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Boston University



**Boston
University
Medical
Campus**

Campus UPDATE

January 1991 Vol. 3 No. 1

Spring break program offered for children of employees

The Parent Services Department of Boston University offers employees a program for their children who are in kindergarten through fifth grade during the public school breaks in February and March. The first session runs Feb. 19-22; the second runs April 16-19. Each session begins on a Tuesday, because both Mondays are holidays. The programs, which run from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., cost \$110 each. Activities will include gymnastics, basketball, ice skating, music, soccer and arts and crafts. For more information, call the Parent Services Department, at 353-5954. □

Slone Epidemiology group studies environmental hazards

A nationally known and frequently cited unit of the Medical Campus is not even located at the South End site. The staff of the School of Medicine's Slone Epidemiology Unit (SEU) carry out a quiet but significant mission from a Coolidge Corner, Brookline, office building. SEU researchers work to identify and quantify the occurrence of environmentally induced diseases in humans. By focusing on a variety of diseased populations in their studies, the researchers attempt to determine whether a particular pharmaceutical drug, environmental condition or surgical procedure caused a given disease. The results of a study can dispel concern over an allegedly hazardous environmental factor—or confirm that it is, in fact, harmful to humans.



Slone Epidemiology Unit Director Samuel (Syd) Shapiro, M.B., F.R.C.P., co-founded the program 15 years ago.

When SEU was founded 15 years ago, the staff focused strictly on the impact of certain pharmaceutical drugs on people. Today, the staff, which has grown from 15 to 60, has expanded its focus and breadth to include the study of a variety of environmental factors, striking all age groups. The

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Frequently asked questions about BU's new dental plan

With the Boston University Dental Health Plan taking effect in just a few weeks, the Office of Personnel has provided answers to some questions commonly asked about the program. The plan, which provides dental coverage ranging from preventive care to specialized dental surgery, will be available for regular faculty and staff who currently are eligible for the University's health plan, as well as for their eligible dependents. Eligible dependents include employees' spouses; unmarried children up to age 19; unmarried children between the ages of 19 and 25 who are full-time students; and physically or mentally handicapped children of any age. The plan takes effect Feb. 1.

Q.: Does the Boston University dental health plan just provide payment coverage or does it provide treatment, as well?

A.: The University will offer comprehensive dental care, as well as insurance coverage. A full dental staff made up of faculty and staff affiliated with the Goldman School of Graduate Dentistry staff will provide treatment in two state-of-the-art facilities, one at the School of Graduate Dentistry at 100 East Newton Street, and one on the Charles River Campus, at 930 Commonwealth Avenue.

Q.: I already have a dental plan. Why should I consider switching to the Boston University Dental Plan?

A.: The fees of the Boston University dental centers are approximately 40 percent lower than those of private services in the Boston area, and the two locations offer proximity for most employees. In addition, the high-quality care offered is assured by the demanding standards of the faculty of the Goldman School of Graduate Dentistry. You'll also be able to receive all your care under one roof at the centers.

Q.: Can I choose which dentist I wish to see at the Boston University dental centers?

A.: Yes. You can select the doctor that you wish to see. Each center has permanent staff members, including dentists and hygienists. This group covers all dental specialties, including orthodontics and pediatric dentistry.

Q.: How do I pay for coverage under the Boston University Dental Plan?

A.: The payroll office will deduct \$3 a month (individual plan) or \$7 a month (family plan) for your

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The holidays are over, but the photographs let us remember. See page 3.

Department Profile

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team's studies have ranged from trying to determine whether estrogen causes endometrial cancer in women (it does), to whether vasectomy increases the risk of heart disease in men (it does not). SEU assembles national, and sometimes international, data banks to permit the evaluation of hypotheses concerning putative hazards that arise from a variety of sources, including case reports and animal experiments. The unit is considered one of the preeminent epidemiologic research centers in the country. SEU's staff consists of specialists in epidemiology, adult and pediatric medicine, nursing, pharmacology, biostatistics and computer science. The late Dennis Slone, M.D., and Samuel "Syd" Shapiro, M.B., F.R.C.P., who were close friends from their native South Africa, founded the research unit. Dr. Slone had lured his old friend to the

United States in 1967. They served as co-directors of the SEU until Dr. Slone's death in 1986. The unit, originally the Drug Epidemiology Unit, was renamed in 1986 in Dr. Slone's honor.

Drs. Slone and Shapiro distinguished the SEU by pioneering a new research process, called the case-control surveillance method. With this technique, researchers compare the medical histories of a group of people with a series of particular illnesses, the "cases," to the histories of a pool of people representing a wide range of diseases, the "controls". They try to determine whether certain factors were more common in the cases' histories than in the control population. Through this comparison, they attempt to determine whether certain phar-

maceutical drugs, environmental hazards or surgical techniques caused the condition in the case population.

An alternative form of research calls for observing a large cohort of apparently healthy people over a period

of many years to try to determine what factors cause some of the people to develop a specific disease,

as is done in the School of Medicine's Framingham Study. When carried out responsibly, the SEU's case-control method can be a cost-efficient means of developing data on epidemiologic trends, because it draws data on a number of diseases at once, according to Allen A. Mitchell, M.D., the associate director of SEU. The danger of this type of study is that a physician will draw a hasty conclusion by gathering data on only a small number of people and do so incomplete-

ly, he said. "If [the study] isn't done carefully, you can come up with results that are not valid," he said. SEU is supported primarily through grants and contracts from federal agencies and by the pharmaceutical industry, which commissions the researchers to evaluate drugs that are suspected of being hazardous. Being paid by the very companies whose drugs are being scrutinized has not compromised SEU's integrity, according to Mitchell. A key to the group's excellent reputation, he said, is its willingness to present negative findings about drugs whose manufacturers have sponsored the studies. SEU will commit to doing research only for companies that give the researchers the freedom to fully explore and publish the findings. "We're known as being fairly prickly," Mitchell said. "It's a reputation we relish." SEU researchers have also demonstrated their integrity by showing their willingness to admit when they have drawn an inaccurate conclusion about a product, Mitchell added. □

"We're known as being fairly prickly. It's a reputation we relish."

Allen A. Mitchell, M.D.

Dental plan Q & A; info meetings to run through January

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coverage under the dental plan. At the centers, you will have no out-of-pocket expenses for many services. You will make any co-payment required directly to the center. If you go to an outside dentist but want coverage under the dental plan, you must pay for the outside service on each visit. You will then be reimbursed by the dental plan according to the coverages outlined in the plan.

Q.: I am in the process of having a root canal performed. May I get coverage under the Boston University Dental Plan for this work?

A.: No. Dental work that is currently in process will

not be covered by the plan. However, if you already have received a root canal, the plan will cover the cost of putting a crown on your tooth. Also, a pre-existing condition that has not yet been treated can be covered.

Q.: If I have medical problems, will the dental centers be able to give me the injections of antibiotics that I need to receive before having dental treatment?

A.: Yes. The dental centers will be able to give you injections of antibiotics.

Q.: What if I want the dental coverage but want to go to an outside dental center for treatment?

A.: Employees and their dependents participating in the dental program who want to receive care from

an outside dentist may do so. In most cases, the plan will pay them an allowance toward the cost of the outside treatment. Employees must receive a pretreatment estimate for outside dental work that will cost more than \$200 by submitting a claim to the Boston University Dental Plan for an evaluation before the work is performed.

Informational briefings will be held in January (see schedule, this page). If you are unable to attend one of these meetings, but have questions, you may contact the personnel office's benefits section, at 638-4610 (x4610). □

Dates and hours of dental plan briefings:

Tuesday, Jan. 22, 10 a.m. to noon; 2 to 4 p.m. Charles River Campus (CRC), George Sherman Union (GSU), room 320-321.

Wednesday, Jan. 23, 10 a.m. to noon; 2 to 4 p.m., CRC, GSU, room 315.

Thursday, Jan. 24, 10 a.m. to noon; 2 to 4 p.m., CRC, GSU, room 315.

Friday, Jan. 25, 10 a.m. to noon; 2 to 4 p.m., Boston University Medical Center, Atrium C/D.

Monday, Jan. 28, 10 a.m. to noon; 2 to 4 p.m., CRC, GSU, room 315.

Tuesday, Jan. 29, 10 a.m. to noon; 2 to 4 p.m., Boston University Medical Center, Atrium C/D.

Wednesday, Jan. 30, 10 a.m. to noon; 2 to 4 p.m., CRC, GSU, room 315. □

Campus payroll, purchasing systems upgraded

As part of an ongoing effort to make financial information more accessible and more timely for employees, the University has upgraded the Personnel/Payroll System and made modifications to the Purchasing/Accounts Payable system documents. Two new documents for purchasing/accounts-payable processing provide more information about your pur-

chase and allow for more timely and efficient order and payment processing. The "Advice of Purchase" form replaced the purchase order and provides detailed information for each order placed with a vendor. The "Accounts Payable Receipt Acknowledgement" form, generated by the Accounts Payable system, will be used

to verify that materials have been received or services have been provided, and to authorize Accounts Payable to pay the vendor. Invoice Transmittals will no longer have to be completed for these purchase-order transactions.

The new Payroll/Personnel system has also produced changes in reporting.

Detailed salary information for departmental budgets is now provided on weekly Labor Distribution Reports with one summary entry for each salary object code on the Budget Status Report. There is no change for Restricted Fund Reports—the detail salary information continues to be listed on this monthly report. □



The Anatomy department staff got down to the important work of feeding their anatomies. Phillipp Massengill, a technician, and Lawrence Zoller, PhD., partook.

It was late December, and they said, 'Let the party begin.'



Luciano "Lou" Lidano, a general mechanic in the Facilities Management department, feasted with holiday spirit.



The Biophysics department celebrated with style. Kumkum Saxena, a graduate student, and Jyotsna Shah, a postdoctoral candidate, look on with a bit of uncertainty at Shastri Bhamidipati, a postdoctoral candidate.

Three lunchtime programs offer tips to working parents

Boston University Parent Services Department will offer a series of brown-bag lunchtime programs for working parents during February, March and April. Employees interested in attending these programs should contact the department at 638-4563 (x4563). The programs will be presented by Nikki Sibley, the director of parent services at Boston University and a past director of the University's day care centers, and Peggy Kociubes, the coordinator of child-care resources and referral at the University Hospital, and a 15-year veteran of helping parents find child care.

The following programs will be offered:

February 27, noon to 1 p.m.: How to find good child care. How to find and

evaluate child care, and how to set up an effective working relationship with your child-care provider will be the topics presented.

March 20, noon to 1 p.m.: **Stressed and Stretched—Is this the only way to go?**

This seminar explores the roots of the pressure of managing work and a family, looking at why people feel pressure and what they can do about it. The goal of this program is to learn ways to deal with the stress.

April 24, noon to 1 p.m.: **Managing personal time.**

People's work lives tend to be very structured. This seminar will look at whether people give enough consideration to the way they spend their personal time and will help them consider whether they could make productive changes. □

Security lock can deter theft

Because computers, facsimile and copy machines, television sets and videocassette recorders are a target of thieves, Director of Security Richard G. Natoli recommends that employees take precautions to secure them. At least, he said, employees should lock their offices at the end of each day. Those people who think their equipment is particularly susceptible to being stolen should consider using a security device that links the equipment via a steel cable to a desk or wall. Natoli and Director of Purchasing for the Medical Campus Richard Bradshaw said there are several security systems that will provide additional protection for valuable equipment. As each type of equipment and location may suggest a different solution, interested employees should contact the security or purchasing offices for specific recommendations.

Natoli urges employees with further questions about security of their equipment to call him, at x4166. □

PC User Group meets this month

The next lunch-bag meeting of the PC User Group will be held on Jan. 17, in the Instructional Building, room 301, from noon to 1 p.m. A presentation will be made of Harvard Graphics 2.3 software, by Judy Jasvrek-Parker of Software Publishing Corp. The discussion, as usual, will be informal. The PC User Group is sponsored by the Medical Campus Office of Information Technology and the University Hospital Computer and Information Center. □

Employee health screenings offered

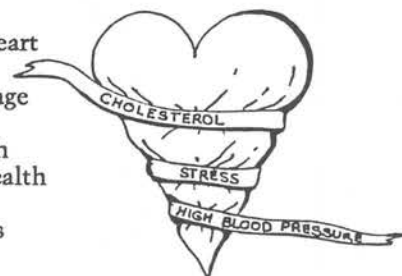
As part of the Medical Center's effort to fight heart disease and to help employees learn to manage the stress in their lives, The Occupational Health Program of Employee Health Services will be offering three screening programs during the next three months.

Blood-pressure screening:

Hypertension (high blood pressure) is the most prevalent cardiovascular problem for adults today. Staff from the Employee Health Service will conduct free blood-pressure screenings and consultation to all employees of the Medical Center on the H-2 bridge in the University Hospital on Friday, Jan. 25, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Cholesterol screening—Be kind to your heart:

Cholesterol screenings will be held on Friday, Feb. 15, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., on the H-2 bridge. Persons un-



able to attend that day may have their cholesterol levels checked in the Occupational Health Services clinic in D-209 during the week beginning Monday, Feb. 18. The staff will make suggestions on nutritious diets to follow.

Stress—Managing the unexpected:

On Friday, March 22, the Occupational Health program will present a display on the H-2 bridge on the effects of stress in a person's life. Included will be a self-assessment inventory to help employees determine how likely they are to be affected by stressors and ways to reduce stress in their lives. □



Joanne Cirame, a financial analyst in the Medical Campus Office of Financial and Business Affairs, ran her first marathon in November, in Newport, R.I. She now has her sights set on running the Boston marathon this spring. Cirame, 24, has been running since she was a child growing up in Arlington. During those years she ran in track and field events and ran in an annual 3-mile race. □

Campus Update is published monthly by the Boston University Medical Campus Office of Business Affairs: William J. Gasper, associate vice president. Article ideas may be addressed to Mr. Gasper or to Michael J. Donovan, director of Personnel. The publication is produced by the Office of Publication Services: Owen J. McNamara, director; Jennifer C. O'Brien, editor/writer; Catherine LeBlanc, designer.