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Lung disease research aided by grant will air during the big game Feb. 4

The best student-created ad for Chevy you ask that of Michael J. Holtzman-Bowad ad contest Supe drug may lessen bone density for most cases of emphysema you see behind-the-scenes footage of 2007’ special, when viewers will be treated to a show of commercials from the Super Bowl’s Greatest Commercials advertising agency, Campbell-Ewald. The ad created by the winning team will air Feb. 4 on CBS during Super Bowl XL — among the most expensive and coveted advertising slots with an audience estimated at 100 million. The winning team will be announced Feb. 7 during CBS “Super Bowl Greatest Commercials 2007,” special, when viewers will see behind-the-scenes footage of the competition.

Lung disease research aided by grant

Physicians say that smoking is by far the biggest cause of emphysema, but why doesn’t every smoker get the disease? If you ask that of Michael J. Holtzman, M.D., he might answer that for most cases of emphysema you need a mix of genes, viruses and cigarette smoke. To study that mix, Holtzman and his colleagues have obtained funds from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health totaling $14.9 million to establish a Specialized Center for Clinically Oriented Research (SCCOR), an ambitious grant program meant to foster research that quickly can apply basic science findings to clinical problems. Emphysema and the associated condition of chronic bronchitis contribute to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), the fourth-leading cause of death in the United States. Research by Holtzman and his School of Medicine colleagues suggests that someone destined to suffer from COPD may start with a susceptible genetic makeup and then experience a severe viral lung infection in early childhood. The infection could “reprogram” the cells of the lung’s air passages and sacs, and the reprogrammed cells could react badly if the same person began smoking cigarettes, leading to COPD.

"Cigarette smoking has created a perception of GM, and we are clearly targeting young people. It’s really going to help them make a decision," said Holtzman.

Robot navigates fire using sensor networks

A agent 007 is a mighty versatile fellow, but he takes a backseat to agents being trained at the University. Computer science engineers have succeeded at having a robot spot simulated fire by seeking out heat and safely navigating near “safe” areas, denoted by plastic network to avoid simulated fire while navigating near “safe” areas, denoted by plastic networks. The development could allow firefighters to use a personal digital assistant (PDA) to communicate with the agent and determine a fire’s location and intensity. The use of wireless sensor networks is poised to explode in the world of technology said Gustav Kokoschka, the young painter quickly became inseparable. The couple met in 1912, a year after Gustav Mahler’s death. Almas was already famous, and several years older than Kokoschka, she and the young painter quickly became inseparable.

"Kokoschka: A Love Story" will receive its world premiere at 8 p.m. Feb. 8 in the A.E. Hotchner Studio Theatre, featuring a student cast, continue at 8 p.m. Feb. 9-10 and at 2 p.m. Feb. 10-11. "Alma was the great love of Kokoschka’s life," said Schvey. The couple met in 1912, a year after Gustav Mahler’s death. Though Alma was already famous, and several years older than Kokoschka, she and the young painter quickly became inseparable.

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S tudents in the George Warren Brown School of Social Work usually spend their days in class or off campus at practicum sites. Now the social work theory learned in the classroom and the field is being put into practice inside the school itself, through a new project called Grounds for Change (GFC).

Grounds for Change facilitates dialogue with a conscience

A cknowledging the importance of an environment that fosters dialogue with a conscience, the George Warren Brown School of Social Work is launching a new initiative called Grounds for Change (GFC), which is designed to provide a space for students, faculty, and community members to engage in meaningful conversation about issues of social justice and ethical practice. The initiative includes a series of events and activities that focus on themes related to social justice, human rights, and social change. These events are designed to encourage dialogue and critical thinking among participants, with the goal of fostering greater awareness and understanding of the complex issues facing our society today.

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Tuition assistance programs: A generous University offering

By Barbara Ria

Washington University in St. Louis has one of the most generous assistance programs in higher education, benefitting students and their families. This year, more than 30,000 students and employees received assistance from the various Tuition Assistance Programs (TAPs) of the University. This assistance was made possible through the generous support of donors, the University, and other entities.

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Tuition assistance is among the most generous benefits the University offers.

This benefit is available to faculty and staff, their spouses or domestic partners, and their dependent children. Except as noted below, it applies to all courses offered by Washington University.

Those who wish to enroll in programs or courses must establish eligibility through the Tuition Assistance Program application. They must complete the application and provide the required documentation. Information about eligibility and benefit details is available at hr.wustl.edu.

"In our effort to attract and retain quality faculty and staff, the University considers its Tuition Assistance Program to be the most competitive perk in our total benefits package," said Lauren, director of benefits.

"It ranks at the very top as compared to major St. Louis corporate and ranks as above average compared to our peer universities. These benefits provide ongoing professional development for employees as an opportunity for personal development for our student and dependent children with a greater opportunity to enter a college education."

Details of the program are:

**Employee Tuition Assistance**

Full-time faculty and staff who are enrolled in graduate or undergraduate courses offered through WUSTL are eligible to receive tuition assistance. The University pays 100 percent of full-time academic fees for eligible undergraduate courses and 50 percent of full-time academic fees for eligible graduate courses.

Spouses/partner and domestic partners of full-time WUSTL faculty and staff who have completed one year of continuous full-time service are also entitled to receive 50 percent of full-time academic fees for eligible undergraduate courses and 30 percent of full-time academic fees for eligible graduate courses.

Full-time employees are entitled to receive all courses up to and including 120 credit hours of college work per semester and must achieve a passing grade. Fee re- mission for eligible undergraduate courses is 100 percent; fee remission for eligible graduate courses is 50 percent.

Sponsors of domestic partners of full-time WUSTL faculty and staff who have completed one year of continuous full-time service are entitled to receive 50 percent of full-time academic fees for eligible graduate courses.

The percentage of tuition remission depends on the school the child attends and the employee's status and serves as a fundamental component of the University's mission to support academic excellence.

"For eligible employees, the University has an expectation that employees make their own choices about the education of their children. "We expect employees to consider several factors when deciding about the education of their children, including the costs and availability of tuition assistance. "We support employees in making decisions that are best for their families, and we believe that providing tuition assistance is a key component of our efforts to attract and retain the best and brightest faculty and staff."
New AIDS treatments research supported by $10 million grant

By carolyn armas

The AIDS Clinical Trials Unit (ACTU) at the School of Medicine has received a $10 million grant to support important studies for AIDS and HIV-related complications, such as dementia, neuropathy and cardiovascular disease.

The seven-year grant is from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

"AIDS is no longer an acute, life-threatening condition," said David B. Clifford, M.D., director of the ACTU and the Men's Health Network Study at Forest Synergy, a division of Clinical Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences. "With current drugs, many HIV patients live for 20 or more years in good health. But standard drugs are not effective in all patients, and many develop complications of their disease. Our focus is on developing better treatments for these conditions.

The grant will fund investiga-
tions of new therapies for pa-
tients recently diagnosed with HIV, as well as for those patients who have developed re-
istance to standard HIV med-
ication. The latter includes clini-
cal trials testing drugs called CCR5 blockers, which are de-
signed to work differentially from currently available drugs by blocking the CCR5 co-receptor.

Clifford said University researchers also will test new therapies for HIV-related dementia and metabolic disorders. Such neu-
roAIDS affects at least one in five of the more than 82,000 patients in the United States who become more common as pa-
tients live longer, said Clifford, who also leads the NIDH Neuro-
logic AIDS Research Consor-
tium.

"The virus reaches the brain soon after infection, but few HIV drugs can penetrate the brain to attack the virus. As part of a multi-center trial, the ACTU will evaluate whether certain drugs known to penetrate the blood-brain barrier, including the antibiotic minocycline, can protect brain cells from HIV damage.

An estimated one-third of pa-
tients with HIV experience neuropsychiatric symptoms caused by either the virus or by the drugs used to treat it. Symptoms often cause great discomfort and can include burning, stiffness, tingling or numbness in the toes and soles of the feet. Address-
ning this problem as a high prior-
ity, Clifford's group is en-
gaged in a multi-year study ga-
uging whether the typical ap-
lication of high potency regimens applied to the feet can control the pain associated with neu-
ropathy. Evidence suggests that capsaicin, found in hot chili peppers, can diminish the pain.

While current HIV therapy typically improves immune function and dramatically reduces the amount of the virus circulating in the body, in some instances, the patient's immune system never fully recovers from the HIV infection, said Clifford. In these cases, levels of CD4 cell immunity remain low, leaving patients susceptible to infections, such as pneumocystis, and to certain can-
taneous cancers. In ACTU research evalu-
ating whether growth factors can stimulate CD4 cells and re-
vive the full function of the im-
une system, patients with HIV live longer, doctors have found that the disease and the patient's immune system can increase the levels of CD4 cell immunity in patients infected with HIV even before treatment begins. Stan-
ard HIV drugs also have been shown to have adverse effects on the quality of life, including weight and cholesterol. The new funding will aid research into strate-
gies at high risk for cardio-
diabetic disease and to find HIV drug combinations that could help reduce that risk.

Potential bioterror threat slowed without key protein

By Michael C. Purdy

The deadly attack of the bacterium that caus-
e pneumonic plague is significantly slowed when it can't make use of a key protein, School of Medicine scientists report in this week's issue of Blood.

Sperm is a primary concern in pneumonic plague, which kills in three to four days and po-
tentially could be used in a terrorist attack. The bacterium, which uses sperm to enter the body, is vulnerable to antibiotics, but by the time an un-
usual infection becomes evident, Jerina has often detected the pathogen.

"By the time most doctors recognize an in-
fection as plague rather than the flu, it's al-
ready too late to begin antibiotic treatment," said Jerina, who has studied pneumonic plague in Antarctica, China, and Europe.

"Most of these pneumonic plague cases are related to travelers who got infected in other countries where the bacteria is a normal component of the soil or environment," said Jerina. "We have been working on strategies to slow the growth of pneumonic plague to make it less contagious in the face of a bioterror attack.

Jerina has found that the protein called G-CSF, which decreases bone density and helps tumors grow in bone, is crucial for pneumonic plague to spread.

"Pneumonic plague involves pneumonic bacteria and pneumonia, and the bacterium is always inhaled. The lungs are the first stop for pneumonic bacteria, and the lungs are the first stop for pneumonic plague," said Jerina. "When we infected mice with pneumonic plague, we found that the pneumonic bacteria couldn't survive in the lungs, but the pneumonic bacteria could survive in the lungs in the absence of G-CSF.

"We are not at all advocating ending G-CSF use," said Jerina. "Because G-CSF supports the development of bone marrow and the production of neutrophils, bioterrorists could pro-
tend to end it, said Jerina. "They want to end it, so they can more easily infect people with this bacterium, which is dangerous when it's not treated.

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tend to end it, said Jerina. "They want to end it, so they can more easily infect people with this bacterium, which is dangerous when it's not treated.
Brown bag it with ‘Work, Families and Public Policy’

Spring social work lecture series begins Feb. 5

BY JESSICA MARTIN

Leading experts in the fields of mental health, civil service and human behavior are part of the George Warren Brown School of Social Work’s spring lecture series.

The series is committed to presenting the most outstanding scholars and thought leaders in the field in order to attract a diverse audience, said Barbara E. Levin, the series organizer and co-chair of the Executive Board for Building Capacity at the school.

The first lecture, “Community Engagement in Music and Social Work,” will be presented by the Department of Music and Human Behavior at the School of Social Work and the Department of Africana Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, San Diego School of Public Health. The talk, set for noon on Feb. 5 in Brown Hall, Lounge 4A.

• March 19: Tanja Chalaka, professor of Arts and Sciences, will present “Unpacking the Household: Informal Property Rights in the Great African Forest.”

• March 25: James Thomas, professor of Arts and Sciences, will discuss “Conspicuous Consumption of Economics in Arts & Sciences, or the Whistleblower’s Role in the Financial Crisis.”


• April 2: Ramesh Raghavan, professor of Arts and Sciences, will present “Your Heart Requires Both: When Modern Cardiac Function Meets Ancient Metabolism.”

• April 9: William Lowry, professor of politics and international affairs in the School of Social Work, will present “Patient-Driven Health Outcomes.”

• April 20: 8 a.m.–5 p.m. School of Social Work.

Other talks are:

• March 2: Nicholas S. Christakis, professor of Arts and Sciences, will present “The Human Cost of Inequality.”

• March 5: William B. McDonough, director of the School of Architecture and Arts & Sciences, will present “Las Vegas: A City of Innovation.”

• April 15: 8 a.m.–5 p.m. School of Social Work.

• April 22: 5 p.m. School of Social Work.

• April 27: 5 p.m. School of Social Work.

• April 29: 5 p.m. School of Social Work.

For more information, call Jenny Krauss-Smith at 935-7973.

By Jessica Martin

Washington University in St. Louis

Friday, Feb. 5


8 p.m. Art and Activism Panel Discussion. “Art and Activism.” Ursa’s Fireside. For information and sign-up, email urssundays@gmail.com.

Saturday, Feb. 6

8 a.m.–5 p.m. Student Art Exhibit. Exhibit continues through Feb. 28. Olin Library, Lvl. 1, Ginkgo Park Blvd., Lower Lvl., Rm. B108. 935-5495.

8 p.m. Division of Biology & Biomedical Sciences. "Whole-body and Metabolic Syndrome." W. Todd Cade, professor of medicine. Center for Molecular Biology of the Cell, Room 524.

11 a.m. MLA Saturday Seminar Series. “Changes in Foreign Policy.” 4950 Children’s Place. 286-0432.

Thursday, Feb. 4

4 p.m. Immunology Research Seminar. "Antibody Responses to the Influenza Virus and Their Migration to Lymph Nodes." Gregory Finucane, professor of medicine. Center for Molecular Biology of the Cell, Room 524.


2 p.m. Women’s basketball vs. Case Western Reserve U. Athletic Complex. 935-4900.

Sunday, Feb. 5

11 a.m. Domestic Violence "Teach-in." "Teach-in" is part of the "50 States/50 Days" awareness campaign. Ridgley Hall, Rm. 245. 935-4841.

Tuesday, Feb. 20

4 p.m. Division of Biology & Biomedical Sciences. "Whole-body and Metabolic Syndrome." W. Todd Cade, professor of medicine. Center for Molecular Biology of the Cell, Room 524.

3 p.m. Joint Center for East Asian Studies Colloquium. "Prevailing Waves: New Studies on Arduino Revolution." (Registration follows.) McDonald Hall Caf. for registration or biligual luncheon.

3:30 p.m. Hematology & Oncology Case Discussions. "Learning Using Cases in Cancer Re-Broadened." The C.R. -Stallion, St. Louis, 100

Wednesday, Feb. 21

11 a.m. Departments of Chemistry and Biological Sciences. "Molecular and Environmental Toxicology Research." Speakers are William H. Lowry, professor of public health and environmental sciences; and David Wyllie, professor of environmental and occupational health sciences. McDonnell Hall, Rm. 203. 935-5610.
Chief Justice Roberts to judge law's multicampus court competition

John G. Roberts Jr., chief justice of the United States, will head the prestigious panel of judges presiding over the finals of the School of Law's Wiley Rutledge Moot Court Competition. The event will take place on Feb. 6 in the Bryan Cave Moot Court Room of Anheuser-Busch Hall.

The other four members of the panel are Karen Nelson Moore, judge on the 6th Cir. Court of Appeals; law school alumnus Catherine D. Perry, judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri; David R. Hendrix, judge on the U.S. Dist. Court for the Southern District of Illinois; and Richard J. Lazarus, president of the Georgetown University Law Center.

The problem for the competition is Gadsden and it was adapted from a New York University School of Law moot court casebook, based on characters from the 2004 movie, “Win a Date With Tad Hamilton.” It focuses on the criminal appeal of a test-winner’s boyfriend who allegedly threatened a celebrity. The competition will be closed to the public. Limited seating will be provided for the WUSTL community to view a simulcast of the student arguments. Space in the overflow rooms in Anheuser-Busch Hall will be available on a first-come-first-served basis.

The arguments begin at 3:30 p.m. Announcements of several specialty awards and the winners of the competition finals will be at 4:45 p.m.

In addition to judging the finals, Roberts will teach a consti- tutional law course at the University of Virginia School of Law for the year’s spring semester.

On Feb. 5, 2007

Driving efficiency: Eric Kaufman (left), a General Motors Corp. Energy Center engineer from Detroit, and Pratim Biswas, Ph.D. (wearing tie), the Stiftel and Quinette Jens Professor and chair of the Department of Energy, Environmental & Chemical Engineering, discuss fuel efficiency and boundary layers, as he spoke Tuesday with a group of professors in Anheuser-Busch Hall, where three of the latest GM vehicles were on display. Earlier in Whitaker Hall auditorium, Biswas outlined the new department he had created to focus on energy and the environment. Kaufman explained GM’s thrust in fuel-efficient technologies, stressing the need to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Environment is Saturday Seminar series focus

By ANDY CLENNDEN

The April 2 talk is called “Citizenship in the Public Realm: Religion: A Reply to Leo Strauss, and Political Theology.”

The MLA Saturday Seminar program was founded to examine and discuss the interaction of questions of esthetic and religious traditions, in Asia, Europe and North America, to present their insights to the public.

Religious pluralism lecture series sponsored by University’s PPRI

By ANDY CLENNDEN

Religion and politics have been around for nearly as long as the world. But at various times in various societies, one has had a profound influence on the other. How do they, or should they, co-exist in today’s world? In an effort to examine and discuss the issues surrounding this topic, the Religion, Science and Religious Initiative (PPRI) is sponsoring the lecture series “Re-examining Pluralism in Religious Studies.”

The series is free to the public. For more information, go online to ucollege.wustl.edu/freest_cultural.php.

“Re-examining Pluralism in Religious Studies” is the topic Monday, March 5, at 3:30 p.m. in the Bryan Cave Moot Court Room in Anheuser-Busch Hall.

The other four members of the panel are Karen Nelson Moore, judge on the 6th Cir. Court of Appeals; law school alumnus Catherine D. Perry, judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri; David R. Hendrix, judge on the U.S. Dist. Court for the Southern District of Illinois; and Richard J. Lazarus, president of the Georgetown University Law Center.

The series schedule is as follows:

Feb. 3: "Environmental Education and Research at Washington University" (Pratim Biswas, Ph.D., the Stiftel and Quinette Jens Professor and chair of the Department of Energy, Environmental & Chemical Engineering

Feb. 24: "Respect for Nature," J. Claude Evans, Ph.D., associate professor of philosophy in Arts & Sciences

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Supplier Diversity Initiative Fine-tunes its focus

BY ANDY CLENDENNEN

One should never rest on one's laurels, regardless of the endeavor. And so it goes for the Supplier Diversity Initiative at the University of St. Louis — a university-wide program designed to increase the diversity of minority and woman-owned businesses within the university's supply chains. "We want to foster the creation and development of businesses to help build the communities around us," said Sandra Marks, SDI director.

Our spending with businesses owned by ethnic minorities, in particular African-American-owned businesses in this region, has been stagnant for the past few years, according to Marks. "We aim to change that," said Marks. "We are looking to foster the creation and development of these businesses to get them started and growing." This initiative is part of the university's overall strategy to diversify its supplier base.

Becoming a preferred supplier with the SDI means that a business will have access to a network of potential customers, including the university, its colleges, and other institutions within the St. Louis metropolitan area. "We want to create a pipeline of minority-owned businesses that are ready to supply products and services to the university," said Marks.

In addition to fostering the development of new minority-owned businesses, the SDI is also focused on increasing the diversity of its current supplier base. "We want to ensure that our existing suppliers are also benefiting from these initiatives," said Marks.

Overall, the SDI is committed to increasing the diversity of its supplier base and creating new opportunities for minority-owned businesses to succeed in the competitive world of higher education. "We are committed to being a leader in this space," said Marks. "We want to be a model for other institutions around the country."
Lützeler receives Austrian Great Medal of Merit

BY NEIL SCHONBERGER

Paul Michael Lützeler, Ph.D., the Rosa May Distinguished University Professor in the Humanities in Arts & Sciences, will receive the Austrian Great Medal of Merit in a ceremony at the University Feb. 6. Christoph Herr-Hohenstein, director of the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York, will present the award.

The award is being bestowed on Lützeler for his work on Jewish-Austrian novelist Hermann Broch (1886-1951) and his research in the fields of European identity and contemporary Austrian literature.

An international leading authority on Broch, Lützeler edited Broch's collected works in 17 volumes. He also has written a biography of Broch, two scholarly books on Broch and numerous volumes of Broch's correspondence. He is president of the International Hermann Broch Society.

In his three books and four editions on European identity and Austrian authors, players argued Lützeler has been invited to lecture on the contribution of Austrian authors to European identity at numerous Austrian universities. He founded WUSTL's European Studies program in 1983 and directed it for 20 years. Lützeler founded WUSTL's Max Kade Center for Contemporary German Literature and Arts. With the Onlin Library, he has a special collection of contemporary German literature.

GFC — from Page 1

To go the school's Student Coordinating Council.

"Getting a great vehicle for bringing people together, and it's been wonderful to get to know faculty, staff and other students we normally wouldn't be in the bus," Harper Chang said. A new law allows "GFC facilitates learning from people of the classroom award." GFC organizers also hope to promote ecological and green living, such as offering free coffee and the snacks are organic or locally grown. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own mug, or can purchase one.

"We hope GFC helps people start to think about making a conscious consumer choice," Hunter said. "It goes beyond the environment. Thinking about individual choices can impact how we work with our social work clients in the future." According to Hunter, GFC has changed how people interact with one another.

"It seems like there's more interaction between student groups, and it's nice to see people coming back to campus to hang out and network," she said.

Gautam Iyadla, Ph.D., director of international programs and associate professor in the school, said, "It's after all, an organization about students. How can the vital grounds for change should be their driving force," he said. As an international student himself, Chang normally for new arrivers of last minute tips and tricks. Chang, of course, is a former assistant director at the student center for international students.

With the GFC programming to include lunch, discussion groups, open mic nights and art exhibits.

"We hope that GFC becomes a place where members of the Brown community can express their creative selves," Harper Chang said.

Notables

Rosa Parks meritorious service award goes to Danforth, McLeod

BY ANDY CLENDENNEN

Last year, the University’s Commemoration Committee established a Rosa L. Parks Award for Meritorious Service to the Community. Margaret Bush Wilson received the inaugural award, and this year, two more recipients were recognized in a Jan. 15 ceremony in Graham Chapel.

Chancellor Emeritus William H. Danforth and James E. McLeod, vice chancellor for students and dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, were honored.

"The award was created to honor those whose work benefits Parks due to her (then) recent passing," said committee chair Harvey J. field, Ph.D., assistant dean of academic programs for Civic Engagement at the Center for Advanced Learning.

The 2006 recipient was Mrs. Margaret Bush Wilson. We wanted to have a special speaker for the 2006 event and decided on Mrs. Wilson. We were able to obtain her agreement to speak publicly with the help of Professor John Baugh, the inaugural Margaret Bush Wilson Professor in Arts and Sciences.

And that first selection led directly to the selection of this year’s recipients.

Wilson was asked to speak, but was not aware she’d be receiving the award. When asked what the award was for — generally presented to someone with strong University affiliations — she immediately thought McLeod would be a good choice.

Unbeknownst to her, though, she had already been selected for the 2006 award. And when it came time to select the 2007 recipients, fields and the rest of the committee recalled Wilson’s recommendation. Danforth’s name came up.

"From then it became quite obvious that the criteria, they both would be worthy recipients," said Fields as the proposal for the 2007 event, Fields said.

"When the 2007 committee came together, this decision was, as appropriate, revised and enthustastically agreed to again. This, that is how the decision was made to present the award to Chancellor Danforth and Dean McLeod."

The award’s charter, read in part: "The award, herewith, will go to the person whose service to the University is most significant, based on."

The Danforth Campus Commemoration Committee deemed that a nominee, who exhibits the courage of Mrs. Rosa L. Parks, who has been a lifelong supporter of the University, whose efforts have had impact far beyond the immediate circumference, and who has served without striving for personal gain, is worthy of this singular honor.

Online system stores health records

BY ANDY CLENDENNEN

Is your vital health information in a doctor’s office, a file cabinet, a stack of stuff at home or all of the above? It’s easy to store a someone quickly access complete, up-to-date information?

A new electronic personal health record program called MyHealthFolders allows individuals to organize, store and retrieve personal health information for themselves and family members using a secure Web-based program. The service — at www.MyHealthFolders.com — is available at no cost to University benefits-eligible faculty and staff.

"In order to manage our own health care, it is important to keep good records," said Maureen B. Prentice, vice chancellor for human resources. "Many of us are also responsible for keeping track of medical information regarding our children and elderly parents. MyHealthFolders is a free tool that faculty and staff members can use to easily track and access this important information from any computer with Internet access."

Members can use myHealthFolders to print up-dated medical reports to bring to physician appointments. Members also can pay for a pharmacy refill, card, giving emergency medical personnel immediate access to medical history, medications, and physician and family contacted through the Internet.

The value of myHealthfolders is largely dependent on the amount and quality of the information entered. Gathering the medical records and personal health information for each family member might be the most time-consuming part of the process. But once the information is entered, there is a permanent record of health information that can be accessed anywhere in the world.

Personal information will not be accessed by BJC Healthcare, insurance companies or the University and will not be used for any type of research or marketing. Like other medical records, the information in myHealthfolders is subject to the federal privacy provisions of the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act and will be protected accordingly.

For more information, call the Office of Human Resources at 935-3990.
Getting children started early

Drug pioneer Shelly Sakiyama-Elbert teaches middle-school kids about chemical engineering

Shelly Sakiyama-Elbert
Professor: Assistant professor of bio-mechanical engineering
Family: Husband, Donald Elbert, Ph.D., associate professor of biomedical engineering, son, Alex, will be 2 Feb. 23
Research specialty: Drug delivery, regenerative medicine
Education: Bachelor's, chemical engineering and biology, MIT (1995); masters, chemical engineering, Cal Tech (1998); doctorate, chemical engineer-
ing, Cal Tech (2005).
Major funders: National Institutes of Health, $1.3 million for four years; and Wallace H. Coulter Foundation, $249,000 for two years

I have always been good in math and science, with math being a favorite, so I thought I might want to be a chemical engineer. The only problem was I didn't really know what a chemical engineer does when I was in high school.

Today, after building an international reputation in the field of drug delivery, Sakiyama-Elbert certainly knows what chemical engineers do. And yet, each fall for the past four years she makes sure that middle-school students, predominantly girls, know what she knows.

Shelly Sakiyama-Elbert at Washington University in St. Louis on Feb. 1, 2007

"When I was in high school, unfortunately, lots of people didn't understand what engineers do and conceptualize what engineers do and computer modeling. They interact and do hands-on experiments and conceptualize what engineers do and easier to picture themselves as an engineer one day.

"I think middle school is the critical age to get students excited about science and engineering. By high school, unfortunately most of kids are turned off by math and science."

Sakiyama-Elbert is the eldest of four siblings (all brothers) and the daughter of Tom and Cathy Sakiyama. Her father, now retired, taught elementary school and every year taught fellow teachers how to test gifted and/or special needs students, primarily at the elementary-school level.

Her mother was also an elementary-school teacher, in addition to being a homemaker.

"I got very good in standardized tests, good at everything," she says, smiling. "I must have taken every standardized test known to man."

She did well enough on her SATs to be admitted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1992 where, by her sophomore year, she finally grabbed what it is that chemical engineers do, thanks to projects that involved succinct oxide kinetics in biological systems and the migration of liver cells on different surfaces.

She learned a lot about how challenging it is to do research and how you have to work through problems and troubleshoot until you get it right," she says.

Sakiyama-Elbert graduated in 1996 with a degree in chemical engineering and biology. She started graduate work that fall at the California Institute of Technology under the guidance of adviser Jefrey Hubbell, Ph.D., professor of chemical engineering, who also advised another student named Donald Elbert, from Lexington, Ky.

Showing Sakiyama-Elbert the laboratory at Cal Tech, Hubbell introduced her to Elbert, and thus began an enduring relationship.

Through Donald Elbert’s and Shelly’s efforts, she could pursue cardiovascular research or the nervous system. Because she had had more exposure to cardiovascular research, she chose the nervous system to learn more.

"The nervous system is amazing," she says. "It's fascinating how it forms in development and even after birth, nature is really elegant in its ability to direct nerves to go over long distances and find the right connections and reinforce those connections. Think of a baby learning to walk — it takes an incredible symptom of nervous communication for that to happen. And we're just now beginning to get the basic understanding of the biology behind the nervous system.

Sakiyama-Elbert had high school physiology as one of "30 Under 30" talented researchers in St. Louis.

Sakiyama-Elbert's expertise — reflecting three degrees — stacks up heavily on the chemical engineering side. To keep up with the dynamic nature of biology, she attends seminars and conferences and reads the literature all the time.

"In trying to do regenerative medicine or tissue engineering, I think we really have to look at developmental biology to understand the critical cues that are there when a tissue is generated the first time," she says.

She and her collaborators have achieved success in cell culture studies with her system and are looking at the clinical side with human studies "still several years away," she says.

"I'm happy to be doing regenerative medicine or tissue engineering. I think we are working on the very basics. We're growing promising materials that can interact in the same way biological cells do and recruit cells to help direct tissue regeneration," she says. "As we start to understand the biology at the molecular level, we can put just the right cues in the materials, keep in mind that the more that the body can do itself, the better."