

Events to Know

March

- 10 12th Annual Brain Awareness Week Public Forum** hosted by the Neuroscience Research Center (NRC). This year's forum – "Central Nervous System Trauma and Rehabilitation" – features a panel discussion moderated by Dr. Alex Valadka. 10:30 a.m.-noon, MSB 3.001.
- 12 Center for Membrane Biology and Biochemistry Seminar Series: Dr. Lei Zheng** (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology) to present "Calcium Binding Domain (CBD1) of a Ca/Na Exchanger from *Drosophila* Eye." Noon, MSB 2.135.
- 14 Psychiatry Lecture Series: Dr. Sharon Morgan** (Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences) to present "Community-based Psychosocial Intervention with Children: Trials and Triumphs." 11 a.m., MSI Auditorium.
- 15 Match Day.**
- 15 NRC's Partners in Education Brain Night.** 6-8 p.m., The Health Museum, 1515 Hermann Drive. Free admission for children and families.
- 16 Dr. Jaroslaw Aronowski** (Neurology) to present Neurology Grand Rounds. Noon, MSB 2.135.

Postdocs: Mark your calendars for March Madness

The UT Health Science Center's Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, along with the postdoctoral offices of Baylor College of Medicine and The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, will host a Texas Medical Center postdoc party with a "March Madness" theme from 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, March 21 inside The Commons. All UT postdoctoral fellows are welcome. Favorite team wear and hi-tops are optional! For details, contact **Leslie Shields** at 713.500.6612.

Lally to lead new Pediatric Surgery Program

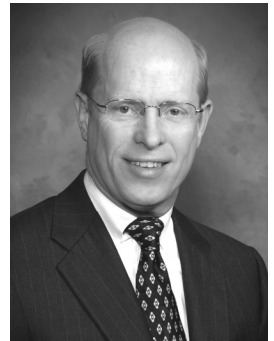
Interim Dean **Jerry Wolinsky** has announced that **Dr. Kevin Lally**, professor and holder of the A. G. McNeese Chair in Pediatric Surgery, will become the director of the Pediatric Surgery Program – a new program designed to bring the pediatric surgical specialties together in a cohesive group, both at the Medical School and at Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital.

Lally directed the Division of Pediatric Surgery at the Medical School for 12 years. With this new role, he will serve as surgeon-in-chief at Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital. Wolinsky said he is the ideal candidate for this undertaking.

"The timing is right to create a consolidated pediatric surgery program at the Medical School, and Dr. Lally is the perfect person to lead this effort," Wolinsky said. "He's been on our faculty for almost 16 years, is a team player, and is committed to our three-part mission of teaching, research, and clinical excellence. As Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital expands its activities in pediatric services, we will be well-positioned to complement these initiatives."

Lally's role as director of the Pediatric Surgery Program is unique in that he will have an administrative role on par with department chairs of the school.

To advance the program's vision, he will work closely with **Dr. Giuseppe Colasurdo**, professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics, and a Governance Committee that includes senior leadership at both the UT Medical School and Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center. Additionally, he will work closely with the chairs of other surgical departments with pediatric specialists, including general surgery, plastic surgery, orthopaedic surgery, otolaryngology, neu-



Dr. Kevin Lally

(Cont'd. on back)

Clay Walker gives \$100,000 to support MS research

In front of a live audience, country music singing sensation **Clay Walker** presented a \$100,000 check to interim Dean **Jerry Wolinsky** to support multiple sclerosis (MS) research at the Medical School, during his March 3 performance at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo at Reliant Stadium, One Reliant Park.

"Clay and the Band Against MS have been extraordinarily generous to our center," Wolinsky said, at a media event held March 2 at the Medical School. "This is a great day. I'm always delighted when I see Clay on the stage personally – that he's able to do this despite the disease."

Wolinsky, holder of the Bartels Family and Opal C. Rankin Professorships in Neurology, directs the Multiple Sclerosis Research Group and Magnetic Resonance Imaging Analysis Center. The research group is internationally known for its work with imaging and clinical trials. Walker's gift will be used for imaging research to better understand the root causes of the disease.

Dr. Ponnada Narayana, professor of diagnostic and interventional imaging and director of Magnetic Resonance Research, also was on stage for the presentation and attended the media event. Narayana is an accomplished researcher in the field of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) research, which he uses to track the development of multiple sclerosis and traumatic spinal cord injury.

"Thank you both for taking such great care of me," Walker said, speaking to Wolinsky and Narayana. "You've showed me there are things I can do to manage the disease."



Clay Walker gives a \$100,000 check to Drs. Wolinsky (center) and Narayana to support MS research at the Medical School.

(Cont'd. on back)

Student-run ethics series to hold pharmaceutical industry debate

Two Medical School students received a \$5,000 Ethics in Action Grant from the American Medical Association to fund an 11-part ethics lecture series, which will culminate in a moderated debate about “The Controversial Role of the Pharmaceutical Industry in Medicine” from noon-1:30 p.m. March 12 in lecture hall 3.001 of the Medical School.

Second-year students **Gaia Muallem** and **Chirag Patel** knew they wanted to educate the community about ethics when they learned about the Ethics in Action Grant.

“Our original goal was to bring the ethics that you see in medicine and that doctors deal with every day to students – that’s really been our underlying focus throughout this project,” Muallem said, adding that funding from the two-year grant helped shape the ethics series.

Involving students from the very beginning to gauge their opinions was something Muallem and Patel employed to design the lecture series. In fact, “Hot Topics in Medical Ethics: Beyond the Classroom,” is entirely run by students and was born based on results from multiple focus groups that were held with first, second, and third-year students over the past year.

Determining the ‘hot topics’ was one of the most exciting parts about designing the series.

“We came up with topics by conducting a series of focus groups to find out what students wanted to know about and how they wanted to learn it,” Muallem said. “They gave us a lot of input in terms of how to approach the topics and how they wanted to be taught. We had the speakers structure their talks according to what students wanted to learn.”

Even though the series is student-run, it’s open to everyone.

“It’s geared for everyone, but we have primarily first- and second-year students attending it,” Patel noted. “One of the special things we were able to set up this time was continuing medical education (CME) credit for physicians for 10 of the 11 talks.”

Patel and Muallem were able to broaden the ethics series even more by making the CME credit inter-institutional to encourage students from the Dental Branch, School of Health Information Sciences, and

Lally, cont’d.

rosurgery, and cardiovascular surgery.

“Our goals are to facilitate the development of academic surgical programs in all of the pediatric surgical specialties,” Lally said, when asked about his priorities for the new program. “We hope to develop a strong cadre of surgeons and scientists in the many different specialties, to develop fellowship training programs, and to work in close collaboration with both the academic surgical departments and the Department of Pediatrics.”

Lally received his medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine and completed his residency and chief residency in surgery at the Keesler Air Force Base Medical Center in Biloxi, Miss. He completed his pediatric surgery training at Los Angeles Children’s Hospital. Lally also received a master’s degree in clinical research from the Medical School’s Center for Clinical Research and Evidence-Based Medicine. He is board certified in surgery, pediatric surgery, and surgical critical care. He also is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

“I think this is a great opportunity to continue the development of academic and clinical programs for children’s specialty services here at the Medical School and the Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital,” Lally said.

-C. Webb

School of Public Health to attend.

“We’re trying to take advantage of all the different health care team members we have at the health science center,” Patel said.

“As we progressed with the series, our goal eventually became to make it more of an interactive series for physicians and students,” Muallem added. “We thought it would be a great way to bring everyone together.”

The keynote talk for the ethics series will explore how the pharmaceutical industry influences medical practice. It was important to Patel and Muallem to present both sides of the issue.

For that reason, they chose to have a moderated debate between **Dr. Howard Brody**, director of The Institute for the Medical Humanities at The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston and author of the book *Hooked: How Medicine’s Dependence on the Pharmaceutical Industry Undermines Professional Ethics*, and **Dr. Paul Antony**, chief medical officer of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA).

Muallem said she feels the pharmaceutical industry’s influence on medicine is a major issue faced by medical students today.

“With the recent changes at schools like Stanford and UPenn that have now banned pharmaceutical representatives from their medical campuses, this topic is becoming one that will have a significant future impact on medical education,” she said. “It is an issue of growing concern and awareness, and we hope to bring it to the attention of all members of the medical community with this presentation.”

The debate also is sponsored by The Arnold P. Gold Foundation.

-C. Webb



Dr. Howard Brody



Dr. Paul Antony

Art Wall seeking entries

The Medical School’s Art Wall has a new way to accept submissions and is seeking art for the fall exhibit, which will show Aug. 30-Nov. 28. Forms may be downloaded from the Art Wall’s new and improved Web site at <http://med.uth.tmc.edu/administration/dean/artwall>, filled out, and then e-mailed to ms.artwall@uth.tmc.edu. Those who submitted entries via e-mail over the past few months are encouraged to resubmit to this new e-mail address.

Clay Walker gift, cont’d.

Over the years, Walker’s Band Against MS Foundation has given \$350,000 for MS research at the Medical School. Walker founded the foundation in 2003 to educate others about the disease and provide funding for research.

“It’s incredible to be able to give back to our community. I was diagnosed with MS 10 years ago – right before I started my career,” Walker said, who has had relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis since 1996. “I think I’m healthier now than I’ve ever been in my life.”

Multiple sclerosis is a chronic, neurological disease that attacks the central nervous system. There is no cure, but treatments and therapeutic approaches help to enhance the quality of life for people living with the disease.

Walker had some words of wisdom for those living with MS. “Don’t panic,” he said. “You’re going to be able to manage it.”

-C. Webb