

The Official USU Newsletter

# the pulse

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Courtesy Photo

**On the cover**

The USU Board of Regents held their February meeting in San Antonio as guests of the USU Southern Region Office. (See story page 6)



# New travel card program manager named

by Staff Sgt. Matthew Rosine



Photo by Tom Balfour

With the start of the 2011 calendar year, the USU Government Travel Card (GTC) program has a new program manager.

James Bruce, previously a financial technician with the USU Financial and Manpower Management office, became the University's new GTC program manager, covering all of USU's GTC card holders.

Bruce has been in the finance department for more than five years. His diligent professional efforts while serving as the University's finance defense travel administrator earned him a sound reputation among customers and coworkers.

In fact, for his efforts Bruce was named one of the Junior Employees of the Quarter in 2009.

Now as the GTC program manager, Bruce is expertly managing the GTC monthly reports, monitoring the appropriate GTC transactions, along with tracking payment delinquencies.

The GTC has to be paid in full when the payment is due. Due to their busy schedules, some USU personnel need to receive some hands-on assistance to make sure their GTCs are taken care of properly.

"We have a lot of students here whose payments come due before their TDYs

are done," Bruce said. "We help ensure they are aware of when payments are due and assist them with partial payments as needed."

Bruce is also instrumental in assisting with the transition from the College and University Financial System, or CUFS, to the Defense Agencies Initiative, or DAI, systems.

"The transition to a new accounting system from CUFS to DAI has been a challenge, but we are succeeding," said the retired Navy E-6. "Just when we got people used to using an automated system, we had to switch them to a manual system, temporarily. We have an excellent program here and once we get few things back on track, things will run smooth."

Of course, Bruce's new position is not a just crunching numbers. He still gets to experience his favorite part of working at USU – interacting with people.

"The best part is that I get to interact with a whole lot of people," he said. "I love customer service so I don't mind the work. In fact, I love what I do."

Over the next several months Bruce and the GTC program will be focusing on improving GTC training for USU card holders.

## The Pulse Spotlight



Photo by Thomas Balfour

**Name:**

Debbie Trunnell

**Duty title:**

Computer Specialist / DAI Helpdesk

**How long have you worked with USU?**

Almost 12 years now. I spent 2 years as a Henry Jackson employee, and almost 10 as a Federal Government employee.

**What brought you to USU?**

A tip from an old friend that Mr. Parker in RMI needed another employee to help run his shop — best call I ever got.

**What is your favorite part of USU?**

The people. Aren't we a fine bunch?

**What advice would you pass on to people new to USU?**

Get in, hold on, and enjoy the ride!

**Editor's Note:** If you know a hard-working under-recognized person in your department, submit their name and contact information, and they might be selected for the Pulse Spotlight. Please submit all nominees to [usunewsletter@usuhs.mil](mailto:usunewsletter@usuhs.mil). Nomination is not a guarantee for publication.

## To infinity and back

by Ken Frager



Photo by Ken Frager

Robert L. Satcher, M.D., Ph.D., the USU Department of Surgery Distinguished Visiting Professor Lecturer, brought the U.S. space program to the campus recently, reflecting on his experiences as mission specialist and crew medical officer for STS 129, the November 2009 Space Shuttle mission to the International Space Station.

Dr. Satcher, an orthopedic oncologist at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas, was a member of the crew that spent more than 10 days in space, traveling 4.5 million miles in 171 orbits. While there, he performed two extra-vehicular space walks which lasted more than 12 hours.

"I travel to many different places to talk about my experiences as an astronaut, to promote the U.S. space program, and to encourage young people to reach for the stars," said Dr. Satcher. "More often than not people ask me why I wanted to travel into space. But the students here at USU instead asked how they can get into the program. That's very refreshing and it tells me a lot about this environment and these future military medical leaders."

Dr. Satcher, when asked about the potential for surgery to be performed in space, said that while it has never been needed up until now, there will come a time. "When you think about our next step being getting to Mars, you have to consider that it will take us six months of

travel just to get there. Emergencies come up and up until now we have had the option to simply turn the shuttle around and be back on earth in less than three days. That's a big difference." He added that while the technology and environment don't currently exist for in-orbit surgery, there is always ongoing research.

## Distinguished UAE visitors tour USU campus



Photo by Tom Balfour

USU Senior Vice President Dr. Dale Smith (far right) presents His Excellency Hassain Al Hammdi (Center), of the Khalifa University of Science, Technology and Resesarch Board of Trustees, with the traditional USU coin. Joining His Excellency Hussain was Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Rashid Al Nuaimi, who is commander of the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces Medical Service Corps.

# Curriculum Reform Town Hall Q and A

by Col. (Dr.) Arnyce Pock and MC1 Chad Hallford

**Q:** Curriculum Reform appears to be involving some wide-sweeping changes. What major changes are being planned?

**A:** The curricular reform project involves virtually every aspect of the current School of Medicine curriculum. That said, the major changes can be divided into four key areas: Changes involving the Pre-Clerkship Period, the Clerkship Period, the Post-Clerkship Period & the Military Unique Curriculum. Included in the Post-Clerkship Period will be a phased-in opportunity for students to complete a CAPSTONE Project.

The chart [right] provides a brief synopsis of some of the main changes in each of these areas.

**Q:** At the January Town Hall meeting it was noted that School of Medicine students may be transitioning to a new grading system. If so, what will the new grading scheme look like and when will it be implemented?

**A:** Current plans are for a new grading scheme to be phased in, starting with the Class of '15. Instead of relying on traditional letter grades, the new plan proposes use of a three-tiered system with Honors, Pass or Fail. If approved, this would become the grading structure for all four years of the medical school curriculum.

**Q:** A great amount of work has already been completed in order to have the new curriculum ready for implementation in Fall 2011, but when will a more detailed layout of the new curriculum be available for review?

**A:** The first step was to realign and reorganize material taught during the first two years of medical school into a series of systems-based modules. That was completed in December and is currently available for viewing on the web.

The next phase, involves developing a more detailed, week-by-week plan

for the pre-clerkship curriculum, with a corresponding set of weekly educational goals. This phase is expected to be completed by 15 March.

The final phase involves establishing teaching objectives for each educational session and/or lecture. This will be done in close collaboration with course directors, course-specific instructors, and the corresponding module directors. This phase is expected to be completed by 15 June and will provide individual instructors with a fair degree of precision about the day/date when they will be asked to deliver a lecture, lead a small group, or participate in some other form of educational activity.

**Q:** How involved are current USU students in this process? Do students have a voice in how the curriculum evolves?

**A:** Current USU School of Medicine students have been integrally involved in all phases of developing the new curriculum. Each of the four main planning committees (Pre-Clerkship, Clerkship, Post-Clerkship & Assessment) have students assigned as full-fledged members, as does the Curriculum Reform Advisory Committee.

In addition, we now have student members aligned to each of the seven modules that comprise the pre-clerkship period. These students will be actively involved in helping to review the emerging modular curricula, and in ensuring that the right topics are introduced at the right time, in the right sequence and via the most effective modality. For example, depending on the specific topic, material might be presented via any combination of small and/or large group teaching, use of the Sim Center, interactions with actual patients, lab experiences, virtual cases, field exercises, and/or self-study techniques.

## Highlights of the New Curriculum

### Pre-Clerkship Period

- Shortened from two years to approx. 16 months. Allows rotations to start earlier, which provides more time for tailored, MS-IV electives. Also provides more time for "audition rotations" at potential internship/residency sites.
- Change from a traditional, course-based form of pre-clinical instruction to one that is fully integrated and divided into seven different system-based modules.
- Increased use of case-based learning, with more teaching being done in small groups vs. large lecture halls.

### Core-Clerkships

- Divided into three 16-week segments; each containing two related disciplines, plus a week of combined assessment.
- Goal is for Class of '15 students to complete at least one of their three clinical blocks in the same geographic (or regional) area for improved clinical continuity.
- Deliberate "threading" of basic science through clerkships, reinforcing previous concepts & introducing new material, as it relates to students' clinical experiences.

### Post-Clerkship Period

- Re-position the Step I exam to a period shortly after completion of the core clerkships.
- Introduce a "Bench to Bedside and Beyond" unit after the core clerkships: Integrates advanced science at a point when students can more fully appreciate the clinical relevance.

### Military Unique Curriculum

- Updated and integrated throughout all four years of the curriculum.
- Expanded field exercise (Bushmaster) that incorporates active interaction between the MS-I, MS-II, & MS-IV classes along with members of the Graduate School of Nursing. Allow MS-Is to experience a much earlier immersion into the world of operational medicine, in October of their first year.

### Capstone Project

- Includes provisions for a "Capstone Project." While this might be initiated prior to the MS-IV year, the goal is to provide students with an opportunity to design, conduct, analyze and present a research topic of their choosing, via the guidance of a faculty mentor.

*Additional information about USU's Curriculum Reform is available at: [www.usuhs.mil/curriculumreform](http://www.usuhs.mil/curriculumreform). Additionally, a bulletin board can be found in the cafeteria (near the microwaves) that features some related charts and graphs. Any comments or suggestions are welcome and can be directed to [Arnyce.pock@usuhs.mil](mailto:Arnyce.pock@usuhs.mil) or office E-2033).*

# USU earns CFC awards

by MC1 Chad Hallford



Courtesy Photo

Navy Capt. (Dr.) Tanis Batsel Stewart presents a commitment check signifying USU's total contribution of \$166,000 to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), to Tre'Sina Steger, USU's Loaned Executive for the 2010 CFC Campaign. Also pictured are Mr. Michael L. Rhodes (left) Director, Administration and Management for the CFC campaign and Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn.

The National Capital Region Combined Federal Campaign honored USU with several awards in a ceremony held at the Pentagon Jan. 31.

Brigade Commander Navy Capt. (Dr.) Tanis Batsel Stewart represented USU President Dr. Charles L. Rice and accepted the awards for the University.

"The awards speak to the enormity and charity of USU's people," said Capt. Batsel Stewart. "In our tough economic times, our military and civilian co-workers alike found it within their hearts to not only give, but to give more than what we did last year."

The USU, with an overall contribution of \$166,000, was recognized with the CFC "Merit" and CFC "Summit" awards, as well as the 2nd

place award for "Best Campaign Writing or Publication."

The designation of CFC Merit means an achievement of 50 percent participation or an average of \$125 per person employed. The CFC Summit entails the description of raising 3 percent more than the previous year.

"The success of USU's CFC hinged upon the efforts of Marine Capt. Matthew Anderson, Army Capt. Justin Beam, Air Force Master Sgt. Stephen Huntington and the CFC keyworkers. Their tenacity to continue until USU reached our goal is commendable," said Capt. Batsel Stewart.

Anderson, Beam and Huntington will receive the award for USU's CFC Newsletter.

## HPRC Health Tips

*The Human Performance Resource Center Health Tips is a new column intended to provide the USU community with information to help develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Check out the HPRC website at: <http://humanperformanceresourcecenter.org>.*

### Do you know what your HDL and LDL numbers are?

Good cholesterol, or high density lipoprotein (HDL), helps prevent fat and cholesterol from clogging your arteries. A higher HDL number (> 60 mg/dl) is better. Low density lipoprotein (LDL) is considered bad cholesterol. It carries cholesterol to your arteries and can cause them to become blocked. A lower LDL number (< 100 mg/dl) is better. High LDL or low HDL cholesterol levels are major risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

### A network of family and friends keeps you healthy.

A recent study shows that having a network of friends, family, and other groups improves your physical and mental health. In particular, belonging to different kinds of groups may help you feel stronger psychologically and physically. Social support bolsters our ability to cope with mental and physical challenges and help us recover faster.

### Family Matters: Communicating Well

Communicating well is extremely important for family well-being. Being able to speak clearly, listen well, show a range of emotional expression while being respectful and showing regard for family members' are all aspects of good communication. You can help foster positive family communication by appreciating your loved ones verbally on a daily basis.

# Welcome Home

by MC1 Chad Hallford

Whether it has the pomp and circumstance of a ship pulling into homeport, the roar of an Air Force C-130 Hercules from the Tarmac, or shouts of “Hooah” echoing across a field, coming home from a deployment is a special event in the lives of servicemembers.

A military homecoming is always an opportunity to thank those who have returned from harm’s way, and to pay tribute to and support those who have lost loved ones.

Navy Cmdr. (Dr.) Lisa Pearse is spearheading campaigns welcoming back USU’s personnel who return from the battlefield. As the command individual augmentee coordinator (CIAC), this is one of the roles for which the office of the Commandant of the School of Medicine is responsible. “Although the Navy is the only

service that officially has a CIAC program, here at USU we are implementing it in a Tri-Service way to support all of our deploying personnel, regardless of service,” said Cmdr. Pearse.

“Being deployed, particularly as an Individual Augmentee (IA), is challenging. In addition to the family separation inherent in any deployment, the IA is separated from their unit and professional colleagues,” said Cmdr. Pearse. “Welcoming home our deployed personnel lets them know that we, as a University community, appreciate their sacrifice, noted their absence, and are happy to have them back safely.” Cmdr. Pearse added that throughout the deployment there have been opportunities to remind the IAs that they were valued by their peers and the

leadership, through email exchange, holiday cards, care packages, and family support.

Last year the University welcomed back Air Force Col. (Dr.) Kenneth Tashiro and earlier this month, on Feb. 3, USU welcomed back Air Force Maj. (Dr.) Jonathan Bowman and Navy Lt. Cmdr. (Dr.) Patcho Santiago from deployments to Afghanistan with receptions in their honor.

“Everyone has been very supportive of these welcome home events, and I have had the pleasure of wonderful support at all levels, from senior leadership of the University to the Brigade and Cafeteria staff who make them happen. With several others due to return to us over the next couple of months, clearly another welcome home party is on the horizon!” said Cmdr. Pearse.

## USU Regents experience Southern educational exposure

by S. Leann Ori

The USU Board of Regents members recently traveled to San Antonio for the February Board of Regents meeting. The meeting was held there to showcase the unique medical training and care provided to services members in San Antonio. During the two-day meeting, members received tours coordinated by the USU Office of the Senior Vice President for University Programs (Southern Region), of Fort Sam Houston, training sites at Camp Bullis, the Battlefield Health and Trauma Institute, the Center for the Intrepid, and the Warrior and Family Support Center. They also received briefings on the Medical Education and Training Campus, Wilford Hall Medical Center, Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium, the USU Air Force Postgraduate Dental School and the U.S. Army Medical Command.



Courtesy Photo

Members of the USU Board of Regents pictured in front of the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer (HEAT) at Camp Bullis, Texas.

# Briefs

## Award nominations due

The award nomination packages for the 2011 Outstanding Biomedical Graduate Educator Award must be submitted no later than March 4.

The award recognizes outstanding contributions to the education of students in the USU School of Medicine graduate programs in Biomedical Sciences and Public Health.

The award is for all USU faculty at the rank of assistant professor or above, in a Department or Program within a Ph.D. or Dr. P.H. graduate training program. Faculty who have received this award with the last five years are ineligible.

Nominations must be submitted in writing.

All submissions as well as any questions should be submitted to the Graduate Education Office.

## Anniversary Web site

The Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute will be launching a new Web site to help celebrate the institute's 50th Anniversary.

The Web site is scheduled to launch next year and highlights AFRRI's rich history and heritage. It also provides users with the opportunity to learn more about the unique mission at AFRRI.

## Dining In

Find out who is going to the grog this year at the USU 2011 Dining In.

Dust off your mess dress and join the party from 6 to 11 p.m. Saturday, March 5.

Tickets are on sale now.

## Inclement weather policy

During the upcoming winter season, USU will remain open for business except for certain situations such as inclement weather.

If the operating status of the University changes, it will be updated on the University's home page, [www.usuhs.mil](http://www.usuhs.mil).

This page will be updated immediately if the operating status changes.

In addition to the Web page, a

broadcast to the USU community via email and recorded phone message will be available.

To access this information by phone, call (301) 295-3039.

In some cases, such as inclement weather, USU's status will be made available via television. All USU students, military, faculty and essential personnel are encouraged to check to the University's Web site regularly to stay aware of the current operating procedures.

## Using Computer Resources

Security incidents continue to be a drain to limited USU Information Assurance manpower. The following highlight current DoD policy and best practices:

Personnel must not install self-coded or non-licensed software on network resources; add, remove, configure, or attempt to modify USU computer operating systems or programs; move audio/visual or network cables, computers or attempt to connect personal computers to the network including MDL and lecture hall spaces; connect personal devices except for those previously authorized by UIS; download pornographic material and store or display offensive material, such as racist literature, sexually harassing or obscene language or material; store or process classified information on any USU system.

Personnel must not permit unauthorized individuals access to a government-owned or government-operated system or program; access online gambling, games and social engineering sites, dates or times.

## Helpdesk Closure

The NOC helpdesk is closed for training on Thursdays from 10 to 11 a.m.

During this time, you can leave a voicemail message at 295-9800, utilize the HEAT Self Service (<http://www.usuhs.mil/uis/forms/trouble.html>), or email [help@usuhs.mil](mailto:help@usuhs.mil).

If an emergency should arise, please call 295-9870.

## Exercise/Fitness Areas

Physical Fitness training should be conducted in designated areas.

The only authorized space for PT within the university is room G060.

The campus' Student Community Lounge area is also authorized, but only during specified PFT testing dates or times.

## Professional activities

The Department of Defense and USU policy requires that all employees, both military and civilian, receive approval for engaging in any activity outside their work environment, which involves their professional expertise or government occupation, and involves compensation.

This approval is required prior to engaging in the activity.

In order to get approval, any employee can complete a USUHS Form 1004. This completed form must be approved and signed by each department chair or activity head.

These forms are available in the General Counsel's office or online at the USU OGC Web site.

Completed forms must be turned in to the General Counsel's office. The form will be routed to the appropriate dean, brigade commander or USUHS president.

Once processing is completed, a copy of the approved form will be returned to the employee for the employee's records.

## ESC meetings

The Enlisted Social Committee holds its monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of every month.

Meetings are held at 9:30 a.m. in the cafeteria's small dining room.

Being a part of the ESC is an excellent way for USU enlisted personnel to actively pursue volunteer opportunities at USU.



# UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY *of the Health Sciences*

