Appointment of Gordon L. Archer, MD, as Acting Associate Dean for Research, School of Medicine

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Gordon Archer, MD, Professor of Internal Medicine and Director of the MD/PhD Program, as Acting Associate Dean for Research in the School of Medicine effective October 17, 2005. This newly created position is critical to the success of the basic and clinical research missions of the School of Medicine at a time of significant investment and great promise.

Gordon is one of our most accomplished physician-scientists, recognized nationally and internationally for his work on S. aureus and S. epidermidis. He is the recipient of major awards in his field of infectious diseases, including a Merit Award from N.I.H. for his research on the methicillin resistance locus, the Research Excellence Award from our Department of Medicine, and the Dean’s Recognition for Research Excellence Award in 2004. He has been recognized for more than a decade as one of the Best Doctors in America. I am confident that Gordon’s credentials in basic and clinical research, his experience in research training and administration, and most importantly, his commitment to our School of Medicine and a passion for excellence will serve us well at a time when the right decisions must be made regarding the future of our research enterprise.

Gordon received his undergraduate education at Washington & Lee University, and medical education at the University of Virginia, followed by residency and fellowship training at the University of Michigan where he also served on the faculty before joining the VCU faculty in 1975. He advanced through the faculty ranks at VCU, being promoted to Professor of Internal Medicine in 1985, and Division Head of Infectious Diseases in 1992. He became Director of the MD/PhD Program in the School in 2003. His research career is emblematic of our research agenda, the conduct of research that will lead to tangible improvement in the health of our nation.

–Dr. Richard Wenzel


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CONTRIBUTED BY JEROME F. STRAUSS, III, MD, PHD
Drau, School of Medicine
Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs,
VCU Health System
Clerkship Leadership Change

After eleven years of directing the Internal Medicine M-3 clerkship, Dr. Judy Brannen has decided to step down. Under her leadership, the Clerkship has thrived and set the standard for medical student rotations at VCU. Her students experienced firsthand her patience, gentle manner and fairness. Her ability to effectively and carefully lead the clerkship played a very important role in transforming our residency program by providing medical students with a positive experience in Internal Medicine that sparked their initial interest in the field and subsequently prompted their decision to pursue residency training at VCU. Dr. Brannen's commitment has been extra-ordinary. While serving as Clerkship Director, she also served as Director of Quality Management at the McGuire VA Medical Center, earned her MBA degree and gave birth to triplets! In addition, for the past year she has served as Acting Chief of Staff at the McGuire VAMC and for many years has served on the Internal Medicine Residency Competency Committee. The Department recognized her important contributions at a reception at the Alumni House on October 17.

By selecting Clerkship Directors with strong organizational and leadership skills such as Dr. Brennan and Dr. Bearman, the Department of Internal Medicine honors its commitment to our youngest colleagues, serving as a foundation for our many other successful ventures. Dr. Brannen set the highest standards in unwavering pursuit for excellence in educating medical students,” said Dr. Richard Wenzel, chairman of the department. “We plan to find new roles for her in our Departmental leadership.”

Contributed by Michael Edmond, MD, MPH
Associate Chair for Education, DOIM

In Memoriam: Dr. Chartchai (Pom) Kositprapa

We are deeply saddened by the loss of one of our young faculty members, cardiologist Chartchai (Pom) Kositprapa, MD.

Born, raised and educated in Bangkok, Thailand, Dr. Kositprapa was an assistant professor at VCU Medical Center and the McGuire VA, specializing in interventional cardiology. He completed his medical training in Buffalo, New York, and came to Richmond for cardiology training.

He met Dr. Juddi Yeh of Houston, Texas, during her medical training at the Department of Internal Medicine. They had marriage celebrations earlier this year in both Houston and Bangkok, and were joyfully preparing for the birth of their child in December.

Dr. Kositprapa was 34 years old. In the short time most of us came to know him, we found him to be an ever-enthusiastic, pleasant and humble person and physician. He unquestionably had the optimal skills of an outstanding physician. He was extremely knowledgeable, supportive, dedicated and, above all else, compassionate. Friends, colleagues and teachers will remember him for his wonderful sense of humor and gift for caring.

The loss of someone so young and talented with so much to give always leaves us frustrated, but perhaps the most tragic of Chartchai’s premature death is the fact that he died of the very disease that we all strive so hard to prevent and to treat.

Chartchai leaves behind a legacy of friends, family and a future generation to wonder what great things could have been beyond the wonderful achievements of his short life.

Contributed by George W. Vetrovec, MD
Professor of Medicine
Chairman, Division of Cardiology

An education fund is being established for Chartchai and Juddi’s unborn son. Contributions may be sent to Juddi Yeh, P.O. Box 25943, Richmond, VA 23242.

Clinical Activities: Letters

Dr. Richard Wenzel received the following letter:

“Dr. [Michael] Edmond talked us through a very challenging and emotional situation, recommended a course of action, he involved us in deciding. He clearly responded to questions of risk, probability, pragmatism and peace of mind. We were very pleased with Dr. Edmond and would readily see him again. Dr. Edmond truly went the extra mile to communicate with us and to help us receive medical help while in Spain, where English-speaking doctors were not available. Thank you!”

Dr. George Vetrovec received the following providing excellent, caring medical attention to […] Her confidence level increases after her visits to you, and both think mentally and physically she feels better. Good luck to you and your staff – also to MCV. It is always refreshing to visit you and your conscientious staff.”
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~Dr. Richard Wenzel

[Dr. Gordon Archer’s] research career is emblematic of our research agenda, the conduct of research that will lead to tangible improvement in the health of our nation.

Dr. Gordon Archer

Contributed by Jerome F. Strauss, III, MD, PhD
Dean, School of Medicine
Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs, VCU Health System