

FROM THE Dean's Desk



**ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON
MEDICAL SCHOOL**

University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey

Message from the Dean

As you have been informed by previous communications from former UMDNJ President William F. Owen, Jr., MD, and Rutgers University President Richard L. McCormick, PhD, Governor Chris Christie has endorsed Part 1 of the Report of the University of Medicine and Dentistry Advisory Committee. This report calls for the realignment of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, the School of Public Health, and The Cancer Institute of New Jersey with Rutgers University in New Brunswick and Piscataway.

The purpose of my communication is to provide the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School community with an update regarding the proposed change which is scheduled to become effective on July 1, 2012. The University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and Rutgers University senior leadership have created Integration Teams that have begun to meet. The Integration Teams include representatives from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and are currently addressing the following areas: Academic and Educational Programs, Student Services, Advancement/Development, Buildings and Assets, Clinical Programs/Affiliation Agreements, Compliance, Financial Services, Government Affairs/Public Relations, Human Resources, Information Systems, Legal Services, and Research. The teams are charged with identifying potential issues that would be affected by the restructuring and are drafting plans to address those issues. Information from the Integration Teams is then provided to a Steering Committee comprised of senior leaders from UMDNJ, Rutgers, and the Governor's Office for final arbitration.

It is important to note that no governmental action has occurred to date, but the endorsement from the Governor's Office has set integration plans in motion. During this transition, I ask for your continued diligence to our missions and to those whom we serve as we work through this process together to enhance medical education in the State of New Jersey.

I will work to keep you updated as new information becomes available.

Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD
Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD, Dean

The Women and Children's Initiative: A Virtuous Cycle

In a virtuous cycle, success builds on success. This concept is the model for the Women and Children's

Initiative, formally launched last July. The initiative strengthens the partnership of three affiliated institutions: Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH), and PSE&G Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH), the nation's largest pediatric healthcare rehabilitation system. "The initiative is a restatement of our shared commitment to the health of women and children in our region," says **Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD**, dean.

The initiative is unique in New Jersey. Situated in individual, state-of-the-art buildings, each institution is only steps away from the research and specialty care at the other. Together, they form the children's academic health campus.

In the RWJMS division of maternal and fetal medicine (MFM), a perinatal specialist manages a high-risk preg-

nancy and delivers the baby at RWJUH, with a team that might include a pediatric cardiologist or nephrologist from



John Emerson

Kapila Seshadri, MD, associate professor pediatrics, examines a young patient.

the Department of Pediatrics. High-risk neonates are routinely evaluated in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at the Bristol Myers-Squibb Children's Hospital (BMSCH) at RWJUH and cared for by a team of specialists until they are ready to go home.

Another example: a young girl with a traumatic brain injury is

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Conference Focuses on Disaster Preparedness and Response

College Advising Program Interconnects RWJMS Community

RWJMS introduced the College Advising Program in the first semester of the 2011-2012 academic year. Three "colleges" serve academic, social, and professional purposes. All students are assigned to one of three colleges, which also include a Student Affairs dean, faculty members, and alumni.

The colleges are named in memory of three faculty members, the late **Pamela C. Champe, PhD**; **Robert L. Trelstad, MD**; and **Parvin Saidi, MD**.

The program was developed by **Sonia Garcia Laumbach, MD '99**, assistant professor of family medicine and community health and assistant dean for student affairs, and **Carol A. Terregino, MD '86**, associate professor of medicine, interim senior associate dean for education, and associate dean for admissions.

"Students had been requesting a program that encourages meaningful communication between students in all four years," says Dr. Garcia Laumbach. "We expect the program to create a sense of family and boost our sense of community."

"The program increases the number of faculty who know the students," says Dr. Terregino. "Faculty from Patient Centered Medicine and clinical faculty can continue the great relationships they establish with students." Fall and spring events, beginning with the Clash of the Colleges, will add a social component to the program.

"9/11 — 10 Years Later, A National Conference on Preparedness and Response" took place on December 9 at The Heldrich in New Brunswick. The event was hosted by the University Center for Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response (UCDPER), a collaborative initiative of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. Among those welcoming conference participants was **Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD**, dean.

Conference speakers addressed a wide variety of topics related to concerns following the terrorist attacks of 2001. **Clifton R. Lacy, MD '79**, director, UCDPER, who served as New Jersey Commissioner of Health and Senior Services at the time of the attacks, spoke on "Bio-terrorism: The Anthrax Threat."

The agenda included talks by three experts from the

RWJMS faculty who also serve on the executive committee of UCDPER. **Paul J. Liroy, PhD**, professor and vice chair, Department of Environmental and Occupational Medicine, spoke on "Living with Hazardous Chemicals after 9/11."

Jeffrey D. Laskin, PhD, professor of occupational and environmental medicine and

chief, division of toxicology, addressed "Countering Chemical, Biological, and Nuclear Terrorism." **Robert M. Eisenstein, MD**, associate professor of emergency medicine and interim chair, Department of Emergency Medicine, discussed "Emergency Preparedness in the Emergency Department."

Second Annual Gala to Celebrate with Alumni and Friends

Building on the great success of the last year's Inaugural Gala to Celebrate with Alumni and Friends, RWJMS and the Foundation of UMDNJ promise an even more memorable event this year. The event begins at 6:30 p.m.

on April 21, in the elegant setting of The Heldrich, in New Brunswick. The company will again be superb, the dining top-notch, and the silent auction opportunities almost limitless — all against the background of the cool jazz of the Warren Daniels Band.

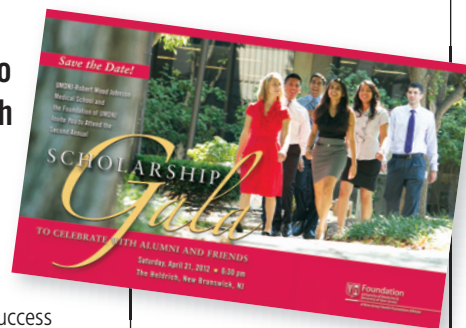
Three special awards will be presented:

- **Meritorious Service Award:** Harvey A. Holzberg, President Emeritus, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

- **Distinguished Alumni Award:** Donald Rose, MD '80, clinical associate professor of orthopaedic surgery, NYU School of Medicine, founding director, Harkness Center for Dance Injuries at the NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases
- **Honorary Alumni Award, posthumously:** to Stephen F. Lowry, MD, MBA, professor and chair, Department of Surgery and senior associate dean for education

"We are excited about joining once again with faculty, alumni, students and friends for a wonderful evening in support of our students," says **Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD**, dean.

For information: email
Patricia Hansen,
hansenmp@umdnj.edu, or
Denise Gavala, dgavala@njhf.org.



The Women and Children's Initiative: A Virtuous Cycle

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admitted to the specialist-staffed Pediatric Emergency Department at BMSCH. She receives specialized care from an RWJMS pediatric neurologist in the hospital's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and is transferred to CSH for rehabilitation.

The Women and Children's Initiative will support new or expanded programs at RWJMS and its affiliates, to include an increase in basic and translational research at the Child Health Institute of New Jersey; the addition of a pediatric cardiac surgery program; expansion of the nephrology program to support kidney transplants for children, further development of the robotic simulator program, and added preventive, diagnostic services for women.

RWJMG Holiday Toy Drive



The staff of the Robert Wood Johnson Medical Group collected toys and clothing for PSE&G Children’s Specialized Hospital (CHS) which provides rehabilitation services for children with special needs. An energetic group of elves, organized by nurses **Linda Matysik, LPN**, and **Ellen Quinlan, LPN**, delivered more than five full carts of games, toys, crafts, pajamas and infant care items in addition to several brand new bicycles, to the hospital on December 9. The toys were distributed to pediatric patients at Children’s Specialized Hospital facilities throughout New Jersey.

Above, left to right are; Kathy Young, Aiesha Wilson, Kristine Peterson, BS, RN, Paulette Caputo, LPN, and Iris Bonilla.

RWJMS Surgeons Add Cardiothoracic Division at St. Francis

Surgeons from the RWJMS division of cardiothoracic surgery have been added to the Cardiac Surgery Program at St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton. They offer patients at St. Francis a full range of adult cardiothoracic surgery including coronary artery bypass surgery, repair or replacement of diseased cardiac valves, repair of aneurysms of the heart and aorta, repair of congenital abnormalities, and surgery to treat arrhythmias. They use specialized techniques of coronary artery bypass surgery, thoracic aortic stent grafting, and minimally-invasive procedures for lung and valve surgeries.

Mark Anderson, MD, professor of surgery and chief of cardiothoracic surgery at RWJMS, will lead the new division at St. Francis. He was the first physician in the nation to implant the AbioCor self-contained artificial heart after the device received FDA approval in 2006.

“We are pleased to expand our services and partner with St. Francis Medical Center,” said **Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD**, dean. “Our cardiothoracic surgeons will provide expert care to residents in the Trenton area, diminishing the need to travel and ensuring a continuity of care for St. Francis patients.”

Cheryl F. Dreyfus, PhD, professor and acting chair, Department of Neuroscience and Cell Biology, was appointed chair of the department. Dr. Dreyfus received her PhD in cell biology at Cornell University and completed her postdoctoral training



Cheryl F. Dreyfus, PhD

at Einstein Medical College. Before joining the RWJMS faculty in 1990, Dr. Dreyfus served on the faculties of

Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons and Cornell University Medical College.

A dedicated teacher, Dr. Dreyfus is noted for her exceptional mentorship of undergraduates, graduate students, and junior faculty. She has served on the Appointments and Promotions Committee, the Admissions Committee, and a number of search and review committees.

Dr. Dreyfus’s internationally recognized work focuses on the regulation of brain cell development and death. She has published over 70 papers and 14 book chapters and is frequently an invited speaker and participant at national and international conferences and symposia.

Robert Eisenstein, MD, associate professor and vice chair, Department of Emergency Medicine was appointed interim



Robert Eisenstein, MD

chair, Department of Emergency Medicine. Dr. Eisenstein received his MD from the University of Health Sciences/

The Chicago Medical School in North Chicago, Illinois. He completed his residency in emergency medicine at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, where he served as chief resident.

Dr. Eisenstein joined the RWJMS faculty in 2003 as clinical assistant professor of emergency medicine and was appointed associate professor and vice chair, Department of Emergency Medicine in 2005. He served as chair of the RWJMG Operations Committee, is a past chair of the Clinical Care Committee, and serves on the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians.

David Swee, MD, professor of family medicine and community health and associate dean for education, was appointed associate dean for faculty affairs and faculty development.



David Swee, MD

Dr. Swee completed his MD degree at Dalhousie Medical School in Halifax, Nova

Scotia, where he completed the first year of a residency in family practice. He completed his residency in family practice at Somerset Medical Center. Dr. Swee joined the Department of Family Medicine as an instructor of family medicine in 1977 and was appointed professor in 1994. He served as chair of the department from 1994 to 2005.

Dr. Swee is a member of and has held leadership positions in many professional organizations and committees at RWJMS and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and chairs the American Medical Association’s Council of Medical Education. His numerous awards include the 2009 Robert Raskowski, MD, Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education Hero Award and the New Jersey Academy of Family Physicians 2009 Chair Award.

Medical Mandarin Students Volunteer at Medical Screening

In October, students from the Medical Mandarin class participated in a free hepatitis B screening, in Edison, receiving high marks from volunteer physicians, the Chinese American Community, and the American Cancer Society Asian Initiative, the sponsoring organization.

The students worked closely with volunteer Chinese American physicians of various specialties from the community, practiced their medical Mandarin, and provided service to people in need. Global Health and Medical Mandarin electives are not only offering opportunities for students to explore a healthcare system outside of the U.S. but are helping people with limited financial resources and knowledge of English," says **Karen Wei-Ru Lin, MD '89**, associate professor of family medicine and community health.

First Students Graduate from GSBS-RWJMS Master's Program

The Master's in Clinical and Translational Science (CTS) program at the UMDNJ-Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at RWJMS graduated its first class last spring. The master's program, begun in 2009, is intended for students with advanced degrees, such as a PhD, MD, PharmD, or DDS, and focuses on a range of topics necessary for participants to understand the complex translation of hypothesis-driven research findings into clinically useful therapy.

Four of the five graduates are medical students at RWJMS who earned a master's degree as part of the MD/MS joint program, while the fifth is a physician who earned a certificate in the program. **Stephen Rosenberg '13** was honored with the Outstanding Academic Achievement Award in the program. **Neil Taunk '12** received an award from the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ASTRO) for his CTS master's thesis, for which he gave an oral presentation in October at the society's conference.



Nature Publishes Two Articles Co-authored by Dr. Smita Patel

In consecutive advance online issues, the journal *Nature* published articles co-authored by **Smita Patel, PhD**, professor of bio-



Smita Patel, PhD

chemistry. The September 18 article describes new research by Dr. Patel and collaborators at Cornell University that identifies how the ring-shaped

helicase enzymes that separate the strands of double helical DNA track forward without slipping backward.

To initiate unwinding of DNA, the helicase enzymes rely on the presence of nucleotides, generally adenosine triphosphate (ATP). However, when explicitly examining DNA unwinding with ATP, the researchers discovered that the phage T7 helicase unwinds DNA with ATP at a fast rate, but it slips repeatedly. Helicase slippage, they found, was stopped when another nucleotide, deoxythymidine triphosphate (dTTP) was added to ATP, and mixtures of ATP and dTTP controlled the degree of slippage.

Improved understanding of the helicase function could pave the way to new therapeutic treatments for human diseases, including the human papilloma virus.

The second article, published September 25, provides new insights into the antiviral immune response. The study was led by Dr. Patel and **Joseph Marcotrigiano, PhD**, assistant professor of chemistry and chemical biology, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and a member of the Center for Advanced Biotechnology and Medicine.

Their study showed for the first time the structure of RNA-bound RIG-1. This is a first step in developing broad-based therapies against viral infections because RIG-1 initiates an auto-immune response when it detects viral RNA.

A failure of RIG-1 to identify viral RNA can lead to alterations of the cell, including cell death, inflammation, autoimmune diseases, and cancer.

Study Finds Benefits of E-prescribing within a Clinical Practice

Research led by **Jesse Crosson, PhD**, assistant professor of family medicine and community health, identified key



Jesse Crosson, PhD

techniques in the implementation and use of electronic prescribing (e-prescribing) that advance the efficiency and effectiveness of a clinical practice. The study

"Meaningful Use of Electronic Prescribing in 5 Exemplar Primary Care Practices," appeared in the September 2011 issue of the *Annals of Family Medicine*.

Dr. Crosson found that by establishing incentive payments for physicians who make "meaningful use" of electronic health record systems, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), stimulated a greater focus on implementing e-prescribing.

"ARRA gives physicians an incentive to move toward electronic health records. More important, successful e-prescribing can increase medication safety for patients," says Dr. Crosson, and it has the potential to reduce healthcare costs and increase a patient's compliance with the recommended treatment.

Dr. Crosson's collaborators on the study included **Rebecca Etz, PhD**, adjunct assistant professor of family medicine and community health.

New Online Application Amplifies Student Experience

The Office of Information Technology, under the direction of **Alexander Izaguirre, MBA, PhD**, has designed an elegant new online application, tailor-made for RWJMS students and the curriculum. The Academic Management Platform (AMP), featuring a user-friendly interface and centralized information, went live at the beginning of this academic year.

"The AMP system provides a way for students to easily navigate a curriculum that is based on the integration of information," says **Andrew Orr '15**. He uses AMP frequently, finding it

most valuable for the way it intuitively combines required readings, recordings of lectures, and presentation slides in one self-contained interface.

Lucy Mashas, manager of the web and collaborative services team, led the development of AMP. Describing the system's ease of use and functionality, she says that, following a lecture, a student could access AMP through the RWJMS Web site using a computer, iPhone, or iTouch. After reviewing a video of the lecture, the student could navigate to the block schedule, review course assignments and required readings, and access supplementary readings and media resources.

Alexandra Nicholas '15 says, "It's very convenient to have all of our materials and schedules accessible through one platform, especially a platform that can be accessed through various means: computers, iPhones, and iPods."

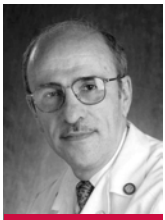
All lectures are stored on the site, so students can review them in new contexts at any time. Dr. Izaguirre says that the platform will support new modules for graduate student programs, research opportunities, access to academic records, and collaborative services that will enhance team-based learning.

"From the ability to take quizzes and listen to recorded lectures to seeing our daily schedule and accessing all resources for each lecture easily, this site is perfection in the works," says **Marissa Nadeau '14**.



Legislators Promote Bill to Reduce SUID

On November 14, Senator Frank Lautenberg and Congressman Frank Pallone held a press conference at the Child Health Institute of New Jersey to promote the need for more awareness and education on Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID). Related to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), SUID is the death of an infant that cannot be explained after a thorough investigation. The Senator and Congressman introduced a bill to help reduce the number of unexpected infant deaths in America by calling for new research and educa-



Thomas Hegyi, MD

tion on stillbirths and SUID. Every year, more than 25,000 stillbirths and 4,600 sudden unexpected infant deaths occur in the U.S.

The event featured parents and advocates who have experienced the loss of a child that was ultimately determined to be SUID, as well as **Thomas Hegyi, MD**, professor of pediatrics and medical director of the SIDS Center of New Jersey in the Department of Pediatrics.

Anesthesiology**Lana Ankin, DO**
*Clinical Instructor***Tejal Mehta, MD**
*Instructor***Edwin Ryan Sison, MD**
*Instructor***Laurie Spina, MD**
*Instructor***Dermatology****Irene Vergilis-Kalner, MD**
*Clinical Assistant Professor***Family Medicine and
Community Health****Widalys Adames-
Mendez, MD**
*Instructor***Bassem Hanna, MB, BCH**
*Instructor***Lisa Primiani, MD**
*Instructor***Kelly Ussery-
Kronhaus, MD**
*Assistant Professor***Medicine****Tanaya Bhowmick, MD**
*Assistant Professor***Kashif Janjua, MD, MPH**
*Instructor***Nakechand Pooran, MD**
*Associate Professor***Saroja Rampertab, MD**
*Assistant Professor***Aparna Repaka, MBBS**
*Assistant Professor***Edward Rivera, MD**
*Instructor***Yu-Hsuan Shao, PhD**
*Assistant Professor***Catherine Weinberg, MD**
*Assistant Professor***Neuroscience
and Cell Biology****Zhiping Pang, BM,
MM, PhD**
*Assistant Professor***Pediatrics****Suhail Alsheikh, MB, BCH**
*Clinical Instructor***Katie Berkowitz, RN, MSN,
CPNP-AC**
*Clinical Instructor***Sarath Chowdwarapu,
MBBS, MPH**
*Clinical Instructor***Lisa Denzin, PhD**
*Associate Professor***Sharada Gowda, MBBS**
*Clinical Instructor***Shilpa Pai, MD**
*Clinical Assistant Professor***Archana Sharma, DO**
*Instructor***Eveline Traeger-
Polinsky, MD**
*Clinical Assistant Professor***Radiation Oncology****Leonard Kim, MM,
AMusD, MS**
*Assistant Professor***Sabin Motwani, MD**
*Assistant Professor***Miao Zhang, PhD**
*Instructor***Surgery****Laurie Kirstein, MD**
*Assistant Professor***Anthony Lemaire, MD**
*Instructor***Joelle Pierre, MD**
*Instructor***Jonathan Piller, PA-C**
*Instructor***Retirements:****Sidney Pestka, MD**
*Professor of Molecular
Genetics, Microbiology,
and Immunology*

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Robert Shelden, PhD

We report with sadness the death on November 22 of **Robert M. Shelden, PhD**. Dr. Shelden earned his PhD in zoology from the University of Montana. He was an NIH Postdoctoral Fellow in Reproductive Endocrinology and then a faculty member at The Ohio State University.

Dr. Shelden joined the faculty in 1976 and retired with the rank of associate professor of obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive sciences. In 2006, he founded the research laboratory in his department and spearheaded the development of the reproductive endocrinology division to support clinical services. He later led the expansion of the laboratory to perform assays and analyses that are essential for patients requiring advanced infertility care. He is credited with the establishment of the In Vitro Fertilization Program (IVF) at RWJMS, which saw the first baby born through IVF in New Jersey, in 1983.

Dr. Shelden is fondly remembered by his many colleagues, students, residents, and fellows, as well as the many technicians he trained in IVF techniques. He published numerous research studies and abstracts and represented the American Association of University Professors throughout his career. In 2009, he was elected as the first president of the newly formed RWJMS Retired Faculty Association.

NEW RESEARCH GRANTS

The National Institutes of Health (NIH)/ National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, in conjunction with Rutgers University, awarded a five-year \$23,178,558 grant to **Jeffrey D. Laskin, PhD**, professor of environmental and occupational health, for UMDNJ/Rutgers Counter-ACT Research Center of Excellence.

The NIH awarded a \$1,755,000 grant to **Jianjie Ma, PhD**, university professor and acting chair, Department of Physiology and Biophysics, for "MG53-Mediated Membrane Repair in Muscle Physiology and Disease." In addition, the NIH awarded a \$73,412 bridge grant to Dr. Ma for

"Ca Sparks in Muscle Aging Dystrophy."

Pfizer awarded a one-year, \$1,300,000 contract to **Jill Williams, MD**, associate professor of psychiatry and director, division of addiction psychiatry, for "A Phase 4, randomized, multicenter study evaluating the neuropsychiatric safety and efficacy of 12 weeks of Venetidine Tartrate for smoking cessation."

Takeda Pharmaceuticals awarded a one-year \$143,750 Investigator-Initiated Research Grant to **Manisha Bajpai, PhD**, instructor of medicine, for "Effect of Acid Suppression on Reversibility of Progression of Barrett's Epithelium to Neoplasia."

Dr. Kostis Leads Trial Confirming Legacy Effect of Hypertension Therapy

RWJMS researchers have shown in a follow-up to the landmark clinical trial, Systolic Hypertension in the Elderly Program (SHEP), that the use of antihypertensive drug therapy is associated with longer life expectancy. The follow-up study, "Association between Treatment of Systolic Hypertension and Long-Term



John B. Kostis, MD

Survival," was published online December 14 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The study was led by **John B. Kostis, MD**, the John G. Detwiler Chair of Cardiology, chair, Department of Medicine, and founding director, The Cardiovascular Institute of New Jersey.

SHEP, which lasted from 1985 to 1990, showed that chlorthalidone-based therapy for hypertension prevented about one out of two admissions for heart failure, one out of three strokes, and one out of four coronary heart disease events. There were no significant differences in mortality.

The current study showed that, compared to patients receiving the placebo, the group that received chlorthalidone treatment survived significantly longer without experiencing a cardiovascular-related death — approximately one day for every month of antihypertensive treatment.

The follow-up study was funded in part by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Stem Cells May Be Viable Treatment for Spinal Cord Injury Repair

Mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs), found mainly in bone marrow, are the focus of clinical trials that investigate methods of neurological repair



Hatem E. Sabaawy, MD, PhD

and other regenerative applications. **Hatem E. Sabaawy, MD, PhD**, assistant professor of medicine, was a senior author of a study of MSCs that was published online

ahead of print in *Stem Cells and Development*. "Although MSCs are widely known to be used in replacing damaged tissue, they may also recruit endogenous cells to help accelerate the repair process," he says.

For the first time, UMDNJ researchers examined the use of human MSCs to prompt repair of spinal cord injuries in transgenic zebra fish embryos. The study demonstrates that human MSCs affix to the injury site and influence spinal cord cells to accelerate the repair process.

"Our results indicate that MSC therapy not only augments recovery after spinal cord injury, but also accelerates the recovery time," said Pranela Rameshwar, PhD, a senior author and professor of medicine at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School.

New England Journal of Medicine Publishes FOCUS Trial Findings

New research published on December 14 in advance of print in the *New England Journal of Medicine* could refine post-operative care while preserving precious blood supply levels. The study indicates that using a liberal blood transfusion strategy in post-operative hip-surgery patients does not improve patients' recoveries or reduce the rate of death.

"The need for — and the quantity of — transfusion of red blood cells in post-operative

patients had not previously been evaluated in a large study," said Jeffrey L. Carson, MD, the Richard C. Reynolds Professor of Medicine and study chair of the Transfusion



Jeffrey L. Carson, MD

Trigger Trial for Functional Outcomes in Cardiovascular Patients Undergoing Surgical Hip Fracture Repair (FOCUS).

"This clinical trial is unique in that all patients were considered very high risk due to age and prior history of cardiovascular disease," says Dr. Carson.

The study examined more than 2,000 high-risk patients, with a

mean age of 82 and hemoglobin levels below 10 grams per deciliter after hip surgery. Patients were randomly assigned a liberal or restrictive transfusion strategy. At 30 and 60 days post-surgery, there was no difference between the groups in the patients' inability to walk without assistance, nor was there a significant difference in the rate of death or heart attacks.

The FOCUS Trial was funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health.

RWJMS Dean's Research Awards Recognize Publications and Mentors

The RWJMS Dean's Research and Faculty Mentoring Symposium on November 3 recognized faculty members and students who achieved best peer-reviewed publications in 2010 from research performed at RWJMS. Two faculty members, chosen by junior faculty,



Joseph Aisner, MD

were honored as the year's top mentors: **Joseph Aisner, MD**, professor of medicine, was awarded the Norman H. Edelman Clinical Science Mentoring Award, and **Monica Roth, PhD**, professor of biochemistry, received the R. Walter Schlesinger Basic Science Mentoring Award.



Monica Roth, PhD

A scientific poster session highlighted not only the work of the awardees, but also of researchers throughout the school and summer student research scholars. The day ended with a

lecture sponsored by the Joint Molecular Biosciences Graduate Student Association.

Award Winners:

- Best Publication by a Graduate Student: **Chang-Chih Wu**, Department of Physiology and Biophysics
- Best Publication by a Postdoctoral Fellow: **Christopher Barbieri, PhD**, Department of Biochemistry
- Best Publication by Faculty – Basic Sciences: **Alexey G. Ryazanov, PhD, DSc**, professor of pharmacology
- Best Publication by a Medical Student: **Aileen Arriola '12**
- Best Publication by a Resident: **Rahul Parikh, MD**, Department of Radiation Oncology
- Best Publication by Faculty – Clinical Sciences: **Konstantin E. Balashov, MD, PhD**, associate professor of neurology

Joseph Barone, MD '87, associate professor of surgery and surgeon-in-chief, Bristol Myers-Squibb Children's Hospital, was nominated as a "Kid's Favorite Doc," in the category pediatric urology, in a program sponsored by *New Jersey Family Magazine*.

The Association of University Centers on Disabilities presented its Special Recognition Award to **William C. Gaventa, MDiv**, associate professor of pediatrics and director of community and congregational supports at The Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities.

At the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, **Emanuel DiCicco-Bloom, PhD**, professor of neuroscience and cell biology, served as moderator for a press conference on neurodevelopmental disorders.

Rajesh Geria, MD, assistant professor emergency medicine, was recently elected chair-elect of the ultrasound section of the American College of Emergency Physicians.

Kenneth R. Kaufman, MD, professor of psychiatry, was named to serve on the International League against Epilepsy Task Force on Sports and Epilepsy. In addition, Dr. Kaufman was appointed to the editorial board of *Epilepsy and Behavior*.

Tamara LaCouture, MD '94, assistant professor of radiation oncology, vice chair, Department of Radiation Oncology, and president, RWJMS Alumni Association, was honored at the Pink Roses Teal Magnolias Brunch sponsored by the Cooper Cancer Institute on October 23.

Barry Weinberger, MD, associate professor of pediatrics and chief, division of neonatology, was named chair of the Distinction in Research Committee.

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) accepted an abstract by **Scot Niglio '12** for presentation at the AACR-EORTC-NCI Molecular Targets and Cancer Therapeutics Conference. The abstract is titled "Apoptosis Induction with the MEK Inhibitor AZD6244 and BH3 Mimetic ABT-737 in Melanoma."

A report, "Best Practices for Mixed Methods: Research in the Health Sciences," frequently cited the work of the division of research in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. The division is led by **Benjamin F. Crabtree, PhD**, professor of family medicine and community health.

Michael Lewis, PhD, University Distinguished Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry, co-edited *Gender Differences in Prenatal Substance Exposure*, due for publication early in 2012.

Governor Chris Christie appointed **Theodore Petti, MD, MPH**, professor of psychiatry and director, division of child and adolescent psychiatry, as a member of the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council.

Robert C. Like, MD, professor of family medicine and community health and director, Center for Healthy Families and Cultural Diversity, was named by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as a member of the Regional Health Equity Council for Region II.

Patricia Whitley-Williams, MD, professor and interim chair, Department of Pediatrics, was appointed chair of the United States Medical Licensing Examination Step 3 Computer-Based Case Simulation Test Material Development Committee by the National Board of Medical Examiners.

Deborah M. Spitalnik, PhD, professor of pediatrics and executive director, The Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, was honored at the 2011 Arc Angel Gala Reception.

Save the Date...

- **February 4: Central New Jersey Regional Brain Bee Competition**
 - 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM • Piscataway campus
 - Hosts: Department of Neuroscience and Cell Biology and Office of the Vice President for Research, UMDNJ
 - Contact Joan Mordes: mordesja@umdnj.edu
- **March 16: Match Day**
 - 11:30 AM • RWJUH Courtyard
 - Contact Jeannette Evans: evanje1@umdnj.edu
- **April 21: 2nd Annual Scholarship Gala to Celebrate with Alumni and Friends**
 - 6:30 PM • The Heldrich, New Brunswick
 - Contact Patty Hansen: hansenmp@umdnj.edu or Denise Gavala: dgavala@njhf.org
- **April 24: 15th Annual David and Hanna Stahl Memorial Lecture in Bioethics**
 - 4:30 PM • CAB, Room 1302
 - Speaker: **Ezekiel J. Emanuel, MD, PhD**, Penn Integrates Knowledge University Professor and Vice Provost for Global Initiatives, University of Pennsylvania
 - Contact Jeannette Evans: evansje1@umdnj.edu