to assess whether a heart failure patient is receiving the optimal types and dosages of medications.

Leadership Advisory Group

The School of Medicine is assembling a Leadership Advisory Group, which will report to the Dean on proposed policies and activities of the Medical Center. The 16-member group will meet periodically with Dr. Fine. Advisory Group members will receive professional development training and be called upon to raise, discuss, and debate topics of importance to the Medical Center. Their first charge is to help develop a uniform policy regarding access to the Medical Center by pharmaceutical industry representatives.

Each meeting will have an education component on an essential leadership skill, such as personnel management and budgeting. Each member is to participate in at least one of the Medical Center’s committees on clinical practice policies.

Fellowship in Medical Education Launched

This fall eight faculty will be chosen to participate in a 16-month curriculum designed to hone their teaching skills, familiarize them with the body of published medical education literature, and add to their leadership skills and career development. Under the guidance of Elza Mylona, Ph.D., Assistant Dean for Faculty Development, the program promotes excellence in teaching and scholarship in teaching. Participants will receive a one-time stipend (\$5,000) and be required to produce a publishable piece on a specific topic in educational research. For more information on participating in the program, please call Dr. Mylona directly at (631) 444-9397.

OSA

Clinical Research Training Program Begins Second Year

During the academic year, the School of Medicine's Clinical Research Training Program (also known as the K30 Program) will begin its second year educating selected clinicians in multidisciplinary didactic training and mentoring in "bench-to-bedside" research. Each participant receives an advanced certificate in clinical research after the first year of the two-year program.

The first participants to receive their certificates are Joshua Feiner, M.D. (Medicine), Mark Melendez, M.D. (Surgery), David Tegay, D.O., (Pediatrics), and Shai Gavi, D.O., M.P.H., (Medicine).

Two of the four to receive certificates, Drs. Tegay and Gavi, are supported through the Clinical Scholars Award, which is directly funded by the Dean's Office.

This year, we welcome two new clinicians to the K30 Program, Edward Chan, M.D. (Pediatrics), and Wenlang Xia, M.D. (Neurology), who will also be supported by the Clinical Scholars Award.

For more information about the program visit www.osa.sunysb.edu/k30/.



Pictured during the first research seminar of the K30 program are Marie C. Gelato, M.D., Ph.D., Program Director; Leslie Hyman, Ph.D., Curriculum Director; Joshua Feiner, M.D.; Shai Gavi, M.D.; Mark Melendez, M.D.; David Tegay, D.O.; Richard Clark, M.D., Professor of Dermatology and Biomedical Engineering; and Wadie Bahou, M.D., Vice Dean for Research, Office of Scientific Affairs.

TRO Grants: Advancing Translational Research

An institutional record high of 14 Targeted Research Opportunities (TRO) grants awarded to 18 faculty members in June will advance the Medical Center's efforts in translational research in the areas of cancer, human genetics, high-tech imaging, and biomedical engineering and technology development. Nearly \$800,000 in research monies will be awarded to the research projects collectively. This outlay of funds is the result of the coordination of the Office

of Scientific Affairs in conjunction with the Office of the Vice President for Research, along with generous funding from the Coulter Foundation, the Carol M. Baldwin Fund, the Ward Melville Heritage Organization (Walk for Beauty), and the Catacosinos Fund.

For more information about the TRO awards and application process, please visit www.osa.sunysb.edu/OsaHomepage/Programs/tro.html.

Clinical Trials to Expand Under Direction of Dr. Sharon Nachman

In her new roles as Associate Dean, Office of Scientific Affairs, and Director, Office of Clinical Trials, Sharon Nachman, M.D., is working toward expanding clinical trial offerings to patients through partnerships with industry.

Essential to this process is maximizing departmental expertise and inter-departmental collaboration in clinical trials. For example, in trials that require a number of specialists from varied disciplines, researchers would be encouraged to work closely with others outside their departments, such as pediatricians and

psychiatrists working together on a pediatric clinical trial.

Dr. Nachman will also look to better connect the work of hospital clinicians with Stony Brook's basic science researchers. She says that facilitating such translational research through the Office of Scientific Affairs will increase opportunities for initiating new clinical trials through industry support.

On behalf of the Medical Center, Dr. Nachman will be communicating with and educating pharmaceutical companies about our treatment programs and the expertise to patients through these programs.



Dr. Al Jordan

Named 2006 Long Island Man of the Year

We proudly salute and congratulate **Aldustus Jordan, Ed.D.**, Associate Dean for Student Affairs at Stony Brook University School of Medicine, who was named the 2006 Long Island Man of the Year by the Suffolk



Community Council, Inc.

Dr. Jordan has served the School of Medicine, the entire Stony Brook University community, and Long Island communities for decades. He has been Associate Dean for Student Affairs for more than 30 years. Dr. Jordan counsels medical students on a regular basis. He works with undergraduates and high school students, with the mission of introducing generations of underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students to opportunities in higher education and health professions.

Dr. Dvorah Balsam

Enhances Radiology Teaching Program



Dvorah Balsam, M.D., Chief of Pediatric Radiology, with 40 years of expertise in pediatric radiology and as a teacher of radiology, is a new faculty member who trains students and residents interested in the specialty of radiology.

Dr. Balsam was Director of the Radiology Residency Program at Nassau University Medical Center for more than 20 years. Donald P. Harrington, M.D., Professor and Chair of Radiology, says her vast experience in pediatric radiology will serve as a valuable resource to our specialists and surgeons as they collaborate with her in diagnosing diseases and conditions in children. Her skills as a teacher of radiology add to the academic program of the School of Medicine.

Dr. Jorge Benach

Grows Research and Graduate Teaching Program

The Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology is in transition, but **Interim Chair Jorge Benach, Ph.D.**, says that the department continues to develop into a dynamic environment for faculty and students. Several clinical researchers have joined the department within the past year, and basic research scientists span fields from infectious diseases to cancer biology.



The graduate teaching program will continue to grow under his leadership.

Faculty members within the department continue to work on a broad spectrum of basic and clinical research, and Dr. Benach expects the department to continue adding to this breadth of research throughout the year.



108 New Students Take the Oath

The School of Medicine's incoming class is once again a diverse and select group of students. The 108 who recited the Hippocratic Oath during the White Coat Ceremony vary in age from 23 to 37 years, are from many ethnic backgrounds, and majored in fields of study ranging from biology to psychology, economics, philosophy and foreign languages. Less than 10% of applicants were accepted into the School. The new students come from 50 different undergraduate institutions from around the nation and world. *US News & World Report* ranks Stony Brook University School of Medicine among the top 50 of all medical schools in the nation. Stony Brook was included in this elite listing for the first time this year.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER NEWS

Greg Filiano, Media Relations Manager, School of Medicine, organizes the content of *Medical Center News*. Greg works in Media Relations to develop stories about the school for internal and external media.



The purpose of *Medical Center News* is to inform and update the School of Medicine and Stony Brook University Medical Center communities on educational, clinical, and research issues, as well as major events and departmental news. Please share any of your news with Greg—from major initiatives to appointments and awards. He can be reached at (631) 444-9343 or on Notes at gregory.filiano@stonybrook.edu

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