At the Commencement Exercises for the most recent class of new Doctors of Medicine from the VCU School of Medicine, faculty members of the Department of Internal Medicine were presented with a number of awards. Dr. Thomas Smith was also presented the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey Humanism Award.

Internal Medicine Wins Resident and Attending Awards

On Thursday, May 11, Internal Medicine faculty and hospital staff were presented with a number of Resident/Attending Awards. The winners were: Vitalie Richard, M.D., Stacy Eber, M.D., Dipak Dixit, M.D., and Leonard Mazzu, M.D. In the Resident category was Ryan Mire, M.D., and Laura Patrick, M.D.

Faculty Publications


Department Receives New Chair in Cardiology

The Department of Internal Medicine is pleased to announce that Dr. Harold M. Kimmerling, ’53 and his wife have endowed a new Chair in Cardiology. Dr. Kimmerling and his wife are native Roanoke Virginians and pride themselves on being active citizens in the Richmond community. They are very pleased to see VCU/MCV attract eminent scholars and establish a new Chair for VCU/MCV’s Chief of Cardiology. The couple specified such on the endowment agreement.

A native of Roanoke, Virginia and a graduate of Virginia Tech as well, Dr. Kimmerling saw the future in Dallas and established a very successful private cardiology practice there. Recently retired from practice, Dr. Kimmerling will remember his friends in the Dallas community for their philanthropic vision, which includes support of the Dallas Symphony and the Dallas Museum of Art. The Kimmerlings said, “That is an incredible acknowledgment of the work being done by our VCU/MCV Heart Center team and most gratefully received. It is in today’s climate that everyone recognizes the school as we in generations past.”

Contributed by Sharon Larkins-Pederson

Medical Grand Rounds Presented by Nobel Laureate

On May 4, Medical Grand Rounds was presented by Dr. Max Perutz, 1962 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry. This was the first Grand Rounds presentation by a Nobel Laureate. Dr. Perutz, author of Science is not a Quiet Life and I Wish I’d Made You Angry Earlier, spoke on his work and his colleagues’ involvement in the beginnings of molecular biology. Dr. Perutz was the first scientist to decipher the structure of hemoglobin and DNA. He pointed out the irony that at the time DNA was deciphered, it was still not yet understood to have the foundations of present day molecular biology.

News Briefs

Dr. Mark F. Switz, M.D., presented an MSK-PFCC grant from the National Institutes of Health to continue clinical operations of the Richmond AIDS consortium.

Mary Sommerville, M.D., M.S., Professor and Chair of General Medicine and Primary Care, was named an AHRQ Fellow by the Hedy Brecher Fellowship Program, an innovative Medicine Program. The Program fosters medical development for new women physicians who are leaders in academic medicine.

Peter Brummel, M.D., has been awarded the 2000 Teacher of the Year Award by the American Geriatrics Society. The award was established in 1987 and recognizes distinguished lifelong achievement in education.

Betty Ann Johnson, M.D., Ph.D., and Medical Director of the VCU Student Health Service, reported that the Student Health Service received a perfect grid score of 100% during its self-assessment by the JCAHO.

Peter Boling, M.D., has been awarded the 2000 Nascher/Manning Award by the American Geriatrics Society. The award was established in 1987 to recognize an individual with distinguished life-long achievement in clinical geriatrics.

Betty Ann Johnson, M.D., Ph.D., and Medical Director of the VCU Student Health Service, reported that the Student Health Service received a perfect grid score of 100% during its self-assessment by the JCAHO.

Julie Beales, M.D., Geriatric Fellow, has been awarded a $50,000 grant from the American Federation for Aging Research for a study entitled “Does the Resident Assessment Instrument Improve Identification and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers and Falls.”

The VCU Hematology/Oncology Racing Team finished 7th of 26 teams in the Ukrops 10K on April 3rd. Team members are Bruce Hillner, M.D., Steve Heddinger, M.D., Thomas Smith, M.D., Susie Tozzy, M.D., and Jerry Riggins.

Medical Care At Academic Health Centers

Dear Colleagues:

There is a new controversy about what types of hospitals deliver the best care for inpatients. Most agree, however, that the treatment of complex diseases is often best managed at academic health centers (AHCs). Nevertheless, some of the strength of specialty care at the AHCs are actually taken for granted. Consider this: there is a difference between onsite care at AHCs vs. attending physicians, hospitalists, nursing staff, and students, in terms of the services of specialists and each remaining complex laboratory data. In a city-pawed world with large new available, overnight is a valuable asset for managing care further. Because we have been fortunate in the quality of care we are available around the clock with physicians. At its core, our care at VCU is 24-7, not limited to a few hours a day. The additional overhead expenses at AHCs derive from the fact that in addition to our educational team approach with students and housestaff and our full-time coverage with physicians, we also have continual coverage with support services – expert technologists, consultants, respiratory therapists, laboratory support, physical, speech and occupational therapy, endoscopy, and more.

Importantly, as a result of around-the-clock coverage, a commitment to always be available to most concerned family members who may not be free during prime time daylight hours. This can be exceptionally comforting to family and relatives of patients seeking information and counseling.

Of course our special strength lies in the fact that we have treatment protocols unavailable to the community hospitals; that because we are a referral center and see “rare” diseases more often than others, we can sometimes move our discoveries from the bench to the bedside quickly when they are identified to be useful.

None of this is to say that we should not continue efforts to improve customer service, the cleanliness of the environment, our food service, and others. Of course all of these areas are important. For instance, we should never come to review our environment continuously to do better, think effortlessly on our own.

The point is to understand the great strength of specialty care at AHCs to the model of it all may soon be forgotten. There are immense benefits to our care, and the division in the Department of Internal Medicine that delivers 95% of patient care at VCU/MCV represents the beneficial health care environment available to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Richard P. Wenzel, M.D., M.Sc.
William Branch Porter Professor and Chairman

CLINICAL ACTIVITIES: LETTERS

Dr. Richard Wenzel received the following letter:

I have been meaning to take the time to write to you all regarding the excellent care I received from Dr. Switz. Since my own physician had left, I was referred to Dr. Switz. I have been treated by many physicians, but I was impressed with Dr. Switz’s care, communications, and professionalism.

Evelyn Fisher, M.D., has received an $875,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health for continuing clinical operations of the Richmond AIDS consortium.

Mary Sommerville, M.D., M.S., Professor and Chair of General Medicine and Primary Care, was named an AHRQ Fellow by the Hedy Brecher Fellowship Program, an innovative Medicine Program. The Program fosters medical development for new women physicians who are leaders in academic medicine.

Peter Brummel, M.D., has been awarded the 2000 Teacher of the Year Award by the American Geriatrics Society. The award was established in 1987 and recognizes distinguished lifelong achievement in education.

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Dr. George Vetrovec (center) with Dr. and Mrs. Harold M. Kimmerling
Internal Medicine Faculty Showered with Awards

At the Commencement Exercises for the most recent class of new Doctors of Medicine from the VCU School of Medicine, faculty members of the Department of Internal Medicine were presented with a number of prestigious awards. Thomas Smith, M.D., Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases, was presented the Distinguished Scientist Award for Distinguished Service. Laurie Lyckholm, M.D., Assistant Professor, Division of Hematology/Oncology, was presented the Distinguished Educator Award for Educational Leadership. Thomas Smith, M.D., Associate Professor and Chairman, Division of Hematology/Oncology, was presented the VCU Physician Distinguished Alumni Award. Dr. Thomas Smith was also presented by the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey Humanist Award.

Internal Medicine Wins Resident and Attending Awards

On Thursday, May 11, Internal Medicine faculty and housestaff were presented with a number of honors: Resident and Attending Awards. Awarded: ‘Best Attending’ were Dave Richard, M.D. - Henry Ford M.D., Laura Lyckholm, M.D. - Leonard Mann, M.D. (of Yale medical school); ‘Best Fellow’ category was Harold Chang, M.D.; Peter Curatola, M.D. - Roshan Bandaram, M.D. - Hector Mateo, M.D. In the ‘Best Intern’ category were Ryan Mire, M.D. - and Laura Patrick, M.D."

Faculty Publications


