A NEW VOICE

Laryngologist Boosts Specialized Care in Region
Life at LSU Health Sciences Center-Shreveport remains invigorating as each day brings new opportunities, exciting news of student and faculty accomplishments, and, yes, the continued challenge of earning the income required for our health sciences center to prosper. I am committed to educating interested parties on the action required to ensure that LSUHSC-Shreveport remains an indispensable component of our region’s economy and healthcare delivery.

First, the health sciences center must seize every opportunity to increase our clinical services in order to strengthen our bottom line. Currently, we earn over 50 percent of the income required to cover the cost of our three professional schools. With the status of our state’s budget, we remain steadfast in seeking ways to secure funds outside the state of Louisiana. That being said, we will always work to secure every possible dollar from the state as we are a proven provider of cutting edge healthcare, outstanding medical education and innovative research.

Secondly, we must grow our research enterprise. We are making significant strides in that regard. Since July 1, 2016, we have been awarded over $10 million in new research grants, strengthened our research infrastructure and have seen significant acceleration in technology initiatives.

And last but not least, we need more philanthropic support. While it is heartwarming to hear business leaders and patients state the importance of our health sciences center, we need that talk to translate to stronger individual and corporate support. Our LSU Health Sciences Foundation (www.lsuhsfoundation.org) stands ready to facilitate gifts to fund our priority needs, as well as gifts in support of specific areas of interest. “Thank you” to those who supported our annual fundraiser, An Evening for Healers, on May 4. A special thanks to Susan Moffitt who chaired the event and did a spectacular job.

We are, indeed, fortunate to have an academic health sciences center in a community the size of Shreveport-Bossier. I am counting on each of you to give your best effort and gifts as we work together to protect and support LSUHSC-Shreveport, a true community treasure.

Sincerely,

G.E. Ghali, DDS MD FACS FRCS(Ed)
Chancellor & Dean
A girl from Brazil and two brothers from Gaza traveled across the world to receive life-saving surgeries in Shreveport. Doctors with LSU Health’s Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, along with other medical professionals in the area, answered the call to provide the highly specialized care unavailable to these children in their home countries. Physicians involved in the children’s care donated their services, and Willis-Knighton Health System provided housing and covered all medical expenses.

**MELYSSA BRAGA**

Dr. Celso Palmieri, Associate Professor of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, was reading a news site from his native country of Brazil when he came across a young family’s plea to find treatment options for their daughter. He sent the picture of 3-year-old Melyssa Braga to Chancellor Dr. G.E. Ghali asking if their department could help, and in less than a month, the girl was ready for surgery to remove a rare myxoma tumor.

“This is typically a benign tumor, non-cancerous, but it’s very locally aggressive,” Dr. Ghali explained. “This tumor had pretty much eaten away her entire jaw from one side to the other and had displaced her tongue.”

Unable to eat very well, Melyssa was rapidly becoming malnourished and would have soon needed a feeding tube. She also struggled to breathe, with the displaced tongue blocking the airway.

“When we were able to remove this tumor, the tumor weighed over five pounds on a child that probably doesn’t weigh more than 25 pounds herself, total weight,” Dr. Ghali said. “I am grateful for everything the doctors here have been able to do for my daughter and in only a short month,” said Melyssa’s father, Manasses Braga.

**FARID & QOSSAY SALLOUT**

Brothers Farid, 6, and Qossay Sallout, 8, were born with nearly identical craniofacial disorders — orbital hypertelorism, or wide-spaced eyes, rare clefting conditions with nasal structural issues, and a posterior cranial defect with a portion of the skull missing — and little hope for treatment. “They tried sending them to a doctor there, and they said there was no surgery or anything they could do for them,” the boys’ grandmother, Hajjar Abusilmi, said on the lack of care available in Gaza.

The Palestine Children’s Relief Fund stepped in to help. This nonprofit humanitarian organization committed to aiding children in the Middle East funded travel to the United States for the brothers with their grandmother as their accompanying guardian. Farid’s procedures were in 2016, with his brother’s surgeries a year later.

“Both boys had this butterfly-shaped open spot in their skulls where there was no bone, only brain underneath,” Dr. Jason Dashow, a cleft and craniofacial surgery fellow, explained the life-threatening skull deformity after Qossay’s surgery in May. “Being an active little boy, if anything were to hit that, it basically would just have to go through skin and then it’s in the brain. Where the rest of us have a casing, he didn’t have that in a large area. Now there is bone placed across that area that will grow in, just like his brother. When they’re playing games and they get bumped in the back of the head, like any kid does, they’re now protected.”

While the family believed the deformities could have been the result of the mother being exposed to tear gas, a geneticist who examined Farid said it is more likely a genetic mutation carried through the family chromosomes.

“I want to thank God and all the doctors that helped with these surgeries and the supporting staff that helped with their care,” Hajjar said. And that care may have had another life-changing effect on Qossay, who says he wants to be a doctor when he grows up.
Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the world, with more than 85 million Americans living with some form of the disease or the after-effects of stroke. Atherosclerosis, plaque buildup in the artery walls, is the most common cause of heart attacks, strokes and peripheral artery disease, accounting for 80 percent of all cardiovascular disease-related deaths. Four grants totaling nearly $3 million dollars will allow LSU Health researchers to further explore different aspects of the disease.

Collectively, the research of Dr. Wayne Orr, Dr. Matthew Woolard and Alexandra Finney examines the main cell types that are involved in atherosclerosis. “Atherosclerosis is caused by the ratio of good and bad cholesterol, but as with most diseases, it’s almost always more complex than that,” said Dr. Woolard. “The truth is atherosclerosis is an inflammatory disease – it’s our immune system gone awry.”

Understanding more about the cells that line blood vessels could be key in discovering new therapies for heart disease. With a four-year grant from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the NIH for $1.45 million, Dr. Orr’s research examines how these endothelial cells become activated to express pro-inflammatory proteins during plaque formation. Normally, endothelial lining works to maintain healthy vessels, but cholesterol buildup causes the lining to stimulate macrophages, white blood cells that specialize in clearing unwanted material from tissue. However, modification of the cholesterol causes the macrophages to accumulate too much, giving them a foamy appearance. Progressive accumulation of cholesterol and these “foam cells” contributes to the growth of the plaque, which can eventually impede blood flow or cause a blood clot to form in the artery.

“Our work focuses on endothelial cell interactions with the extracellular matrix, the proteins that make up the scaffolding of the blood vessel. We have found that during atherosclerosis, endothelial cells deposit certain matrix proteins associated with tissue remodeling and wound healing, which subsequently causes the endothelial cells to be hyper-responsive to a variety of pro-inflammatory stimuli,” Orr explained. “With this grant, we will characterize how endothelial cells interact with these matrix proteins, assess how this matrix promotes endothelial pro-inflammatory responses, and test whether blocking the interaction between the endothelial cells and this wound-associated matrix reduces the formation of atherosclerotic plaques.”

With his four-year grant for $1.45 million from NHLBI, Dr. Woolard is taking a closer look at macrophages. “Normally, macrophages are supposed to do is get rid of that bad cholesterol for us, but for reasons we don’t understand, the macrophage decides instead of just getting rid of the bad cholesterol, it needs to treat the bad cholesterol like a pathogen.”

When too much cholesterol is present, the macrophages must find a way to store it by creating internal storage structures called lipid droplets. An enzyme, lipin-1, is supposed to help with proper storage, but instead it tells the macrophage to produce more of this fibrous tissue. “As the plaque within your arteries begins to develop and enlarge with fats and macrophages, another cell type called a smooth muscle cell will also accumulate in the plaque. In addition to dividing and contributing to plaque size, smooth muscle cells also deposit a lot of fibrous tissue which changes the composition of the plaque,” she said. “What we have found is that the EphA2 receptor is highly expressed in these smooth muscle cells within the plaque, and this expression is what leads cells to divide more as well as put down more of this fibrous tissue.” Her project examines why EphA2, an oncogene found in many types of cancers, becomes expressed in this cell and how it contributes to atherosclerosis – knowledge that could lead to new drug developments targeting EphA2.

“Despite widely available treatments to combat plaque build-up, not all individuals respond favorably,” Woolard said on the need for alternate intervention. “For example, many people are unaffected by statin therapy and have no alternative means for treatment. People who receive a stent to open their vessels are often at risk for the vessel to thicken and become blocked again.”

The three researchers recently collaborated with other faculty members from the Center for Cardiovascular Diseases and Sciences on a groundbreaking study that was published in Circulation, the top journal for cardiovascular disease and research published by the American Heart Association. The study, focusing on an Alexander’s protein of interest, found that when EphA2 was removed plaques were smaller and they had less of the smooth muscle cells present in advanced atherosclerosis. Others from LSU Health Shreveport who contributed to the project included Dr. Steven Funk, Jonette Green, Dr. Anf Yuradagul Jr., Dr. Mohammad Atif Rana, Dr. Rebecca Pistorius, Miriam Henry, Dr. Andrew Yurochko, Dr. Christopher Pattillo, Dr. James Trayler and Dr. Christopher Kevil.

Researchers Bring in $2.98 Million in Grants to Study Atherosclerosis
Human papillomavirus (HPV) induces more than 5 percent of all human cancers, which include all cervical and a subset of oral cancers. Curiously, only a small subset of known HPV types induces tumor formation, and it is unclear why due to a lack of models to study the low-risk HPVs. In addition, immediate early events of the HPV life cycle and their deregulation in cancers are incompletely understood.

With a five-year grant for $1,658,440 from NIH’s National Cancer Institute, Dr. Martin Sapp will take closer look at those early events in HPV. With a newly developed cell culture model system, Dr. Sapp, Mingyu Ding Memorial Professor of Microbiology, will be able to study the immediate early events of low- and high-risk HPV side by side. For the first time, this will help to identify the manipulations of the host cell by the virus that lead to cancer development.

Ultimately, these studies will aid in the identification of new drug targets and treatment options. The project began in June and will continue through May 2022.

Grant Funds Research for Prostate Cancer

With a two-year grant for $145,000 from NIH’s National Cancer Institute, Dr. Kuping Yu will study neuroendocrine prostate cancer (PCa), which is also called prostate small cell carcinoma. Although primary prostate small cell carcinoma is rare, neuroendocrine differentiation in PCa is common after failure of androgen deprivation therapy, occurring in 40-100 percent of advanced stage PCa. With the use of new anti-androgens and drugs that block androgen synthesis in prostate, the “therapy-induced” progression to neuroendocrine PCa is seen in 25-50 percent of the patients.

Currently, there is no effective treatment for PCa with prominent neuroendocrine differentiation. Understanding the mechanisms that drive neuroendocrine differentiation of PCa will help identity potential therapeutic targets for the treatment of “therapy-induced” neuroendocrine PCa.

In this study, Dr. Yu, Assistant Professor of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, will examine the roles of EZH2 in neuroendocrine differentiation of PCa. The project will also test if blocking EZH2 offers a treatment option for neuroendocrine PCa. The information obtained from this research will provide guidance in determining whether targeting Polycomb proteins is a feasible approach for the treatment of neuroendocrine PCa.

Project Studies Alcoholism

Dr. Hugh Nam, Assistant Professor of Pharmacology, Toxicology & Neuroscience, received a one-year grant for $50,000 to study signaling receptors involved in alcoholism. Adenosine signaling in the brain has been implicated in the pathophysiology of psychiatric disorders including alcoholism. Adenosine A2A receptor (A2AR) is exclusively expressed in the midbrain, which plays an essential role in drug reward and goal-oriented behaviors. Funded by the Biomedical Research Foundation of Northwest Louisiana and The Biomedical Research Foundation Seed Funding Program, Dr. Nam’s project will study the molecular mechanism of A2AR related to alcohol tolerance and goal-oriented alcohol seeking behavior using state-of-the-art molecular techniques. The results of the study will demonstrate the causal relationship between alcohol preference and alcoholism, which may be used to develop new pharmacological targets to treat and/or prevent alcoholism. Moreover, since caffeine is one of the most commonly consumed drugs, this study will help to understand the role of caffeine in alcoholism development.

Hypertension Focus of Study

Hypertension is an increasing health concern in the United States, and African Americans are at a higher risk for hypertension, develop hypertension at an accelerated rate, and are more likely to have uncontrolled hypertension in spite of treatment. The molecular mechanisms that are responsible for these differences in hypertension pathogenesis among ethnic groups remain unclear.

A two-year project led by Assistant Professor of Cellular Biology & Anatomy Dr. David Kryzwanik will examine if ethnic variation in mitochondrial function and increased reactive oxygen species (ROS) production contribute to hypertension by inhibiting vascular relaxation and promoting blood vessel remodeling. The research, funded for $50,000 by the Louisiana Clinical and Translational Science Center and the health sciences center, will determine if circulating blood cells can be used to assess ethnic differences in mitochondrial function and ROS production in patient populations and if a pro-oxidative mitochondrial phenotype is associated with hypertension. Data will provide the first assessment of how ethnic variation in mitochondrial function may affect mitochondrial redox phenotypes in clinically relevant-par characteristics and will provide important insights into the mechanisms that underlie ethnic differences in hypertension susceptibility.

Study Looks at Epstein-Barr

Dr. Martin Muggeridge, Associate Professor of Microbiology & Immunology, recently began a new project on Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), which causes infectious mononucleosis and is associated with several kinds of cancer. The research started as a pilot project of the NIH-funded Center for Molecular and Tumor Virology at LSU Health Shreveport, led by Dr. Dennis O’Callaghan, and will now be independently funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, with a two-year award totaling $145,000.

EBV is a herpesvirus and is related to herpesvirus simplex virus (HSV), which causes cold sores and genital herpes, and to human cytomegalovirus (HCMV), which can cause blindness and severe birth defects. The research focuses on the complex mechanism that the virus uses to enter cells to begin an infection, particularly in the way in which two virus proteins cooperate to fuse the virus and cell together. The goal is to gain sufficient knowledge about this process so that it can be used as a target for the development of drugs for treating or preventing infections. Different herpesviruses cause different diseases, but they share some fundamental properties. With that in mind, Dr. Muggeridge is hopeful that his research will lay the groundwork for the development of drugs not only for EBV infections but also for the severe diseases caused by HCMV.

$1.65 Million Grant from NIH Allows Closer Study of HPV

Human papillomaviruses (HPVs) induce more than 5 percent of all human cancers, which include all cervical and a subset of oral cancers. Curiously, only a small subset of known HPV types induces tumor formation and it is unclear why due to a lack of models to study the low-risk HPVs. In addition, immediate early events of the HPV life cycle and their deregulation in cancers are incompletely understood.

With a five-year grant for $1,658,440 from NIH’s National Cancer Institute, Dr. Martin Sapp will take a closer look at those early events in HPV. With a newly developed cell culture model system, Dr. Sapp, Mingyu Ding Memorial Professor of Microbiology, will be able to study the immediate early events of low- and high-risk HPV side by side. For the first time, this will help to identify the manipulations of the host cell by the virus that lead to cancer development.

Ultimately, these studies will aid in the identification of new drug targets and treatment options. The project began in June and will continue through May 2022.
In December 2016 the Medical Center Clinics, Inc. donated $1.2 million to establish a permanent endowment to bolster graduate medical education at LSU Health Shreveport’s School of Medicine. It is the largest gift received by LSU Health Shreveport in support of residency training and will provide vital funding for the 29 resident and fellowship training programs now and into the future.

The Medical Center Clinics was formed in 1968 by a group of 11 leading local physicians, all members of the visiting staff of Confederate Memorial Medical Center, later known as LSU Medical Center. The founders were: Samuel D. Cummins, MD (Pathology), Edwin E. Dilworth, MD (OB/GYN), Edgar Hull, MD (Internal Medicine), Dudley R. Isom, DDS (Oral Surgery), Charles D. Knight, Sr., MD (Surgery), Erich K. Lang, MD (Radiology), Thomas A. Norris, Jr. MD (Orthopaedics), Bert E. Trichel, MD (Urology), Herbert D. Tucker, MD (Cardiology), Clarence H. Webb, MD (Pediatrics), J. Woodfin Wilson, MD (Internal Medicine), Mr. Harry R. Nelson (General Council) and Mr. Daniel L. Butler (CPA).

Its sole purpose was to receive and donate funds to support resident training programs at LSU School of Medicine. Several of the founding members served on the “Study Committee for the Development of a Medical School in Shreveport” and were integral to bringing medical education to North Louisiana. Since its creation, the Medical Center Clinics has provided grants to various residency programs at LSU Health Shreveport.

In addition to the $1.2 million endowment, the group has fully funded six endowed professorships and has committed to fund three additional professorships all in support of the departmental residency programs represented by the original members. “This endowment will be a lasting legacy to the physicians who formed the group,” said Chancellor Dr. G.E. Ghali.

“It has been our honor and pleasure to help carry on the work of our founding members. Our goal has always been to help the LSU Medical School provide the best educational experience for its residents. After supporting individual programs over the years, our board chose to make a gift that would provide a permanent funding source to benefit the school’s entire resident education program. We are excited to see the many new opportunities this gift will afford our residents,” said Dr. Jerard R. Martin, President of the Medical Center Clinics.

These endowments continue to be critical resources to some of our most excellent faculty, residents and students. The funds are lasting tributes to the commitment of Medical Center Clinics to LSU Health Shreveport and to the legacy of these great physician leaders.

The current members of the Medical Center Clinics Board are Dr. James Batte (Oral Surgery), Dr. W. Douglas King (OB/GYN), Dr. Gordon M. Mead (Orthopaedics), Dr. Jerard R. Martin (Pathology), Dr. F. Dean Griffen (Surgery), Dr. Stanley J. Smith (Urology), and Dr. Paul S. Wilson (Internal Medicine).

J. WOODFIN WILSON, MD Professorship in Internal Medicine continues to support one of the largest Continuing Medical Education Events at LSU Health Shreveport, The Intensive Review of Internal Medicine.

B.E. TRICHEL, MD Professorship provides for continuing education and review opportunities, visits, lectures, and resource materials in the Department of Urology.

CHARLES D. KNIGHT, MD Professorship in General Surgery enhances quality, hypothesis-driven research resulting in valuable research opportunities and publications.

W.R. MATHEWS, MD Professorship in Pathology supports visiting lectures, research and educational opportunities and is a critical funding source for the annual W.R. Mathews Lectureship.

E. EARLE DILWORTH, MD Professorship in Obstetrics and Gynecology encourages outstanding performance by OB/GYN faculty and residents.

THOMAS NORRIS, MD Professorship strengthens resident education in the Department of Orthopaedics.

ENDOWMENTS HONOR GREAT LEGACIES
INSIDE LSU HEALTH SHREVEPORT

An Evening for Healers

Faculty, residents and students were honored Map 4 for their lifesaving and life-changing care of two patients — Ray Snow, who was brought back from the brink of death following a head-on collision, and Christian Starks, a newborn given a fighting chance at life after his emergency delivery. Drs. Jennifer Woerner, Russ Brunelsite, Nadejda Samos and John Owings headed a list of 60 heroes and healers from LSU Health, University Health, Willis-Knighton, and the Shreveport Police and Fire Departments who were honored for their roles in saving their lives. Retired dean Dr. Ike Muslow and community-leader Donald Zadeck received a standing ovation as they accepted honors as the 2017 Community Heroes. Susan Moffitt served as chair of the event, which was emceed by Shreveport Chief Administrative Officer Brian Crawford.

It was the seventh year for An Evening for Healers, with more than $1.5 million cumulatively raised for LSU Health Shreveport from the events. The LSU Health Sciences Foundation sponsors the event, made possible by donors. Watch the dramatic video stories at youtube.com/lsuhscshreveport under the “Evening for Healers” playlist.

PARKS ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIP SUPPORTS NEUROLOGICAL REHAB

LSU Health Shreveport received a $100,000 gift from Charles Richard Parks of Menden to create an endowed professorship within its physical therapy program in the School of Allied Health Professions. The Charles Richard Parks Endowed Professorship in Neurological Rehabilitation enhances the program’s patient care, education and research efforts.

Neurological Rehabilitation is a physical therapy specialty that focuses on improving the quality of life of a patient who has sustained a brain injury such as a stroke or traumatic accident or other nervous system insult. Mr. Parks, who experienced a stroke several years ago, is a patient at LSU Health Shreveport’s Allied Health Rehabilitation Clinic. He was so impressed with the clinic staff’s commitment to helping patients recover that he wanted to support their work.

“I witnessed every day the hard work and dedication of our faculty and patients. Mr. Parks certainly can be counted among those dedicated individuals. We are grateful that he has chosen to support our work in this way,” said Dr. Joseph McCullah, Dean of the School of Allied Health Professions.

Dr. Suzanne Tinsley, Associate Professor of Physical Therapy, was selected as the first holder of the Parks Endowed Professorship. “Dr. Tinsley leads our efforts in the Neurological Rehabilitation program, and this is a testament to her skill as a healthcare provider, teacher and researcher,” McCullah said.

Dr. Tinsley received her Master’s in Physical Therapy from Texas Woman’s University in 1986 and her PhD in Neuropsychology from LSU Health Sciences Center-Shreveport in 1999. She is a Board Certified Clinical Specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy. Dr. Tinsley will use the Parks Endowed Professorship to advance treatment of neurologically impaired patients, enhance the education of physical therapy neuro residents, and support clinical research efforts through the purchase of assistive technology and state-of-the-art equipment.

“I made this gift out of gratitude for the care and support I’ve received from LSU Health’s Allied Health rehab clinic. The clinic is a special place with special people,” said Mr. Parks. “Throughout the years, the physical therapists, especially Dr. Suzanne Tinsley, have never given up on me. My hope is that this professorship will support their important work for many years to come and ultimately help other people like me.”

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Willis-Knighton Health System
Lindsay & John Atkins
CHRISTUS Health Shreveport-Bossier
Dr. Horacio & Linda D’Agostino, LUBAD
Dr. Destin R. Black & Dr. Jason Lustig
Morris & Dickson Co., LLC
MST Consulting
Rehab Services of Louisiana
Riverbend Rehabilitation
The Tokem Family & Tokem Toyota
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Zadeck
Drs. Jennifer Woerner, Nadejda Samos & John Owings
The Moffitt Family, Moffitt Volkswagen Porsche Audi & Manda
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Zadeck
Judy & Chris Kinsey
The Moffitt Family, Moffitt Volkswagen Porsche Audi & Manda
View Complete List of Sponsors at www.lsuhfoundation.org/healersponsors

Dr. Ike Muslow and Dr. Steven Conrad

Dr. Steven Conrad named the first holder of the Ike Muslow Endowed Chair in Healthcare Informatics in February.

The $1 million chair in honor of retired Dean Dr. Ike Muslow was created through private donations of $650,000 matched by $400,000 by the Louisiana Board of Regents.

“An Endowed Chair in the name of Dr. Muslow honors a person whose fingerprints are intertwined throughout every aspect of our campus and have left their mark on alumni all across our nation. His skills as an administrator and a teacher may never be rivaled,” said LSU Health Shreveport Chancellor and Dean Dr. G.E. Ghali.

Dr. Muslow served as Dean of the School of Medicine from 1979 to 1981, from 1990 to 1995, and again from 1996 until his retirement in 2000. Among his significant achievements was the construction of the Burn and Trauma Unit that evolved into today’s Level I Trauma Center, as well as the establishment of the LSU Health Sciences Foundation.

Dr. Ghali added that there was no one more fitting for the chair holder than Dr. Conrad. “Without question, Dr. Conrad emulates the work ethic, love of research, and excellence in teaching for which Dr. Muslow is so well known.”

With more than 30 years of service as a member of the LSU Health Shreveport faculty, Dr. Conrad currently serves as a Professor of Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Pediatrics, Neurosurgery and Anesthesiology. Healthcare informatics uses information technology to optimize the delivery of healthcare to patients and provides the basis by which physician’s access and use information in healthcare. The chair aims to integrate a number of state and local resources in a coordinated initiative to improve clinical education, expand clinical research, and deliver quality healthcare.

DR. STEVEN CONRAD NAMED TO MUSLOW CHAIR

Dr. Steven Conrad was named the first holder of the Ike Muslow Endowed Chair in Healthcare Informatics in February.
Atlanta, San Francisco, Nashville, New York, Baltimore, Houston, Shreveport joined the ranks of those major cities as a home to a voice center when laryngologist Dr. Paul Weinberger joined the LSU Health Shreveport faculty in July. The Center for Voice, Airway and Swallowing offers comprehensive care for patients with laryngologic disorders such as hoarseness, trouble swallowing, and tracheal stenosis.

With laryngology being a relatively small subspecialty—with an approximate 250 laryngologists in the nation and only about half of those performing major airway reconstructions while many focus solely on professional voice—this highly specialized care is usually only available in major cities. “Dallas doesn’t even have a voice center — patients would have to bypass Dallas and go to Houston,” said Dr. Weinberger, the only subspecialty fellowship trained laryngologist in the region serving patients in North Louisiana, Arkansas, and into Texas. “This area needed a voice center. It was just very serendipitous that as a physician-scientist, I was looking to move to an institution like LSU Health, and Dr. Cherie-Ann Nathan was looking to bring a laryngologist here. She has a strong interest in supporting research, so it was just a perfect match.” Another serendipitous moment for Dr. Weinberger was discovering the faculty and staff waiting for him at the health sciences center. “As I started exploring what was already in place and what was needed to establish a successful voice center, it was awesome to find that exactly the people I would look to recruit were already here,” Dr. Weinberger said of the voice center team, “We have some amazing people who have all come together to create this incredibly special synergy. The chances of just by happenstance having people this specialized and with complementary skills and interests … it boggles the mind. It was supposed to happen.”

The Center for Voice, Airway and Swallowing team includes Dr. Satish Kalanjeri, Dr. Cherie-Ann Nathan, Melanie Brown, Dr. Paul Weinberger, Dr. Mobheb Boktor, Polly Kaufman and others.

FOLLOWING THE SOUND OF THEIR VOICES

LARYNGOLOGIST PAUL WEINBERGER & TEAM OFFER MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO PATIENT CARE
The idea of doing any kind of airway procedure outside of the OR was completely unthinkable until about four years ago."

That team makes up the multi-disciplinary approach of the center, including the expertise of speech-language pathologists, gastroenterologists, neurologists, pulmonologists, gastrointestinal surgeons, anesthesiologists and CRNAs, and respiratory therapists all coming together to provide state-of-the-art patient care.

Dr. Weinberger says it’s teamwork that is vital to the success of the voice center, adding that it’s the collective expertise of his colleagues that make this highly specialized care possible. “I can’t do what I do without this team.”

And what that team does so well is offer life-changing treatment for patients — and not just those in the surrounding areas, but from states like Vermont, Florida and Georgia. “For patients in Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana or Mississippi, this is a very convenient place for them to come. For others, they’re coming here for the uniqueness of this particular environment. And it really is very unique,” said Dr. Weinberger.

Part of that uniqueness is the type of procedures performed at the voice center, including “suspension tracheoplasty” to deal with tracheal stenosis, which is a narrowing of the windpipe that can occur after prolonged use of a breathing tube and certain procedures.

Brandon Young is breathing easier thanks to the procedure. The 32-year-old was left fighting for his life following a car accident with his band back in 2006. The accident left him with a severe brain injury and he was in a medically induced coma for six weeks. Brandon was dependent on a tracheostomy tube and once it was removed, he continued to experience tracheal stenosis, with his airway only 50 percent open.

“He opened my throat up to 90 percent — it was at 50 percent. Now I can talk so much better, I can breathe so much better,” said Brandon, who now works as a Voice for Injury Prevention at ThinkFirst of the Ark-La-Tex, sharing his story at high schools, colleges and more. “Dr. Weinberger really helped me so much with that.”

“When it is still early in the development of the technique, it appears the procedure is safer than open reconstruction and patients require far shorter hospital stays — one to two days of regular hospital admission, versus five to seven days with most of those in the ICU,” said Dr. Weinberger. His inspiration for the procedure came from examining the structure of a circus tent while at Disney World. Instead of compressive architecture, which is similar to the traditional reconstructive surgeries that include putting in a foundation with supports and cartilage struts, he thought about applying a suspension, or tensile, architecture structure in an airway procedure.

“All of the tension in the structure is actually directed up, and not down and in,” he said. “I thought ‘Wouldn’t that be great for an open cavity like the airway, if you could have all of the tension being up and out, helping to pull everything open rather than letting it collapse and settle in?’”

Another treatment developed by Dr. Weinberger, in-office bronchoscopy with tracheal steroid injection, is helping some tracheal stenosis patients avoid open airway surgery under general anesthesia. For patients like 72-year-old Gail Chevalier, this procedure that takes up to 30 minutes without sedation has helped her breathe easier. “For six years doctors tried to figure out why I couldn’t breathe. I was treated for COPD, asthma, everything,” said Gail, adding she couldn’t walk more than a half a block without being short of breath.

“The idea of doing any kind of airway procedure outside of the OR was completely unthinkable until about four years ago. Now it is routine at the few voice centers scattered around the country,” said Dr. Weinberger.

The KTP laser is another cutting-edge treatment used by Dr. Weinberger and his team for laryngeal disorders, including recurrent respiratory papillomatosis (RRP) and leukopapillakia, a condition in which, white patches form on the tongue and the lining of the mouth.

Rick Haxton, of Tyler, Texas, suffers from RRP, a very rare disease caused by the human papillomavirus that causes uncontrolled tissue growth in the airway that can lead to hoarseness, a blocked airway and cancer. The condition can require surgery as often as 12 times a year, and before the voice center opened in Shreveport, Rick was traveling to Dallas for surgeries three times a year. At age 64, he’s had 78 surgeries to treat his condition. Due to the number of procedures and the RRP, Rick was forced to retire from his job as an assistant in an orthopaedics clinic because he was unable to speak to the patients.

“Some of these patients need surgery once a month. When it’s at that level, and you’re having to be put to sleep under general anesthesia every month, basically your life consists of either having surgery, you’ve just had surgery and you’re recovering, or you’re planning your next surgery. Maybe you have a week that you’re not worrying about surgery — and that’s not life,” Dr. Weinberger said of patients like Rick.

Before the voice center opened, Rick’s options were limited. “With the laser procedure, Dr. Weinberger has kept it so clear, I haven’t had to have surgery in a year. That’s a blessing right there,” Rick said. “I can live my life without the surgery time immensely. He’s a blessing for this area, for people with my problem. I’ll never go anywhere else as long as he’s here.”

“To be able to just come into the office, no pre-op, no blood work, none of the stuff you have to have when you’re being put to sleep, and you have a 30-minute procedure with some topical anesthesia and then you can drive yourself home. That’s been transformative for those patients to all the sudden have access to that type of treatment,” Dr. Weinberger said. “Before the voice center, that wasn’t available to them probably within 400 miles.” But for some patients, traveling many miles to Shreveport

“…”I can’t do what I do without this team.”

Along with Dr. Paul Weinberger, the Center for Voice, Airway and Swallowing team includes:

- Dr. Chere Ann Nathan, Professor and Chairman of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery
- Dr. Charles Fox, Professor and Chairman of Anesthesiology, and nurse anesthetist Romanne Smith
- Gastroenterologists Dr. Mahab Boktor and Dr. Paul Jordan, both with interests in swallowing and dysphagia and advanced endoscopic esophageal procedures
- Radiologist Dr. Alberto Carbo, with expertise in upper esophageal sphincter functional imaging and modified barium swallows
- Speech-language pathologist Melanie Brown, with expertise in voice therapy
- Speech-language pathologist Stacie Odum
- Surgical oncology surgeons Dr. Roger Kim and Dr. Quinn Chin, both with an interest in esophageal and thoracic surgery
- Trauma and critical care surgeon Dr. Jay DuJour helps manage any severely ill critical care patients
- Physician assistant Polly Kaufman and nurse practitioner Nancy Pittman, both with an interest in airway and dysphagia patients, serve as a central contact point for patient care coordination
- Interventional pulmonologists Dr. Satish Kalanjeri and Dr. Robert Holfaday
- Administrative office staff Amy Ray, Amy Soucier and Tremendous Carroll, as well as clinic staff, also play a vital role in keeping the voice center operating smoothly and in coordinating patient referrals
Dr. Paul Weinberger with patient Dr. Paul Weinberger, a local musician.

“There are not a lot places left in the country where they do what’s best for the patient ... at least here in Shreveport at LSU, medicine is like it should be.”

— often bypassing larger cities — is necessary for the specialized treatment they can receive from Dr. Weinberger and his team.

“Using a team approach, Dr. Weinberger is committed to providing the best possible care for people with voice, swallowing and airway disorders,” said Dr. Cheri-Ann Nathan, Chairman of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery, adding that in a short time the team has built a busy voice and swallowing center. “I am proud to say we are getting referrals from all across the country.”

Firefighter Jeffrey Hines of Jacksonville, Florida, had a heart attack after returning to his station following a call. He was intubated and rushed to the hospital, where the medical team worked for more than an hour to stabilize him.

“I was in a coma for about 14 days, and the EEG didn’t look right,” Jeffrey said. “They thought I was going to be a vegetable, and the suggestion was made to my daughters when it really hit home — that this could be my future, that I may never speak again.”

Jeffrey was flown in from Tampa for extensive open airway surgery, an extended circatrachial resection with extended suspension tracheoplasty. The nearly 10-hour procedure did more than give Jeffrey his voice back — it gave him a new lease on life.

“I’m so thankful for Dr. Weinberger and what he did for me. I got a chance to face time with him at Dr. Nasser’s office during my last visit. He was happy to see me and I was happy to see him. Dr. Weinberger said, ‘You really made my week.’ And I told him, ‘I’m way ahead of you — you made my life.’”

Following the procedure, Jeffrey was able to return to work as a fire inspector. “Even now, to speak about it really breaks me up,” he said, adding that none of this would have been possible without the care he received at the voice center. “I never would have gone back to work and my life would have forever been different, but because Dr. Weinberger has that ability, he changed my life.”

For Rachel Phillips, traveling to Shreveport from Burlington, Vermont, meant finding a glimmer of hope for her condition after several institutions — including Johns Hopkins, Harvard’s teaching hospital Massachusetts General, and New York Eye and Ear Infirmary — were unable to treat her life-threatening airway collapse. The former professional ballerina, who once performed in London’s Royal Ballet and the Kirov Ballet of St. Petersburg, Russia, was diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS), a connective tissue disorder that affects the collagen in the body. EDS led to severe tracheobronchomalacia, a condition that causes trachea and bronchial airways to collapse. Several types of intervention were tried on Rachel with no success, including resection stents, a very complicated tracheal bronchoplasty and a tracheostomy that led to an A-frame stenosis that worsened her collapse.

“All these places all over the world said, ‘There’s nothing else we can do for you,’” Rachel said. One facility recommended a resection, but others in the field warned against it, fearing her genetic condition would cause the airway to collapse. “None of the other institutions felt they were able to attempt this, so she came across the country to see us. She had to drive because she is so medically fragile she cannot fly. Her trip required coordination of way-points along the route where oxygen cylinders and supplies were dropped off.”

After the procedure, which also included laser treatment of her stenosis, Rachel was able to go out to dinner for a few hours without taking her oxygen tanks — something she hadn’t done in years. “My first memory of waking up in recovery ... it was like going from breathing through a straw to breathing through a much larger pipe.”

With her EDS, Rachel knew there was a chance the treatment would have no effect. “If I could be five percent better from one procedure and three percent better from another, that’s eight percent improvement, and I had just been declining for the last five years, so little improvements stuck up,” she said. “I had realistic expectations, and the biggest thing Dr. Paul Weinberger and Dr. Satish Kalanjeri gave me was hope.”

Whether patients come to LSU Health from near or far for voice, airway or swallowing issues, they find one common thread in the care they receive from the doctors and staff at the center — they do what’s best for the patient, and Dr. Weinberger says that sets the health sciences center apart.

“There are not a lot places left in the country where they do what’s best for the patient,” he said. “That is true here, and it shows. And that gives me chills just to think about how special that is. It’s vanishing, and I hope it doesn’t disappear from here. There are so many pressures that, over time, have eroded what medicine is supposed to be like. Here, at least here in Shreveport at LSU, medicine is like it should be.”

Dr. Paul Weinberger received his medical degree from the Medical College of Georgia (now Augusta University), where he also completed his Otolaryngology Residency training. He has completed subspecialty fellowships in Clinical Research at Yale University, Laryngology at Medical College of Georgia, and Complex Airway Reconstruction at University College of London and the Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital. He has been the recipient of numerous awards including the Fancowi Award from the American Head and Neck Society, Young Clinical Research Faculty of the Year Award, and was a finalist for a Fulbright Distinguished Research Award from the U.S. Department of State. He was recognized by the American Laryngological Association with a National Leadership Award in 2007. In addition to his clinical expertise, Dr. Weinberger manages an externally funded research laboratory. His research program is focused on developing novel therapies for anaplastic thyroid cancer, a disease for which there are no effective treatment options. He also has investments in an novel nanotechnology biomaterials applied to the area of regenerative medicine and airway reconstruction. On the national level, Dr. Weinberger serves as a member of the Science Education Committee of the American Association for Cancer Research and is a champion for promoting science and cancer research career options to disadvantaged high school and undergraduate students.
Occupational therapist Gretchen Reeks doesn’t horse around when it comes to serving on a team impacting patient care — even when that patient is a horse.

Gretchen, an Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy, is using the Kinesio Taping Method to treat Olympic hopeful Cisko and trainer Sydney Elliott. The horse qualified for the Olympics long list at the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event before he sustained an injury, a right front superficial digital flexor tendon core lesion, in September 2016.

Kinesio Taping is just one aspect of the care — overseen by veterinarian Dr. Nelson Lewis at Red River Equine Hospital, owner Carol Stephens and professional equestrian Sydney — that has Cisko on the mend and back on track for the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. This rehabilitative technique is designed to provide stability and support to muscles and joints without restricting range of motion. The cotton fabric facilitates the body’s natural healing process and also provides soft tissue manipulation to prolong manual therapy benefits.

“On a human, it can work on the epidermis, dermis and fascia, depending on the strength and elasticity you put on the tape itself,” said Reeks, explaining the treatment works the same on horses with one big difference — how the patient communicates what’s working. “Humans can explain to us what hurts and where, and while horses can’t use words, what they can do is use their non-verbals to tell us what they like and don’t like. We’re fortunate enough that the trainer has a very close relationship with this horse. Cisko tells Sydney when the tape is working and what he likes and doesn’t like.”

The bright-colored tape is a familiar sight on many types of athletes, including volleyball teams and tennis players, and while the practice of using it on equine and other animals is growing, it’s more common in Europe than in the United States. Gretchen, who became a Certified Kinesio Taping Practitioner (CKTP) in May, works closely with others in the field through the Kinesio Taping Association International (KTAI) and consults with Fédération Equestre Internationale veterinarian Dr. Juan Garcia de Brigard, who is a certified Kinesio Taping instructor based out of Columbia. Gretchen, who is also a rider at Holly Hill Farms, is providing her care as a community service.

While mostly veterinarians and equine bodyworkers are taping horses, Dorothy Cole with KTAI Communications said a few physical therapists are using the method on animals, adding that Gretchen is the first occupational therapist in the United States working with equine. While there are approximately 2,000 active CKTPs in the U.S., there are only five members in the equine organization.

After the initial injury, Gretchen’s focus was trying to control the edema, cutting the tape into “finger” strips that wrapped around the injured leg with no tension. Once the swelling was under control after 90 days of stall rest, Dr. Lewis cleared Cisko to begin a walk-trot program of exercise. After gradually building up to 60 minutes of walking, Cisko was recently upgraded to trot.

Sydney says the taping is making a difference for Cisko. “He loves it so much. It gives the tendon so much support. We put hours and hours of work on these horses every week. I think just the support of it daily has helped maintain the strength to be able to work for hours each day during the weeks and months leading up to his big competitions.”

Cisko isn’t the only one benefiting from Kinesio Tape — Sydney also uses it. “We are very hard on our bodies, just like the horses are, and I could not see a downside to trying it,” she said. “I had an injury to my elbow, and my left arm was going numb. Gretchen taped me for several weeks, and I’ve got full feeling back in my arm and the tendon is healed.”

Gretchen carries the practice into her teaching at the School of Allied Health Professions, having students practice using the tape on patients in their clinical studies.

“Kinesio Taping really works, and it does help the horse,” Gretchen said, adding that Cisko’s owner and veterinarian are supportive of her work with him. “It takes open mindedness to try something new — and a team approach to make any sort of treatment work, whether it’s on a human or a horse.”
LANE COOK lives in Knoxville, Tennessee, where he practices psychiatry. In addition to his regular outpatient practice, he specializes in addiction psychiatry with a large residential facility. Three years ago he incorporated Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation into the practice for treatment-resistant depression. He and his wife, Judy, have been married 30 years.

Ron Cowley completed his fellowship and a two-year fellowship in Neurology at Wake Forest 1977-1980. He was Chief of Neurology at Greenville Health Systems from 1981 to 2014 and is now semi-retired. He is active in his church, the American Academy of Neurology and in Translational Oncology. He won the Cornelius Dyke Award for the American Academy of Neurology in 1981. He and his wife, Linda, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They have one son and one grandson, who is 9 years old. Ron is a Master Gardner in the Master Naturalist program and is a Master Gardener at the LSU AgCenter in Shreveport. In addition to gardening, he enjoys playing golf, fly fishing, photography, and watching, hunting, and photography.

Russell Romero practiced plastic surgery in Lafayette for 29 years. He founded a surgical clinic in Aboy, Mexico to which he traveled yearly for 20 years repairing cleft lips and other craniofacial issues. He received the award from Rotary International “Service Above Self.” He and Carolyn, who have been married for 48 years and have two sons. Their oldest son, Jason Romero, MD, is an LSU Health Shreveport Medical School graduate, is a dermatologist in Shreveport and is married with four children. Their other son, Jordan T. Romero, MD, is an LSU Health New Orleans Medical School graduate and a psychiatrist in Norfolk, Virginia.

Ramón Rosenkrans retired in January 2016 after more than 20 years as a practicing ophthalmologist in Batesville, Mississippi. He and his wife, Kathy, have two daughters, Meredith and Ellen.

Don Willett is a retired diagnostic and interventional radiologist. He was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and grew up in Pontotoc, Mississippi. He and his wife, Susie, have three sons, Marshal, William and Charles. Marshall, who will be a senior at Caldwell Magnet High School this fall, has an affinity for drama and acting. William, who will be a freshman at Northwood High School, loves playing basketball and is playing travel basketball this summer. Marshall is a senior at Donnie Bishopp Middle School, and he enjoys robotics and sports, including fishing and hunting.

2017 FALL ALUMNI REUNION
Friday, October 6 - Saturday, October 7
Invitations to alumni of these classes will be mailed out this summer. Alumni can update their contact information at www.lsuhsfoundation.org/aluminate.

For more information, please contact Bridget Venet at 318.675.6065 or bverret@lsuhsfoundation.org.

IN MEMORIAM
DR. JOHN C. HARDIN, JR. passed away on May 11 at age 92, after a lengthy illness. He taught at the School of Medicine while maintaining a successful private practice in maxillofacial, oral and plastic surgery from 1956–1993. After retiring from private practice, Dr. Hardin fully devoted his time to teaching students until his retirement at age 86.

DONNIE JUNEAU passed away on February 15 at the age of 70. In addition to owning B&J Flooring, he was a home builder and real estate developer. Along with his partners, he developed the Twelve Oaks neighborhood. Donnie received a liver transplant at the Mayo Clinic in 2002, and because of his gratitude for this lifesaving surgery, he and his wife created the Donnie & Dall Juneau Endowed Chair in Transplantation at LSU Health Shreveport. Donnie, who served as the GBI-DOFS R&D coordinator, has been active in his church, The Bridge. His service to the LSU Health Shreveport Foundation. Go to www.lsuhsfoundation.org and select the GIVE NOW tab at the top right of the home page, then select Endowment for Anatomy Education as the designation. William MerriD Johnson GoFF, who served as Personnel Director at the health sciences center, passed away January 24 at age 83.

DR. ROBERT CHARLES CLAWSON, a longtime faculty member, passed away March 15 after complications following a stroke. He shared 41 of his 87 years mentoring students as a Professor of Anatomy. His passion for teaching garnered him many honors, including the All-Student Award for Teaching Excellence. Upon his retirement in 2008, Dr. Clawson was named Professor Emeritus. The family requests any memorials be donated to the LSU Health Shreveport Foundation. Go to www.lsuhsfoundation.org and select the GIVE NOW tab at the top right of the home page, then select Endowment for Anatomy Education as the designation.

IN MEMORIAM
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE CLASS OF 1977
Michael Albritton is a radiation oncologist at Ferrell Duncan Clinic in Springfield, Missouri. He and wife, Lily, have been married for 36 years and have two sons. Andrew, who received his PhD in English Linguistics from the University of Northern Iowa, teaches American Sign Language at Lake Charles State, and Charles, who is a second-year resident at OB/GYN at LSU Health Shreveport Foundation.

LANE COOK lives in Knoxville, Tennessee, where he practices psychiatry. In addition to his regular outpatient practice, he specializes in addiction psychiatry with a large residential facility. Three years ago he incorporated Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation into the practice for treatment-resistant depression. He and his wife, Judy, have been married 30 years.

Ron Cowley completed his fellowship and a two-year fellowship in Neurology at Wake Forest 1977-1980. He was Chief of Neurology at Greenville Health Systems from 1981 to 2014 and is now semi-retired. He is active in his church, the American Academy of Neurology and in Translational Oncology. He won the Cornelius Dyke Award for the American Academy of Neurology in 1981. He and his wife, Linda, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They have one son and one grandson, who is 9 years old. Ron is a Master Gardner in the Master Naturalist program and is a Master Gardener at the LSU AgCenter in Shreveport. In addition to gardening, he enjoys playing golf, fly fishing, photography, and watching, hunting, and photography.

Russell Romero practiced plastic surgery in Lafayette for 29 years. He founded a surgical clinic in Aboy, Mexico to which he traveled yearly for 20 years repairing cleft lips and other craniofacial issues. He received the award from Rotary International “Service Above Self.” He and Carolyn, who have been married for 48 years and have two sons. Their oldest son, Jason Romero, MD, is an LSU Health Shreveport Medical School graduate, is a dermatologist in Shreveport and is married with four children. Their other son, Jordan T. Romero, MD, is an LSU Health New Orleans Medical School graduate and a psychiatrist in Norfolk, Virginia.

Ramón Rosenkrans retired in January 2016 after more than 20 years as a practicing ophthalmologist in Batesville, Mississippi. He and his wife, Kathy, have two daughters, Meredith and Ellen.

Don Willett is a retired diagnostic and interventional radiologist. He was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and grew up in Pontotoc, Mississippi. He and his wife, Susie, have three sons, Marshal, William and Charles. Marshall, who will be a senior at Caldwell Magnet High School this fall, has an affinity for drama and acting. William, who will be a freshman at Northwood High School, loves playing basketball and is playing travel basketball this summer. Marshall is a senior at Donnie Bishopp Middle School, and he enjoys robotics and sports, including fishing and hunting.

2017 FALL ALUMNI REUNION
Friday, October 6 - Saturday, October 7
Invitations to alumni of these classes will be mailed out this summer. Alumni can update their contact information at www.lsuhsfoundation.org/aluminate.

For more information, please contact Bridget Venet at 318.675.6065 or bverret@lsuhsfoundation.org.

IN MEMORIAM
DR. ROBERT CHARLES CLAWSON, a longtime faculty member, passed away March 15 after complications following a stroke. He shared 41 of his 87 years mentoring students as a Professor of Anatomy. His passion for teaching garnered him many honors, including the All-Student Award for Teaching Excellence. Upon his retirement in 2008, Dr. Clawson was named Professor Emeritus. The family requests any memorials be donated to the LSU Health Shreveport Foundation. Go to www.lsuhsfoundation.org and select the GIVE NOW tab at the top right of the home page, then select Endowment for Anatomy Education as the designation.

IN MEMORIAM
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE CLASS OF 1977
Michael Albritton is a radiation oncologist at Ferrell Duncan Clinic in Springfield, Missouri. He and wife, Lily, have been married for 36 years and have two sons. Andrew, who received his PhD in English Linguistics from the University of Northern Iowa, teaches American Sign Language at Lake Charles State, and Charles, who is a second-year resident at OB/GYN at LSU Health Shreveport Foundation.

LANE COOK lives in Knoxville, Tennessee, where he practices psychiatry. In addition to his regular outpatient practice, he specializes in addiction psychiatry with a large residential facility. Three years ago he incorporated Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation into the practice for treatment-resistant depression. He and his wife, Judy, have been married 30 years.

Ron Cowley completed his fellowship and a two-year fellowship in Neurology at Wake Forest 1977-1980. He was Chief of Neurology at Greenville Health Systems from 1981 to 2014 and is now semi-retired. He is active in his church, the American Academy of Neurology and in Translational Oncology. He won the Cornelius Dyke Award for the American Academy of Neurology in 1981. He and his wife, Linda, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They have one son and one grandson, who is 9 years old. Ron is a Master Gardner in the Master Naturalist program and is a Master Gardener at the LSU AgCenter in Shreveport. In addition to gardening, he enjoys playing golf, fly fishing, photography, and watching, hunting, and photography.

Russell Romero practiced plastic surgery in Lafayette for 29 years. He founded a surgical clinic in Aboy, Mexico to which he traveled yearly for 20 years repairing cleft lips and other craniofacial issues. He received the award from Rotary International “Service Above Self.” He and Carolyn, who have been married for 48 years and have two sons. Their oldest son, Jason Romero, MD, is an LSU Health Shreveport Medical School graduate, is a dermatologist in Shreveport and is married with four children. Their other son, Jordan T. Romero, MD, is an LSU Health New Orleans Medical School graduate and a psychiatrist in Norfolk, Virginia.

Ramón Rosenkrans retired in January 2016 after more than 20 years as a practicing ophthalmologist in Batesville, Mississippi. He and his wife, Kathy, have two daughters, Meredith and Ellen.

Don Willett is a retired diagnostic and interventional radiologist. He was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and grew up in Pontotoc, Mississippi. He and his wife, Susie, have three sons, Marshal, William and Charles. Marshall, who will be a senior at Caldwell Magnet High School this fall, has an affinity for drama and acting. William, who will be a freshman at Northwood High School, loves playing basketball and is playing travel basketball this summer. Marshall is a senior at Donnie Bishopp Middle School, and he enjoys robotics and sports, including fishing and hunting.

2017 FALL ALUMNI REUNION
Friday, October 6 - Saturday, October 7
Invitations to alumni of these classes will be mailed out this summer. Alumni can update their contact information at www.lsuhsfoundation.org/aluminate.

For more information, please contact Bridget Venet at 318.675.6065 or bverret@lsuhsfoundation.org.
LSU Health Shreveport launched a new Pediatric Chronic Ventilator Clinic in April, providing complex care to children with conditions that require chronic mechanical ventilation.

"Access to care in our region will improve the quality of life for many children and their families," said Dr. L. Keith Scott, Professor of Pediatrics, Surgery and Medicine. He noted that prior to the clinic’s opening in Shreveport, parents often had to drive 300 miles or more to receive this level of specialized care, with the nearest locations in Little Rock, Dallas, Houston and New Orleans.

PEDIATRIC CHRONIC VENTILATOR CARE OFFERED

The Pediatric Chronic Ventilator Care Clinic is offered on the last Wednesday of each month at University Health’s Ambulatory Care Center. Services include nursing education, as well as dietary, respiratory, and social therapy. To find out if a child is a candidate for the program, call (318) 675-6094.

MINI MED TO BE HELD IN AUGUST

LSU Health Shreveport will open its doors to the community at Mini Med School, with sessions kicking off on August 1. During this four-week program, held from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through August 22, faculty members will discuss interesting health topics and offer participants hands-on activities and demonstrations that doctors and other 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.

With more than 80 participants, the Spring Mini Med class was the largest since the program was founded in 2012.

LSU ON THE HILL

LSU on the Hill was held on March 21 in Washington, D.C. and represented a system-wide effort to engage and inform elected delegates. A breakfast with the Louisiana delegation was well attended with each delegate receiving a Congressional Resource Guide providing facts about each campus. In addition to pre-scheduled meetings with research and education leaders and staff members, each campus was encouraged to schedule meetings to enhance federal funding. LSU Health Shreveport leadership met with President Donald Trump and a section chief at the National Institutes of Health.

HERNIA REPAIR DEVICE NOMINATED FOR AWARD

A new device to repair hernias, developed at LSU Health Shreveport, was nominated for a NASA Tech Briefs design award.

Working with different types of hernia mesh on a daily basis, LSU Health Shreveport chief surgery resident Dr. Alireza Hamidian began to notice some common problems with current mesh designs, which made him explore ways to improve the design and make the application easier. He came up with the Mesh Sprayer Device.

Along with acting Surgery Chairman Dr. F. Dean Griffen and former surgery resident Dr. David Ballard, Dr. Hamidian developed the liquefied mesh delivery system that applies liquefied sterile mesh into the abdominal wall. Applied by a spray canister that can be fitted over a laparoscopic/robotic camera and other instruments, the layered liquid changes into a solid or semi-solid form that serves as a reinforcement for the abdominal wall to prevent the risk of future hernia formation at the site.

The design competed in the Create the Future Design Contest, which was created in 2002 by the publishers of NASA Tech Briefs to help stimulate engineering innovation. In 2016, a chest tube designed by Drs. Hamidian and Ballard along with Radiology Chairman Dr. Horacio D’Agostino was named one of the top 100 designs out of more than 22,000 submissions.

The patent for the device is pending through LSUHSC-S-2017-003.
NEW FACULTY

Joseph A. Bocchini, Jr., MD, Professor and Chairman of Pediatrics, was named Louisiana’s 2017 CDC Childhood Immunization Champion by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the CDC Foundation.

Quyen Chu, MD MBA FACS, the Charles Knight Professor in Surgery and Chief of Surgical Oncology, received the inaugural Humanitarian Award at the Americas Hepato-Pancreato Biliary Association Annual Meeting.

Glenn Mills, MD FACP, Director of Feist-Weiller Cancer Center, was named Interim Chairman of the Department of Medicine in March.

Navdeep Samra, MD FICs, Associate Professor of Surgery with tenure, was appointed as Assistant Program Director of Surgery in December.

Orr named to NIH Study Section

Wayne Orr, PhD, Professor of Pathology, Physiology, Cellular Biology & Anatomy, was selected to serve on National Institutes of Health’s Vascular Cell and Molecular Biology Study Section. His six-year appointment begins July 1. Study sections review NIH grant applications, make recommendations to the appropriate national advisory councils and survey the status of research in their respective fields. Members are selected on the basis of their demonstrated competence and achievement in their scientific disciplines as evidenced by the quality of research accomplishments, scientific publications and other achievements and honors. The VCMB Study Section reviews applications involving the cell and molecular biology of blood vessels ranging from major arteries to the microcirculation. Studies using cellular, biochemical, biophysical, immunological, genetic, pharmacological, and molecular biological approaches to define vascular homeostasis and dysfunction in experimental models are reviewed. A principal focus is on the biology of the endothelium, vascular smooth muscle cell, as well as adventitial cells and pericytes.

Friday, Umer receive honors

The 2017 Allen A. Copping Excellence in Teaching Awards, the most prestigious honor given by LSU Health Shreveport, were presented during graduation May 27. Dr. R. Ellen Friday, Assistant Professor of Medicine, was the basic sciences award winner, and Dr. Sarwat Umer, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine & Pediatrics, received the clinical award. Recipients are chosen by their leaders, colleagues and students.

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

1 Chancellor Dr. G.E. Ghali congratulates a graduate during commencement on May 27, when 175 students received their degrees.

2 Medical student Arneyeshko Kuoemr Deyiwaal receives his crass from Dr. Adrian Abess at March 25’s White Coat Ceremony.

3 Medical student Lane Fontenot has his head shaved at the Geaux Bald event March 10 after raising money for childhood cancer research.

4 Student Smita Maruvada looks at jewelry from Pakistan with Drs. Karina Sulaiman and Sarwat Umer during the Diversity Matters Celebration on April 20.

5 Shreve Island Elementary students Kira Thompson and Christopher Hawkins participate in activities at St.-Port’s Science Academy, a seven-week program focused on math and science sponsored by LSU Health Shreveport’s Multicultural Affairs.

6 The Delta Kappa Boulé of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity donated Barnes & Noble gift cards for children receiving care in the pediatric clinic.

7 Bevin Hicks with Lola Magazine and Weston McElwee with Tejas restaurant present a check to LSU Health’s Lisa Babin and Foundation Development Director Dr. Adrian Abess and Smita Maruvada for $2,000 raised at the Dinner for the Docs event March 6.
ROARING into our 20's 1990-2017

2017 LIFE SAVERS

Chairmen
ANGELA CORNELIUS, MD & JULIE ZADECK

September 16, 2017 · 7 p.m.
SAM’S TOWN RIVERFRONT BALLROOM

DINNER · OPEN BAR · SILENT AUCTION
MUSIC AND DANCING WITH STORMY the Band
BLACK TIE · 20’S GLAM

For more information, contact Anne Higdon or Darlene Whitaker at (318) 813-1485.
PAY ONLINE AT: WWW.FEISTWEILLER.ORG/LIFESAVERS