

Events to Know

April

11 Henrys W. Withers Lectureship in Family Medicine: Dr. Richard Wender (American Cancer Society) to present "What It Will Take to Reduce Cancer Mortality in the U.S." 1-2 p.m., MSB 2.135.

16 Surgeon and writer Dr. Atul Gawande to lecture and read from his new book, *Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance*. Noon, MSB 3.001. Free lunch available for first 75 attendees.

Date change: Please note the date for the next MSRDP Board Meeting is April 16. It will be from 4-6 p.m. in MSB 2.103. All members invited.

UTMost Interest

Dr. Pedro Ruiz, professor and vice chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, was inducted as an honorary member of the Spanish Psychiatric Society during the X Annual National Congress in Sevilla, Spain, and he delivered the keynote lecture of this congress on "Ethnicity and Psychopharmacology." Ruiz also was made an honorary member of the Bolivian Psychiatric Association during the IX National Congress in Sucre, Bolivia.

Dr. Kathleen Becan-McBride, professor of family practice and community medicine, was elected vice chair of the Board of Registry Board of Governors for the American Society for Clinical Pathology, which has more than 140,000 national members and now international members.

Dr. John Byrne, professor and chair of the Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy, was elected chair of the Section on Neuroscience of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

CCTS announces first round of K12 award winners

Three junior faculty members and one postdoctoral fellow are the first K12 recipients at the Medical School from the Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences (CCTS). The K12 award is a training program that provides 50-75 percent salary support for up to three years and \$15,000-\$25,000 research funds per year for junior investigators to conduct clinical or translational research studies under the mentorship of senior faculty mentors.

"K12 funding provides a wonderful opportunity for young clinical and translational investigators here to obtain support for their career development," said **Dr. Jon Tyson**, chair of the CCTS K12 Advisory Committee and assistant dean for clinical research. "The K12 awards provided through the CCTS involve a shorter proposal and a much faster review and availability of funding than do K awards submitted to the National Institutes of Health."

Dr. Kenneth Helmer, assistant professor of surgery, received support for his research proposal titled "The Anti-Inflammatory Role of Ketamine in Thoracoabdominal Aortic Aneurysm Repair." Helmer will work with mentor **Dr. David Mercer**, professor and vice chair of surgery and chief of surgery at Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital.

"The study is concisely designed, innovative, potentially important, carefully designed to avoid biased results, and relatively straight forward to conduct," K12 reviewers said of Helmer's study.

Dr. Mary Ruppe, assistant professor of internal medicine in the Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, will study "Growth Determinants in X-linked Hypophosphatemic Rickets," under the mentorship of **Dr. Dianna Milewicz**, professor and director of the Division of Medical Genetics, and **Dr. Jacqueline Hecht**, professor of pediatrics.

Ruppe will use clinical, genetic, and biochemical approaches to examine X-linked hypophosphatemic rickets – a rare, genetic disease among children that causes bowing of the legs, bone pain, and dental deformities. "It has a high likelihood of yielding important information on much needed genotype-phenotype correlations," K12 reviewers said.

Dr. Keri Smith, research instructor in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, *(Cont'd. on back)*

Potts elected to American Board of Surgery

Dr. John Potts, professor and program director in the Department of Surgery, has been elected a director of the American Board of Surgery. Potts, assistant dean for Graduate Medical Education, will serve a six-year term beginning July 1.

"The American Board of Surgery is one of the most prestigious surgical groups in the world. Dr. Potts' appointment as a director of this board is the highest recognition of his leadership in American surgery and reflects well on our department and medical school," said **Dr. Richard Andrassy**, professor and chair of the Department of Surgery. "We are proud of his achievements and the recognition we receive from his work."

The American Board of Surgery is an independent, nonprofit organization founded in 1937 for the purpose of certifying surgeons who have met a defined standard of education, training, and knowledge.

Surgeons certified by the ABS have completed a minimum of five years of surgical residency training following medical school and successfully completed a written and oral examination process administered by the ABS.

As a director, one of Potts' duties will be to improve and broaden the opportunities for the graduate education and training of surgeons. He also will participate in the administration of a comprehensive certification process for general, pediatric, vascular, surgical critical care, and hand surgeons.



Dr. John Potts

-M. Raine



Wanchoo serves as state Legislature's 'Family Physician of the Day'

Dr. Ruchi Wanchoo, a resident in the Department of Family Practice and Community Medicine, volunteered to serve as the Family Physician of the Day for the 80th Texas Legislature March 20.



Dr. Ruchi Wanchoo

Physicians participating in the Family Physician of the Day program volunteer their time to staff the Capitol Health Services Clinic in Austin. Wanchoo is a resident member of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians (TAFP), the state's largest medical specialty organization, which directs the program.

As Family Physician of the Day, Wanchoo was available to treat emergencies in the Capitol building or on the grounds. Her primary concern was the care and well-being of the legislators and their staffs because many of them reside in Austin only during the legislative session and do not have primary care physicians in the capital. Wanchoo was introduced in the House and Senate by legislators **Rep. Ellen Cohen** and **Sen. Rodney Ellis**, and her name was recorded as part of the official legislative record.

A TAFP member is scheduled to serve in the clinic each day of the 80th Legislature. More than 2,500 family physicians have participated in the program since it began in 1971.

Source: TAFP

Wender to present Withers Lectureship



Dr. Richard Wender

Dr. Richard Wender, president of the American Cancer Society, will present the Henry W. Withers Lectureship in Family Medicine on "What It Will Take to Reduce Cancer Mortality in the U.S." at 1 p.m. Wednesday, April 11 in room 2.135 of the Medical School. Wender is also alumni professor and chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

A graduate of Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Wender completed his family medicine residency at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital before joining the faculty in 1982. He served as residency director of the Jefferson program from 1985 to 1995 and vice chair from 1995 to 2002 at which time he was chosen as department chair.

His academic career has been dedicated to diabetes and cancer control, particularly colon cancer prevention. He has published extensively and served in numerous leadership positions related to cancer and diabetes. On Nov. 16, 2006, he was elected president of the American Cancer Society at the national level, the first primary care clinician to occupy the office.

K12 awards, cont'd.

will study "Chemical Immunology Concepts and Their Possible Use in the Clinical Setting." Smith will work with two mentors, **Dr. Sudhir Paul**, professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, and **Dr. W. Keith Hoots**, professor of pediatrics.

"Dr. Smith has an outstanding publication record in the fields of immunology and vaccine design," K12 reviewers said. "She has put herself in a position to maximize her immunological skills while incorporating the novel strategies for inducing B cell tolerance to Factor VIII."

Dr. Mary Kay Koenig, fellow in pediatric neurology, will conduct research titled "Mitochondrial Dysfunction." Her mentors are **Dr. Diane Hickson-Bick**, associate professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, and **Dr. Hope Northrup**, professor and director of the Division of Pediatric Genetics.

Through her study, Koenig will assess the impact of a ketonic diet for the treatment of mitochondrial mutation-related diseases. "This candidate has backgrounds in biochemistry, microbiology, and medicine that provide her an outstanding foundation to perform this clinical translational research in mitochondrial disorder," K12 reviewers said.

K12 recipients also include a fellow and an assistant professor at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, **Dr. Elizabeth Plimack** and **Dr. Wendy Woodward**, respectively.

The CCTS is currently accepting applications, due 8 a.m. Monday, April 16, for its next round of K12 awards (see below).

-C. Webb

Reminder: CCTS K12 applications due April 16

The deadline to submit applications for the Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences' K12 training program is 8 a.m. Monday, April 16. The application requires only five pages for the description of the proposed research.

The program provides salary support for up to 75 percent protected time for up to three years for instructors and assistant professors and up to two years for fellows. Research funds – \$25,000 for faculty and \$15,000 for fellows – also will be provided. One to two medical fellows, one to three medical or clinical instructors or assistant professors (with MD, DO, DDS, or DSN degrees), and one health professional instructor or assistant professor (with a PhD, DPH or PharmD degree) with a strong interest in clinical or translational research are expected to be selected. All applicants must be engaged in or preparing to conduct clinical or translational research and able to complete the entire funding period at the UT Health Science Center at Houston or M. D. Anderson Cancer Center.

Each trainee will conduct a clinical or translational research study under the supervision of one to two senior faculty mentors. The K12 Advisory Board will select awardees based upon the qualifications of the trainee and mentor(s) and the scientific merit of the research proposal and training plan.

Call **Drs. Jon Tyson** or **Robert Lasky** at 713.500.5651.

Calling all volunteers! Volunteers are needed to give their time, talent, and energy for a great cause – UT House Medics, which celebrates its 16th year of helping elderly homeowners whose dwellings need repair, repainting, additions of ramps, and more to allow them to age in place in their homes. In recent years, program participants have improved up to five homes during the spring home repair, renovating the exteriors of more than 60 homes since 1991.

Workdays for volunteers are Saturday, April 14 and Saturday, April 21. Each home requires a team leader and 50-60 volunteers. Volunteers are provided with a light breakfast, lunch, and a T-shirt. No experience is necessary – there's something for volunteers of all ages to do. Potential team leaders should call **Krysti Suarez** at 713.500.2241 or **Dennie Clemons** at 713.500.2235 to sign up.

For details, see <http://is.hsc.uth.tmc.edu/projects/housemed.html>.