Inside
LSU HEALTH SHREVEPORT

School of Medicine
School of Graduate Studies
School of Allied Health Professions
LSU Health Sciences Foundation

WINTER 2017

BACK ON HER FEET

Allied Health Team Helps Patient Recover From Spine Injury

MINI MED SCHOOL

Dr. Shane Barton, Chairman and Associate Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, guides Mini Med School participant Frank Auer on how to cut and drill a bone.

Mini Med School

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WINTER 2017

I recently completed my first year as Chancellor and Dean of LSU Health Shreveport. Needless to say, it has been a busy and challenging year — a year that has made me grateful to lead a group of dedicated, passionate and exceptional employees. As we strive to overcome very difficult times, I am reminded that it is times like these that tend to bring out the best in all of us. Our employees — the foundation of our institution — have revealed that we are resilient, resourceful, compassionate, possess a "can do" spirit, and most importantly have the ability and desire to stay focused on our mission of patient care, education and research.

In the past 90 days, we have had many exciting developments on our campus, such as the establishment of the Center for Brain Health, new project awards from the National Institutes of Health totaling over $4.8 million, and a 10-week bioentrepreneurism seminar series titled the Business of Science. We are also fortunate to have had improvements to our campus made possible by volunteers and donors, fundraising efforts by our students for Camp Tiger where mentally and physically challenged children enjoy a week of free fun each summer, and faculty members being recognized around the world for their clinical and research expertise.

I wish I could tell you exactly what tomorrow holds for our health sciences center in terms of a hospital partner, funding levels from the state, and faculty recruitment, but the reality is, at this time, I do not know. What I do know is that every single day, I along with the 2,726 employees will continue delivering outstanding patient care, education that engages and challenges our students, and research that will improve future healthcare.

I ask for your continued interest and support of our health sciences center as "together" we work to achieve the greatness that our institution deserves.

Sincerely,

G.E. Ghali, DDS MD FACS FRCS(Ed)
Chancellor & Dean

content

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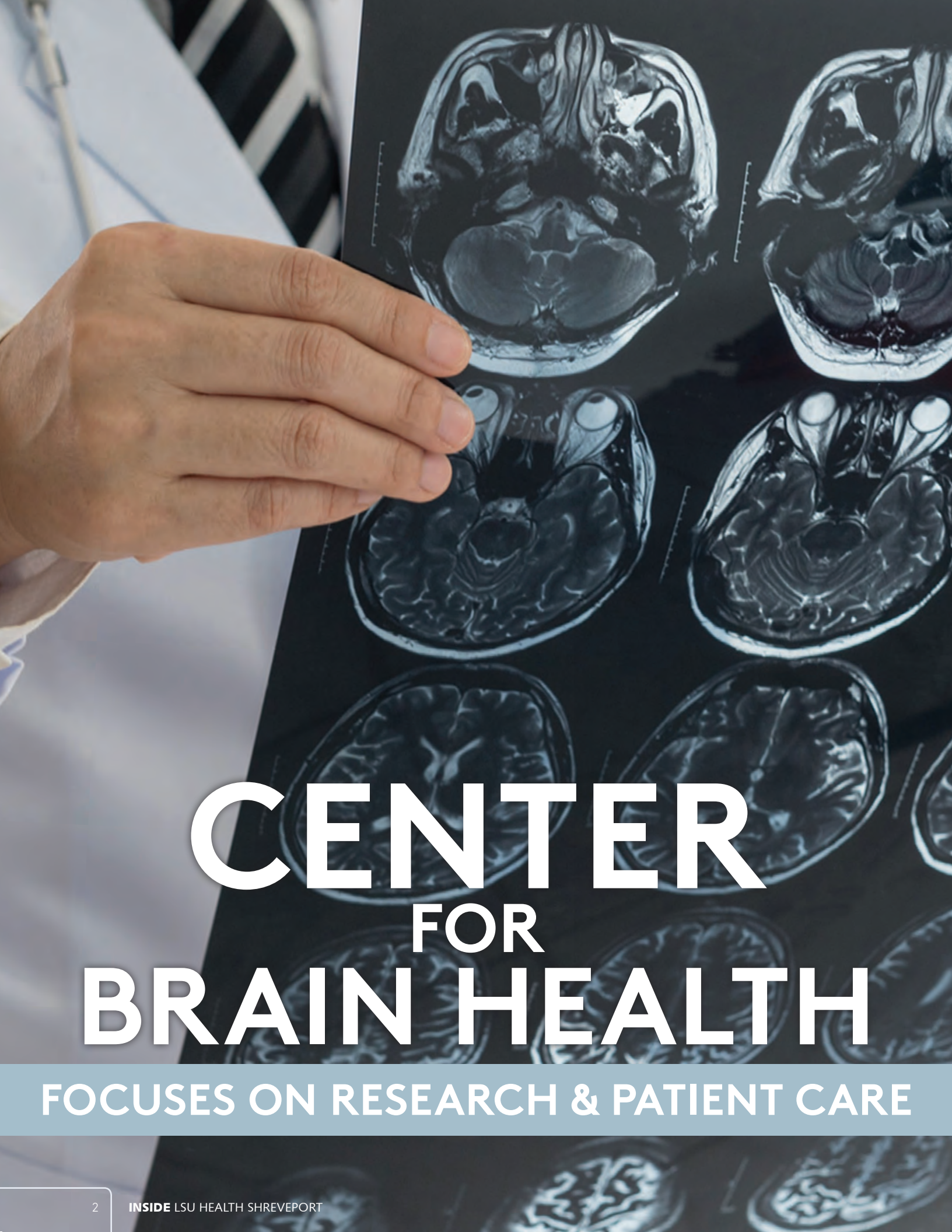


CENTER FOR BRAIN HEALTH

FOCUSES ON RESEARCH & PATIENT CARE

LSU Health Shreveport's new Center for Brain Health will offer a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to treating brain injuries and diseases.

The center received one-year conditional approval from the Louisiana Board of Regents on Oct. 26, following the September approval by the LSU Board of Supervisors.


Disbrow

"Advances in brain health rely on an approach that brings together clinicians, educators and researchers from many areas of expertise, which is something we are uniquely positioned to offer at LSU Health as an academic medical center," said Dr. Elizabeth Disbrow, Director of the Center for Brain Health and an Associate Professor of Neurology. "When researchers work with clinicians, the research improves. When the clinicians work with the researchers, the clinical care improves."

With faculty and staff from LSU Health's School of Medicine, School of Allied Health Professions and School of Graduate Studies working together, the center will provide comprehensive care for brain disorders while expanding neuroscience-related education and research. The center will focus on research into disorders such as stroke, traumatic brain injury, epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, and Alzheimer's disease. The Center for Brain Health will also partner with the Children's Center at the School of Allied Health Professions, where children across the Ark-La-Tex are evaluated for Autism Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.


Tinsley

"Uniting our three professional schools, the Center for Brain Health is the only neuroscience research facility in the state that offers the comprehensive clinical aspects in treating patients. Once they are evaluated and treated medically, they'll continue to be followed into the rehabilitation aspect of their care," said Dr. Suzanne Tinsley, Associate Professor of Neurological Rehabilitation and Assistant Dean of the School of Allied Health Professions, which is home to the only nationally accredited neurological physical therapy residency program in Louisiana. "The goal of neurological rehabilitation is to restore patients back to the maximum level of function possible after brain injury or disease."

Another component unique to the center is LSU Health's role in the National Institutes of Health's StrokeNet. This stroke trials network serves as a pipeline for new potential treatments for patients with stroke and those at risk for stroke. The Shreveport health sciences center is the first in the state to be accepted into StrokeNet, joining the ranks of institutions such as Emory, Massachusetts General, Mount Sinai, Northwestern, Stanford, UCLA and Vanderbilt.

Dr. Oleg Y. Chernyshev, Assistant Professor of Neurology and StrokeNet principal investigator, said one of the main goals of this network is to maximize efficiency in developing, promoting and conducting clinical trials focused on key interventions in stroke prevention, treatment and recovery. Under the direction of Dr. Chernyshev, the stroke program at LSU Health's hospital teaching partner, University Health Shreveport, is the only one in North Louisiana to receive Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers from The Joint Commission, providing acute stroke care to 30 percent of the state's population.


Chernyshev

"StrokeNet provides a tremendous educational platform for stroke physicians and other healthcare professionals, particularly those individuals in training and focused on an academic career," Chernyshev said. "The health sciences center's inclusion in this network will bolster the success of the Center for Brain Health."

Not only does the Center for Brain Health integrate LSU Health Shreveport resources focusing on brain injury and disease, it also provides a platform for collaboration with Overton Brooks VA Medical Center, Louisiana Tech University and LSU-S.

"There is so much to be accomplished by leveraging all the existing resources available in North Louisiana into an integrated hub," said Disbrow. "We enhance the education and training of our students, we improve our ability to secure competitive national research funding for our region, and we better serve our community with advanced neurorehabilitation services."

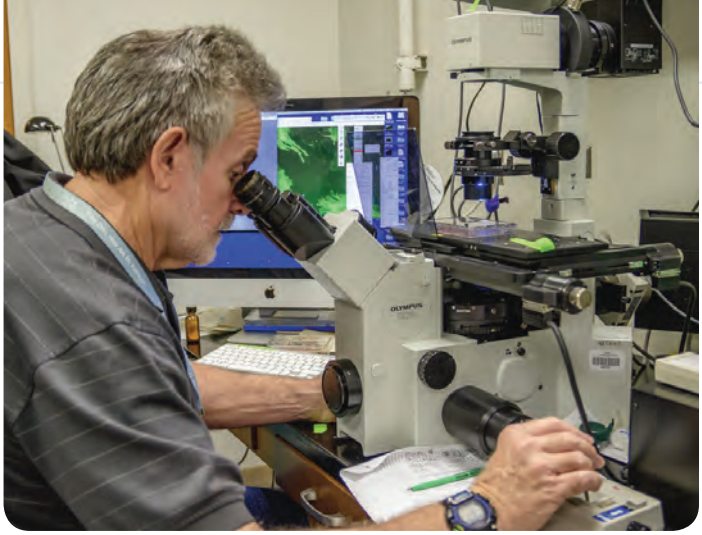

Kevil

"With the establishment of the Center for Brain Health at LSU Health Shreveport, we continue to advance clinical and research opportunities to citizens of North Louisiana," said Dr. Chris Kevil, Vice Chancellor for Research at LSU Health. "In addition, as the only Louisiana institution associated with StrokeNet sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, the Center for Brain Health will be a vital source for the latest in stroke care, rehabilitation, and research."

For more on the Center for Brain Health, visit www.lsuhscbrainhealth.com

LSU Health Shreveport
CENTER FOR BRAIN HEALTH

Diabetic Kidney Disease Focus of $2.5 Million Grant



Dr. Kevin McCarthy, Chairman and Professor of Cellular Biology & Anatomy, received a $2.5 million grant from the NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases for his five-year project on diabetic kidney disease.

It is currently estimated that 30 million individuals in the United States are afflicted with diabetes mellitus. In Caddo and Bossier Parishes, approximately 11 percent of the adult population are diabetics. Long term, poorly controlled diabetes mellitus is one of the leading causes of adult blindness, limb amputations, stroke, heart attack, and kidney disease. Approximately 36 percent of individuals with diabetes mellitus develop chronic kidney disease, and the cost of treating diabetics with kidney disease is approximately $25 billion a year.

Although research into the etiology and progression of diabetic kidney disease, nephropathy, has been an active area of biomedical research for four decades, an understanding of how diabetic nephropathy begins and progresses is still incomplete. The research of the McCarthy laboratory at LSU Health Shreveport over the past 25 years has focused on discerning key factors that contribute to the development and progression of diabetic nephropathy.

"Every day our kidneys will produce about 35 gallons of filtrate, but we only urinate about a liter per day. The kidneys are responsible for filtering our plasma, and they recycle and reclaim key proteins and ions. This is what we depend on to maintain our homeostasis, the water balance in our body," Dr. McCarthy said.

"In diabetics, this kidney disease process is rather slow. It depends on the person, but usually it takes between 10-25 years. So unlike other kidney diseases, like nephritis, this isn't happening rapidly. With diabetics, it's so sneaky. One of my colleagues calls it an insidious disease because these patients are fine and they don't know something is wrong, and then one day that gradual demise of these filtration units just builds up. You have 1 million of these filtration units per kidney. If you become a diabetic and these units are gradually affected, one by one you start losing them. You may go from 1 million down to 250,000 over 20 years. And then all of a sudden you may go from that 250,000 to 100,000, and then you have issues."

The current award from NIH/NIDDK to the McCarthy lab will fund research exploring the adverse effects that hyperglycemia has on very critical protein-carbohydrate interactions that are known to play an important role in maintaining the integrity of kidney function.

The results of this line of research will ultimately lead to a better understanding of the basic mechanisms by which the kidneys fail as a result of diabetes mellitus and the development of novel therapeutic interventions that could potentially block the development and progression of diabetic nephropathy.

$1.45 Million NIH Grant Examines Sickle Cell Disease

With a $1.45 million grant from the NIH's Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, Dr. Felicity Gavins is investigating the dysfunction of the cerebral microvasculature in sickle cell disease.

In sickle cell disease, a group of inherited red blood cell disorders, cells become hard and sticky and resemble a sickle tool. These red blood cells can't transport enough oxygen, Gavin explained, making these patients very susceptible to vessels becoming blocked, which can lead to heart attacks and strokes.

"We're looking at white blood cells, particularly how the neutrophils in sickle cell disease are different and how they contribute to the increase in inflammation and thrombosis that these patients have," Gavins said of her four-year research project. "A lot of sickle cell patients are very susceptible to having strokes and heart attacks, so my research is looking to be able to target the specific cells, particularly neutrophils, in order to change their phenotype to perhaps protect these patients from having strokes."

Sickle cell disease affects approximately 100,000 Americans, according to the Centers for Disease Control, occurring in one out of every 365 African-American births.

Each year in Louisiana, approximately 80 infants are born with sickle cell disease, with approximately 3,000 children and adults in the state living with sickle cell, according to the Louisiana Department of Health.

In addition to her research, Dr. Gavins, Assistant Professor of Physiology, is actively involved in bringing more awareness to sickle cell disease. She and other faculty members held the Adult Sickle Cell Anemia Symposium at LSU Health Shreveport in August. Gavins also served on the organizing committee for the American Physiological Society's 2017 Conference on Physiological and Pathophysiological Consequences of Sickle Cell Disease, held Nov. 6-8 in Washington, D.C.

NIH Project Looks at Brain Injury Following Cardiac Arrest

Dr. Kevin Lin received a grant for $1,596,156 from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke of the NIH for his five-year project studying cardiopulmonary arrest-induced brain injury.

Cardiac arrest is a major cause of death and disability in the United States, affecting up to 325,000 people each year with only a 10 percent survival rate.

The whole-body ischemia, or restriction in blood supply to meet metabolic demand, following cardiac arrest results in subsequent brain damage leading to neurological deficits. The long-term goal of Dr. Lin's project aims to decrease brain damage by reviving cerebral blood flow and subsequent neurological deficits associated with cardiac arrest.

"Survival rates following cardiac arrest are poor, despite prompt emergency treatment and better resuscitation techniques," said Dr. Lin, Assistant Professor of Neurology, Cellular Biology & Anatomy and Director of the Stroke Center for Research. "With 70,000 patients per year that are resuscitated after cardiac arrest, 60 percent die from extensive brain injury and only 3 to 10 percent are able to resume their former lifestyles. Most neuroprotective trials for cerebral ischemia have been unsuccessful and therefore new interventions are greatly needed. Our goal in this proposal is to understand sympathetic regulation in brain circulation after cardiac arrest in order to lay the foundation for a common therapy and greatly improve the outcome."

His research looks to improve understanding of the mechanisms underlying cardiopulmonary arrest-induced brain injury. "Identifying regulatory factors that influence cerebral blood flow autoregulation and innovative neuroprotective agents in the context of cardiac arrest is paramount in changing patient outcomes," he said.

Dr. Lin will study a new vasotone regulatory mechanism, the release of palmitic acid methyl ester (PAME), a vasodilator and neuroprotectant, derived from the superior cervical ganglion innervating major cerebral arteries. "Our central hypothesis is that protein arginine methyltransferases are the regulatory 'switch' for the methylation of palmitic acid to form palmitic acid methyl ester responsible for vasodilation/neuroprotection during ischemia."

- Dr. Lin received a grant-in-aid from the American Heart Association for $154,000 to explore the therapeutic potential of palmitic acid methyl ester (PAME) against cerebral ischemia.

- Dr. Reggie Lee in the Lin lab is also looking at how to decrease brain injury and memory deficits associated with cardiac arrest (CA). With CA-induced hypoperfusion, the decrease in cerebral blood flow (CBF) as the major cause of brain injury and neurological deficits, uncovering novel therapies to alleviate hypoperfusion is greatly needed. Research has previously identified PAME derived from the sympathetic nervous system causes potent vasodilation and an increase in CBF. The vasodilatory properties of PAME provide a potential therapeutic opportunity in the treatment of CA-induced hypoperfusion. With Lee's post-doctoral fellowship funded by the AHA for $114,368, the project's main purpose is to investigate the impact of PAME on CA-induced hypoperfusion alleviating subsequent brain injury.

Award Supports Collaborative Research Across Louisiana

Nationally recognized researchers from LSU Health will continue to play key roles in addressing health issues that adversely impact the people of Louisiana thanks to a $20 million federal grant to fund the innovative Louisiana Clinical and Translational Science Center (LA CaTS) for another five years.

This funding from the National Institutes of Health is the second competitive grant awarded for this research collaborative among 10 academic institutions across the state. The new award increases the total federal support for LA CaTS to $40 million over 10 years and continues to build Louisiana's research capacity.

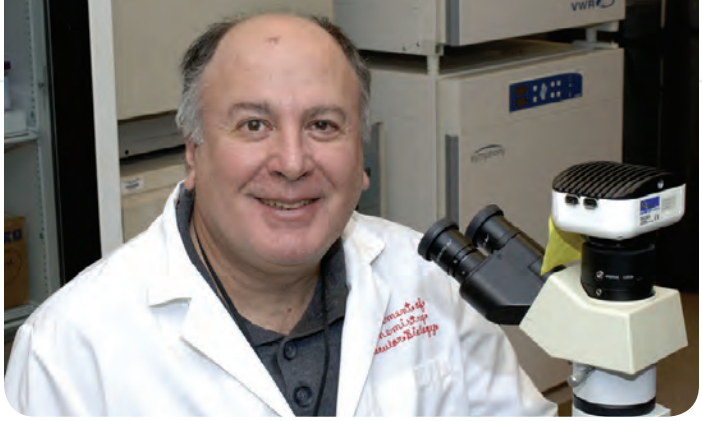
LSU Health faculty will make a significant contribution in this statewide initiative coordinated through the Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge. The health sciences center will be funded for $1,035,255 over the next five years, bringing the total funding for its contributions to LA CaTS to $2,220,372 over a 10-year period.

Drs. Terry Davis and Connie Arnold, Professors of Medicine, serve as site principal investigators. In this role they have implemented health literacy research and education state and nationwide. Their work focuses on enhancing patient understanding and engagement as well as promoting collaborations with rural and inner city clinics.

"LA CaTS provides a novel opportunity for health professionals and researchers across the state to collaborate to conduct truly meaningful clinical research to improve the health and healthcare of Louisiana residents, particularly our most vulnerable populations" Dr. Davis said.

Vice Chancellor for Research Dr. Chris Kevil is the site investigator for the Clinical Research Resources. In that capacity, Dr. Kevil will work closely with other LA CaTS Clinical Trial Units in a collaborative arrangement designed to greatly expand access to the resources required for high-impact research at the health sciences center and other research institutions across the state. "Cross institutional participation in LA CaTS clinical research areas, such as cardiovascular disease, holds great promise to improve the health of all Louisiana citizens," said Dr. Kevil. "The ability to initiate and engage clinical research at LSU Health Shreveport, in conjunction with other Louisiana medical centers, strengthens our ability to impact as many people as possible."

Researcher Looks at Drug's Effect on Prostate Cancer



Dr. Arrigo De Benedetti, Associate Professor of Biochemistry, received $865,785 in funding as part of the Department of Defense's Prostate Cancer Research Program. His project looks at specific inhibitors identified in antipsychotics used to treat schizophrenia patients and how those drugs may slow or prevent the progression of prostate cancer.

"In retrospective studies of male patients who were given these phenothiazine antipsychotics, they found a much lower percentage of prostate cancer," Dr. De Benedetti said.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men after skin cancer, with approximately one in seven diagnosed with the disease, according to the American Cancer Society. It is the third leading cause of cancer deaths in men in the United States, ranking behind lung and colorectal cancers.

Hormone therapy, or androgen deprivation therapy (ADT), is the mainstay treatment for prostate cancer. This therapy reduces the level of male hormones, or androgens, which stimulate the growth of prostate cancer cells. While this is often initially effective in remission of the disease, after a mean time of two to three years, the prostate cancer frequently progresses despite hormonal manipulation, Dr. De Benedetti explained.

"Once that therapy fails, the cancer is androgen-insensitive and eventually that will kill the person," he said. His work looks to repurpose those antipsychotics to improve response to androgen deprivation therapy and prevent the progression to the fatal castrate-resistant prostate cancer.

"Since these are well-tested drugs, if our work is successful, it may not take long to achieve a patient-related outcome with a clinical trial," he said. "Phenothiazine antipsychotics have been used for over 30 years for severe psychotic illnesses for prolonged periods with relatively low side effects."

Support from a previous DOD grant and Bridging Grants through LSU Health Shreveport's Feist-Weiller Cancer Center made it possible for Dr. De Benedetti to advance to this point in his research. "There was so much I could do with my research, but to move forward, it really needed to take the next step, and without the Feist-Weiller funding, I couldn't have done it," he said, also crediting Dr. Stephan Witt, Chairman of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, with helping him secure grant funding.

After this stage in his research, Dr. De Benedetti will apply for the National Institutes of Health Rapid Access to Interventional Development Program, which assists in moving the treatment to clinical trials.

Collaborative Grant Includes Researchers from Three States

Dr. Andrew Yurochko, Professor of Microbiology & Immunology is among a group of human cytomegalovirus researchers across the nation awarded a five-year, $8.9 million collaborative grant to investigate how the virus hides its presence in dormancy until it's ready to activate and pose life-threatening disease risks.

Dr. Yurochko will work with other researchers from the University of Arizona Health Sciences and Oregon Health and Science University to investigate different aspects of the virus-host interaction of the human cytomegalovirus (HCMV), one of nine human herpesviruses. The grant is funded by the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Dr. Yurochko's research will receive $746,715 over five years.

Unlike many virus infections, HCMV infections are forever—they are never cleared by the host, hiding their presence in dormancy. More than half of adults by age 40 have been infected with HCMV and most people infected show no signs or symptoms.

When HCMV is reactivated from dormancy, it poses life-threatening disease risks in immunocompromised individuals, including transplant, AIDS and cancer patients. HCMV infection also is the leading cause of infectious disease-related birth defects, affecting 1 in 150 live births in the United States.

Each of the research teams will look at a different aspect of the virus-host interaction working to understand how the virus manipulates signaling pathways within its host, regulating how a host cell receives and transmits information from the extracellular environment to sense and respond to infection. Their aim is to understand how HCMV can hijack its host's biology allowing it to control its entry into and its exit from dormant and active cycles, a key to its ability to exist in the human host.

"This grant shows the importance of collaborative research as the NIH's Program Project Grant involves virologists in Oregon, Arizona and Louisiana," said Dr. Dennis O'Callaghan, Chairman of Microbiology & Immunology at LSU Health Shreveport. "Virtually all faculty within the department have ongoing collaborations with scientists not only within the same department but with faculty in other departments, such as Physiology, Pediatrics, Pathology, ENT, and with faculty at other universities such as LSU-S, ULM, University of Berlin, Tulane University, Yale University, University of North Carolina, Michigan State University, Iowa State University, and others."

3-D Material Explored for Living Bone Grafts

Dr. Christen Boyer, a postdoctoral fellow, and mentor Dr. Steven Alexander, Professor of Molecular & Cellular Physiology, received the Peter Geistlich Award from the Osteo Science Foundation for $100,000 for their two-year project, "Three-Dimensional Printing of Osteogenic Engineered Networks (OGEN) for Craniomaxillofacial Defects," in collaboration with Dr. Jennifer Woerner, Assistant Professor of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery.

Surgical reconstruction of the face for cancer, cleft palate and birth defects often requires harvesting of bone from a patient's body (like the hip) to provide bone for the facial restoration. The availability of bone using this approach is limited, can be traumatic and carries several complications, especially for pediatric patients. Synthetic materials for bone replacement can be used, but still need to be shaped to fit individual patient anatomies and are not as ideal as living bone.

"At LSU Health, we have developed a three-dimensional printing material called OGEN, or Osteogenic Engineered Networks, which is loaded with nanoparticles and human placental stem cells for use in bone regeneration. OGEN is used in 3-D printing and allows for the creation of custom printed, patient-specific facial implants based on a unique nanoparticle-enhanced stem cell bone regenerative process," Dr. Boyer said. "While we are still validating OGEN materials, we expect we will soon be able to provide patients with custom 3-D printed synthetic living bone grafts at LSU Health."

AHA Fellowship Looks at Atherosclerosis

The American Heart Association awarded Aimee Vozenilek, a graduate assistant in Microbiology & Immunology, $53,688 for her pre-doctoral fellowship taking a closer look at atherosclerosis.

Excess cholesterol in the blood results in its deposit into blood vessels, causing them to harden and narrow. This process, atherosclerosis, is the major cause of catastrophic cardiovascular diseases, such as strokes and heart attacks. One of the immune cells, called a macrophage, tries to remove the cholesterol from the blood vessels by "eating" it. However, for reasons that are not fully known, macrophages respond to excess cholesterol as if it were a pathogen, and these pathogenic responses accelerate atherosclerosis.

"We are studying an enzyme, lipin-1, which is required for managing cholesterol in macrophages. However, exposure to excess cholesterol causes this enzyme to contribute to macrophage pathogenic responses. We showed that mice lacking the lipin-1 enzyme from macrophages have reduced atherosclerosis," Vozenilek said. "My fellowship is focused on understanding how and why lipin-1 contributes to atherosclerosis. By understanding lipin-1 and the pathways that it controls, we can identify targets to develop better therapeutics to treat atherosclerosis."

Grant Examines Effects of H. Pylori in Space

Dr. David McGee, Associate Professor of Microbiology & Immunology, received $35,000 from the Board of Supervisors of LSU and Agricultural and Mechanical College — LaSpace for his project examining the microgravity-mediated effects on *Helicobacter pylori*.

Astronauts in space encounter low gravity or microgravity environments, often for extended periods of time leading them to develop a variety of health issues. They carry microorganisms into space and one of these, *H. pylori*, can cause inflammation of the stomach, ulcers and stomach cancer. How *H. pylori* responds to microgravity and whether this bacterium affects astronaut health in outer space are unknown.

This project focuses on the response of *H. pylori* grown under normal or microgravity conditions to a variety of stresses that the bacterium encounters in the human body. Some stresses that will be investigated include: bile salts, released after a fatty meal into the intestines; acid mimicking stomach acidity; and oxidative stress, a by-product of metabolism. Factors that are known to contribute to disease will also be assessed.

"This proposal addresses an important NASA goal to minimize risk and maximize astronaut safety, as this organism can potentially cause moderate to severe health problems in astronauts in the microgravity environment of outer space," Dr. McGee said.

Research Focuses on HPV-related Cancer

Head & Neck Surgery Fellow Dr. Ameya Asarkar and mentor, Dr. Cherie-Ann Nathan, Professor and Chairman of Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery, received $30,000 from the American Academy of Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery's Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research examining human papillomavirus-positive head and neck cancer.

HPV-associated oropharyngeal squamous cell cancer (OSCC) is a growing epidemic in the young population, projected to surpass HPV-associated cervical cancer by 2020. HPV-positive OSCC patients exhibit a significantly better prognosis compared to HPV-negative OSCC. However, 30 percent of HPV-positive patients still see a recurrence, especially in the HPV-positive smoking population.

Current treatment regimens for head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) include a combination of surgery and radiation therapy with or without chemotherapy. Chemotherapeutic agents such as cisplatin, have high rates of acute and long-term adverse effects including difficulty in swallowing, dryness of mouth, inflammation of the oral mucosa and potential damage to the kidneys. "There is a dire need to find effective and less toxic agents which can target these cancers at the molecular level," Dr. Asarkar said.

Preliminary data from Dr. Nathan's lab has shown PIK3CA, an important gene responsible for normal growth and function of cells, was considerably altered while p53, a tumor suppressor gene, was mutated in only 5 percent of HPV-positive smokers. PIK3CA alterations contribute to the aberrant activation of PI3K/Akt/mTOR pathway rendering selective inhibitors of this pathway a promising therapeutic option in HPV-positive OSCC. "Studies proposed in our research project will provide a strong rationale for development of PI3K/mTOR specific inhibitors as effective radio-sensitizers for HPV-positive oropharynx cancer patients improving their functional outcomes while maintaining high cure rates," Dr. Asarkar said.

Generous Donations Provide Campus Beautification

Medical students enjoy the new gathering space, part of a campus beautification project supported by generous donors.

Significant landscaping enhancements in many areas of the LSU Health Shreveport campus were completed this fall. The $100,000 campus beautification project was envisioned in 2014 and generously supported by donors in the community. It serves to enhance the exterior of the campus, reflecting the amazing achievements and discoveries that happen inside our buildings.

Visitors to LSU Health Shreveport are greeted by renewed flower beds at the Kings Highway entrance and newly planted trees along Jennings Street and Woodrow Street. There have also been significant drainage and irrigation improvements and the installation of a new outdoor gathering space which is available to all. Thank you to the many donors who made these enhancements possible.

ALUMNA ESTABLISHES SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT

The Martin Endowed Scholarship for Medical Students was established in 2017 by Dr. Cindy M. Martin, a graduate of LSU Health Shreveport's School of Medicine, in honor of her parents, Sandra and Jerry Martin.

The Martin Scholarship is the first student scholarship endowment to be established by an alumnus/alumna and will benefit incoming medical students from rural communities in North Louisiana. Born in the small community of Ashland, Louisiana, Dr. Martin is passionate about investing in the future of young people from small towns and providing them with opportunity and encouragement, just as her parents did for her. The scholarship is intended to help defray the cost of Louisiana resident tuition and fees for the four years of medical school.

Dr. Martin received her MD at LSU Health Shreveport in 1998. At the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, she completed her residency, general cardiology fellowship, advanced heart failure and transplantation fellowship, and a formal three-year postdoctoral research fellowship in molecular cardiology. She is an Associate Professor of Medicine, Section Head of Advanced Heart Failure, Transplantation and Mechanical Circulatory Support, and Co-Director of the Adult Congenital and Cardiovascular Genetics Center in the Cardiovascular Division at the University of Minnesota Health Sciences.

Dr. Linda Nall, Dr. Celso Palmieri, Jr., Louisiana Board of Regents Congressional District #5 Representative Wilbert Pryor, Dr. Suzanne Tinsley, Dr. Paul Cooper, and LSU Health Sciences Foundation President Kevin Flood at Sept. 28's reception honoring newly endowed professorships at LSU Health.

PROFESSORSHIP RECIPIENTS HONORED

LSU Health Sciences Foundation celebrated four Louisiana Board of Regents-matched endowed professorships and the faculty members holding those professorships at a reception on Sept. 28 at LSU Health Shreveport.

The faculty members honored were:

- **Suzanne Tinsley**, PhD, PT, NCS, as the Charles Richard Parks Professor in Neurological Rehabilitation
- **Paul Danner Cooper,** MD, as the Clarence H. Webb, MD, Professor in Pediatrics
- **Celso Palmieri, Jr.,** DDS, as the Dudley R. Isom, DDS, Professor in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- **Linda Nall,** MD, as the Medical Center Clinics Professor in Radiology

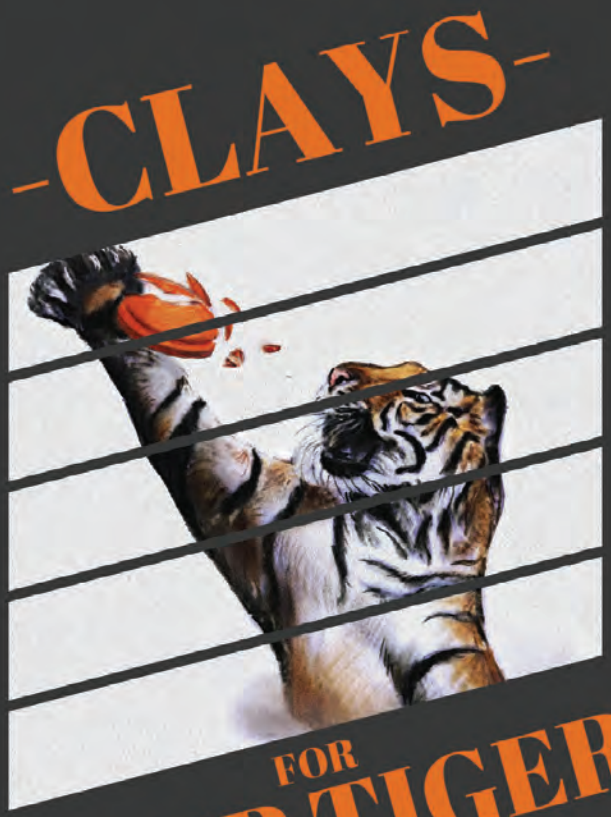
"Endowed chairs and professorships are among the highest honors that can be bestowed on a faculty member," said Kevin Flood, President of the LSU Health Sciences Foundation. "Their purpose is twofold – to provide recognition of our best and brightest and to provide crucial funding for the holder's work or to support an academic department's specific needs."

The Endowed Professorships Program helps recruit and retain superior faculty members at Louisiana institutions by pairing a private-sector gift with a Board of Regents award. LSU Health Shreveport has 55 endowed chairs and professorships that were created with more than $7 million in Board of Regents matching funds.

Dr. Jane Eggerstedt presents Dr. Linda Nall with her medal.

Chancellor G.E. Ghali with honorees.

Clays for Camp Tiger volunteers at the Shreveport Gun Club on Oct. 21.



The Third Annual Clays for Camp Tiger fundraiser was held on Oct. 21 at the Shreveport Gun Club. The event raised more than $20,000 for Camp Tiger, a weeklong camp offered entirely free of charge to children ages 5-18 with physical and mental challenges.

The skeet shooting tournament is the largest fundraiser for the camp, which was started in Shreveport in 2000. With camp activities including visits to Gators and Friends, Sci-Port Discovery Center, the Robinson Film Center and more, the cost per child is approximately $700. Community support at fundraisers like Clays for Camp Tiger make it possible for those costs to be covered for the campers' families.

Camp Tiger is organized by medical students who gain valuable healthcare experience by working with children with special needs. The camp involves months of planning beyond fundraising events, including identifying sponsors, selecting and scheduling activities, securing charter bus transportation, and arranging meals. With a counselor-to-camper ratio of two-to-one, every child receives focused attention throughout camp activities.

Visit camptigershreveport.com for more on the camp or to make a donation. Applications for the 2018 Camp Tiger will be available on the website in January. Spots are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Dr. David DeSha, Professor of Cellular Biology & Anatomy, and Dr. Timothy Hart, Class of 1973 alumnus, at the event. Medical student Seth Fruge takes aims during the skeet shoot and later visits with past Camp Tiger camper Loren McClelland.

Dr. Evelyn Scarborough, PT, DPT, (right) demonstrates the Vector Harness System with patient Samantha "JoJo" Sims.

BACK ON HER FEET

JoJo Sims' boyfriend, Stephen Martin, sits at her bedside after one of her procedures. Complications from a blood patch following a spinal tap formed a cyst that left her unable to walk and without feeling in her legs.

Allied Health Therapists Move Patient Past Paralysis after Spinal Cord Injury

When Samantha "JoJo" Sims started experiencing symptoms common in spinal meningitis, including headaches, a stiff neck and back aches, little did she know that trying to rule out the condition would lead her on the most challenging journey of her life. One that would break her down physically before leading her to the School of Allied Health Professions Rehabilitation Clinic, where therapists would help her find strength — both physical and emotional.

In November of 2015, JoJo had a spinal tap to test for meningitis. She has a pre-existing brain aneurysm that was diagnosed at age 6, and so her doctor feared the symptoms were either from a ruptured aneurysm or meningitis. The results from the spinal tap didn't show meningitis and her aneurysm appeared stable, but following the procedure, JoJo began experiencing debilitating headaches that left her bed-ridden for three days. With headaches being a common side effect following a spinal tap, her doctor recommended JoJo get an epidural blood patch — a surgical procedure that uses the patient's blood to close a hole in the spinal cord following a lumbar puncture, relieving the headaches. But the procedure led to more complications.

"I was told to go home and lie down for 24 hours, so I did. Whenever I got up, I noticed that my right knee down was numb, so I called my mom and she called my neurologist who said that was probably just a side effect, but that if it gets worse to let her know," JoJo said about the day her life forever changed. "Later on that night, my whole right side from my belly button down went numb. My mom came over, and at first I was laughing about it, because my leg felt like it weighed a thousand pounds and I was walking around dragging it. Since my neurologist said it was just a side effect, I wasn't freaking out yet. A few hours later I was watching a movie with my boyfriend, and when I stood up, I just fell. I was completely numb from the belly button down."

JoJo's mother, Lisa Sims, came with her daughter to every rehabilitation appointment at the Allied Health clinic.

ABOVE: JoJo visits with Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy Marie Vazquez Morgan, PT, PhD, and Clinical Instructor Evelyn Scarborough, PT, DPT, at the Allied Health clinic. TOP LEFT: JoJo has a slight misstep while trying to step over an obstacle while walking on the Vector System during a therapy session. BOTTOM LEFT: JoJo celebrates when Dr. Scarborough takes away her last walking pole, having her walk without assistance on the Vector System.

The next morning, the neurologist called JoJo's mom, Lisa Sims, and told her to take her daughter to see LSU Health Shreveport doctors at University Health Shreveport. When she saw Dr. Alireza Minagar, Professor and Department Chairman of Neurology, that's when JoJo realized the severity of the situation.

"Dr. Minagar brought his team in, and they were testing my legs, but whenever they got to scraping the bottom of my feet and nothing reacted, that's when he looked at his team and said 'This is our most important patient of the day.' And that's when I realized this was serious."

An MRI revealed a cyst caused from the blood patch. She would later be diagnosed in Houston with cauda equina syndrome, a serious neurologic condition in which damage to the cauda equina, a bundle of spinal nerves, causes loss of function of the nerve roots of the spinal canal below the termination of the spinal cord.

"JoJo had just celebrated her 21st birthday, and a week later, life as we knew it was over," Lisa said of the devastating news of her daughter's paralysis.

Doctors decided that another spinal cord procedure was too risky. "There's no cure for this, and every doctor told me I wouldn't walk again. Some of them would say it in a nicer way, like 'I don't want to tell you you're not going to walk again, but it's very slim chances.' And one doctor said if I could even move my legs again, it would be two to five years before that was even possible. This was not supposed to happen," JoJo said while walking around the Allied Health clinic.

After a month at an inpatient rehabilitation facility, a chance conversation set JoJo on the path to conquering the impossible. Lisa Sims didn't want to leave her daughter's side at the rehab facility for a long-scheduled doctor's appointment with her OB-GYN, but her husband insisted that he could stay with JoJo so Lisa could make the visit.

But it was a mother-to-mother conversation during that appointment with Dr. Catherine Vanderloos, not doctor-to-patient, that gave JoJo's family the "miracle" they needed. After Lisa shared her daughter's medical complications, Dr. Vanderloos advised Lisa to look into the neurological rehab at Allied Health.

"She said, 'The second she's discharged, tell them that you're going to Allied Health and go see Evelyn Scarborough'," Lisa recalled. "At the time I didn't know that she was referring my daughter to her daughter — I just knew she was a highly recommended therapist that was into neurology."

"For patients like JoJo, recovering the ability to walk takes time, and here at Allied Health, we're willing to put in that time. A lot of places will give a patient 12 weeks, and after that they'll say the patient can't get any better.

We're very aggressive here. If we are making progress, we keep the patient and we're going to finish the job that a lot of the places aren't willing to do," explained Dr. Evelyn Scarborough, who worked with JoJo for more than a year and half, along with Dr. Marie Vazquez Morgan and other physical therapists and trainees. "Anywhere else and JoJo may have been discharged from therapy on a walker, and that would have been horrible. We keep patients for as long as they need to be in therapy and as long as they're progressing."

Lisa said from the first visit to the Allied Health clinic, "The therapists saw more than what was diagnosed on paper. They saw the need and the drive and determination that JoJo had, even the hope against all odds. They treated JoJo as much more than a patient."

That hope was the first thing that the therapists at Allied Health restored to JoJo. "During inpatient therapy, I really had no hope," she said. "Coming to outpatient at Allied Health changed that. The first day Evelyn put me on the Vector System, after walking on that thing, I left here thinking, 'I will walk again. I don't care what the doctors tell me'."

Dr. Vazquez Morgan explained, "We don't treat the diagnosis. We treat the impairment. As we worked with JoJo and she continued to become stronger, we weren't treating whatever diagnosis they thought it was. We were treating the weakness in her legs, which was getting better. And the fact that she was getting better and we were cleared to do e-stimulation, we knew we had to hit it hard, and she did phenomenally well. Since we just treat the impairment, JoJo's progress just encouraged us to keep going stronger, because it was only going to make her better."

The dedication of the Allied Health therapists, combined with the state-of-the-art equipment at the facility, assisted JoJo in slowly building up her strength. With sessions three times a week, the therapists used the Bioness electrical stimulation system and the Vector Harness System to take JoJo's recovery day by day and step by step.

"The Bioness assisted the muscles in the right way, not only strengthening them with electrical stimulation but also in the right order for walking. We call that motor control. You have to retrain the brain by doing a lot of repetitions. So we had to do a lot of walking with JoJo," Dr. Scarbourough explained. "We would put her in the Vector System with the Bioness — we used everything at our disposal — and started with a walker. At first, she could only go very short distances before she was just too tired to do any more. And then we just progressed from there, so we moved her from a walker to hiking poles, then to one hiking pole, and then eventually she was doing several laps on the Vector without any assisted device. Then we took her off the Vector and started working on the track without a harness."

Dr. Scarborough explained the Vector allows patients to move around on all plains, which is more effective than trying to teach someone to walk again on a treadmill or in a pool. With those treatments, "the brain doesn't get the same input and feelings that you can fall in any direction. The Vector stimulates faster recovery because the brain has to learn faster, so having this equipment really allowed us to get recovery faster. Instead of spending my time making sure JoJo's not going to fall, I can stand back and watch how she's walking and give her verbal feedback that helps us work together as a team."

Read more about JoJo's recovery on her Facebook page, Through JoJo's Journey.

After making great strides in her recovery, Drs. Scarborough and Vazquez Morgan worked with JoJo in setting personal goals for her progress. Those goals included getting back to running and going back to work part-time — before the injury, she worked full-time in a dental office in addition to serving as a nanny to two young girls. Dr. Vazquez Morgan said it's those little things, like working out with JoJo to encourage her to enter a 5K and teaching her how to walk in heels again for a formal wedding, that amounts to recovering true function in her life.

JoJo's journey to walking again was an emotional one for her and her family. "The first time JoJo learned to walk when she was little, those first steps are so miraculous and you just want to share it with everyone. I watched her learn to walk twice in my lifetime. As a mother, that was so emotional knowing that I was not supposed to watch her learn how to walk twice or learn how to drive twice," Lisa said. "All the firsts I had with her when she was a baby, it was like they were all recreated — like maybe I didn't embrace them enough the first go round. Now I have these new firsts, but they're of her as a 21-year-old. She never once complained. We never counted all of our losses that came with this injury, we just kept counting all of our gains."

While JoJo still does not have any sensation in her legs from the knees down, she has been fully discharged and has returned to work and even started a new business, Little Red Writing Wood, making decorative wooden signs — a task that requires a lot of physical strength.

"I don't take anything for granted anymore. During this journey, I learned to love myself again," JoJo said through tears. "The therapists at the Allied Health clinic gave me my life back. Without coming here, I would still be in a wheelchair. I would have given up. I'm very thankful for this place."

Class Notes

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
CLASS OF 1987

Benjamin Close practices at Louisiana Allergy & Asthma Specialists in Alexandria, Louisiana. He and his wife Mimi have been married for 34 years and have three adult children. During free time, the family enjoys trail biking, traveling and LSU football.

Bryan Demarie worked at Ochsner until 2000, and then moved to a small private practice in Dallas, Texas. His practice grew from 3 to 300 and became USMD, now a division of Optum Health. His Internal Medicine practice and his position as Medical Director of SeniorCare and Population Health keep his days busy. Bryan is active in a local free clinic and is looking forward to 'retirement' when he can volunteer full time. He and Jody are celebrating 25 years together. They enjoy camping in cooler temperatures with their dog, Jo, as much as possible. They count themselves blessed to have most of their siblings, nieces and nephews, as well as parents, in Texas.

Nita Harris is currently practicing non-invasive Cardiology at DaVita Medical Group in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Nita is actively involved in her community and is currently the president of the Southern Colorado Chapter of the American Heart Association. For 19 years, she has been married to Brad, who works in IT for a company called Travelport. They have one son who will begin college next year. Together they enjoy traveling and have "miles to go before we sleep!"

Thomas Lacour is in private practice now after spending several years at Parkland Memorial and UT Southwestern Medical School following his residency in Anesthesiology. He and his wife Becky live in Dallas, Texas.

Gary Manuel has been in private practice as an OB-GYN in Alexandria, Louisiana for 26 years. He is married to Shelley and has two sons and a stepdaughter. His passions are golfing, duck hunting and spending time with his family.

David McManus has practiced full-time Emergency Medicine in Lafayette, Louisiana since 1990. He has enjoyed 38 years of marriage to Sheila. Together they have raised five children and are now blessed with two granddaughters.

John Roberts is currently Medical Director at the Pavilion Treatment Center in Mills Springs, North Carolina. He also serves as Clinical Assistant Professor at USC Medical School in Greenville, South Carolina and Assistant Professor at the Medical University of South Carolina. He has been recognized as the PGY-2 Teacher of the Year and received the Golden Apple Award for third year medical student psychiatry clerkship. Outside of his medical practice, he is the lead singer for "Psychodynamics", The World's Only All Psychiatrist Rock and Roll Band and "17 South", a corporate/wedding party band, and is active in Community Theater at Dock Street Theatre in Charleston, South Carolina.

Kathleen Lacour Rosson recently retired from academic medicine at UHC in Lafayette, Louisiana. Prior to her retirement, Kathleen was program director for LSUNO's Family Medicine residency in Lafayette. Her husband, Jody practices Pulmonary/Critical Care Medicine in Lafayette and contributes to residency education. They have four children. Kathleen's days are filled with caring for her family and her disabled 79-year-old mother.

Dean Smith and **Christine Zaffater Smith** live in El Paso, Texas. Dean has his own orthopedic spine practice, El Paso Spine Center. Christine works in a private general pediatric practice, Westwind Pediatric Clinic, also in El Paso. They have four grown children — the oldest, Melissa, graduated from LSU Health Shreveport's School of Medicine in May 2016.

David Vining is a diagnostic radiologist in Houston, Texas building his second medical software company, VisionSR. He and his fiancé, Mary Mercer, plan to wed in 2018. He enjoys keeping up with his four daughters, playing tennis and sailing.

CLASS OF 1990

Emily Fontenot Marcinkowski completed her General Surgery Residency at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill followed by a Complex Surgical Oncology Fellowship at the City of Hope National Cancer Center in Duarte, California. She currently serves as Assistant Professor of Surgery at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. She married Tim in 2014.

CLASS OF 1997

Sharye Atchison has been in private practice at Mid-City Pediatrics in Shreveport since finishing her Pediatric Residency at LSU Health Shreveport. She and husband **Steve Atchison** (MD, 1991) have been happily married for 25 years and have four children. Steve is an orthopedic surgeon at Orthopedic Specialists of Louisiana.

Kelly Carlisle is the Chief Hospitalist at Highland Hospital for Sound Physicians and serves as System Medical Director for the Sound programs in Louisiana. Her husband of 15 years, Brian, owns an architectural and industrial salvage business in town. Kelly has two stepchildren and a son.

Monica Haynes is a pediatrician with Portico Pediatrics in Shreveport, Louisiana. She has been married to **John Haynes** (MD, 1994) for 18 years and they have three children.

Wendy Moreland resides in Huntsville, Alabama with her husband Richard and two daughters. She completed a fellowship in hematopathology at Tulane in 2012 and is a partner at a large pathology private practice in Huntsville where she specializes in hematopathology. Richard teaches physics, pre-calculus, and engineering at Westminster Christian Academy.

Nathan Morris is currently a certified functional medicine practitioner who specializes in complex diseases and serves as Chief Medical Advisor for Pure Encapsulations. He is also a developer of PureGenomics.com and an Associate Professor at Wright State University in the Department of Family Medicine.

Chris Sockrider and **Stephanie Sockrider** (MD, 2001) live and practice in Shreveport, Louisiana. They are both in private practice — Chris as a breast surgeon and Stephanie as an OB-GYN. They have four sons.

Steen Trawick spent four years in private practice in med/peds at Highland Clinic in Shreveport, after which, he left to become a hospitalist, working at CHRISTUS Schumpert and CHRISTUS Highland until 2013. In 2014, he began working as a Regional Medical Director for Sound Physicians caring for CHRISTUS Louisiana Hospitals. Now, he is an Associate Chief Medical Officer for Sound Physicians, caring for only CHRISTUS hospitals. Steen has been married to Ronda Free, from Shreveport, for 17 years and they have two children. In the last 10 years, Steen has completed 13 marathons. He and his family enjoy traveling and spending time at the lake.

CLASS OF 1998

Fr. H. Dale Meade completed his Family Medicine Residency in Alexandria, Louisiana and taught for that same residency program until December 2004. He practiced at Sicily Island Medical Center in Sicily Island, Louisiana until August 2009 when he received his Master of Arts degree in Dogmatic Theology from Holy Apostles College and Seminary. He went on to complete philosophy studies at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio in 2011, completing his requirements for the Master of Divinity degree from the same institution in 2015, and was ordained a priest of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Alexandria in 2015. He is currently serving as Pastoral Administrator of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Winnsboro, Louisiana along with its mission of St. John's in Columbia, Louisiana.

CLASS OF 2007

Paul Aucoin finished his Anesthesiology residency at University of Texas at Houston in 2011. After which, he moved to Baton Rouge and joined Anesthesiology Group Associates. He has been a partner in the group for three years. He and his wife, Lindsey, got married shortly before graduation and now have four children.

Catherine Harris Boston completed her Pediatric residency at Yale and Pediatric Oncology fellowship at MD Anderson. She has

Fall Alumni Reunion events were held Oct. 6-7 honoring the Classes of 1987 (top left), 1997 (top right) and 2007 (below).

been employed at St. Jude Affiliate Baton Rouge for the last four years where she also conducts leukemia research on a St. Baldrick's grant. Her husband, Van, is a Houston firefighter on the technical rescue team. She enjoys to sing in her spare time.

Wyche T. Coleman III completed a residency in Ophthalmology at LSU Shreveport and practices at Willis-Knighton Eye Institute specializing in cataract and refractive surgery. Wyche is also involved with the LSU Department of Ophthalmology teaching cataract surgery to residents. He is active in aviation and owns and operates a flight school and aircraft management company at the Shreveport Downtown Airport, Tubreaux Aviation. He is married to **Renee Schwartzenburg Coleman** (PA, 2010) and they have two sons.

Michael Do completed his General Surgery Residency at the Oschner Clinic Foundation in 2013 followed by a fellowship in Vascular Surgery at the University of Tennessee in Memphis in 2015. Since then, he and his wife, **Penny Dupre** (MD, 2008), have been living in Mobile, Alabama with their two sons.

Carey Guidry is a Radiologist with Radiology Consultants in Little Rock, Arkansas. He and his wife, Beth, have been married for five years and have two sons. The family enjoys being outdoors, especially spending time at the lake together.

Jason Hatfield completed his residency in Family Medicine in 2010. He has been in private practice since, the last five years in Opelousas, Louisiana. He and wife **Allison Hatfield** (MD, 2009), a Pediatrician, currently reside in Washington, Louisiana with their three children.

Alicia Kober has been married to Michael for 14 years. She is a Pediatrician with Ochsner in Baton Rouge, Louisiana where she has been practicing for the last seven years. They have two daughters, who along with their three dogs, one cat, and one horse, keep her quite occupied.

Ryan Menard obtained his Degree of Fellow from the American Academy of Family Physicians (FAAFP) in 2014 and his Masters of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Texas in Tyler in 2015. He serves as the Associate Program Director for the Family Medicine Residency Program in Tyler, Texas and is Clinic Director of the Family Health Center, UTHSCT. In 2016, Ryan obtained Associate Professor of Family Medicine academic promotion status in 2016. He and his wife, Melinda, have three children.

Jeremiah Newsom completed his residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, followed by a VA Quality Scholars Fellowship Program at the Birmingham VA and graduated with an MSPH degree from the UAB School of Public Health in 2012. He joined Ochsner Health System in New Orleans in July 2012 as a staff hospitalist. Jeremiah is an Assistant Program Director and organizes the Morbidity, Mortality and Improvement Conference for the Internal Medicine Residency Program. He serves as a course co-director for the annual Southern Hospital Medicine conference. In August 2014, he became the Section Head for Hospital Medicine and started the employed hospitalist program at OMC-Kenner in August 2014. In 2016, he was elected to Fellowship in the American College of Physicians. He and his wife, Marion, welcomed their daughter in February 2015.

Patrick Walker is a board-certified Family Medicine physician who has practiced with Our Lady of the Lake Physician Group since 2013. He lives in Baton Rouge with his wife, Erin, and their three children and dog.

Lesley Walsh is a Senior Physician at Ochsner in New Orleans. In addition to practicing Pain Management, she is also the Medical Director of the Functional Restoration Program. She is married to David, and they have one son together. They enjoy spending time at the beach and watching their son experience new things!

SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS CLASS OF 2007

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

Ashley N. Fort serves as an Assistant Professor and Academic Coordinator for the Physician Assistant Program LSU Health Shreveport. She worked as a physician assistant in Family Medicine for 10 years and has been teaching full-time for more than three years. She has been married to Jarrod Chaffold for the past eight years. They have two children — Kwalen, a fifth-grader who loves reading and robotics, and Kylee, who enjoys being the "boss" and the family princess.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST MEGAN LEBLANC SHARES WHY SHE'S #UpstateProud

Megan LeBlanc with professor and mentor Gretchen Reeks and classmates during August's commencement ceremonies. OPPOSITE PAGE: Megan at her workplace, High Hope Care Center in Sulphur.

"I LOVE THIS SCHOOL AND EVERYTHING THAT IT HAS GIVEN ME."

When Megan LeBlanc began exploring Occupational Therapy programs following her graduation from McNeese State University, she was looking for more than a school — she was looking for a home.

The Erath native loved the community atmosphere she experienced as an undergrad and was looking for a place that spoke to her in the same way. "The moment I walked through the doors for my information session, I felt it: that feeling of home. It was a wonderful atmosphere with true, genuine smiling faces that wanted to get to know 'little, ole me.' They wanted to know who I was, where I was from, and what made me love the profession I was pursuing, Occupational Therapy. I traveled to other school systems for information sessions, and I just never felt that true sense of home the way I felt it at the School of Allied Health Professions at LSU Health Shreveport."

Allied Health students, faculty, staff, patients and alumni have been sharing the benefits found by those who "Geaux Up State" to LSU Health Shreveport. Megan, who graduated in August 2017, joins them in singing the schools praises.

"Being an occupational therapy student at LSU Health had many benefits," she said, including an entire semester exploring anatomy with access to a cadaver lab. "In the world of rehabilitation, understanding the way the human body is made and the way it works is critical to rehabilitating a patient. The knowledge and experience I gained during my semester in cadaver lab will forever be ingrained in my mind."

Megan said she was also grateful for the experience she and her classmates received practicing their interviewing and treatment skills in the School of Medicine's simulation rooms before working in the field, as well as the many clinical experiences available for students to pursue.

"LSU Health uniquely prepared me, as well as my classmates, for our careers by allowing us to complete our clinical rotations in various settings in locations around the nation," she said.

For Megan, those rotations included work at TIRR Memorial Hermann in Houston, Texas; Our Lady of the Lake in Baton Rouge; The Transitional Learning Center in Galveston, Texas; and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Those who worked with Megan during her rotations praised her skills. "I have worked with more than 100 interns in my career, and Megan was in the top five percent. Her knowledge and ability to use therapeutic use of self are second to none," said Tamra Trenary, OTD, OTR/L, BCPR, Clinical Education Coordinator of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the Mayo Clinic. "Megan demonstrated the ability to evaluate, treat, and progress complex medical patients. "

Tamra was so impressed with Megan's skills that she recommended that Allied Health faculty honor Megan with a student award. "She has an innate gift to work with elderly patients. Her inspiration was working with patients, and her passion fueled her motivation."

Gretchen Reeks, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, couldn't have agreed more with Tamra's assessment of Megan's skills.

"You cannot imagine the excitement we feel as faculty when we have a clinical site contact us to say that one of our students has surpassed all expectations they have set at that fieldwork site," said Reeks, who presented Megan with the honor for Outstanding Student Performance in Occupational Therapy during commencement activities.

The experience Megan gained through the School of Allied Health Professions made finding a job "a breeze," she said, adding that selecting which position she wanted was the most difficult task she faced.

"I was offered a job mid-way through my second clinical rotation, which was about two months prior to my graduation," she said. "Although some job openings wanted applicants to have working experience, I was easily able to communicate my hands-on training during my time as a student at LSU Health Shreveport. Many recruiters and interviewers were impressed that a smaller school in North Louisiana was able to send me to all these big name locations for rotations."

Ultimately Megan's gift for working with elderly patients led to her current position at High Hope Care Center & Rehabilitation, where she works in a nursing home and skilled nursing facility.

"These experiences throughout my graduate degree shaped me into the Occupational Therapist I am today. Although I still have so much room to grow, which I believe every clinician does, I believe through this experience I've become a well-rounded Occupational Therapist. At LSU Health in Shreveport, you're getting so much more than just a Master's in Occupational Therapy — this program also comes with experience that will last a lifetime and professors that truly become family. All of my professors have become so much more than just teachers, they became mentors, friends, and finally colleagues. I know that if I ever needed advice on my practice as a clinician, I could easily call any one of them up and we could talk for hours about the profession," she said. "I love this school and everything that it has given me!"

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

FREE SERIES HELPS COMMUNITY LAUNCH STARTUPS

LSU Health Shreveport's Office of Sponsored Programs & Technology Transfer offered "The Business of Science," a free bioentrepreneurism seminar series, to the community this fall.

"Shreveport has long been a nationally recognized hub for research and innovation, and this series exposed scientists and innovators to the tools of entrepreneurship and successful commercialization," said Annella Nelson, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research Development at LSU Health.

The 10-week series was held on Thursdays from Sept. 14 through Nov. 9, with a wrap-up discussion panel on Nov. 30. Guest speakers with expertise in their fields discussed a variety of topics guiding participants in the steps to starting a successful science-based entrepreneurial endeavor. Topics included forming and licensing intellectual property, market and financial analysis, legal preparation, business plans, raising capital and more.

John H. Chidlow Jr., PhD, Co-founder and CEO of Innolyzer Labs, LLC. served as a guest speaker during Business of Science series.

"The series strived to equip attendees with the knowledge of where to begin, where to look for further resources, and how to take that important first step," Nelson said.

Series organizers included Charles Holoubek, patent attorney with Davis & Bujold Intellectual Property Law Firm, and John Chidlow, PhD, Co-founder and CEO of Innolyzer Labs, LLC. Holoubek is a frequent lecturer and author on patent, trademark, copyright, and other intellectual property issues, and he has been actively involved with the Louisiana Startup Prize. Chidlow's Innolyzer, a privately-held company specializing in the development and commercialization of innovative analytics for a broad array of industries, won the Louisiana Startup Prize in 2015. He was named the 2016 Young Professional of the Year by the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce's Young Professional Initiative of Northwest Louisiana.

"Startups face constant challenges and many of them are catch-22s. In the earliest stages, simultaneously bringing together data for finances, projections, markets, and other aspects while licensing patents, and finding the money to pay for it is challenging. Over time the challenges change, but they are always there," Chidlow said. "Product development and bringing a product to market offer their own unique scenarios. This series was designed to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with a checklist that can be utilized to avoid pitfalls, delays and unnecessary costs along the way."

"Our expectation is that between now and next year, a number of our participants will have started a new biotech company and will have used what they learned in this course to help be successful," Holoubek added. "According to recent research, new businesses, or startups, account for substantially all of the net job growth in our economy. This is something we want locally too. So we as a community, for the economic health and prosperity of the community, need to encourage and empower the assets we have – human, financial, and technical – to go and create. That is the future of Shreveport."

LARYNGOLOGIST'S STARTUP A FINALIST IN COMPETITION

SpheroFill, a biotechnology startup founded by Dr. Paul Weinberger, Director of LSU Health Shreveport's Center for Voice, Airway and Swallowing, was named one of the finalists in the 2017 Louisiana Startup Prize. His company is developing a novel injectable tissue filler for use in the larynx to treat common age-related vocal cord atrophy and vocal cord paralysis due to injury and disease.

Dr. Weinberger, Associate Professor of Otolaryngology, is exploring ways to partner with local biomedical expertise in the state to bring this technology to clinical use, starting with applications in laryngeal surgery and eventually cancer treatment as a novel way to deliver chemotherapy in a sustained release, controlled both in location and in time.

DOCTORS AMONG FIRST IN STATE TO IMPLANT MICRA PACEMAKERS

LSU Health Shreveport doctors implanted their first leadless pacemakers at partner hospital University Health in July. The procedures in Shreveport were among the first in Louisiana.

In April 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the Micra Transcatheter Pacing System, the first pacemaker that does not require the use of wired leads to provide an electrical connection between the pulse-generating device and the heart. This self-contained device is approximately one inch-long, about the size of a pill capsule and one-tenth the size of traditional pacemakers. This pacemaker is implanted directly in the right ventricle chamber of the heart.

Two patients — Juanita Bui of Minden and Barbara Crochet of Monroe — were the first to receive the Micra device at UH. As the smallest pacemaker available, the device is inserted by catheter, typically through the thigh, directly into the heart. Traditional pacemakers sit outside the heart, with a pulse generator on the left shoulder with wires that run into the heart.

Assistant Professor of Medicine and Director of Cardiac Electrophysiology Dr. Paari Dominic said recovery time and complications are greatly reduced with the leadless pacemaker versus the traditional device — especially for ideal candidates like 73-year-old Crochet, whose sinus node, the heart's natural pacemaker, would stop beating for 10-15 seconds, causing her to get dizzy and pass out. With the device addressing the abnormal heart rhythm, she was able to undergo rehabilitation following a stroke.

Micra pacemaker (right) compared to traditional pacemaker device

"If a patient gets a regular pacemaker, they can't use the left arm for about four weeks, which means rehab is going to be prolonged," Dr. Dominic said, explaining the device doesn't limit rehab or other activity because the pacemaker is directly lodged into the heart.

He said the device was also more beneficial for 71-year-old Bui, who receives dialysis three times a week, leaving her shoulder free from a traditional device in case doctors need to run a dialysis port for her continued care.

Dr. Dominic explained regular pacemakers also run the risk of infection in the leads when a patient has bacteria in their bloodstream and that risk is reduced with the new devices. When infection sets in the leads of the regular pacemaker, everything has to be removed.

"They are very easy to implant and very difficult to get infected, so it actually makes it a great choice for older patients," he said of the Micra devices. "It has lower complication rates, especially in older women. The usual pacemaker wires are inserted in the apex of the heart, which is the tip of the heart, and usually in older patients the tip of the heart is very thin, so you perforate the heart sooner. The new ones that we put in are actually lodged in the septum, which is a much thicker portion in older patients and has less complications and perforation risks."

Dr. Dominic said an additional 10 devices have been implanted in patients since July with positive outcomes.

Campus Federal representatives Brent Paddie (left), Branch Manager in the hospital location, and Andrea McKnight (right), Business Development Officer, offered their support to Chancellor G.E. Ghali and LSU Health at the Employee Service & Excellence Awards.

CAMPUS FEDERAL OFFERS SUPPORT

Campus Federal continued its long-standing relationship with LSU Health Shreveport by supporting this year's Employee Service & Excellence Awards with door prize gifts and a $1,000 gift.

Campus Federal was established in 1934 by seven LSU employees. Today, Campus Federal has grown to serve more than 50,000 consumer and business members with nine branches throughout Baton Rouge, New Orleans and Shreveport.

"We are a progressive financial organization providing consumer and business solutions including Residency and Education Loans, Online and Mobile Banking, and more. We help members throughout all life stages with competitive financial products and services coupled with personal member service," said Marketing Manager Connie Hernandez. "At Campus Federal, we strive to make a difference in our members' lives and support community efforts and events. Our mission of 'people helping people' is the guiding force behind our everyday service."

Those associated with LSU Health are eligible to join Campus Federal and access its benefits. To learn more, visit www.campusfederal.org, write to email@campusfederal.org or call 1-888-769-8841.

Parents Bryan Bridwell and Charlie Jo Wilson visit newborn son, Jason, in the NICU in March.

PEDIATRICS TEAM DIAGNOSES RARE GENETIC DISORDER

The Pediatrics team at LSU Health Shreveport is uniquely qualified in diagnosing rare conditions, so when an OB-GYN in Monroe noticed some anomalies in an ultrasound of pregnant mother Charlie Jo Wilson, she was referred to Dr. Arun Pramanik, Professor of Pediatrics specializing in neonatal and perinatal medicine.

"An average doctor or specialist could have easily missed this very rare diagnosis," Dr. Pramanik said of the infant's condition, Acrocallosal Syndrome, Schinzel Type (ACS). With access to detailed 3-D imaging, Dr. Pramanik noticed the baby boy showed an abnormal brain structure, absent the corpus callosum, the thick fiber which joins the two cerebral hemispheres. The infant, who also presented with fused toes, is only the 27th case of this rare syndrome since it was first documented in 1979. "We went back to the National Institutes of Health's rare disease database and we found that the child met three out of the four criteria for the disease, confirming the diagnosis 100 percent."

Understanding the rare genetic mutation that causes ACS is beneficial to the parents not only in caring for the child, but also in the knowledge that the mother has a one-in-four chance of having another child with the condition in subsequent pregnancies, Dr. Pramanik explained. ACS can also cause spontaneous abortion, and there is no blood test that can reveal this condition during pregnancy. The parents, Charlie Jo and Bryan Bridwell, have a daughter who is healthy.

Dr. Pramanik's team is working to connect the family to the NIH's Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center to further study ACS.

JOHNSON APPOINTED TO EXAMINERS BOARD

Dr. Lester W. Johnson, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs-Monroe, was appointed to the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners by Gov. John Bel Edwards in July. Nominated by the Louisiana State Medical Society, Johnson serves as the board's rural representative. The Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners protects the health, welfare, and safety of Louisiana residents against the unprofessional, improper and unauthorized practice of medicine by ensuring that those who practice medicine and other allied health professions under its jurisdiction are qualified and competent. In addition, the board serves in an advisory capacity to the public and the state with respect to the practice of medicine. As a board certified surgeon, Johnson serves as a Professor of Clinical Surgery at LSU Health Shreveport and Chief of Surgery and Director of Surgical Services at LSU Health's partner hospital in Monroe.

SAMRA INDUCTED AS ACS FELLOW

Dr. Navdeep Samra, Associate Professor and Assistant Program Director of Surgery, was inducted as a Fellow in the American College of Surgeons during the ACS Conference held in San Diego, California in October. The designation as a Fellow is granted to surgeons whose education and training, professional qualifications, surgical competence, and ethical conduct have passed a rigorous evaluation process meeting the high standards established by ACS.

POWELL RECEIVES COPPING AWARD

Dr. Tom Powell, Professor of Communication Disorders in the School of Allied Health Professions, received the Allen A. Copping Excellence in Teaching Award in August.

Graduate student Christopher C. Nguyen (right) presented his work at the International Herpesvirus Workshop in Ghent, Belgium in August. He is pictured with Dr. Gang Li, a former postdoctoral fellow in the Kamil lab who also attended the meeting.

STUDENT PRESENTS RESEARCH AT INTERNATIONAL MEETING

Christopher C. Nguyen, a senior doctoral student, was invited to present his research at the International Herpesvirus Workshop as both an oral presentation and a poster. Held in Ghent, Belgium in August, the conference is the premier international meeting on the basic science aspects of herpesvirus biology, which includes the underpinnings for many clinical therapies and interventions.

Chris works with Dr. Jeremy P. Kamil, Associate Professor of Microbiology & Immunology, on the viral factors that determine the host range of human cytomegalovirus (HCMV). As a student member of the Center for Molecular and Tumor Virology, Chris supports Dr. Kamil's NIH-funded research.

"It is not common for a student to be given an oral presentation. With abstracts ranked by world experts, it is an honor that Chris' abstract was selected for an oral presentation. Indeed, many established investigators submit abstracts that are not chosen for talks. Dr. Dennis O'Callaghan and myself are very proud of Chris," Dr. Kamil said.

Chris gave a 15-minute presentation on his work, "The HCMV Tropism Modulator UL148 Interacts with SEL1L, a Cellular Factor Essential for ER-associated Degradation of Glycoprotein O during Infection."

MINI MED SET FOR MARCH

LSU Health Shreveport will open its doors to the community at Mini Med School, with sessions kicking off on March 6, 2018. During this four-week program, held from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through March 27, faculty members will discuss interesting health topics and offer participants hands-on activities and demonstrations that healthcare professionals receive during their training. Cost is $40 for first-time participants, which includes a white lab coat and all four sessions. The fee for returning Mini Med alums is $20. Register online at www.lsuhealthminimed.com.

IN MEMORIAM

MARGARET CARMOUCHE passed away Aug. 8 at age 71. Mrs. Carmouche earned her Master's Degree in Speech Language Pathology from LSU Health Shreveport as a member of the first class. She served for many years in the Caddo Parish School District and after her retirement continued in her field working in private homes, hospitals and nursing homes, specializing in traumatic brain injuries. Margaret was a member of Speech Pathologists and Audiologists in Louisiana Schools.

REID WINSLOW CHADWICK , a fourth-year medical student, passed away on Oct. 21 at age 26. Before attending LSU Health Shreveport, Reid graduated Cum Laude from Rhodes College in 2013. He was a compassionate student and colleague, and an ardent learner known for his kindness and generosity of spirit.

THE REID CHADWICK MEMORIAL AWARD

The Reid Chadwick Memorial Award has been established by The Chadwick Family Foundation to annually recognize a fourth-year medical student who has exhibited evidence of conducting research in addiction medicine, shown leadership in raising awareness or funding for addiction disease, or made definitive plans to specialize in addiction medicine. The $10,000 cash award may be presented to a single student or multiple students as determined by a selection committee. For more details on the Reid Chadwick Memorial Award, go to lsuhsfoundation.org.

DR. CHARLES "CHAD" HARGON JR. passed away on July 13. The LSU alumnus studied medicine at LSU Health Shreveport, where he also completed his Internal Medicine and Pediatrics residency and a fellowship in Hematology and Oncology. He was an active member of Alpha Omega Alpha. The dedicated husband and father was known as a friend to all, beloved by his patients as a caring and empathetic physician. All who knew him say his work was one of his greatest passions, showing love for every patient by spending time with them and praying with them.

THE CHARLES G. HARGON, JR. MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Charles G. Hargon, Jr., MD Memorial Scholarship has been established by Sigma Chi Fraternity, Gamma Iota Chapter, 1988-89. Fundraising for the scholarship continues with a goal of raising a minimum of $25,000 to establish an endowed scholarship. An endowed scholarship will allow Chad's legacy as a gifted and devoted physician to be remembered in perpetuity. The scholarship criteria is currently under development but will include strong consideration of those who mirror Chad's zeal and love of Christ. To make a donation, visit lsuhsfoundation.org.

DR. FLETCHER S. SUTTON JR. passed away on Nov. 1 at age 75. A graduate of LSU Health School of Medicine in New Orleans, Dr. Sutton was a dedicated physician and teacher. He served as a faculty member at LSU Health Shreveport from 1993-2005.

FACULTY HONORS

William Byrd, MD, Associate Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology, was named Chairman of Ophthalmology in August.

Norman Harris, PhD, Professor of Molecular & Cellular Physiology, was named Interim Chairman of Molecular & Cellular Physiology in November.

Christopher Kevil, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Research, was named Dean of the School of Graduate Studies in August.

Jay Marion, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, was named Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in May.

Kevin McCarthy, PhD, Professor of Cellular Biology & Anatomy, was named Chairman of Cellular Biology & Anatomy in August.

Wayne Orr, PhD, Professor of Pathology, Physiology, Cellular Biology & Anatomy, was named Director of the Center for Cardiovascular Diseases and Sciences in August.

John T. Owings, MD, Professor of Surgery and Director of Trauma Services and Chief of Trauma and Critical Care, was named Chairman of Surgery in September.

Sandra Roerig, PhD, Associate Dean of Research and Professor of Pharmacology, Toxicology & Neuroscience, was named Associate Dean of Graduate Education in August.

Brian Willis, MD, was named Interim Chairman of Neurosurgery in October.

Stephan Witt, PhD, Professor of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, was named Chairman of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology in August.

NEW FACULTY

Muzammil Aziz, MD, Assistant Professor, Surgery
Brennan A. Bernard, PhD, Clinical Instructor, Physical Therapy
Kamel Brakta, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Surgery
Matthew Burroughs, JD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Administration
Amy M. Creel, PhD, Clinical Instructor, Child & Family Services
Julie P. Chun, MD, Clinical Instructor, Family Medicine
Ashtaad H. Dalal, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Neurology
Jillian N. Danzy, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Cardiopulmonary Science
Narendra Duddyala, MD, Assistant Professor, Medicine-Cardiology
Megan K. Flavin, PhD, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Physical Therapy
Ashley B. Flowers, MD, Assistant Professor, Pathology
Haidy I. Galous, Clinical Instructor, Arthritis & Rheumatology
Dana A. Graham (masters), Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Neurosurgery
Janis J. Gulick, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, EA Conway
Nicholas Allen Harris, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Surgery
Donald K. Haynes, MD, Clinical Professor, Family Medicine
Scott E. Henry, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, EA Conway
Vijayakumar Javalkar, MD, Assistant Professor-Clinical, Neurology
Tucker L. Kifer, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Neurosurgery
Amanda R. Kirby, Instructor, Occupational Therapy
Bhavani Kura, MD, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Neurosurgery
Elizabeth M. Lafitte, PhD, Clinical Instructor, Medicine-General Internal
Stephanie H. Ledoux, PA, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Orthopaedics
Tu-Chinh Linda LeDuc, MD, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Medicine-General Internal
Clarke D. Lilley, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Anesthesiology
Susan B. Lobrano, MD, Assistant Professor-Clinical, Emergency Medicine
James David Lowder, DDS, Clinical Assistant Professor, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
Patrick A. Massey, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Orthopaedics
Samip R. Master, MD, Assistant Professor-Clinical, Feist-Weiller Cancer Center
Erin Nicole Madara McCallister, PhD, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Physical Therapy
Vijayashree Mekala, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Medicine, Infectious Disease
Juan J. Mercado, MD, Assistant Professor, Pathology
Bakhtiar K. Mohamad Amin, MD, Assistant Professor, Medicine-Nephrology
Usman Mustafa, MD, Assistant Professor, Medicine-General Internal
Puja H. Nambiar, MD, Assistant Professor-Clinical, Medicine-Infectious Disease
Paras M. Patel, MD, Assistant Professor, Medicine, Pulmonary & Critical Care
Jayson D. Rodriguez, MD, Assistant Professor, Neurology
Mila D. Shah-Bruce, MD, Assistant Professor-Clinical, Obstetrics & Gynecology
Shashank S. Singh, MD, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Medicine-General Internal
Nancy S. Silverblatt, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Psychiatry
John G. Singleterry, MD, Instructor-Clinical Specialist, Anesthesiology
Jennifer G. Smith, PhD, Clinical Instructor, Medicine-General Internal
Giovanni F. Solitro, PhD, Assistant Professors, Orthopaedics
Ashley A. Sommerhalder, MD, Clinical Instructor, Family Medicine
LaTashia C. Upton, MD, Assistant Professor-Clinical, Obstetrics & Gynecology
Stephanie L. Villalba, Instructor-Research, Cellular Biology & Anatomy
Glenn M. Waguespack, Clinical Instructor, Communication Disorders
Gina L. Wilson, MD, Assistant Professor-Clinical, Radiology
William R. Wise, MD, Clinical Instructor, Family Medicine

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

1 Students and faculty with the School of Allied Health Professions volunteered at a health fair in October.

2 Dr. Neil Granger (far right) was honored by family, friends and colleagues during his retirement reception on Oct. 25, including (left to right) Chancellor Dr. G.E. Ghali; Vice Chancellor for Research Dr. Chris Kevil; Dr. Norman Harris, Interim Chairman of Molecular & Cellular Physiology; and Dr. Dennis O'Callaghan, Chairman of Microbiology & Immunology.

3 U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy, MD, visited with students, faculty and residents on Aug. 29. He discussed "Hepatitis C and the Government's Role in Funding of Public Health."

4 Kameron Hobley, a student at Caddo Magnet High School, explains his research during the Jumpstart Summer Enrichment Program poster session on July 28. Coordinated by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, this eight-week program gives students an opportunity to work in a research laboratory, conducting hands-on experiments and gaining valuable insight about the medical field.

5 Dr. Navdeep Samra, Associate Professor of Surgery, was one of the guests at the All Y'all live storytelling event on Aug. 26.

6 Dr. Jennifer Singh, Assistant Professor of Physician Assistant, spoke at the September meeting of the LSU Health Women's Club.

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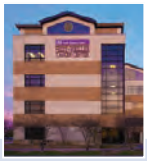

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