



ON THE INSIDE

LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport

Dr. McDonald Announces Decision to Retire in 2008



John C. McDonald, M.D., Chancellor and Dean of the LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport, which includes E.A. Conway Medical Center in Monroe and Huey P. Long Medical Center in Pineville, last month announced his plans to retire within the next twelve months.

"I have been privileged to serve the LSU Health

Sciences Center at Shreveport for some 31 years, but I feel that it is time to retire," Dr. McDonald said.

Dr. McDonald has agreed serve until a successor is named or until Jan. 1, 2009, whichever occurs first.

A surgeon, Dr. McDonald had already gained national prominence for his pioneering work in organ transplantation when he joined what was then LSU Medical Center in Shreveport as Professor and Head of the Department of Surgery.

He served in that position until 2000 when he was appointed to the newly created chancellorship for the LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport. The Shreveport chancellorship, established by the LSU Board of Supervisors, was a formal acknowledgment of the maturation of LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport that had been begun in 1965 as a branch campus of the New Orleans LSU Health Sciences Center.

Under his leadership, the LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport gained statewide recognition as "the Shreveport model," a financially successfully blend of graduate medical education, research, and tertiary healthcare sought by patients of all financial backgrounds across the state. The Louisiana Legislature in 2003 transferred administrative control of E. A. Conway Medical Center in Monroe from the LSU Health Care Service Division to LSUHSC-S and solidified public healthcare and medical education programs in North Louisiana.

Based on the development of Conway under LSUHSC-S, in 2007 the Legislature transferred administrative control of Huey P. Long Medical Center in Alexandria to LSUHSC-S on July 1.

As part of his commitment to expanding access to rural patients, Dr. McDonald has been instrumental in planning an innovative LSUHSC-S/Rural Hospital Network initiative that relies on health information technology to link rural doctors and hospitals across North Louisiana with LSU Hospital in Shreveport and its physician specialists.

The Legislature approved the concept by appropriating \$13 million in the 2007 to begin implementation of the rural network initiative, which is in progress.

Among Dr. McDonald's many contributions to improving Louisiana healthcare is adding 18 additional freshman medical student slots to be filled by students from rural Louisiana. The initiative is part of the comprehensive LSUHSC-S commitment as a state institution to produce doctors who will remain in Louisiana and practice in underserved, rural communities. ■

Research Holds Promise for Improved Treatment for MS Patients



Alireza Minagar, M.D.

Patients who suffer from Multiple Sclerosis (MS) may benefit from a novel treatment tested in a pilot study at LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport, according to research results published in December in *Archives of Neurology*.

LSUHSC-S neurologist Alireza Minagar, M.D., Associate Professor, Department of Neurology, collaborated with research scientist J. Steven Alexander, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Molecular and Cellular Physiology, to test the effectiveness on MS of two drugs already in use.



J. Steven Alexander, Ph.D.

The single-center trial at LSUHSC-S involved 15 patients with relapsing-remitting MS who had been taking interferon for at

least six months and were experiencing symptoms and developing new brain lesions.

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) involves inflammation that destroys parts of the brain along with progressive degeneration of brain tissue.

The most common type is relapsing-remitting MS, in which patients experience attacks of symptoms such as

muscle weakness and spasms followed by periods of symptom-free remission. Many patients with relapsing-remitting MS who take interferon, a medication that boosts the immune system and fights viruses, still experience relapses. They may also continue to develop new areas of damaged brain tissue (lesions) visible on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

In the four-month LSUHSC-S study, participants took 100 milligrams daily of the antibiotic doxycycline in addition to interferon therapy. They underwent monthly neurological examinations to detect brain lesions and blood work to monitor safety.

At the end of the four-month study, the combination treatment resulted in fewer lesions visible on MRI with a 25 percent reduction in lesions in 60 percent of the patients. The patients also had reduced average scores on a scale designed to assess disability levels.

Only one patient relapsed.

Adverse effects were mild and included only already known effects of the two drugs individually, according to Dr. Minagar. No new effects associated with combining the medications were reported, he said.

"Overall, data suggest that the treatment combination of oral doxycycline and interferon beta-1a may be safe and effective in some patients with MS; however, further controlled clinical trials are warranted to demonstrate safety and efficacy in a larger patient population," said Dr. Minagar. ■

Dr. Bocchini Receives Medical Society Award

The Shreveport Medical Society last month bestowed its annual Distinguished Service Honor award on Joseph A. Bocchini Jr., M.D., Professor and Head of the Department of Pediatrics at LSUHSC-S and founding medical director of the Children's Hospital of LSUHSC-S.

The award was presented by Anil Chhabra, M.D., SMS outgoing president, at in recognition of Dr. Bocchini's outstanding contributions to the advancement of medicine in the Shreveport area.

Dr. Bocchini was nominated for the award by members of the society with final selection made by the board of directors.

In presenting the award, Dr. Chhabra cited Dr. Bocchini's demonstrated professional expertise, devotion to pediatric care, research in pediatric infectious diseases, outstanding education and training of medical students and pediatric residents, and accessibility for support of community pediatricians in particularly difficult cases.

Dr. Bocchini's outstanding leadership in qualifying the Children's Hospital of LSUHSC-S for membership in the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions in 1996. NACHRI membership is the benchmark for excellence in Children's Hospitals.

Dr. Bocchini has practiced and taught pediatric medicine as a member of the faculty of the LSU School of Medicine in Shreveport for 30 years.

Dr. Bocchini's status as a nationally recognized expert and spokesman for pediatric infectious diseases was also noted. ■

Holiday Schedule

The following are the official and proposed holidays for the LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport campus for calendar year 2008.

New Year's	Dec. 31 (Mon), Jan. 1 (Tues)
Martin Luther King, Jr.	Jan. 21 (Mon)
Mardi Gras	Feb. 4 (Mon)
Easter	March 21 (Fri), March 24 (Mon)
Memorial Day	May 26 (Mon)
Independence Day	July 4 (Fri) (proposed)
Labor Day	Sept. 1 (Mon) (proposed)
Columbus Day	Oct. 13 (Mon) (proposed)
Thanksgiving	Nov. 27 (Thurs), Nov. 28 (Fri) (proposed)
Christmas	Dec. 24 (Wed), Dec. 25 (Thurs) (proposed)
New Year's	Dec. 31 (Wed), Jan. 1, 2009 (Thurs) (proposed)

Proposed holidays have been submitted by LSUHSC-S to the LSU Board of Supervisors for LSU System FY 2008-09 holiday schedule that will be adopted in the spring.

Dr. Zhao Chosen for American Heart Association Committee

Li-Ru Zhao, M.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Neurology, has been invited to serve on the Affiliate Brain Committee of the American Heart Association, formed recently to review neuroscience research grant applications.

She will sit on the review panel for Region II, which encompasses Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida and Puerto Rico.

Dr. Zhao was asked to join the committee in recognition of her expertise in strokes. ■

Successful Drive Collects Books for "Reach Out and Read"



Spearheading the "Reach Out and Read" book drive were (l to r) Kerri Christopher, Instructor, Medical Library Science; Jennifer Kelley, MSII; Soumia Brakta, MSII; and David Duggar, Assistant Professor, Medical Library Science.

Pediatric outpatients of the Children's Hospital of LSUHSC-S will have 2,111 more new and gently used children's books to enjoy, thanks to donations to the recent annual book drive to support the "Reach Out and Read" program.

At each appointment to the well-child clinic, "Reach Out and Read"—designed to foster parent-child reading enthusiasm—presents the youngster with a book of their own.

Jennifer Kelley and Sourmia Brakta, second year medical students, were Book Drive Committee co-chairs.

Other book drive committee members were Katie Berg, fourth-year medical student; Margaret Beadle, Emily Simon, Jaszianne Tolbert, and Van T. Tran, all third-year medical students; and Amy Duthu, Jessica LeBlanc, Case Sanders and Tracy Wallace, all second-year medical students. ■

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Blood Drives Scheduled

Students and employees of LSUHSC-S literally give of themselves to help others.

Again in 2007, the LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport ranked among top collection sites for LifeShare Blood Center. Employees and students donated 786 units during 12 campus blood drives.

"LifeShare is grateful for the donations we receive from LSUHSC-S. They are instrumental in helping maintain the area's blood supply," said Molly Fouts, LifeShare Blood Center Donor Recruiter.

Employees and students who have donated blood in the past are encouraged to consider making donations again (and again) in 2008 during the series of blood drives scheduled on the Shreveport campus.

The dates—all Thursdays—are January 17, February 21, March 13, April 17, May 15, June 19, July 17, August 21, September 18, October 16, November 13, and December 11. Each drive will be conducted between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the Biomedical Research Institute Atrium. ■

Caddo Deputies Bring Toys to Young Cancer Patients



Caddo Sheriff Deputies Jeff Thomas (left) and Rodney Spikes (right) pose with pediatric cancer patient Kel-Nisha Odom (center), 5, of Shreveport, after they dropped off a load of toys to be given to young patients being treated at the St. Jude Affiliate Clinic at LSUHSC-S.

The annual toy donation by Thomas and Spikes, both of the Caddo Parish Sheriff Office Crime Scene Investigation Division, is their way of thanking LSUHSC-S faculty and staff for the outstanding care Spikes' son received when he was battling cancer several years ago.

2008 General Faculty Meeting Schedule

The schedule of General Faculty meetings for the LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport for 2008 has been announced.

The meeting dates are January 15, May 20 and September 16. Medical and Dental Staff meetings, which precede each of the General Faculty meetings, begin at 5 p.m. in Room G-221.

Minutes of the most recent meeting are posted on the LSUHSC-S web page under the Chancellor's Office at <http://www.sh.lsuhs.edu/faculty>. ■

Human Resources Corner



David Fuqua, HRM Director

Happy New Year. This past year has been very exciting and fast-paced in Human Resource Management. However, our goal remains, as always, to provide options, solutions, and service for employees of LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport in a prompt, courteous, and efficient manner.

We have had several new additions to our staff, so we would like to feature each of the Human Resource sections in some of the upcoming issues of *On the Inside*. We would like to acquaint employees with the staff in each section and their responsibilities so that questions or concerns can be directed to the most appropriate person.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to improve our service. Contact Human Resource Management at 675-5610 if we can help you in any way.

Patio Area for Cancer Patients Dedicated

Dedication ceremonies were held December 17 for the O. Delton Harrison, Jr. Patio, located on the sixth floor rooftop adjacent to the Hematology/Oncology area.

The patio is intended to provide a retreat for those cancer patients who are hospitalized at LSUHSC-S.

Furniture for the patio was underwritten by Karin and Greg Barro.

Jonathan Glass, M.D., Professor and Carroll W. Feist Endowed Chair in Medicine, who is founding director of the Feist-Weiller Cancer Center, thanked Mr. Harrison for making the rooftop patio available for the benefit of cancer patients. ■



Enjoying dedication ceremonies of the new patio area were (l to r) Karin and Greg Barro; Veronica Poole, Oncology Unit Manager; O. Delton Harrison, Jr.; and Jonathan Glass, M.D., Director of the Feist-Weiller Cancer Center.

Conference Center Renamed for Foundation Chairman

Room G-221, the campus multipurpose meeting room, has a new look and a new name, the Donald J. Zadeck Conference Center.

The refurbishing is thanks to the efforts of the LSU Health Sciences Foundation.

The Foundation decided to update one of the most frequently used meeting spaces on campus in honor of Donald J. Zadeck, the inaugural chairman of the Foundation's board of directors. The renovation was made possible through \$75,000 in private contributions from LSUHSC-S faculty members, administration and the friends and family of Donald Zadeck.

On June 1, 2007, the LSU Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the renaming of the Conference Center to the Donald J. Zadeck Conference Center. The Zadeck Conference Center was dedicated during the Foundation's Board of Directors' annual meeting November 15, the Foundation's 10th Anniversary. That same day Zadeck officially stepped down as chairman, a post he had held for ten years.

"The naming, renovation and upgrade of the Zadeck Conference Center was the culminating project of the Foundation's 10th Anniversary. The Foundation views this project as a great example of individuals and businesses working together to enhance the LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport," said Lisa Babin, LSUHS Foundation President and CEO.

The project received an added bonus when a \$15,350 grant applied for by the Foundation was approved by AT&T. The money will provide videoconferencing capabilities for the room. The technology will create a new location where healthcare professionals can earn continuing education credits via videoconferencing. ■

Pathology Residents Present Work at National Meeting

LSUHS-C Department of Pathology residents made several presentations during the recent annual meeting for the Association of Molecular Pathology (AMP), in Los Angeles.

Ami Bhalodia, M.D., fourth-year resident; Seth Bilello, M.D., and Brandi Painter, M.D., both third-year residents; and Thad Primeaux, M.D., Maressa Pollen, M.D., and Yamil Lopez, M.D., all second-year residents, made four poster presentations.

In addition, Dr. Painter was invited to give an oral presentation, "HPV Genotypes in adolescents" during an Infectious Disease session.

Mary Lowery-Nordberg, Ph.D., and Janice Matthews-Greer, Ph.D., both Associate Professors, Department of Pathology, served as faculty mentors for the residents. ■

E.A. Conway Employee of the Month



William Redmond, CRNA

William "Mack" Redmond, CRNA, was the December Employee of the Month for E. A. Conway Medical Center.

Mr. Redmond has worked as a Nurse Anesthetist at the hospital for 10 years.

He graduated in 1974 from Meridian Junior College School of Nursing and in 1977 from Madison Hospital School of Anesthesia (now the Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia). Mr. Redmond has been certified in Anesthesia by the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists since 1977.

In 1984, he received his BA degree in Health Care and Education from Ottawa University. ■

LSUHSC-S Research Featured on Organization's Website

A study of obesity and risk for relapse of breast cancer in women, funded by the Feist-Weiller Cancer Center (FWCC) of LSUHSC-S, was one of only four abstracts selected by the American Association for Cancer Research on the organization's web paper www.aacr.org.

In the study, one of the largest racially diverse studies of low income women, FWCC researchers found that women who are overweight or obese at the time they are diagnosed with breast cancer are at an increased risk of relapse. For each point gain of body mass index, the risk of cancer recurrence is increased by four percent.

Dolly Quispe, M.D., hematology-oncology fellow at FWCC, was the lead investigator. Her faculty sponsor is Amanda Sun, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine.

"We find that obesity, which is associated with poverty, is a significant factor in whether cancer recurs," said Dr. Sun.

Dr. Quispe noted, "Poverty is an important marker for limited access to healthcare, late-stage disease, and poor outcomes, and the fact that lower income adults are more likely to be obese. The goal of the study was to determine if there is a correlation of obesity and poverty with breast cancer recurrence and to quantify it."

The research team examined medical records for 349 women diagnosed with breast cancer from 1990 to 2004. Forty-five percent of the participants were African-American making the study one of the largest with a high proportion of African-American breast cancer patients. The records showed 25 percent lived in parishes with high poverty rates. Twenty percent of the patients received free healthcare and 25 percent were enrolled in Medicaid.

Many studies have found that obesity in postmenopausal women is a risk factor for breast cancer development, but the few studies that correlate excess body weight and cancer in premenopausal women have shown mixed results. ■

E.A. Conway Equipment Fair



Jeremy Bowen (left), Biomedical Engineering at E.A. Conway, demonstrates new equipment for (center to right) Bernestine Robinson, Labor and Delivery; Deborah Robinson and Letha Owens, both in Obstetrics and Gynecology, during recent Maternal Child Care Equipment Fair.

The fair educates and familiarizes employees with equipment while reviewing the employees' skills and competencies, as required by The Joint Commission.

Biomedical Engineering Director Ron Mahmoodian; Child Managers Raina Futrell, R.N., Manager of NICU, and Penny Snell, R.N., Manager of Labor and Delivery; and Twala Hernandez, R.N., NICU, who are not pictured, also participated in the equipment demonstration.

New Faculty

Anthony Orr, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Pathology
Bhanu Wunnava, M.D., Instructor, Family Medicine

Current and past issues of "On the Inside" can be viewed on the LSUHSC-S web site at <http://www.sh.lsuhs.edu/our.html>