Bright futures ahead for all medicine grads

UC Irvine hearing research leads to breakthrough product that soothes the effects of tinnitus

More than 200 students flock to School of Medicine to learn more about bedside ultrasound

Acclaimed surgeon Dr. Johnny Delashaw joins UC Irvine to lead, advance neurological surgery

Dr. Jordan J. Cohen (above), president emeritus of the American Association of Medical Colleges, addresses the crowd at the UC Irvine School of Medicine graduation ceremony on June 2 in Aldrich Park. Associate Dean of Admissions and Outreach Ellena Peterson congratulates graduate Clifford Lau (left). The class of 104 graduates celebrated as they looked ahead to their bright futures. More: www.meded.uci.edu/gallery
Novel tinnitus therapy technology based on UC Irvine research

Research led by Fan-Gang Zeng, director of the Center for Hearing Research, has resulted in a novel sound-based treatment for people with tinnitus. SoundCure Inc. has launched the Serenade Tinnitus Treatment System (pictured), which provides customized treatment sounds, called S-Tones, to soothe the ear ringing of a disorder that affects approximately 10 percent of U.S. adults and an estimated 260 million people globally. In 2007, Zeng and his colleagues first advanced research using low frequency, amplitude-modulated tones that frequency pitch-matched a patient’s unique tinnitus. The work represented a significant clinical breakthrough compared to previous approaches. According to Zeng, these modulated tones “keep the brain’s interest” thus “reducing the perceived tinnitus sound and bringing relief.” SoundCure CEO Bill Perry added, “This approach is an important solution to provide relief to patients and represents a real advance in tinnitus care.”

More: www.healthaffairs.uci.edu/hesp

UC Irvine immunologist reaps $4.8 million stem cell grant for MS treatment

Tom Lane with the Sue & Bill Gross Stem Cell Research Center received a $4.8 million grant from the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine to create a new line of neural stem cells that can be used to treat multiple sclerosis. In addressing this issue, Lane – who also directs the Multiple Sclerosis Research Center – will target a stem cell treatment that will not only halt ongoing myelin loss but also encourage the growth of new myelin that can mend damaged nerves. “Our preliminary data are very promising and suggest that this goal is possible,” said Lane (pictured). “Research efforts will concentrate on refining techniques for production and rigorous quality control of transplantable cells generated from high-quality human pluripotent stem cell lines, leading to the development of the most therapeutically beneficial cell type for eventual use in patients with MS.” Lane’s grant brings total CIRM funding for UC Irvine to $82 million.

More: stemcell.uci.edu

Dr. William Bunney wins prestigious CINP award for mood disorders work

The Collegium Internationale Neuro-Psychopharmacologicum has honored Dr. William Bunney (pictured) with its prestigious Pioneers in Psychopharmacology Award, bestowed annually upon individuals who’ve made globally recognized contributions to the field’s growth. Bunney, a Distinguished Professor of psychiatry & human behavior, has furthered our understanding of mood disorders. His early research helped establish lithium’s effectiveness in treating bipolar disorder, and his efforts led to official approval of the drug for the condition. Bunney also wrote a seminal paper on the neurotransmitter norepinephrine’s pivotal role in depression. His work has directly improved the quality of care available to people with substance abuse and psychological disorders. As director of the Division of Narcotic Addiction & Drug Abuse at the National Institute of Mental Health from 1971 to 1973, he expanded the number of drug abuse treatment centers nationwide.

More: www.psychiatry.uci.edu
Summer PreMed, Surgery programs offer high school students head start

More than 100 eager high school students are getting head starts on promising healthcare careers this summer in two distinctive training programs. In the Summer PreMed Program, students will attend lectures given by School of Medicine faculty members and participate in hands-on workshops that allow them a first-rate exposure to the medical field. They will also be exposed to the practice of medicine and patient care at UC Irvine Medical Center. In its third year, the Summer PreMed Program now offers three two-week sessions to meet student interest. Additionally, the Department of Urology will host a Summer Surgery Program, an intensive, two-week program introducing students to the most advanced diagnostic and therapeutic surgical techniques, including the most advanced endoscopic, laparoscopic and robotic surgery. Reflecting interest in medical education, both programs quickly filled their slots. More: www.som.uci.edu/summerpremed

UltraFest draws more than 200 for ultrasound training

More than 200 medical, osteopathic and physician-assistant students from across the state converged at the Medical Education Building on May 20 for UltraFest 2012, where they learned the latest techniques for a diagnostic tool destined to become widely used in medicine – portable ultrasound. UC Irvine’s medical school is the only one in California to employ this cutting-edge technology in its curriculum. Used mainly in emergency medicine right now, this easy-to-use ultrasound stands to change how physicians of all specialties diagnose their patients. At UltraFest, UC Irvine physicians and students led hands-on workshops in emergency medicine, urology, obstetrics and gynecology, surgery, anesthesia, cardiology, sports medicine and more. The symposium provided an incredible opportunity for students to learn and improve bedside ultrasound skills in multiple fields. Dr. Chris Fox, director of ultrasound education, originally thought 30 or 40 students would attend the symposium. “The response, though, was overwhelming and shows how important tomorrow’s doctors and healthcare workers see portable ultrasound becoming,” he said. More: www.ultrasound.uci.edu

iPad iMedEd Initiative goes clinical

Starting in 2010, all incoming medical students received iPads loaded with their entire year’s curriculum. UC Irvine was the first medical school to embrace this innovative approach to medical education, and this August, the iPad program expands to accompany third-year students on their clinical rotations. All third-year students will have clinically focused tools downloaded onto their iPads that will enrich their clinical experiences and help foster a more interactive experience, said Dr. Warren Wiechmann, director of instructional technologies for the School of Medicine. Additionally, the students will be the first large group to use an electronic medical records app in a clinical environment. “This puts patient care directly on their devices,” Wiechmann added. “It makes patient care mobile and can become a great vehicle for patient education. This really changes the field.” More: www.imeded.uci.edu
Dr. Johnny Delashaw leads neurosurgery at UC Irvine

Dr. Johnny Delashaw, who has earned international acclaim for his expertise in skull base, pituitary and cerebrovascular surgery, has joined the School of Medicine as chair of the Department of Neurological Surgery. Delashaw is playing a key role in creating a major national surgical referral center for complicated cranial disease. Delashaw has established one of the largest neurosurgical practices in the U.S, and he’s among only a few surgeons who perform complex procedures for pituitary disorders, such as Cushing’s syndrome, for which he has built a national referral network. His cure rate for this ailment is one of the highest in the country. “I’m thrilled to be joining a dedicated team of surgeons at UC Irvine,” Delashaw said. “Our mission is not only to provide patients with exemplary care, but also to inspire medical students and residents to discover the challenge and excitement of treating complex neurosurgical conditions.”

More: www.neurosurgery.uci.edu

Joint Commission renews stroke, heart disease programs

UC Irvine Health’s heart failure program and Stroke & Cerebrovascular Center have again earned the Gold Seal of Approval from The Joint Commission, healthcare’s predominant standards-setting and accrediting body. Joint Commission certification recognizes an organization’s diligence in meeting rigorous performance standards accepted nationwide as benchmarks of superior patient care. UC Irvine’s heart failure program (director Dr. Dawn Lombardo pictured) first received certification for disease-specific care in 2008 and was the first awarded by The Joint Commission to a Southern California hospital or medical center. The Stroke & Cerebrovascular Center has held advanced certification from The Joint Commission since 2004 and was among the nation’s first academic medical facilities to be designated a primary stroke center. More: www.healthcare.uci.edu/stroke and www.healthcare.uci.edu/cs_heart_failure.asp

UC Irvine center recognized for top epilepsy care

UC Irvine’s Comprehensive Epilepsy Program has again earned the highest designation for care from the National Association of Epilepsy Centers. Level 4 epilepsy centers have the professional expertise and facilities necessary to provide the greatest level medical and surgical evaluation and treatment for patients with complex epilepsy. “An evaluation and treatment at a Level 4 center offers patients with epilepsy the best opportunity to learn what type of disease they have and understand all treatment options available,” said Dr. Mona Sazgar, neurologist and program director (pictured). The association first designated UC Irvine as a top-level center in 2006. The designation recognizes the program’s state-of-the-art neurodiagnostic monitoring, neuro-imaging and nuclear imaging technologies and extensive range of medical and surgical treatment options for epilepsy. UC Irvine is one of about 140 facilities in the nation with Level 4 status. More: www.healthcare.uci.edu/epilepsy
2012 Calendar of Events

Friday, Aug. 3
White Coat Ceremony
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Irvine Barclay Theatre

Saturday, Sept. 15
School of Medicine Alumni vs. Students Softball Game
Time: Noon
Location: ARC Fields

Thursday, Sept. 27
Dean’s Quarterly Lecture Series
Time: 5 p.m.
Location: Sue & Bill Gross Hall
Topic: “From Mice to Men: Lessons from the Lab to Cure Paralysis”

Speakers: Ranjan Gupta, M.D.
Oswald Steward, Ph.D.

Friday, Oct. 5
Third annual UC Irvine Outreach Clinics Benefit
Wine Tasting and Auction
Time: 6 p.m.
Location: Orange County Medical Association - 17322 Murphy Avenue, Irvine, CA 92614
Support the student-run outreach clinics by attending the annual benefit.
More: www.ucioutreachclinics.org

UC Irvine Health Gala raises more than $700,000

School of Medicine Dean Dr. Ralph Clayman joined UC Irvine Chancellor Michael Drake, UC Irvine Medical Center CEO Terry Belmont and more than 425 community members in a celebration of healing at the 2012 UC Irvine Health gala, “Healing Under the Stars,” held in April at Disney’s Grand Californian Hotel & Spa.

The gala raised more than $700,000. Proceeds will support patient-care programs and technologies. Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 6, 2013, for the 2013 UC Irvine Health gala, “Science Under the Stars,” which will benefit UC Irvine School of Medicine.

More: www.healthaffairs.uci.edu/health-gala

Rally for Reunion 2013
Did you graduate from medical school in 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003 or 2008? If so, mark your calendar for the weekend of April 5-6, 2013, to reunite and reconnect with fellow classmates. The reunion weekend will include a CME course, tours of the Medical Education Building and UC Irvine Douglas Hospital, an alumni reception and more!

We depend on alumni volunteers to help plan and execute successful class reunions. One way to help is to serve as a reunion representative, reaching out to others and encouraging them to attend. If you would like to help, call 949-824-9157 or email medicalschoolalumni@uci.edu.
During our June 2 commencement ceremony, Dr. Jordan J. Cohen, president emeritus of the American Association of Medical Colleges, addressed our graduating class. During his presidency of the AAMC, Dr. Cohen promoted greater racial and ethnic diversity in medicine, campaigned to uphold professional and scientific values and worked to transform our nation's healthcare system. His commencement speech addressed 5 important healthcare paradigm shifts. He kindly allowed me to provide you with the following excerpts. The full version is available at: www.meded.uci.edu/Cohen_commencement2012.asp

Sincerely,
Ralph V. Clayman, M.D.
Dean, School of Medicine
Professor of Urology

The question I have for you today is: Are you ready for the coming paradigm shifts? Let me briefly describe five of the biggies.

1. The paradigm of autonomy is shifting toward one of accountability. One of the historic hallmarks of the medical profession is the exceptionally high degree of autonomy that doctors have enjoyed. … But those autonomous judgments must now be tightly coupled to explicit accountability [and] complete transparency – it means measuring a physician's autonomous performance and whether that performance meets acceptable benchmarks. It means shifting from receiving a fee for each service to being paid for the quality of the care. In other words, it means the old paradigm of “trust me and believe me” is shifting to “trust me, but verify what I do.” … Maintaining public trust is the sine qua non of a viable profession, and it requires that each of us be willing – even eager – to be openly accountable for everything we do.

2. The paradigm of the paternalistic doctor making all the decisions is shifting toward one of patient-centric, shared decision-making. I grew up with the Norman Rockwell image of the all-knowing doctor telling the dutifully attentive and passively receptive patient exactly what had to be done. … That image is fast giving way to the skeptical, information-empowered patient expecting, if not demanding, to be a partner in the decision-making process. The new paradigm: No decision about me, without me.

3. The paradigm of an exclusive focus on individual patient needs is shifting toward an acknowledgement that broader societal needs cannot be ignored and must be addressed. … We have an obligation to educate the public about the behavioral and social determinants of disease, to work together to reduce medical errors, to advocate on behalf of vulnerable populations, and to engage in bolstering the quality and effectiveness of the healthcare system. The new paradigm: An expanded spectrum of professional obligations rooted in the needs of one's individual patients, to be sure, but extending to the overarching needs of society.

4. Our paradigmatic penchant for the profligate use of resources must shift toward an ethos of parsimony. No greater challenge awaits than ensuring that healthcare costs are brought under control and that limited resources are not squandered. Practicing medicine parsimoniously does not mean skimping on what's needed to provide excellent care. … It does mean avoiding unnecessary duplication, shunning services of little or no benefit, using the least costly of equivalently efficacious interventions, and knowing and respecting patient preferences, especially at the end of life. The new paradigm: Prudent stewards of limited societal resources.

5. The paradigm of authoritarian captain of the team is shifting toward being an effective and respectful teammate. Well-functioning, interdisciplinary teams of healthcare professionals are undeniably the key to providing cost-effective, coordinated, high quality care, especially to patients with chronic, unremitting disease. … The new paradigm – Non-hierarchical, full participation of all who can help achieve optimal health outcomes.

So, there you have it: five paradigm shifts that will redefine your role as doctors. Paradigm shifts, by definition, cannot be resisted. They fix the boundary conditions that will enable you not only to function effectively in the emerging realities of a transformed healthcare system, but most importantly, will enable our profession to continue to meet its fundamental obligation – advancing the health of the public.
Shaping the future at UC Irvine

Early in his medical school training, 2012 UC Irvine School of Medicine graduate Matt Fradkin (pictured) distinguished himself by founding Music to Heal, a nonprofit group that provides musical outlets – from instrument rentals and lessons to music therapy – to patients in hospitals and health clinics. He played a leadership role in the Pediatric Student Interest Group and in PALS, a student-driven initiative that pairs students with chronically ill children and their families. The Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society member was recognized for his achievements as recipient of the Humanities Consortium Award for Research and the Office of Educational Affairs Service Award.

Like more than half the medical students nationwide, Fradkin leaves medical school with upwards of $150,000 in education debt. Despite a hefty loan obligation, he plans to continue on the path of excellence as a pediatric resident, choosing to follow his passion.

Fradkin is among the fortunate ones. His outstanding academic performance and commitment to caring for the underserved earned him the 2011-12 UniHealth Foundation Medical Student Scholarship. Thanks to this philanthropic support, Fradkin’s student loan debt will be greatly reduced.

The School of Medicine would like to offer more merit and need-based scholarships for students like Fradkin—talented individuals who are on course to contribute to society in a meaningful way. This would give the nation’s best and brightest one more reason to choose UC Irvine for their education. It would also allow them greater freedom to pursue primary care careers – and options such as working with the underserved – that favor intrinsic reward over financial return.

You can help shape the future of medicine by making a gift to medical student scholarships at UC Irvine. Your generous donation will help to attract many of the nation’s most promising medical students and, along with them, leading clinicians, researchers, residents and fellows who want to be where tomorrow’s medicine is being practiced today. For more information, call UC Irvine Health Advancement at 949-824-9157 or go to www.ucfuturehealth.com/Pages.aspx/School-of-Medicine.

Support

Connect with your class

Calling all Anteater alumni! Are you still in touch with your medical school classmates? Would you like to connect with others and become more involved as an alum? We are seeking members from each class to become class agents who connect with medical school peers and help them stay connected through activities that support the School of Medicine. Class agents are the key liaisons between your class and the School of Medicine, promoting advocacy, loyalty and involvement among UC Irvine alumni. The role of a class agent is easy and doesn't take much time. Simply help the School of Medicine maintain ongoing communication with your classmates regarding alumni events and programs, alumni news, reunion plans and more. You will be supported in this effort to stay in touch through letters, emails, phone calls, personal notes and Facebook messages. Class agents are among our most valued volunteers. If you would like to become a class agent or want more information, contact the Alumni Relations Office at 949-824-9157 or medicalschoolalumni@uci.edu. More: www.som.uci.edu/alumni.
Trained in care and compassion

Dr. Elaine King ’99 is an Irvine success story. Since moving to the city with her family from Shanghai when she was 11, she’s earned her bachelor’s and medical degrees from UC Irvine, and currently runs a family medicine practice in the rapidly growing Irvine Spectrum area. A classically trained pianist, she also serves on the School of Medicine’s alumni board. Here, she talks with the Dean’s Report.

DR: How does someone trained as a classical pianist become a physician?

EK: My whole family loves classical music, and I started playing at age 4. Performing piano has always helped me clear my mind and brings joy and pride to my family. I never stopped playing piano. I just added medicine.

DR: Tell us about your practice.

EK: My private practice is in Irvine Odyssey Medical Center next to the Great Park. I emphasize disease prevention, health education and women’s health. I like to take care of the whole person, not just an illness. I also have certification in traditional Chinese medicine, which allows me to better care for my patients who choose to combine Western and Eastern medicine.

DR: How did you choose to enter medicine?

EK: I decided to become a family medicine physician when my grandparents developed cancer. Being new immigrants starting over in a new country, our family had difficulty communicating with medical professionals who have so little time with each patient. I chose to become a physician to be an advocate for every patient, to provide more health education and hopefully to bring families together. I care for every one of my patients as how I would want my own family to be treated.

DR: How has medicine changed since you were in medical school?

EK: We now have more women in medicine, especially in primary care. I like to think we women bring a softer, gentler touch to medicine. I’m not afraid to hug, laugh or cry with my patients.

DR: What satisfies you about participating on the alumni board?

EK: I like to be connected to my school. I’m proud to be a School of Medicine grad. If I can help out new students, get more alumni to give back and make our school even better, I would be so happy.

DR: What advice would you give to today’s medical students?

EK: Do what you love, and love what you do.

Keep in touch with Dr. King at eking_doc@yahoo.com.