GSN Acting Dean Bids Farewell to USU

By MC3 Jeff Hopkins
Assistant Editor, Office of External Affairs

After nearly two years as the acting dean for the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences’ (USU) Graduate School of Nursing (GSN) incumbent dean has left the university.

William T. Bester, RN, MSN, CNA, BS, served as acting dean of the GSN, and provided invaluable service to the university in a time when a search for a replacement for the previous dean of the GSN was underway.

Dr. Charles L. Rice, USU president, thanked Bester for his great work and commitment.

“With great reluctance, I have accepted BG (ret) Bill Bester’s resignation as Acting Dean of the GSN,” Rice said. “He has served this university with great distinction, commitment, and enthusiasm.”

Bester said that chief among his reasons for resigning his position is a desire to be near his family in Texas.

“I’d like to return to my family in Austin,” Bester said. “My son and his family moved to Austin shortly after I accepted this position, so that has been a big deciding factor.”

Bester said his tenure at USU has been delightful, and it has been a very positive experience.

“There’s nothing I haven’t enjoyed,” Bester said. “I’ve enjoyed my relationship with the leadership team here; I think everyone here is very supportive of the GSN. I’ve certainly enjoyed my time with our faculty within the GSN, a very diverse group of individuals who are all focused on providing the best education to the students, and I’ve enjoyed my time with the students in all four of our programs.”

Prior to his position as the GSN’s acting dean, Bester was a professor of clinical nursing at the University of Texas in Austin. During his military career, Bester served in a variety of leadership roles; serving as commander of the Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, assistant surgeon general for Force Protection, and chief of the Army Nurse Corps. These positions have provided Bester with significant leadership experience which he believes has helped prepare him for the responsibility of overseeing the education of the GSN students, but his duties as acting dean were a brand new role for him.

“I’ve never been in a leadership position in academia before,” Bester said. “This has been the first time I’ve taken on a role like this, and I’ve found it very enjoyable. What we’re really doing is cultivating the next generation of leadership for the services, and that’s an exciting place to be. I can honestly say there hasn’t been a day I haven’t enjoyed coming to work.”

Bester said he has been proud to be a part of the GSN, and that in his short time here, the school has made remarkable progress.

“The budget was a big breakthrough,” Bester said. “We have never had an official budget for the GSN, we have always had what’s called ‘marked money.’ a certain amount of money congress designates when they build the budget every year that’s fenced for the GSN. Thanks to some really great efforts by Stephen Rice, Walt Tinling, CAPT Toni Whitmeyer, and certainly folks within the GSN, we briefed a lot of people downtown, followed by the Surgeons General, and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, who approved the GSN to be budgeted in the coming years.”

In addition to the budget, Bester said the GSN has grown in terms of personnel as well.

“I think we’ve done a great job of getting some new faculty hired,” Bester said. “In addition we’ve got some new military faculty assigned into the doctoral program, thanks to the great support of the Federal Nursing Chiefs. I think the success of the GSN is reflected in the graduates we turn out of our programs, and how well they do in the certification exams and practice arena. I think they continually validate the fact that we have outstanding faculty and staff here who do great work, and who support us from day to day to get all these things done.”

Bester says he isn’t sure what’s ahead of him professionally, but he’s exploring job opportunities in Austin and has not decided on anything yet.

He extends his personal thanks to the USU community for its warmth and support during his time at the university.

“I would like to thank everyone at the university for all the support they have provided, to me personally, and certainly to the GSN,” Bester said. “I want everybody to know I’ve truly enjoyed every minute of my time here, and I’m certainly going to miss the USU community, as well as a lot of the people individually here that I’ve become close friends with.”

Rice said that the university is in the final stages of recruiting a permanent dean for the GSN. In the interim, COL Bruce Schoneboom, CRNA, Ph.D., NC, USA, NC, will serve as acting dean until the new dean is on board. Schoneboom was previously an associate professor for the GSN’s Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist program.
Patient Simulation Lab Reaches 10-Year Anniversary

By Richard Kyle
Patient Simulation Laboratory

January 2008 marks the 10-year anniversary of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) Patient Simulation Laboratory (PSL).

The PSL was created by CDR Paul Pudimat, MC, USN, Department of Anesthesia, and Richard Kyle, Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Genetics, under the leadership of their departmental chairs, Sheila Muldoon, MD and Harvey Pollard, MD, PhD.

The university’s first commercial simulator arrived in July 1997. During those early years of discovery, many of the PSL’s lessons learned with and improvements to the first simulator became part of its vendor’s subsequent offerings and updates that were distributed to the world’s owners of these devices.

When the PSL’s early successes generated teaching demands beyond the capabilities of the first simulator, the USU Equipment and Unfunded Requirements Review Committee funded a new “family” of simulators: an adult male; a birthing female; and a child. Today, the university still uses the first simulator’s body as an emergency airway access trainer, and it is now wrapped in the body-armor worn by CAPT Darin Via, MC, USN, SOM class of 1991, during his tour in Iraq in the spring of 2003.

The PSL’s simulation contributions beyond the USU campus include over a month of at-sea deployments aboard the Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort, numerous sessions with the Army Critical Care programs from WRAMC, and post-graduate challenge training for the Air Force Critical Care Air Transport Teams from Andrews AFB. In addition, the PSL provides regular consultations and exchanges on the integration of simulation within clinical training programs with military and civilian clinical educators.

USU Faculty Member Receives Honorary Degree

By MC3 Jeff Hopkins
Assistant Editor, Office of External Affairs

A faculty member at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) received an honorary degree in Tropical Medicine from the University of Maridol at Bangkok, Thailand in a ceremony earlier this summer.

John Cross, Ph.D., professor of Tropical Public Health, was presented the degree by one of Thailand’s three princesses, Princess Somdet Prathep, Ph.D.

“The princess arrived and sat down, and her assistants handed her each of the degrees,” Cross said. “When we were called forth, we had to hold our hands up to show that we did not have a weapon, and then we were handed our degree.”

Cross was a Navy Corpsman during World War II, and served in Shanghai for four years. After his separation from service, he continued to work in Shanghai for United Nations aid programs, and then returned home in 1950 to go to college.

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Cross received his undergraduate education at Miami University in Ohio, where he completed his bachelors and masters degrees. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Texas Medical Center in Galveston.

“I taught at the University of Texas for a bit, but then moved on to the University of Arkansas medical school in Little Rock,” Cross said. “Then I got a call from the Navy asking me if I wanted to go back to Taiwan, and I said ‘of course.’”

Cross said his honorary degree was bestowed upon him in thanks for the numerous lectures he’d given in Malaysia and Thailand, as well as for the help he’d provided to the graduate education programs.

“I was with the Naval Medical Research Unit 2 in Taipei, Taiwan, and our work included areas in most of Southeast Asia in collaboration with other units,” Cross said. “I was the scientific director, and it was my job to coordinate these different laboratories. A few times a year I would fly down to Jakarta and Malaysia, and then to Bangkok and back to Taiwan, but anytime I’d stop in Malaysia and Thailand they’d ask me to give lectures. Over the years I was on committees for graduate students, and gave exams for them. Eventually, they decided to give me an honorary degree.”
April—The USU Graduate School of Nursing Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesia (CRNA) program received a national ranking of sixth out of 106 Nurse Anesthesia Programs according to the 2007 U.S. News and World Report. The U.S. News and World Report bases its nurse specialty rankings on ratings by educators and deans at peer schools.

March—The nationally recognized artwork of Dr. Frank Netter, titled “Medical Masterpieces – Art of a Surgeon,” was displayed March 16 – April 27 in the Bldg. B lobby. The exhibit showcased 30 paintings and several sketches of Dr. Netter’s original art. The paintings displayed various aspects of anatomy, embryology, pathophysiology, illness, and patient care.

February—C. Thomas Yarington, Jr., M.D., a retired Air Force brigadier general, was sworn in as a USU Board of Regents (BOR) member. The BOR are officials who provide advice on academic and administrative matters for the university. Dr. Yarington died peacefully at home May 30, but contributed a great deal to the Board during his few months of service.

January—The Anchor and Caduceus dinner was held Jan. 12 in Washington, D.C. Retired VADM Dr. Richard Carmona, former U.S. Surgeon General recognized for his strong support of USPHS alignment with the military, was the guest of honor. The Anchor & Caduceus Society was founded in 1991 to preserve the history of the USPHS commissioned-corps.

May—TSgt Walter Bennett, USAF, USU Service-member of the Year, lead the graduation procession, carrying the University Mace. The F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine awarded 159 Doctor of Medicine and 49 biomedical sciences graduate degrees, while the Graduate School of Nursing awarded 25 Master of Science degrees.

June—MS1 students received their first white coat at the end of their first year at USU. During the ceremony, MS1 students are cloaked in their first laboratory coat as a welcome to the medical field. The ceremony is a way to recognize and honor the doctor-patient relationship. The white coat symbolizes the privilege and responsibilities the wearer has as a physician.
**A Year in Review**

**July**—LTC Alfred Rascon, USA, who received the Congressional Medal of Honor Feb. 8, 2000 for his actions near the Long Kahnh province during the Vietnam War, visited USU and spoke to the medical students on the topic of leadership and its importance in the military, not only to commissioned officers, but enlisted service members as well.

**August**—LTC John Maurer, MS, USA, relinquished command of the USU Brigade in an ceremony in the USU breezeway, handing over the mission and values of the university to COL John Wempe, MS, USA. Prior to his assignment at USU, Wempe was previously Commanding Officer of Fort Drum’s Medical Department Activity in Fort Drum, N.J.

**September**—First year students gathered in the university’s amphitheater for the annual Presentation Ceremony. During the ceremony, the medical students recited the Hippocratic Oath, an oath pertaining to the ethics of medicine traditionally taken by physicians. Larry Laughlin, M.D., Ph.D., dean of the F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine, administered the oath.

**October**—First year medical students visited Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School in Rockville, Md., and demonstrated a program called “Get up, Get out, Get Fit.” The program was designed to instruct the elementary students about the importance of nutrition and exercise, as well as give them a brief lesson in anatomy.

**November**—First-year school of medicine students took part in a patient evacuation exercise as part of the Introduction to Military and Emergency Medicine course on the USU softball field. Among many learning objectives, students learned to load and unload patients from a front line ambulance and a UH-1 Iroquois helicopter, as well as how to evacuate patients using the helicopter’s hoist.

**December**—The end of 2007 marks the 10-year anniversary of the Patient Simulation Laboratory, which provides quality simulated-patient training to USU medical students. The university’s first patient simulator arrived in July 1997, and in the years since its inception, the PSL has added an adult male, birthing female, and an infant to its simulation repertoire.
USU Hosts 19th Annual Academic Award Collegium

By MCSN Raul Zamora
Assistant Editor, Office of External Affairs

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences has no shortage of outstanding students. More than 300 awards were presented during this year’s 19th Annual Academic Award Collegium, which honored classes of 2008, 2009, and 2010, Thursday.

The award ceremony began with a welcome from Richard Macdonald, M.D., associate dean for Student Affairs, and remarks from Larry Laughlin, M.D., Ph.D., dean, School of Medicine.

“At the School of Medicine we extremely proud of our graduates,” said Dr. Macdonald. “We expect great things, and we expect them to fulfill leadership roles within military medicine. It is both fitting and proper that we set aside a time certain marked by ceremony where we acknowledge the best and the brightest of our students. For they have set themselves apart from their peers, usually with a combination of courage, confidence and capacity. With the willingness to work harder and the willingness to use gifts that they have been given to distinguish themselves from their peers and that is worth speaking about.”

2d Lt Charisma Bautista received the most awards for the class of 2008, taking with him 5 awards. Outstanding award for Family Medicine; Outstanding Award for Internal Medicine; Outstanding Award for Medical Biochemistry; Outstanding Award for Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease; Outstanding Award for Preventive Medicine; an Outstanding Award for the McGraw Hill Award in Pharmacology, an Outstanding Award for the American Society of Clinical Pathologists’ Award for Academic Excellence and Achievement for Pathology; and the Dean’s Award.

Nicole L. Achee, Ph.D., assistant research professor, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences’ (USU) Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics, will receive a project support grant for $3.5 million from the Global Health Program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine.

Dr. Achee is the first faculty member at USU to receive a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The purpose of her research program is to develop a novel insecticide treated material “push-pull” system for detailed behavioral studies; the determination of the lowest ITM surface area and chemical dose required to repel and irritate adult Ae. aegypti; and chemical repelling of Ae. aegypti from the peridomestic environment and to quantify the effectiveness (measurable reduction of indoor mosquito populations) of an ITM push-pull system in an experimental small-scale trial.

Green Tea Shown to Possess Antitumor Effect in Breast Cancer

A team of scientists led by Dr. Radha Maheshwari, professor of Pathology at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) and Rajesh Loganathan Thangapazham, a USU graduate student, have shown that green tea has antitumor effect in breast cancer cells. The recently concluded study will be published in the Journal of Cancer Biology and Therapy, December 2007, Volume 6, Issue 12.

Cancer is a disease caused by the increased proliferation of cells which group and form a lump called tumor. Tumors can be benign or malignant. Cells from malignant tumors break away from the original tumor and spread to other parts of the body growing and forming new tumors. They can invade, penetrate into blood and lymphatic vessels, circulate via the bloodstream and can grow in a normal organ or tissue anywhere in the body. Unfortunately, treatment options for metastasis are very limited and usually represent the end stage of the disease. Unlike malignant tumors, benign tumors do not invade and, with very rare exceptions, are not life threatening. Chemoprevention broadly implies the use of a chemical substance of either natural or synthetic origin, to prevent, hamper, arrest or reverse a disease. Phytochemicals are plant based non nutritive components with substantial medicinal properties.

Dr. Maheshwari’s study observed that green tea can inhibit the invading capacity of these breast cancer cells and have also identified the mechanisms involved in death inducing and invasion inhibiting effects of green tea. Epidemiological studies also suggest that the risk of breast cancer is found to be less in Asian countries consuming green tea. These studies have greater clinical significance since the ability of these phytochemicals to activate antitumor and chemopreventive agents may provide a novel approach to breast cancer prevention.

A study by Dr. Maheshwari that was published earlier this year in Cancer Letters showed that green tea is effective in delaying tumor incidence as well as in reducing the tumor burden. Green tea was found to inhibit growth of tumors as well as induce death of breast cancer cells.
USU News Briefs

PTF/PFA/AFPT Notice: The Army AFPT, Navy PRT, and Air Force AFPT will be conducted in April 2008 for all faculty, staff, and students (excluding SOM). Naval personnel must complete the Health Risk Assessment questionnaire and Physical Health Assessment annually; Navy weigh-ins must be conducted between 10 days and 24 hours prior to the Navy PRT. Dates and times will be announced soon.

Service Member of the Quarter: Nominations for the Service Member of the Quarter for the 4th Quarter of 2007 are due through the chain of command to the Senior Enlisted Leader by Jan. 4. Supervisors are encouraged to submit their deserving E-6 and below personnel for this honor. The winner will compete for the title of Service Member of the Year, as well as the rewards that accompany it.

WRAMC Wounded Soldier Christmas Cards Hoax: An email hoax has been circulating, claiming that Christmas cards addressed to “A Recovering American Soldier” will be presented to recovering Soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. This is not true. WRAMC can not accept or process mail addressed to “Any Wounded Soldier,” “A Recovering American Soldier,” or any item similarly addressed. DoD policy states that due to safety and force protection concerns, these items cannot be accepted, as WRAMC cannot accept unsolicited mail. There are numerous other ways that well-meaning individuals can show their support. To see how you can show your appreciation, visit the WRAMC website at http://www.wramc.amedd.army.mil/Pages/default.aspx, then click “Support a Recovering American Soldier.”

“So You Think You Can Cook” Contest: The Combined Federal Campaign staff will be holding a contest entitled “So You Think You Can Cook” to help with this year’s CFC fundraiser Dec. 18. Contestants who register will be offered a prize, and will compete for the best dish. Peers and co-workers are encouraged to vote for their favorite dish as well. If you are interested in competing and would like to register your dish for the event, contact SSgt Witter, USAF (AVC) at mwitter@usuhs.mil.

Color Guard: The USU Color Guard is currently seeking new members. Color guard practices are held at 10:30 a.m. every Thursday in the Bldg B Lobby. If you would like to participate, please contact HM2 Charles, USN (EHS) at ccharles@usuhs.mil.

Military Awards Program: Nominations for the January Military Awards Panel must be routed through the chain of command to HM1 Hassan, USN (BDE) by Jan. 18. Award recommendations for officer and enlisted personnel must include routing slips with the appropriate signatures.

A Day in USU: Everyone has a job in The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and this is your chance to shine. Please submit photos and brief publishable caption for a chance to have them showcased in a special edition of the USU Newsletter. You can enter by calling the attention of your chain of command to this opportunity. Any employees who would like to enter please contact HM1 Hassan, USN (BDE) by Jan. 18. Award recommendations for officer and enlisted personnel must include routing slips with the appropriate signatures.

NSPS Questions/Answers

Q: How will the January 2008 Government-wide Pay Increase Affect Employees under NSPS?

A: Under the General Schedule, most employees currently receive the January Government-wide Pay Increase (GPI) in two parts: a base salary increase and a locality pay increase. While the final amount of the GPI is still not known, it will be distributed differently under NSPS.

The Department is taking the next step towards a more robust pay-for-performance system to enable the Department to better compensate its employees based on contribution to mission accomplishment. As a result, the GPI for Spiral 1 employees will be distributed as follows:

- Local market supplements will be the same as the Government-wide increases for locality pay for employees with an acceptable performance rating (rating of record of 2 or higher).
- 1.25% of the January 2008 GPI (not allocated for locality pay) will be added to pay pools and distributed through the pay pool process based on performance.

The remaining portion of the GPI (not allocated for locality pay) will be granted as an increase to base salary for employees with an acceptable performance rating. (Although employees on pay retention are eligible for locality pay increases, they are ineligible for this base salary increase.)

Faculty News

Professor Participates in Panel Discussion with First Lady Laura Bush—Stephen Cozza, M.D., professor in the department of Psychiatry at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU), participated in a recent roundtable discussion led by First Lady Laura Bush about “Helping America’s Youth” and focusing on the special needs of military children. The roundtable was held at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland at the youth center.

USU Graduates Team to Save Critically Wounded Afghani Toddler—A team of physician graduates from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) recently saved the life of a 3-year-old Afghani girl after she was severely injured in a bomb blast. Four USU alumni: Air Force Col. (Dr.) Gary Arishita, Maj. (Dr.) Chetan Kharod, Lt. Col. (Dr.) Randy McCafferty, and Maj. (Dr.) Charles Reilly, who are also university faculty members currently serving in Afghanistan, treated the toddler after she sustained life threatening injuries from an explosion while allegedly being used as a human shield by members of the Taliban.

SIMULATION from page 3

The PSL has been a leader in discovery and creator of new opportunities; almost every simulation session the PSL has offered at USU had never existed anywhere before the university created and produced it. James Zimble, MD, former president of USU, used the PSL’s successes to attract the approval for and resources to construct another clinical simulation facility for USU: the National Capital Area Medical Simulation Center (NCAMSC), which is located several miles east of the main USU campus.

While the PSL and the NCAMSC work for the same leadership and teach the same students, the courses that make use of their complementary assets differ. For example, the numerous human actor/standardized patient training experiences that had been performed in the Multi-Disciplinary Laboratory (MDL) and the clinics for the first several decades of USU’s existence now take place in a recently renovated state-of-the-art facility at the NCAMSC.

Since the origins of clinical simulation in the PSL, USU faculty and leadership have embraced the value of simulation: intentional, deliberate, and schedulable teaching objectives. The added value of simulation at USU improves the university’s clinical teachings and the clinical care its students will provide to their real patients.