New Dean Seeks to Strengthen Basic Science Programs, Collaborations

By Katie Pence
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Thomas Boat, MD, was appointed dean of UC’s College of Medicine and vice president for health affairs on May 18. The appointment is effective July 1.

Boat has served as executive associate dean for the College of Medicine since April 2008 and as chief executive officer of University of Cincinnati Physicians since July 2008.

“After a thorough national search for the right candidate to fill this important position, it is clear that the best person for the job is right here at home,” said UC President Gregory H. Williams during the internal announcement in Kresge Auditorium.

Boat says that his previous experience has given him a chance to know the clinical activities and departments in the College of Medicine but that he will be working to learn more about the challenges and opportunities within the basic science departments.

“I am also not as familiar with the College’s education programs, but Dr. (Andrew) Filak is going to return to his role as senior associate dean for academic affairs and as chair for the department of medi-cal education. He will be taking on expanded roles in these leadership positions and will provide educational leadership, as he always has done so well,” he says.

Boat, a professor of pediatrics, adds that he hopes to strengthen relationships with Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center as well as learn more about other Aca-demic Health Center affiliates, like the Cincinnati Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center and Shriners Hospitals for Children-Cincinnati. Collaboration with other health systems in the region is also a goal.

“Clinically, I feel that we are in a good situation with a unified agenda as far as the UC Health system goes,” he says. “Our collaborative efforts create a very strong and well-functioning system that has an academic agenda—an important element that is in line with the goals of the College of Medicine.”

But Boat says he knows there are many challenges ahead for him.

“Much of my attention will be focused on our research programs—to take out the redundant and non-productive costs and support productive investigators and supportive investigative infrastructures,” he says. “I feel like UC Health is a good model, with an integrated faculty practice that is growing every day. I will spend time assembling a leadership management team that will work to keep faculty connected with College of Medicine goals and communicate well.”

Drake Medalists Honored

The UC College of Medicine has named Richard Becker, MD (above left), and James Heubi, MD (right), winners of the 2011 Daniel Drake Medal. The Daniel Drake Medal was established in 1985 as the college celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of its founder, pioneering physician Daniel Drake. The award is given annually to honor distinguished living faculty and alumni.

Becker is professor of medicine at Duke University School of Medicine. He completed undergraduate, graduate and medical degrees at UC and is co-director for the Duke Comprehensive Center for Hemostasis and Thrombosis and directs the Cardiovascular-Thrombosis Center and the Duke Health System’s Cardiogenetics Thrombosis Clinic.

Heubi has been on the faculty of UC for 32 years and professor of pediatrics since 1989. More recently he has been program director for the General Clinical Research Center from 1988 to 2010, associate dean for clinical and translational research since 2002, associate chair for clinical investigation in the department of pediatrics since 2006 and co-director of the Center for Clinical and Translational Science and Training since 2005.

Search for His Replacement at UC Physicians:

Boat says it’s not as simple as finding a new CEO of University of Cincin-nati Physicians.

“This person will also be senior associate dean of the College of Medi-cine and the senior vice president for UC Health, overseeing the ambula-tory practices,” he says. “This is a big job.”

Boat says he and Chief Executive Officer of UC Health Jim Kingbury will identify candidates in coming months and the boards for UC Physi-cian and UC Health will be involved in selecting someone for this posi-tion.

2011 Schmidlapp Scholarship Winner Dedicated to Women’s Health and Community Engagement

By Angela Koenig
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Third-year University of Cincinnati medical student Jessica Sisto is the 2011 recipient of the Charlotte R. Schmidlapp Scholarship.

This award of $15,000 is given to a female student in the senior class who has demonstrated leadership ability, with particular emphasis on women’s issues, academic achieve-ment and community involve-ment.

The Schmidlapp gift is adminis-tered by Fith Third Bank, Trustee, and is connected by history to Ja-cob Schmidlapp, a prominent Cin-cinnati banker and philanthropist whose Union Savings Bank merged with Fifth Third in 1919. The trust has contributed over $1.6 million toward art, health and community initiatives. Schmidlapp directed that grants be restricted to helping women establish themselves in life.

Today the Charlotte R. Schmidlapp Fund promotes the study of math and science for women in the Greater Cincinnati area.

“Receiving this scholarship was an incredibly important achieve-ment for me, as it represents the culmination of many years dedi-cated to women’s health and com-munity engagement and reinforces that I have been doing something right along the way,” says Sisto, who applied for the scholarship while working in a clinic in rural Hondu-ra as a women’s health project.

“Our College of Medicine is blessed with so many talented fe-male medical students, and I believe that we empower each other to pur-sue the passions that drive us,” she says of taking a year off from medi-cal school to live and work abroad with underserved populations. That experience, she says, gave her an entirely new perspective and appre-ciation for the hardships of women across the globe.

Sisto says she is torn between a residency in either obstetrics and gynecology or urology.

In addition to her demanding course schedule, Sisto has been ac-tively involved in the following or-ganizations: Urban Health Project co-director; co-president of the American Medical Student Associ-ation; Medical Students for Choice; LGBT People in Medicine; and a member of the Initiative on Poverty, Justice and Health-Medical Stu-dent Scholars Program.

The Schmidlapp Scholarship is one of the most prestigious awards in the College of Medicine. Funds from the scholarship are used to offset tuition costs in the final year of medical school.
New Weekly Email Publication Coming in July

For over 10 years, Findings has brought you news each month from the Academic Health Center. But now, we’re stepping up our game to bring you even more news, event coverage and information each week from the convenience of your email inbox.

Findings ends as a printed publication with this issue. On July 7, we will begin sending an electronic publication to your email every Thursday afternoon, providing you with more timely information about what is happening at the Academic Health Center.

In addition, we’re expanding the types of stories you can find on our website (health-news.uc.edu) which also offers videos, slide shows and other useful information.

We are making these changes based on a recent reader survey and to provide you with more news more frequently. Please contact us at uchealthnews@uc.edu with questions or to suggest story ideas and give us feedback. Thanks for your support.

FROM THE SURVEY:

• Almost half (46 percent) of respondents were reading Findings online.
• Almost 60 percent would read the publication if it was solely available online.
• 71 percent would prefer a weekly electronic publication.
• Only 17 percent indicated they would not like it if Findings became an electronic publication.

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Amputee Support Group Gives Students Real-World Experience

By Katy Cosse
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Surrounded by students in white coats holding clipboards and measuring tools, members of the Tri-State Amputee Support group did something few amputees prefer to do in public:

They took off their protheses. They discussed what led to their amputation, from disease to disabling falls. And they answered students’ questions about how their injury has changed their day-to-day life.

Volunteers from the group make the trip to Assistant Professor of Rehabilitation Sciences Rebecca Leugers’ class once a year at French East. There, students in the College of Allied Health Sciences’ doctorate of physical therapy program are able to learn about amputations from the patients themselves, as well as practice assessment techniques before they start clinical work.

“It’s good to get experience before you actually see patients in the clinic, just to have an idea about what to expect and what you’re supposed to be looking for,” says student Amelia Teffeller. “And when you’re working with someone who has been living and coping with an amputation for several years, you can learn more about different techniques that could work for other people.”

Leugers regularly brings volunteer patients into her classes, though she says it has taken her years to develop a network of people who will “come in year after year … and who are willing to let the students practice with them and learn.”

But she says it’s crucial for students to be able to talk with patients candidly, “to put themselves in the patient’s shoes and understand, holistically, how a catastrophic problem like having a stroke or amputation has affected the whole person.”

For her holistic teaching methods, Leugers received the 2011 Mrs. A.B. “Dolly” Cohen Award for Excellence in Teaching.

In the recent class, students clustered in small groups and worked with two volunteers to conduct a general assessment and measure functional mobility. After the class, everyone sat for a potluck dinner to honor the support group’s founder, Rich Friend, who died in 2010.

Group member Tim Shafer has been coming to the class for seven years. He says it makes him feel important to be a part of future physical therapists’ education.

“I get a lot of satisfaction out of it, of giving back to the students,” he says. “Rebecca’s a great teacher, and I think she can impart a lot of knowledge to her students. It’s a good teaching tool, I think, for the students to have a hands-on experience with patients in class.”

Rebecca Leugers (far right), 2011 recipient of the Mrs. A.B. “Dolly” Cohen Award for Excellence in Teaching. works with student Leslie Schlesier.

Focus on Science

Keith Jones, PhD

Focus on Science is a column highlighting basic scientists at the University of Cincinnati and their discoveries.

Keith Jones, PhD, associate professor and vice chair of the department of pharmacology and cell biophysics, decided that he wanted to be a scientist at age 8. No one in his family had ever been to college and his father, though a high school graduate, had to work from age 12 to support the family after the death of his grandfather. Jones’ father worked for the railroad and would bring home books from damaged shipments, many of which were science books, and he pored over them, finding them fascinating. “He fed the fire over the years, and took AP biology in high school and never looked back,” Jones says. He received his doctorate degree in biological sciences and genetics from the University of Kentucky in 1987 and underwent postdoctoral training at UCLA and then at the University of Cincinnati. His research is in the area of cardiovascular and innate immune system signaling and gene expression programming underlying cardiovascular pathophysiology.

How long have you been with UC?

“After a postdoctoral position here in the 1990s, I started my independently funded research career at the University of Louisville. I returned to UC as a faculty member in 2000."

What is your current research focus?

“The focus of my research program is to understand the molecular and biochemical basis of cell death in the heart. Recently in 2009, we discovered that there are pathways stimulated by the activation of pain receptors in a particular region of the abdominal skin. These pathways can be activated after the onset of a heart attack and are able to mediate protective against cell death. Most interestingly, this effect can be stimulated by an electrical signal or by application of topical capsaicin, the same biochemical that causes the hot sensation when you eat a pepper. We are pursing the molecular mecha-

Allergy Screenings in June

UC Health’s Otolaryngology Department and Neck Surgery is offering free health screenings for a variety of ear, nose and throat conditions. From 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 14, experts will be doing spring and summer allergy testing at the UC Health Physicians Office in Clifton, Suite 5200. The same screening will be taking place from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 15, in West Chester. Suite 3900. Call (513) 475-8400 to reserve a spot.

New Emergency Medicine Research Fellowship

The Society for Academic Emergency Medicine (SAEM) has approved a fellowship in emergency care research in the UC Department of Emergency Medicine under the direction of Associate Professor and Vice Chair for Research Christopher Lindseth, PhD. UC was chosen as one of only 13 sites in the country to offer a SAEM-approved research fellowship. Fellows who complete the program will receive a certificate from SAEM and each program will be recognized at the SAEM annual meeting.

Research Finds Cancer Drug Effective in Preventing Transplant Rejection

A multicenter trial led by E. Steve Woodle, MD, director of UC’s transplant surgery division, has provided the first head-to-head comparison of the three most common agents used in the early post-transplant period to prevent rejection follow-

NEWS EXTRAS

"I get a lot of satisfaction out of it, of giving back to the students," he says. "Rebecca’s a great teacher, and I think she can impart a lot of knowledge to her students. It’s a good teaching tool, I think, for the students to have a hands-on experience with patients in class."
Academic Health Center - University of Cincinnati

Diabetes Brought Into Focus Through Hospital Program

UC Health’s Diabetes Now Program Efforts Aim for Quality Improvement in Care of Patients With Diabetes and Hyperglycemia

By Dama Ewbank
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A team effort is how endocrinologist Mercedes Falciglia, MD, describes the Diabetes Now program at UC Health University Hospital. The multidisciplinary inpatient program, developed by Falciglia in 2006, involves representatives from endocrinology, nursing, pharmacy and dietary, as well as hospital administration. All have made it their mission to improve the care of hospitalized patients with diabetes and high blood glucose (hyperglycemia) — from admission to discharge, and beyond. “We’ve studied hyperglycemia in the hospital setting and have found that it’s common even in patients without diagnosed diabetes and that these elevations in blood glucose carry an increased risk of death and complications,” says Falciglia, an associate professor in UC’s endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism division. “One prevailing assumption that elevated blood sugar in hospitalized patients without recognized diabetes is a consequence of the stress of illness, otherwise known as ‘stress hyperglycemia,’ says Falciglia says it’s possible that some patients have diabetes and have never been diagnosed. Or, she says, it’s possible they may have a pre-disposition to diabetes.

She and collaborators David D’Alessio, MD, director of UC’s endocrinology division, and Dana Rendell, MD, professor of medicine in the division of pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine, have been investigating this phenomenon through a study funded by the National Institutes of Health. Although these studies have largely involved the analysis of national databases, Falciglia says it’s those daily one-on-one interactions where you can really see some of the practical implications of blood sugar control within the hospital setting.

“What we know is that there needs to be a systematic approach to treating high blood glucose in the hospital in order to do so effectively and safely,” says Falciglia. “Insulin is one of the few medications labeled as ‘high alert’ because of its propensity to cause harm if misused.”

“That, paired with the fact that hyperglycemia is an abnormality occurring in every corner of the hospital explains why the coordinated effort to take care for these patients,”

Falciglia says diabetes often remains unrecognized and therefore untreated for as long as 10 years. “Once someone is in the hospital, clinicians can use the UC’s new protocols to facilitate the treatment of hyperglycemia in addition to caring for the health issues responsible for the hospitalization that often take top priority,” she says.

Falciglia and her team are working to better manage high blood glucose across the hospital and in the ICU, making the analogy of hyperglycemia similar to gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy): It could be a good predictor for a future diabetes diagnosis. For this reason, she says, it’s more important than ever to make sure patients leave the hospital with knowledge about diabetes and how to prevent and manage it.

“But therein lies another challenge. Falciglia, along with nurses from UC Health and investigators from UC’s College of Nursing, have conducted research to determine what diabetes ‘survival skills’ patients retain once they are discharged from the hospital. It turns out, they retain very little. “We think we are helping patients by informing them about diabetes while they are in our care, but what we’ve found is that patients remember very little of what we’ve shared,” Falciglia says.

The reality, she says, is that patients are overwhelmed with diabetes education and, understandably, they are focused on the primary health problem that brought them to the hospital in the first place. No matter the reason for hospital admission or the extent of a patient’s health problems, the Diabetes Now team has recognized a need in order to do so effectively and safely.”

Putting Research Into Practice

Diabetes Now has already prompted policy changes with regard to insulin coordination at University Hospital. In 2010, nutritional sciences graduate students in the College of Allied Health Sciences, working with Diabetes Now, identified problems with the traditional ‘bedtime snack’ being offered to patients. Clinicians were finding that many patients receiving a bedtime snack would arise in the morning with high blood sugar. The hospital was able to put policy in place to eliminate the evening snack for patients with diabetes or high blood sugar.

Research involves collaboration among identified areas for improvement relevant to the coordination of timing between meal delivery, consumption and insulin administration—a care process that is critical for the safe and effective treatment of hyperglycemia. Efforts are under way to design and implement strategies that will address these important processes in inpatient diabetes management.

Proudly Cincinnati Faculty and Staff Campaign Offers Chance to Show UC Spirit

By Keith Herrell
keith.herrell@uc.edu

When her youngest daughter decided to attend the University of Cincinnati, Betty Boiman was thrilled to have another family member at UC— and the Proudly Cincinnati Faculty/Staff Giving Campaign offered a perfect way to express her delight.

“I originally designated my gift to the Parents Campaign because she was starting her college career during her freshman year and it was a good way to show our support and enthusiasm for this college,” says Boiman, grants administrator and administrative coordinator in the department of surgery’s division of research.

This year, Boiman plans to give to the surgery department’s Institute for Military Medicine, directed by Alex Lentsch, PhD, to whom Boiman serves as an assistant. “Supporting the scientists in research has given me first-hand knowledge of what our dollars can do, it has been an exciting experience to see the results they produce,” says Boiman. “In a time of war, I can think of no better ‘thank you’ to our troops than to promote the science that assists in providing the best possible care for wounded warriors.”

Because faculty and staff— following Boiman’s example—can designate their gift to any university priority they choose, there are numerous ways to support UC.

Involvement is the goal of the campaign, with participation valued at any gift amount. College of Medicine figures, based on active full-time faculty and staff, were 16 percent in Fiscal Year 2009 and 19 percent in Fiscal Year 2010.

“The College of Medicine should aspire to reach a participation rate of 25 percent this year and higher moving forward,” says Andrew Filak, MD, interim dean of the College of Medicine and vice president for health affairs.

UC President Gregory H. Williams has set a goal of 50 percent participation for all faculty and staff by 2019.

Gifts for Fiscal Year 2011, which ends June 30, can be made online at uc.edu/foundation, through payroll deduction or by pledge card June is the feature month for the College of Medicine in the Faculty/ Staff Giving Campaign. Nursing is featured in October, Pharmacy in December and Allied Health Sciences in January 2012.

“ ‘We Must Lead by Example with Our Own Time and Resources.’

TESTIMONIAL: JOSEPH BRODERICK, MD

“The University of Cincinnati and specifically the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine have played a very large role in my life—first as a medical student and alumnum, then as a faculty member, and most recently, as the proud parent of several children who are students in the medical school.

‘Gifts to the school reflect my wife’s and my thankfulness for the education and clinical programs of various brain diseases. If we expect the community to support the scientists in research, we must lead by example with our own time and resources.’

A ‘There is no UC without U’ Faculty/Staff Giving Campaign event for the College of Medicine will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, June 16, in the CARE/Crawley Building dining area. Lunch (sandwich from Subway, cookie and choice of drink) will be provided as a thank you to current (Fiscal Year 2011) College of Medicine faculty and staff donors. Lunch will also be provided to those who stop by and make a minimum $5 contribution to a UC program important to them.

Current and new donors will be entered into a drawing for prizes including UC football tickets and certificates from Subway, Skyline and Proctor & Gamble.

To ensure that enough lunch is provided, RSVPs are encouraged at (513) 558-6464 or emailing comalunuc@uc.edu by June 13.

Left to right: Megan Lyons, PharmD; Adele Corbin, nurse practitioner; Tama Porter, MD; and Mercedes Falciglia, MD
Urologic Surgeons Share Minimally Invasive Surgery Expertise Abroad
Clinical Division Introduces New Care Options, Innovations and Specialized Physicians to Local Health Care Services

By Amanda Harper

Innovative thinking and finesse with robotic and minimally invasive surgical techniques are benefitting patients in the local region as well as across the globe.

Urologic surgeons from the UC College of Medicine and UC Health recently shared their expertise in minimally invasive prostate and kidney cancer at the First International Meeting on Minimally Invasive Surgery in Urologic Oncology, held at the Institute of Urology at the Ministry of Health Care and Social Development of the Russian Federation in Moscow.

They were one of two U.S.-based urology teams to present at the international meeting, held March 24 and 25, 2011. Urologists from across Europe, Russia and the United States attended the conference, which explored topics ranging from the balance between maintaining a patient’s quality of life and tumor control to the critical discussion of decisions in treatment strategy.

About 100 urologists attended the meeting in Moscow, with hundreds more watching a live webcast throughout Russia.

James Donovan, MD, chief of UC’s division of urology, spoke about modern methodology and new technologies in prostate biopsies.

Vladimir Mouraviev, MD, UC urology endo-urology fellow, presented on cryoablation of prostate cancer and focal therapy; a newer approach to treating early stage prostate cancer that involves advances in imaging prostate cancer and selectively freezing cancerous tissue to destroy the malignant cells, while avoiding radical prostatectomy or radiation therapy and their associated drawbacks.

Krishnasath Gaitonde, MD, discussed the benefits of partial nephrectomy in cases of kidney cancer as well as the use of robot-assisted techniques in select patients.

“Cryoaulation is becoming a more widely accepted treatment for non-metastatic prostate cancer and small renal tumors. We’re excited to offer it as an option for patients in Greater Cincinnati,” says Donovan.

While in Russia, Donovan, Mouraviev and Gaitonde also performed two surgical cases: A 53-year-old man with localized prostate cancer who underwent cryosurgery; and a 31-year-old woman with a benign kidney tumor.

Both cases served as demonstrations of robotic and minimally invasive urologic techniques for surgeons attending the conference.

Recent Innovations in UC Urology

UC Health’s urologists provide innovative, minimally invasive treatments for patients with prostate and kidney cancers. Recently, Nilesh Patil, MD, introduced a catheterless robotic prostatectomy.

In traditional surgery, patients have a penis catheter for seven to 10 days post-op to drain urine while the surgical site heals. The new technique involves draining urine directly from the bladder through a small incision and tube inserted just above the pubic bone. This allows the patient to begin draining urine faster post-operating and spares the patient the discomfort of a catheter.

Donovan, Gaitonde and Mouraviev—in collaboration with Glenn Taylor, MD, a private practice radiologist at West Chester Hospital—have launched a program for computed tomography (CT)-guided percutaneous cryoablation procedures for small renal tumors. The procedure targets kidney tumors located posteriorly which are accessible under CT guidance allowing biopsy and destruction by cryoaulation.

The procedure involves using CT imaging technology to guide a small needle through the skin and into the kidney to freeze cancerous tissue. Typically, patients are discharged the day after surgery, with return to regular activity in two weeks. The UC division of urology and department of radiology will introduce focal therapy for prostate cancer to the region in the coming months.

By Katie Pence

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, more commonly known as MRSA, has been a medical issue that has been affecting populations globally for over a decade.

It’s been gaining attention as a major cause of ventilator-associated bloodstream infection in all hospitals nationwide, “ says pharmacy’s Dean Daniel Acosta, PhD.

By putting a focus on the report who is also the national Program Director for Infectious Diseases, VA Central Office.

Medical centers were directed to implement a “bundle” of evidence-based practices which included universal nasal surveillance (nasal swabbing) upon hospital admission, contact precautions for patients who were infected, hand hygiene and an institutional culture change.

The bacteria present in hospital settings is MRSA bacteria.

After the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, took bold action and implemented a nationwide initiative to decrease health care-associated MRSA infections in patients in critical care facilities, says Roselle, senior author on the report who is also the national Program Director for Infectious Diseases, VA Central Office.

Gettting patients to understand their medications and take them as directed is the goal of a new public awareness campaign, “Script Your Future,” sponsored by the National Consumers League.

Cincinnati is one of six cities targeted in the campaign, and on May 18, the league kicked off the local effort at UC’s Center for Academic and Research Excellence (CARE)/Crawley Building atrium with speakers from the James L. Wpro College of Pharmacy and representatives from business and government. A patient perspective was provided by a speaker with type 1 diabetes, who attested to the importance of adhering to medications.

Faculty members Andrea Wall, assistant dean and associate professor in the College of Pharmacy, and John Kues, PhD, assistant senior vice president for continuous professional development in the College of Medicine, are actively involved in the campaign and planning student activities that will encourage a new generation of health care providers to impart the importance of medication adherence to their patients.

Pharmacy students and medical students are truly dedicated to this cause,” said pharmacy’s Dean Daniel Acosta, PhD.

For more information on the campaign, visit scriptyourfuture.org.

Report Shows Precautionary Measures Prevent Spread of MRSA in Hospitals

By Amanda Harper

Innovative thinking and finesse with robotic and minimally invasive surgical techniques are benefitting patients in the local region as well as across the globe.

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