Researchers hone technique to destroy pediatric brain tumors

BY MELISSA STUART

A interdisciplinary team of researchers at Washington University, led by Karen L. Woodley, Ph.D., the James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor in Arts & Sciences, is a step closer to delivering cancer-killing drugs to pediatric brain tumors.

Such tumors are often difficult to completely remove surgically, frequently leaving cancerous cells behind following surgery, and the tumor returns.

Chemotherapy, while effective at treating tumors, often harms healthy cells as well, leading to severe side effects, especially in young children that still are developing brain functions.

In an effort to solve this problem, the Woodley lab has developed polymeric nanoparticles that can trap doxorubicin, a drug commonly used in chemotherapy, and slowly release the drug during an extended time period. By fine-tuning the polymer composition, they were able to tailor the release rate of the drug and improve its solubility.

The work was published in Chemical Communications and supported by the Children’s Discovery Institute of St. Louis Children's Hospital and by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health as a Program of Excellence in Nanotechnology.

With its approach, the Woodley lab was able to load more of the drug into the cores of the nanoparticles, compared with similar constructs.

Typically, a polymeric micelle has 5 to 4 percent (drug) loading per nanoparticle mass. In our experiment, they were able to tailor the fine-tuning the polymer composition, which results in a drug release rate of the drug and improve its solubility.

“We thought weekends would present a problem for some people attempting to lose weight, but the consistency of our finding was surprising,” said first author Susan Racette, Ph.D., assistant professor of physical therapy and of medicine. “Subjects in the diet group lost weight during the weeks, but over the weekend, they stopped losing weight because they were eating more.”

African-American writers, foreign diplomats among Callaloo Workshop's highlights

BY CYNTHIA GEORGES

Summer STARS Dan Glammer, Ph.D., associate professor of energy, environmental and chemical engineering, and Navin Peoples, a senior at St. Louis University High School, look at reactors used to study lead concentrations in drinking water. Glammer is mentoring Peoples, one of 83 high-school students participating in this year’s Students and Teachers as Research Scientists (STARS) program, sponsored by Solvay Inc., Pfaizer Inc., LMI Aerospace Inc., D3 Technologies, and The Solea Co. Evolved from the NSF Young Scholars program, STARS provides high-school students with the opportunity to participate in scientific research at one of St. Louis’ distinguished academic institutions.

Fernando Cutz represents the United States as a diplomatic intern in the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon, Portugal. His residence in Cacauca — a five-bedroom, three-bath apartment with a swimming pool, tennis courts and a balcony view of the beach — is a 40-minute drive from his office, where he routinely reports each morning in coat and tie.

Passionate about politics, public speaking and exploring new cultures, Cutz will tell you he’s a better person when he’s busy and challenged: “Competition leads to progress,” he says.

What is most striking about this impressive profile is Cutz himself, a WUSTL junior. And his age: 20. Landing a coveted internship in what’s known as Europe’s sunniest capital suits Cutz to a T. Of his youth living arrangements, he said, “I love Wash U. dorms, but this is even better.”

A political science and international studies major with a psychology minor, Cutz is seizing every opportunity to expand his horizons. And he’s doing it countering the biggest challenge of his life: cancer.

How he faced down a deadly disease then went on to a prestigious international internship is an inspiration to the entire University community.

Despite fighting the disease for the past year, his responsibilities — work in the embassy’s consular services and public relations office — have been nothing less than exhilarating. And he’s getting an inside view of what it takes to run an embassy.

“I’m learning diplomacy, American interests abroad and a lot about Portuguese and, more broadly, the European cultures,” he said.

Cutz has an undeniable edge in this process. A native of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Cutz moved with his family to Kirksville, Missouri, at the age of 3, and Cutz considered himself an American prior to living in Brazil.

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At the School of Medicine Employee Appreciation Day picnic June 6 at Hudlin Park, hundreds of School of Medicine faculty and staff line up for ‘Ted Drews Frozen Custard and to enter their names in the drawing for prizes. In addition to the catered barbecue lunch and frozen custard, the event included games and music. The thunderstorms held off until the event had concluded.

The following employees were recognized for 10 years of service: Elia Alexander, Vicki D. Allen, Aura Aluko, Santos Alvarado, Karen Ann Altamirano, Eric Ann Allen, Mark A. Ames, Cyntia Ann Anderson, Elizabeth Ann Andrews, John Arthur Andrews, John Modesto, Thomas M. Asprion, Sandra Dane Austin, Shazad Babb, Steven A. Bartel, Gary J. Barrett, Brenda J. Belford, Elgin B. Benton, Terrance Bighair, Christine Marie Bischoff, Michelle Baker, James J. Belling, Jennifer C. McCrea, Kelly J. Mead, Tomomi Ichinose, Arnita James, Erika Johnson Guthrie, Gayla Danette Robinson, John Ross Roman, Judith Phelps, Edeltraut I. Plut, Larry Mossinghoff, Teri A. Naismith, Karen Meyer, Lillian Milich, Shirley Madden, Jacquelyn A. Mallmann, Macaulay, Janie Mack, Mary Lee Claxton, Shawn Matthew Leonard, Gene Edward Largent, press, Michael A. L joined the Division of Pathology and Immunology, received the Research Support Award. “Jennifer is an im- pressive, effective and productive administrator I can imagine,” said Herbert W. “Skip” Virgin, M.D., Ph.D., the Edward Mallinckrod Professor and chair of the Department of Pathology and Immunology. “She is enormously organized and keeps me informed of all the things I need to do to get a grant submitted. Most important to me, she always works hard to make me feel unnecessary work and allows me to focus on the science.”

Sally A. Jansen, insurance/billing/coding assistant II in the Department of Medicine’s Division of Dermatology, received the Operations Staff Award. “Sally Jenson has repeatedly demonstrated an excep- tionally high level of performance and po- liteness,” said Leslie Petiet, business director in the Division of Dermatology. “Her efforts are crucial to the success of the department and an important reminder of how fortunate we are to have Sally as a member of our team.”

**Employees receive recognition for years of service to school**

**Four service awards from dean**

**Laurie J. Shapiro, M.D., executive vice chancellor for medical affairs and dean of the School of Medicine, June 17. The award, con- sidered to be the medical school’s highest form of recognition, recognizes employees who exceed their job responsibilities, help to create a positive working environment and improve the community in which they live.**

**The following employees were recog- nized for 20 years of service: Cheryl A. Adkins, Mary Margaret Beaver, Jerome M. Beaulieu, Jennifer Lackner, research adminis- trator II in the Department of Medicine, where she works and proves every day that she is the front door to exceptional patient care. “Marybeth is a dedicat- ed, capable individual with the utmost ability and utmost knowledge of her role here at Washington Uni- versity. She has taught her staff about dedication and shown them how to be the best and service-oriented to others at the University.”

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Steroids in female mouse urine light up nose nerves of male mice

By Michael C. Purdy

A group of steroids found in female mouse urine goes straight to the male mouse's brain, according to School of Medicine researchers who found that the compounds activate nerve cells in the mouse's head, according to School of Medicine researchers. They found that the compounds activate nerve cells in the brain of the male mouse, a finding that opens up a new direction for research into the role of steroids in the brain.

Science has long recognized that urine, sweat and other bodily fluids contain chemical communication signals called pheromones, which can influence the biology or behavior of others. Most research has focused on how these signals affect the behavior of the animals involved in energy metabolism, stress or immune function, said senior author Timothy E. Holy, Ph.D., assistant professor of anatomy and neurobiology.

"This particular steroid, known as glucocorticoids (GCCs), is involved in energy metabolism, stress and immune function," said senior author Timothy E. Holy, Ph.D., assistant professor of anatomy and neurobiology.

"They control many important aspects of the mouse's physiology and theoretically could give any mouse that smells them a detailed insider's view of the health of the animal they came from," Holy said.

Holy plans further research to see if activating the nerves in the male mouse's brain will change its particular behavioral responses. He hopes to track which pheromones go to chemical signals from female mice to advance understanding of pheromone recognition and learning in the much more complex human brain. In 2005, he found that female mice or their odors cause male mice to sing.

"There is a lot of interest in the role of hormones in the brain, in addition to how hormones affect behavior," Holy said. "The pheromones we identified in female urine are documented to be behavioral stimulators of the mouse nose. This finding may mean the male mouse's brain can assess different aspects of female mouse health by selectively analyzing individual pheromones.

The GCC pheromones that Holy and his team found are linked to courtship and mating. In addition, the GCC pheromones account for approximately 75 percent of the signals detected in female urine by the male olfactory system.

Among his many accomplishments, DeBaun established the endowed chair as a way to accomplish the pursuit of new knowledge that proves theDataSet with Cite: Set with Cite: in the study of sickle cell disease and its peripheral complications. DeBaun said his "internal expectations" are higher than any external expectations. I feel our best work is yet to come." 

DeBaun has established a nationally renowned program for treatment, education and research into the complications of sickle cell disease. Under his leadership, he and a team of investigators have received funding for the first National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) -sponsored international clinical trial for sickle cell disease, called the Silent Cerebral Infarct Transplant (STT) Trial.

Through various accomplishments, DeBaun established the Charles DeBaun, M.D., Program, in collaboration with the American Red Cross. The program provided medical services, including the number of African-American blood donors in the St. Louis community. In addition, DeBaun's team expanded the sickle cell database, a faith-based effort to educate the American community about sickle cell disease and the importance of blood donation for those with the disease. These efforts have doubled the number of units of blood donated by African-Americans.

The center is scheduled to open in summer 2009 at the Shenanigan Cancer Center. The facility will be located across the street from the Center for Advanced Medicine on Euclid Avenue.

Bradley, a radiation oncologist specializing in lung and esophageal cancer, is an international expert in the application of stereotactic body radiation therapy, which delivers a tightly focused high radiation dose to a small area. Bradley also is known internationally for breakthroughs in using positron emission tomography (PET) scanning to enhance radiation therapy treatment planning.

"Our lives have been greatly improved by what Dr. DeBaun has accomplished since we've been working with him through the Ferrigno Scholar Program," Ferrigno said. "He's a remarkable person and a real asset to the community and to St. Louis Children's Hospital." 

In 2002, DeBaun established the Ferrigno Scholar Program in honor of the late Dr. Robert Ferrigno, a former radiation oncologist at the hospital.

"We're extremely impressed by what Dr. DeBaun has accomplished since we've been working with him through the Ferrigno Scholar Program," Ferrigno said. "He's a remarkable person and a real asset to the community and to St. Louis Children's Hospital." 

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Art student Weaver wins prestigious MFA Grant

BY LIAM OTTEN

In Weaver, who earned a master of fine arts degree from the San Francisco School of Design & Visual Arts in May, has won a $15,000 MFA Grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation in New York.

Weaver was one of 15 students nationwide to receive recognition in the first ever offering from the foundation.

Through primarily a painter and printmaker, the Chicago native focused this past year on multimedia installations informed by anthropology and archaeology as well as African-American and European history.

"I have approached this re-imagining of history as a process of visual layering," she said. "Disparate objects, artifacts, and representations signify their power within the context of the larger project. They tell a story that occupies a certain time period but transcends time to reach forward, into and out of our own time."

This is the second time coming to WUSTL, Weaver earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from Columbia College in Chicago and was honored as one of the city's premier alternative exhibition spaces, including The Riverside Arts Center, the Hyde Park Art Center and Archipelago. The Slade Fine Art School Gallery featured a series of trompe l'oeil paintings based on certifying documents and other family documents.

The Joan Mitchell Foundation was established in 1992 shortly after the death of Joan Mitchell, a renowned abstract painter. The foundation strives to aid and assist the needs of contemporary artists and to aid the transition from academic to professional studio work. To date, the foundation has awarded 133 MFA Grants, which may be used for anything art-related.

More information on the WUSTL MFA Grant Exhibition remains on view through next Monday at the Milledge Lane Kemper Art Museum. For more information, call 935-4523 or visit kempermuseum.wustl.edu or call 935-5190.

Courses' Director's Cup finish

The Department of Athletics finished first in the 2007-08 United States Sports Academy Directors' Cup Division III standings, as announced by the National Association of College Directors of Athletics.

The second-place finish is the highest in school history and the Bears' sixth-straight top-10 appearance. 2002-03 (fifth), 2003-04 (fourth), 2004-05 (third), 2005-06 (seventh), 2006-07 (fifth).

WUSTL, in first place after the fall and winter standings, accumulated a school-record 899 points, breaking the record points total of 849 set in 2006-07. WUSTL won a school-record three national championships and had 14 teams compete in NCAA Tournament action.

Schael gets AD honors

Director of Athletics John Schael was named the AutoTurf Division III Central Region Athletic Director of the Year by the National Association of College Directors of Athletics.

"I have approached this re-imagining of history as a process of visual layering," he said. "Disparate objects, artifacts, and representations signify their power within the context of the larger project. They tell a story that occupies a certain time period but transcends time to reach forward, into and out of our own time."

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Next generation of metals industry leaders prepared by Olin School

BY CYNTHIA GEORGES

The first participants enrolled in the Strategic Metals Management Program—an Olin custom executive program designed to train the next generation of metals industry leaders—graduated in June, with many holding top positions at the Knight Center for Executive Education.

The program, offered by the Metals Service Center Institute (MSCI) in partnership with Washington University in St. Louis and Olin Business School, has two additional classes enrolled and is building a third.

Twenty-eight graduates attended of the four classes over a 16-month period, covering five contributing disciplines: strategy, organizations and shareholder value, economics and finance, operational excellence; creating value and sustaining profitable growth; and high-level performance organizations.

The first class was comprised of faculty teachers, so the modules, all case studies, and lectures were tailored to equip mill and service center executives with the tools and knowledge to boost their performance and prepare them to assume senior executive roles.

Participating executives also have the opportunity to learn from visiting industry executives and, upon completing the program, are awarded a certificate of completion.

"This program has prepared both metals industry leaders and the Olin Business School to new levels of innovation and creativity in executive education and development," said Ken Barucha, dean and the Charles and Joanne Knight Distinguished Director of Executive Programs at Olin.

We will continue to improve and innovate the program as we go forward and create an even stronger relationship with the MSCI, the graduating executives and the companies in the future," Barucha said.

"This is an important milestone for our industry and for the Metals Service Center Institute," said Norman E. Gottschalk Jr, Ph.D., MSCI's chairman and also president of and CEO of Marshall Industries Corp. "These individuals have completed a rigorous course of study and are now better prepared for senior leadership roles than those who have gone before them. I am immensely proud of their achievements."

One measure of the program's success is that the role of the visiting executive was over subscribed, and there is a waiting list for those who are expected to begin studies in 2009, Baruch said.

MSCI members constitute the largest single group of metals producers and processors in North America and service 1,000 manufacturers and fabricators.

Olin has offered custom programs since 1993 and is one of only three business schools in the world rated as an "excellent" labor and Economist for both customized and open-enrollment executive education programs.

Child care subsidies available for first time for doctoral students

For the first time, doctoral students at the School of Medicine and School of Engineering & Applied Science may apply for subsidies to help defray the cost of child care.

The first subsidies have been awarded to three doctoral students based on financial need and are grants, not loans. Several weeks ago, the GSS conducted a survey that indicated that graduate students needed help to afford the cost of child care.

"This is a direct result of the efforts of the Graduate Student Senate (GSS), said Anna Notaro, Ph.D., associate dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, including the Division of Biology and Biological Sciences, as well as the School of Engineering & Applied Science and the George Washington School of Law.

This year, 10 students applied and three were awarded a subsidy to help defray the cost of child care.

The benefit is a direct result of the efforts of the Graduate Student Senate (GSS), said Anna Notaro, Ph.D., associate dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, including the Division of Biology and Biological Sciences, as well as the School of Engineering & Applied Science and the George Washington School of Law.

This year, 10 students applied and three were awarded a subsidy to help defray the cost of child care.

They took a leading role in defining a concern among some of our students and making sure that it was addressed.

The Graduate School of Arts & Sciences will manage the administration of the subsidy in consultation with the other schools to craft the Child Care Day Care Subsidy policy,

It was really great to see the students of other graduate schools that students that helped bring this initiative together," said Thack, Ph.D., who stepped down June 30 as the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences' first dean.

"We have some extraordinary graduate and professional students who took advantage of the University's tradition of encouraging and supporting student and graduate fellowships and seek</s>
Olin forms alliance with top management school in India

By SHILA NEUMANN

The Olin Business School and the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIMC) have created a partnership designed to advance research, teaching, and cultural understanding.

"This collaboration opens opportunities for students and faculty at both institutions, where the schools plan to organize joint programs in business and industrial engineering," she said.

This agreement facilitates the creation of publications, conferences and research projects. It also includes new and innovative exchange programs for faculty and students.

"We are very excited about our new connection with the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta," said Mahendra Gupta, Ph.D., dean of the business school and the Geraldine J. and Robert L. Virgil Professor of Accounting at Olin.

The agreement recognizes his outstanding contributions and the rich diversity of his intellectual properties, as well as his ability to join forces will strengthen our reputations and standing in the world," Gupta said.

The institute already are planning for an international immersions program — a capstone experience for IMC's Postgraduate Program in Management and Executives.

Indian students will come to St. Louis for four weeks to attend classes at Olin and undertake full-time projects or internships with area firms.

The exchange program is invaluable to our students," Gupta said. "It will expose them to a different culture, help them understand international business practices and create cross-cultural management in an Indian business context. It is an experience that will prove invaluable to our executive students' ability to thrive in the global marketplace.

The Olin Business School already has connections with several other business schools around the world. In 2002, Olin became one of the first American business schools in China with the successful Executive MBA program in Shanghai in collaboration with Fudan University.

"The results are highly promising and are allowing us to move forward to a fully functional, tumor-targeted drug delivery device. The key to making this happen is the interdisciplinary team of investigators, each of whom brings a different chemical, biological or medical expertise," the said.

"In this latest work, the nanoparticles were designed with thermally tunable core properties to serve as a host system that retains drug molecules at room temperature and then releases the cargo at physiological temperature. The nanoparticles can release their drug payload in a highly controlled, tumor-specific manner," the said.

"The collaboration opens a new era in the global regulatory environment," she said.

"Now, we are poised to take advantage of the progress made to develop the particles for diagnosis and treatment of several diseases."
T he newly released fourth edition of Fishman's Pulmonary Diseases and Disorders presents a comprehensive overview of the pulmonary spectrum of lung diseases as well as information on how they are diagnosed and treated. Included in the two-volume textbook's 157 chapters are outstanding contributions from the University of Hawaii in Pearl City, Hawaii, in recognition of her extensive scientific achievements in occupational therapy and translational research.

The book will be available at record.wustl.edu in late August, with the remainder of the building to open for December 2009 with the 2008 Paralympic Games.

Fishman's Pulmonary Diseases and Disorders, Fourth Edition


By TONY FITZPATRICK

Construction Update

Construction Update is published periodically and provides information about the progress of major building and renovation work. Information is provided to the Record by facilities management.

Danforth Campus

Danforth University Center

This project is on target to be ready for occupancy in move-in dates.

Village East

This project is scheduled for completion this month.

South 40 utilities

New chilled water, electric, telecommunications, domestic hot water, fire protection water, fuel oil and sewer lines are being installed. Electric power was shut down on the South 40 in late May for the high-voltage relocation. The major earthwork is complete. The drilled pier foundations are 80 percent complete, and the structural steel is erected for the first floor on the west end of the building over the Metrolink tracks and on the South-North Wing. Core and shell construction is scheduled for December 2009 with the WUSTL build-out to follow.

Environmental Health & Safety Building

Programming is under way for a new building to house the Environmental Health & Safety functions, Radiation Safety, the machine shop and Building Services shops. The building will be located in the 4500 block of McKinley Avenue. It will be three stories tall, structured for future expansion. Construction should start in early 2009.

Genome Sequencing Data Center

The building on the corner of Newstead and Duncan avenues is substantially complete. The department has moved in and is in the process of setting up equipment.

Obituaries

Barrow, associate professor of clinical medicine, 84

Jock Barrow, M.D., instructor, associate professor of clinical medicine at the School of Medicine, died July 3, 2008. He was 84.

Miller, associate professor of orthodontics, 73

Francis E. Miller, M.D., a part-time associate professor of orthodontics in the School of Dental Medicine, died Friday, June 20, 2008, of cancer at his home in Washington, Mo. He was 73.
Charles F. Hildebolt, Ph.D., is not fond of routine. Fifteen years into his career as a dentist in Beavercreek, Ohio, he quit to go back to school and try something else.

"Dentistry is OK — it's a great profession for people who have that temperament — but once I'd done procedures several thousand times, I just... I used to grit my teeth," says Hildebolt, professor of radiology. "Thank goodness my wife went along with my dental practice and put all that behind us."

At the time, Hildebolt had been active for many years in exploring Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, the world's longest known cave system.

"Just about every trip we went on, we explored it, mapped virgin caves — caves humans hadn't been in before that weren't on any of the maps," he says.

On the trips, Hildebolt met and became lifelong friends with Patty Jo Watson, Ph.D., and Red Watson, Ph.D., two WUSTL faculty members who are now retired. Patty Jo, the Edward Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor Emerita, was an anthropologist at the Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology, and Hildebolt was occasionally able to help her on digs in Mammoth Cave.

"They knew that I wasn't too happy with what I was doing, and Red and I used to exchange long letters," Hildebolt says. "He knew I was interested in taking courses in archaeology and anthropology, and he said, 'Well, maybe you should think about graduate school.'"

After exploring a number of options, Hildebolt's graduate study, Hildebolt was most intrigued by WUSTL's physical anthropology program and the possibility of studying under Stephen Molnar, Ph.D., an expert in dental anthropology who now is professor emeritus of anthropology in Arts & Sciences.

"To some people, that may seem like an odd focus for an anthropologist, but there's a tremendous amount of information they can reveal about eating habits and nutrition have made teeth a rich source of insights into humanity and its ancestors."

When he earned his doctorate from WUSTL in 1987, Hildebolt was hired as faculty.

"The University is such a great place to work," he says. "You get to work in a field that brings the best, the resources are the best in the world, and I'm never, ever bored."

Defending a discovery
In recent years, much of the excitement in Hildebolt's professional life has centered on a skeleton found in a cave on the Indonesian island of Flores in 2003. The skeleton came to be known as the "Hobbit" because her short stature and numerous distinct features (nearly as long as her kneecap, for example) evoked the diminutive protagonist in J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and its prequel, "The Hobbit."

Hildebolt wasn't a member of the team that originally unearthed the Hobbit. He became involved through Dean Falk, Ph.D., the Hale G. Smith Professor and chair of anthropology at Florida State University. Falk had examined a cast of the Hobbit's skull and agreed with the theories of the researchers who found the Hobbit. She said the skeleton likeness was proof of a previously undiscovered species of human ancestor.

"The University is such a great place to work. You get to work with the brightest and the best, the resources are the best in the world, and I'm never, ever bored." - Charles F. Hildebolt

Charles F. Hildebolt
Family: wife, Louise, 60; daughter, Nea; twin daughters, Annie Gunn and Annie Lynn; son, Sean, 27, a new-home sales representative in Beavercreek, Ohio; son, Red, 31, a competitive "soccer" player for a local club and a student at Ohio State University; D.D.S., 1970, Ohio State University; M.A., physical anthropology, 1978. Hildebolt's wife, Louise, a professor of physical anthropology and of anatomy and neurobiology, gives him "service above and beyond the call of duty to students and colleagues.""

"We were on the mountain for 37 days and spent something like 10 days in a snow cave," he says. "Another group on the other side of the mountain couldn't find a snow cave, and several people died. That was the last mountaineering trip I ever went on."

Hildebolt's primary hobby now is soccer. He plays in five "non-competitive" soccer games a year, including one with his son, Sean, on Sundays.

"I used to go the gym, but I didn't like that. It's boring and much too routine to just run around a track," he says. "I figure, why not do the stuff I loved to do when I was a kid? You know, run around, chase the ball and kick it? That's hard to beat."