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Boston University

News & Notes

Boston University School of Medicine



Issue #61
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SANDSON, ABERCROMBIE, FRANKL NAMED BUMC DEPUTY DIRECTORS

Dean Sandson has been appointed deputy director of the Medical Center for medical affairs by BUMC Director Richard H. Egdahl, M.D. Egdahl also appointed University Hospital President J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., M.D., a clinical professor of pathology and medicine, to the position of deputy director for hospital affairs, and Goldman School of Graduate Dentistry Dean Spencer Frankl, D.D.S., as deputy director for dental affairs.

In a January letter informing Medical Center officials of the appointments, Egdahl said the three will "continue to function in their day-to-day roles as the chief administrative officers of their respective institutions. In addition, I have asked each to take on a broader role of concern for the integrity of the Medical Center.

"These appointments emphasize the continuing importance of developing mutually satisfactory responses to the opportunities and challenges that confront all of the constituent members of the Medical Center. The difficult financial situations with which the Hospital and the Schools must cope make such cooperation among our member institutions more imperative than ever," he said in the letter.

STUDY: SMOKERS' CARBON MONOXIDE INTAKE NOT REDUCED BY FLITERS

Smoking filtered or "light" cigarettes does not cut down on a person's intake of carbon monoxide, which may be a cause of heart disease, according to a study released by William P. Castelli, M.D., an adjunct assistant professor of medicine and director of the world-renowned Boston University/Framingham Heart Study.

Castelli announced these latest findings, the result of a project involving all existing brands of cigarettes, at a recent meeting of the American Heart Association. Researchers studied approximately 800 middle-aged men and women involved in the Framingham Heart Study. Subjects were asked not to smoke at all on the day of the test, which involved holding air in the lungs for about 30 seconds, then exhaling into a bag. An analyzer was used to measure the amount of carbon monoxide coming out of the lungs.

Researchers found there was either no difference or slightly more carbon monoxide present in the lungs of filter cigarette smokers than non-filter smokers. Further, they found that on some occasions, non-smokers who lived with smokers also had high levels of carbon monoxide.

Carbon monoxide is believed to lead to atherosclerosis by weakening blood vessels. Cholesterol, which narrows and hardens arteries, is deposited more easily on carbon monoxide-weakened vessels.

According to Castelli, a possible explanation for the results is that people who smoke filtered or "light" cigarettes may inhale more smoke, puff more frequently, hold the smoke in longer or smoke more cigarettes. Castelli, himself a former smoker, concluded, "It's better to quit smoking than to switch to filter cigarettes because a safe cigarette doesn't exist. This latest finding is just another link in the chain of evidence against cigarettes."

BEMC RECEIVES GO-AHEAD ON
EMERGENCY HELICOPTER SERVICE

The state Department of Public Health has given the go-ahead to University Hospital, Boston City Hospital and the New England Medical Center to operate an emergency helicopter service that will speed medical expertise to critically injured and seriously ill patients within a 150-mile radius of Boston.

The three hospitals together form the Boston Emergency Medical Center that will run the round-the-clock "mobile intensive care unit."

Lenworth M. Jacobs, M.D., medical director of BEMC and newly appointed BUSM assistant dean of emergency medical services (see story below), expects the helicopter service to begin operations sometime this spring. The helicopter, to be staffed by highly trained pilots and critical care nurses under the direction of physicians experienced in trauma, will be jet-powered and will carry monitoring and other advanced life-support equipment.

LENWORTH JACOBS NAMED
ASSISTANT DEAN OF EMS

Lenworth M. Jacobs, M.D., an associate professor of surgery, has been named assistant dean of emergency medical services by Dean Sandson.

The newly created position is designed to give an academic presence to emergency medical services, said Jacobs. Jacobs, who staffs EMS and trains residents in treating trauma victims, has been working to establish similar EMS programs overseas.

Recently, Jacobs was principal investigator in a project funded by the Jamaican Ministry of Health to establish an emergency medical system in Jamaica, Jacobs' homeland. The project included obtaining ambulances and radios as well as training Jamaican health professionals in basic emergency room procedures and triage. The new system aims to provide a consistent approach to the delivery of emergency care throughout the island.

Jacobs joined the BUSM staff in 1976 as an assistant professor of surgery and prior to that was a resident at University Hospital.

COCHIN NEW CHAIRMAN
OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Joseph Cochin, M.D., Ph.D., a professor of pharmacology and psychiatry, has been appointed chairman of the Medical Center's Institutional Review Board. The appointment, effective Jan. 1, was announced by Richard H. Egdahl, M.D., director of the Medical Center.

Cochin succeeds Michael Klein, M.D., an associate professor of medicine and physician coordinator of University Hospital's Coronary Care Unit. Klein had chaired the IRB since July 1978. In announcing the new appointment, Egdahl paid tribute to Klein's leadership of the board, citing his "yeoman's work" in chairing an important committee for such a long period.

On behalf of the Schools of Medicine and Graduate Dentistry and of University Hospital, the 27-member IRB screens the protocols of proposed research that involves human subjects. The board is composed of representatives of the three institutions as well as community representatives. Vesna Williams, the IRB coordinator, can be reached at x5572.

CULBERT NAMED ASSISTANT DEAN
OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Arthur J. Culbert, Ph.D., former assistant to the dean, recently was appointed assistant dean of student affairs. In this position he will coordinate all student career advising.

In naming Culbert to the post, Dean Sandson said, "I am extremely pleased with his appointment and I look forward to major accomplishments from him in the field of special medical education programs."

During Culbert's two years as assistant to the dean, he directed the BUSM portion of the Modular Medical Integrated Curriculum (MMEDIC) program. The MMEDIC program is an eight-year degree program designed to integrate a liberal arts education with basic medical sciences. He will continue to direct this program in his new post.

Culbert has been on the BUSM staff for eight years, working for six of these as a research associate in the Department of Socio-Medical Sciences and Community Medicine.

CONVERTING BODY FAT IS KEY TO
SURVIVING A FAST, STUDY SAYS

Converting body fat to fuel may be the key to surviving a prolonged fast or famine, according to a report released by Michael N. Goodman, Ph.D., an associate research professor of medicine and physiology, and Neil B. Ruderman, M.D., a professor of medicine and physiology.

Goodman, Ruderman and graduate student Bradford Lowell, who have been studying the effect of starvation on rat metabolism since 1976, found that obese rats were able to survive about twice as long as rats of normal weight. Other experiments revealed that the obese rats were better able to maintain muscle protein synthesis due to their ability to break down body fats for fuel, thereby conserving protein that is essential for survival.

The researchers' findings were reported at the annual meeting of the American Physiological Society recently held in San Diego.

ENDOWMENT FUND ESTABLISHED
IN MEMORY OF ANTHONY GORMAN

Colleagues of Anthony Gorman, Ph.D., a BUSM professor of physiology who died recently of a heart ailment at age 50, have set up an endowment fund in his memory. Proceeds of the A.L.F. Gorman Physiology Prize Fund will be used to award an annual prize to the best student in physiology at BUSM.

In a letter to the BUSM community, fund organizers said Gorman's death came "at a time of his greatest scientific productivity. In addition to having lost a great friend, we will miss his careful and imaginative contributions to physiology. We believe that this fund is a fitting honor to Tony's memory."

Contributions to the Fund may be sent to the Department of Physiology, L-708 (Boston University School of Medicine, 80 East Concord St., Boston, MA 02118).

PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION Kenneth C. Edelin, M.D., a professor and
NAMES EDELIN VICE CHAIRPERSON chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and
Gynecology, has been elected to a one-year
term as vice chairperson of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

"As a member of our national board during the last four years, Dr. Edelin has contributed greatly toward furthering the goals of Planned Parenthood. We are honored to receive such dedicated support from a truly remarkable individual," said PPFA Chairperson Jean Mahoney.

Edelin, who is gynecologist-in-chief at University Hospital and director of Boston City Hospital's obstetrics and gynecology department, has served since 1980 as medical director of the Boston Family Planning Project. He also is a fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and is a past president of the New England Medical Society.

PPFA is a voluntary family planning agency with 190 community-based affiliates in 42 states and the District of Columbia.

BUSM STUDENT TRAINEE Second-year BUSM student Christopher H. Lowrey
IN JOSLIN SUMMER PROGRAM studied new techniques for the separation and
analysis of glycosalated hemoglobin in a
laboratory traineeship at the Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston this past
summer. One of five students awarded the traineeship, Lowrey studied the ways
in which glucose combines with hemoglobin at the biochemical level.

Lowrey, who has a master's degree in biochemistry, studied in the lab of J. Stuart Soeldner, M.D., a senior investigator at the Joslin Research Laboratory. Lowrey now is working there on a part-time basis.

According to Lowrey, previously it had taken up to several days for separation and analysis of glycosalated hemoglobin, while the newer methods work in minutes. "Time is essential when studying reactions that are over in a matter of a few hours," he added. Such research is useful in long-term patient control and in the study of diabetes complications, he said.

The summer traineeship program was established in 1980 by the Dorothy L. Frank Tribute Fund, an endowment intended to encourage interest in diabetes research.

BUSM FACULTY MEMBERS TO BE Three Department of Continuing Medical
FEATURED AT UPCOMING COURSES Education courses to be held in Vermont in
the next two months will feature several

School of Medicine faculty members.

"Diseases of the Bladder and Prostrate," co-sponsored by the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University and the BUSM Department of Urology, will be held Feb. 7 to 11 at Smugglers' Notch in Jeffersonville, Vt. Robert J. Krane, M.D., a professor and chairman of the Department of Urology, is co-director of the course.

The Department of Pediatrics will sponsor a course titled "Current Clinical Pediatrics" to explore concepts and difficult problems in patient management. It will be held Feb. 28 to March 4 at Smugglers' Notch and will be directed by Stephen I. Pelton, M.D., an associate professor of pediatrics.

In addition, a course titled "Emergency Treatment of Orthopedic and Sports Injuries" sponsored by the Department of Orthopedic Surgery will be held Feb. 27 to March 4 in Stowe, Vt. It will be directed by George Whitelaw, M.D., an assistant professor of orthopedic surgery and director of the West Suburban Sports Clinic in Waltham, Mass.

BUMC BLOOD DRIVE
SLATED FOR FEBRUARY

A BUMC Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on Feb. 22 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Hiebert Lounge on the 14th floor of the Instructional Building. Boston, the largest blood-using community in the United States, needs about 1,500 pints of blood daily to meet the needs of 200 area hospitals. All faculty and staff will be receiving sign-up sheets through the mail. For more information, contact John Zamagni at x6025 or x5758.

COLONNADE RUN EARNS \$16,000:
TIFFT ORGANIZES EVENT

More than 20 BUMC physicians joined 200 fellow New England physicians in the fifth annual Colonnade Doctors' Run recently held to raise money for the American Heart Association. Charles P. Tifft, M.D., an assistant professor of medicine, who is chairman of funding the Greater Boston Division of the AHA, organized the event in which runners raised nearly \$16,000. Tifft placed ninth in the race.

Tifft also recently spoke in a program titled "Health Care and Hospital Pharmacy Practice: New Concepts" held in Newport, R.I.

BUMC BUSINESS OFFICE MAKES
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

In order to improve fiscal controls in the Medical Center Business Office, the following changes have been made, according to Robert N. Jordan, BUMC business manager.

Herbert Lewis, former accounting manager, was promoted to assistant business manager. In addition to his other duties, he will oversee the accounting functions related to international grants and contracts.

Anne DerHagopian, former budget coordinator, was promoted to assistant director, grant and contract administration. Along with her other duties, she will plan, develop and maintain a resource library that will contain reference materials on funding sources, proposal development and regulation manuals concerning the administration of projects that are awarded.

Linda Mellen, former administrative assistant to the business manager for medical affairs, was promoted to budget coordinator. She will oversee operating budget allocations as well as acting as liaison between the deans of the medical and dental schools and their respective department chairpersons.

In addition, Cathy Bryant, former assistant to the director for grant and contract administration, was named fiscal assistant for international programs, and Margaret Calla, former accounting supervisor, was promoted to accounting manager.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Joseph J. Vitale, Sc.D., M.D., associate dean for international health and director of the BUSM nutrition education program, recently spoke at the American Dental Association's Sixth Annual Conference on Food, Nutrition and Dental Health. He discussed the general host defense mechanisms involved in, or affected by nutrition and how they relate to periodontal disease defense systems....Robert G. Feldman, M.D., a professor and chairman of the Department of Neurology, spoke on "How to Help Parkinson's Patients Help Themselves" at a recent meeting of the Newton-Wellesley Parkinson Support Group.

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