



# DEAN'S Quarterly

An update on faculty honors & hires as well as student achievement  
in the VCU School of Medicine

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VCUHS

### Faculty Recruits

Pediatrics  
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VAMC

### Student Honors

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Please submit news of faculty hires and  
faculty honors through your chairman's  
office to Joan Barrett, Assistant to the  
Dean, at [jmbarret@vcu.edu](mailto:jmbarret@vcu.edu).

## Faculty Honors

Raising our school's profile in the region, the nation and the world

### Anesthesiology

**Michael Czekajlo, M.D.**, received an award from the VCU Council for Community Engagement for training Henrico County high school students in basic CPR.

### Emergency Medicine

**Robin Foster, M.D.**, has been named as a 2009 Annual YWCA Outstanding Women Award recipient in the Health and Sciences category. She was recognized at the Awards Luncheon in April. She also received the State of Virginia Child Champion Award from Prevent Child Abuse Virginia for child advocacy. She was appointed by the Governor to the Virginia State Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board and is chairperson of the Emergency Medical Services for Children Committee.

### Internal Medicine

**Michael Edmond, M.D.**, was appointed as the Internal Medicine III Professor and Eminent Scholar.

**Susan R. Digiovanni, M.D.**, was appointed as the Nephrology Professor II Eminent Scholar.

**Kenneth Ellenbogen, M.D.**, received the Simon Dack Award for excellence in the critical evaluations of manuscripts for the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* for both the excellence and the number/timeliness of his reviews and for evaluations at the highest level in terms of critical thinking and constructive comments. Ellenbogen holds the Hermes A. Kontos, M.D., Professorship in Cardiology.

**Anne L. King, M.D.**, was appointed as the Nephrology Distinguished Professor.

**Richard P. Wenzel, M.D.**, has been appointed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to chair its National Research Advisory Council. The Council's main role is advising on the nature and scope of research and development sponsored and conducted by the Veterans Health Administration. Wenzel holds the Dr. William Branch Porter Chair in Infectious Diseases.

**Christopher Wise, M.D.**, was appointed as the Thomas Branch Scott, Jr., Mrs. Carrie Triplett Taliaferro Scott, Horace Dade Taliaferro, M.D. and Lucy Nelson Taliaferro Endowed Distinguished Professorship in Internal Medicine.

**VCU's GI program** is ranked No. 1 among federally funded U.S. programs by ScienceWatch.com based on the citation index between 2003-2007. The mean impact factor was 17.31 with 132 papers published by faculty with a primary affiliation to the GI division.

### **Obstetrics and Gynecology**

**Jerome F. Strauss, III, M.D., Ph.D.**, was appointed to the External Clinical Advisory Council of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. He also received an award from the March of Dimes at the 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Clinical Meeting of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists for his research on preterm birth as well as the Rector's Medal from the University of Chile for excellence in research in the field of reproductive health and contributions to biomedical research in Chile and research at the University of Chile.

### **Pathology**

**Marcella Fierro, M.D.**, was presented the Milton Helpern Award at the American Academy of Forensic Sciences Annual Meeting in Denver. She also authored a section of the recently released NAS Study Death Investigation and Forensic Pathology.

### **Pediatrics**

The VCU Health System's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit is the 2009 recipient the GE Imagination at Work Award to recognize an outstanding effort by a NICU or L&D Department. The award will be presented by the general manager of GEHC's Maternal Infant Care Division to **Dr. Gary Gutcher and the NICU staff**.

### **Pharmacology and Toxicology**

**Robert Balster, Ph.D.**, is the 2009 Nathan B. Eddy Award recipient from the College on Problems of Drug Dependence. He has made many significant contributions to this field with his outstanding research that has been well funded for his entire career as well as his special ability to educate future scholars and stimulate them to excellence. Balster holds the Luther A. Butler Professorship in Drug and Alcohol Studies.

### **Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation**

**Juan C. Arango-Lasprilla, Ph.D.**, will be awarded the 2009 Emerging Professional Award presented by APA Division 45-Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues at their annual convention in August.

**Jeffrey Kreutzer, Ph.D.** was appointed to the Rosa Schwarz Cifu Professorship in Cancer Rehabilitation.

### **Psychiatry**

**Susan G. Kornstein, M.D.**, has been elected president of the North American Society for Psychosocial Obstetrics and Gynecology. The society serves clinicians and researchers who work at the interface of the fields of psychiatry and OB/GYN on disorders such as PMS, perinatal depression, infertility, mood and menopause. Traditionally, the society's annual meeting is held at the president's home institution, and Kornstein will host the 2010 NASPOG meeting in Richmond next January.

**Isaac Wood, M.D.**, has been appointed chair of the National Board of Medical Examiners' Test Material Development Committee, Step 1, Behavioral Sciences.

### **Radiation Oncology**

**Michael Hagan, M.D., Ph.D.**, was appointed by the Veterans Administration to serve as its national director of Radiation Oncology Services to help standardize and improve patient care in the VA's national network.

## Radiology

**John D. Grizzard, M.D.**, was appointed to the Charles L. Baird, Jr., M.D. Professorship in Innovative Cardiology.

## Surgery

**Harry D. Bear, M.D., Ph.D.**, has been awarded the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project (NSABP) Distinguished Investigator Lifetime Achievement Award. Bear holds the Walter Lawrence, Jr. Chair in Surgical Oncology.

## Urology

**Adam P. Klausner, M.D.**, was appointed to the Warren W. Koontz, Jr., Research Professorship in Urology.

## VCU Health System

The VCUHS has received notification that it will receive the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get with the Guidelines Performance Recognition Bronze Award for Stroke. This recognition is awarded for compliance of 85% or greater in core Joint Commission Stroke Performance Measures for three consecutive months, which is the first of several levels of achievement recognized by the AHA/ASA. VCUHS is the only hospital or health system in central Virginia to achieve this recognition for stroke care.

## *New Faculty*

Expanding our expertise and opportunities for collaboration

## Pediatrics

Bruce K. Rubin, M.D., M.Eng., F.R.C.P.C., M.B.A., has been named chair of the Department of Pediatrics, effective July 1. He also will hold a professorship in the VCU School of Engineering. Rubin joins the medical school after 12 years at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., where he has been professor and vice chair for research in the pediatrics department, professor of physiology and pharmacology and professor of biomedical engineering with the Virginia Tech-Wake Forest University School of Biomedical Engineering and Sciences.

Rubin is a pediatric pulmonary expert and was recently selected as the recipient of the 2008 Forrest M. Bird Lifetime Scientific Achievement Award, a top research honor given by the American Respiratory Care Foundation and the American Association of Respiratory Care. He is on the editorial board of 12 pulmonary journals, has published more than 200 research papers and chapters and holds five patents. Rubin's specific clinical and research interests include cystic fibrosis, childhood asthma and other chronic lung diseases. He and his research team study aerosol therapy for lung diseases, airway inflammation and excessive mucus that contributes to lung disease. Rubin received his undergraduate bachelor of science in math and physics, master of engineering and medical degrees from Tulane University in New Orleans. He was a Rhodes Scholar, conducting postdoctoral work in biomedical engineering at Oxford University and also earned an MBA at Wake Forest University.

## Radiology

**Kevin B. Hoover, M.D., Ph.D.**, joined the faculty of the musculoskeletal section of the Department of Radiology in January. Dr. Hoover received his undergraduate degree from the University of California, Berkeley in molecular and cell biology (with honors) in 1992. He was granted M.D. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California, Irvine College of Medicine in 2000 and 2002. Dr. Hoover completed his radiology residency training at Massachusetts General Hospital followed by a musculoskeletal fellowship at the same institution in 2007.

## Surgery

**Homayoon Akbari, M.D.**, joined the Department of Surgery in April. He was awarded a degree in Neurobiology from New York University in 1994 and was awarded his medical degree in 1997 from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He completed his residency at the Georgetown University Medical Center in 1999 and a fellowship in the Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital in 2003. His most recent post was at the Rhode Island Hospital in Providence, RI.

## VAMC:

**Robert K. Schneider, M.D.**, has been named chief of Mental Health Service at the Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Dr. Schneider, a fellow of the American College of Physicians, served as a full-time member of the VCU School of Medicine faculty from 1997 through 2008, serving as chair of ambulatory psychiatry from 2004-2008. Last summer, he joined the VAMC working in the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinic and initiating the program for the Mental Health/Primary Care Integration, while continuing to work at VCU as a clinical faculty member. He received his medical degree and residency training in internal medicine from Emory University, worked in private practice as a PCP, then completed residency in psychiatry training at Duke University Medical Center. He is board certified in psychiatry and internal medicine with added qualification in geriatric medicine.

## *Student Honors*

Raising our school's profile in the region, the nation and the world

**Branden Engorn**, Class of 2009, has received the Beverly Chaney Award administered through the Joseph Collins Foundation. Only four awards are given nationally for outstanding medical school graduates. Branden ranks in the top of his class, has been a class leader and this past year was President of the Medical Student Government. In July, he will start his residency in Pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Health System.

The Joseph Collins Foundation was formally established in 1951 at the bequest of the late Dr. Collins, who is regarded as a pioneer in the field of neurology. His purpose in creating the foundation was to assist "ambitious and determined" students in their study of medicine. Applicants must also demonstrate an interest in "arts and letters or other cultural pursuits outside the field of medicine." As one of this year's four awardees, Branden received a cash prize of \$10,000.

**Alison Kuchta**, an M.D./Ph.D. student who is currently completing her third-year clerkships, has received an award from the Fogarty International Clinical Research Scholars Program that will support her study of infectious diarrhea in Bangladesh in the coming year. Alison aspires to a career in global health research and since her matriculation in 2002, has developed her medical knowledge and scientific skill. Her project in Bangladesh will provide her with needed experience in the field of public health.

The Fogarty International Center is the international component of the NIH, supporting global health research, international partnerships and training for the next generation of scientists to address global health needs.