

Women's Health E-News Summer 2009

WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWS AT VCU

VCU Medical Center physicians recognized as Top Docs for Women in Richmond magazine survey

More than 30 physicians from the VCU Medical Center were recognized as Top Docs for Women, as chosen by their peers in the April issue of Richmond magazine. The physicians were nominated in more than 40 categories from cosmetic surgery to cervical cancer to dermatology. Wendy S. Klein, M.D., associate professor emeritus of medicine, obstetrics and gynecology at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, also was recognized as a special honoree for her continued work as a physician advocate. Twenty-five VCU Medical Center physicians received the top vote-getter positions, including Doug Arthur (Breast Radiation); Gilda Cardenosa (Breast MRIs); Stephen Chen (Body Contouring); Ellen Brock (General Gynecology, Vulvar Lesions/Vulvodynia, Menopause); Stephen Cohen (Gynecologic Surgery); Catherine Matthews (Urogynecology and Pelvic Floor Disorders); Lenore Buckley (Arthritis/Rheumatology, Autoimmune, Fibromyalgia); Julia Nunley (Dermatology); Joann Bodurtha (Genetic Counseling); Peter Boling (Geriatric Medicine); Ruma Adams (Internal Medicine/Primary Care); Elizabeth Waterhouse (Migraines, Neurology); Robert Downs (Osteoporosis); Simon Mest (Podiatry); Susan Kornstein (Psychiatry); Tom Laughran (Sports Medicine/Orthopedics); and David Gardner (Thyroid/Endocrinology). For full list: http://www.news.vcu.edu/vcu_view/pages.aspx?nid=2865 or visit: <http://www.richmondmagazine.com/>

VCU receives \$11.5 Million NIH grant to study the vaginal microbiome and its relevance to disease, genetics and the environment

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the National Institutes of Health has awarded Virginia Commonwealth University the first year of a planned, four-year \$11.5 million project to study how microorganisms found in the vagina influence health and disease in women. The four-year grant will bring together researchers from across VCU's campuses from multiple disciplines to determine the role of genetics in the composition of vaginal microorganisms. Co-principal investigators on the grant are Jerome F. Strauss III, MD, PhD, Dean of the VCU School of Medicine; Cynthia Cornelissen, PhD, from the Department of Microbiology and Immunology; Lindon Eaves, PhD, from the Department of Human and Molecular Genetics; and Mark Reimers, PhD, from the Department of Biostatistics. For more information, visit: <http://www.news.vcu.edu/news.aspx?v=detail&nid=2936>

BIRCWH Scholar receives Susan G Komen Grant

A Virginia Commonwealth University BIRCWH (Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health) scholar Kazuaki Takabe MD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Surgery & Assistant Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Surgical Oncology, VCU Massey Cancer Center was recently awarded a "Career Catalyst Research Grant" from Susan G. Komen for the Cure foundation. The \$450,000 Komen Promise Grant is designed to discover and deliver breast cancer cures more quickly. An article on CBS 6 webpage with a short 2 minute video can be found at:

www.wtvr.com/Global/story.asp?s=10316965. The NIH-funded BIRCWH career-development program (Principal Investigator Jerome Straus MD PhD) provides Ph.D and M.D. junior faculty scholars, with interdisciplinary training and in-depth mentoring to enable them to develop independent research programs in broad areas relevant to women's health. For more information on BIRCWH, visit: www.medschool.vcu.edu/research/bircwh

Women's Health 2009: The 17th Annual Congress

The VCU Institute for Women's Health and the Journal of Women's Health held its annual multidisciplinary CME conference, *Women's Health 2009: The Annual Congress*, in Williamsburg, Virginia on March 27-29. The purpose of this dissemination conference was to provide state-of-the-art, evidence-based knowledge on a broad range of issues relevant to women's health across the lifespan, to a target audience that included physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, nurse-midwives, and other allied healthcare providers. Under the leadership of Program Chair Wendy Klein and Program Co-Chair Susan Kornstein, expert faculty from around the country addressed a host of topics relevant to the clinical care of women. In addition, this year's conference included research poster presentations from around the world. Close to 800 healthcare providers from 38 states and 9 countries attended the event, which was held in collaboration with the American Medical Women's Association. See full program at <http://www.bioconferences.com/CONFERENCES/WomensHealth/program.aspx>.

WOMEN'S HEALTH LEADERSHIP NEWS

Dace Svikis, PhD wins the 2009 Distinguished Scholar Award from the VCU College of Humanities and Sciences. Dace Svikis is a Professor in the Departments of Psychology, Psychiatry and Obstetrics/Gynecology at VCU. She also serves as Deputy Director, VCU Institute for Women's Health and Director of the AWHARE Program (Addiction and Women's Health: Advancing Research and Evaluation). More recently, she has assumed a leadership role in the development of an Academy of Mentors for VCU with a focus on creating a solid institutional infrastructure that supports faculty and students in the conduct of interdisciplinary clinical and translational research. Dr. Svikis' own research efforts have focused on identification and treatment of perinatal addiction, with specific attention paid to both the clinical and economic efficacy of alternative intervention strategies. For full article, visit: <http://www.has.vcu.edu/psy/news/facultyawards2009.html>

Susan G. Kornstein, MD, has been elected president of the North American Society for Psychosocial Obstetrics and Gynecology. The society serves clinicians and researchers who work at the interface of the fields of psychiatry and OB/GYN on disorders such as PMS, perinatal depression, infertility, mood and menopause. Traditionally, the society's annual meeting is held at the president's home institution, and Dr. Kornstein will host the 2010 NASPOG meeting in Richmond - February 10-13, 2010. Kornstein is also currently serving as president of the International Association for Women's Mental Health.

Judy Collins RNC, MS, WHNP, FAAN, IWH Professional Advisory Board Chair, was recognized by the Robert Wood Johnston Foundation. "From Nursing to Public Health Policy." Former Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellow Judith B. Collins worked in Congress and "got to see policy and politicking in action." As a Health Policy Fellow from 1982 to 1983, Collins worked in the office of Congressman Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.), a member of the influential House Ways and Means Committee. "The knowledge and skills that I learned—not only in policy-making but in networking and politicking—have continued to have an impact on my leadership ability." Consider:

- In 1991, she helped organize the first annual Nurses Walk on the Capitol in Richmond, Va.
- Collins founded the comprehensive VCU Women's Health Center at Stony Point in 1993
- Collins participated in the RWJF Summit to Build Nursing Education Capacity
- She established the VCU/MCV Health Policy Office under the jurisdiction of the vice president for Health Sciences. As director of the office, Collins focused her next 10 years on governmental relations, health policy issues and education, while teaching at the Schools of Nursing and Medicine

For full article, visit: www.rwjf.org/humancapital/product.jsp?id=43428&c=EMC-ADV

Kate Mohr, Nursing Director, Women's Health and Radiology, assumes new nursing leadership role at VCU

Kate Mohr, Nursing Director of Women's Health and Radiology at VCU, will also assume leadership effective July 20, 2009 for pediatric services which include NICU, PICU, PPCU, Pediatrics, Pediatric Echo and Pediatric Palliative Care. This change will enable the organization to align Women's and Children's Services to grow and enhance services. Kate will be working closely with the new Chair of Pediatrics, Dr. Bruce Rubin, during this transition. Kate has been with VCUHS since August 1999 and in her role as Nursing Director, Kate has been instrumental in being strategic in her vision for Women's and Radiology while assuming operational accountability for these diverse areas. Kate joined the VCUHS team from her role at Duke University Medical Center, where she provided leadership for the tertiary care perinatal center. She has extensive background in Women's Health and has served in staff, coordinator and manager roles in NICU, Neonatal Transport and PICU which prepares her well for the new responsibilities. Kate serves on the IWH Professional Advisory Board.

DHHS Office on Women's Health Regional Women's Health Liaison joins IWH Professional Advisory Board

Ledia I. Martínez, MD, MPH, Regional Women's Health Liaison for the US Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health, has joined the IWH Professional Advisory Board. Dr. Martínez gave a presentation at the June IWH Professional Advisory Board meeting on "Updates from the Office on Women's Health". Opportunities for further collaboration between OWH and IWH were discussed.

Christine Baker, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, will serve as the IWH representative on the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's **Maternal Mortality Review Team**, as a psychiatrist with expertise in the area of women's mental health.

Janett Forte, MSW, LCSW, will serve on the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's Fatal Domestic Violence Workgroup. This group will review findings and conclusions from ten years of family and intimate partner homicide surveillance and domestic violence fatality reviews in Virginia in order to make recommendations for future directions.

Carol Hampton, M.M.S., Associate Dean for Faculty and Instructional Development, and IWH Director of Leadership is retiring, after many years of service to the School and University. Her generous spirit, organizational skills and unwavering commitment to developing and supporting women in leadership will be sorely missed. Ms Hampton will remain involved with IWH as a member of our Professional Advisory Board (PAB).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GRANTS IN WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH

The Institute for Women's Health announced the recipients of our second seed grant program, fostering excellence in community - based participatory research in women's health. The community-based research awards, totaling nearly \$50,000, will allow researchers and community organizations to study and conduct projects addressing community needs such as understanding risks of contracting sexually transmitted disease and the impact of guidelines for HPV vaccination, analysis of exercise and nutrition in women and men with substance use disorders, and substance abuse treatment and overall healthy living for women and girls.

<http://www.news.vcu.edu/news.aspx?v=detail&nid=2027>

The five **2009- 2010** Community-Engaged Research Seed Grant projects are:

Arpita Aggarwal, MD, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine, School of Medicine, Perception of Cervical Cancer Screening Post HPV Vaccination- Impact of new guidelines.
Community Partner: Rubicon, Inc

Tegwyn Brickhouse, DSS, School of Dentistry, Perinatal Influences on the Incidence of Early Childhood Caries in Richmond Healthy Start Infants.
Community Partner: Richmond Healthy Start

Pamela Dillon, PhD. Center for Translational Science, An Analysis of Exercise and Nutrition Profiles in a Community Sample of Women and Men with Substance Use Disorders

Community Partner: Substance Abuse & Addition Recovery Alliance of Virginia

Lelia Islam: Department of Psychology, Motivational Incentives to Increase Exercise Compliance in Cocaine-Dependent Women.

Community Partner: Rubicon, Inc

Jo Robins, PhD, RN: Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, Exploring the Feasibility and Acceptability of a Novel Tai Chi Program for Stress Management in Women.

Community Partner: Neighborhood Resource Center – Fulton Hill

WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH DAY 2009

The VCU Institute for Women's Health sponsored the **Fifth Annual Women's Health Research Day** on Wednesday, April 15, 2009. More than 200 faculty, students, and staff attended the event. Drs. Bob Downs and Saba Masho co-chaired the event. Dr. Susan G. Kornstein, Executive Director of the Institute for Women's Health and Dr. Jerome Strauss, MD, PhD, Dean of the VCU School of Medicine, gave introductory remarks. The Keynote Address was presented by **Dr. Vivian Pinn, Director of the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health** who spoke on "Moving Into the Future: New Dimensions and Strategies for Women's Health Research for the NIH". Over 40 women's health research posters were presented from faculty, staff and students across VCU.

Dr. Viktor Bovbjerg, husband of the late Elizabeth Fries, presented the Elizabeth Fries Young Investigator Award to **Kai Cheang**, Pharm.D., assistant professor in the School of Pharmacy, who studied the effect of oral contraceptives on metabolic risk factors in obese versus lean women. Best Posters were given in Basic Science and Behavioral Science to **Nikita Mishra**, PhD, graduate student in VCU Departments of Physiology and Biophysics and Obstetrics & Gynecology and to **Brandi Jancaitis**, MPH a prevention research specialist, Substance Abuse Division, of Richmond Behavioral Health Authority.

For a complete summary, visit

www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/research/research_day_2009.html

GLOBAL WOMEN'S HEALTH

The Institute was represented at the Global Health Council's 36th Annual **International Conference on Global Health**, held from May 26-31 in Washington, D.C. Over 1500 participants from across the world participated. Janett Forte, IWH Program Director, attended the international conference, which included workshops on women's health topics such as "Women Centered and Women Empowered Approaches", Transformative Dialogue: Social Change to Improve Sexual and Reproductive Health", "Gendered Perspectives and Women's Health", Sexual Violence & Coping Strategies in Conflict Settings, Postpartum Hemorrhage: New Findings & Innovative Technologies", as well as roundtable sessions on the links between maternal syphilis and gender based violence to

name a few of the workshops. The annual Global Health Council event provided a major opportunity for global health workers and policy makers to network, share research findings, and discuss solutions to the world's biggest health challenges. For more information, visit: www.globalhealth.org/conference_2009

Guatemala Human Rights Delegation – “Women’s Right to Live Campaign”

Janett Forte, IWH Program Director, and a team of twelve other people including VCU School of Social Work, University of Central Florida and University of Nevada Las Vegas social work faculty, will participate in this Guatemala Human Rights Delegation (GHRD). Since 2000, over 5500 Guatemalan women have been brutally murdered. These gender-based crimes have been characterized as "femicide" because they target females. 98% of the crimes go unpunished. The delegation will travel to Guatemala to understand the economic, social and political issues surrounding femicide. They will learn how society is affected by and reacts to the murders and they will participate in activism and solidarity, reaching out to women's organizations working on this most difficult issue. For more information, visit: www.ghrc-usa.org/Programs/ForWomensRighttoLive/Delegation.htm

As part of the group's commitment, they intend to share what they are learning to raise awareness and increase support for women's human rights in Guatemala. Follow their experience starting August 1, 2009 via their **blog** at <http://vcu-wh-guatemala.blogspot.com>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Our Bodies OurSelves (OBOS) co-founder and executive Director Dr. Judy Norsigian will be the featured speaker at an IWH-sponsored event on September 25, 2009, from 1:00 to 4:30, at the Science Museum of Virginia. OBOS is the organization that for almost 40 years has provided indispensable information on women's health and sexuality and has facilitated 30 editions of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* in diverse languages and formats "inspiring a worldwide movement of women's health". *Watch the IWH website for more information.*

Health Equity Conference: Advancing Health Equity: from Theory to Practice September 10-11, 2009, Richmond, VA. For more information: Virginia Department of health, Office of Minority Health and Public Policy. 804-864-7435 • www.vapha.org

New Perspectives in Women's Health – September 18, 2009. Presented by the Richmond Regional Midwife Group of the Virginia Chapter of the ACNM. For more information, contact: Brenda Brickhouse 804-346-0459 or thebrickhouse@aol.com

SAVE THE DATE: Women's Health 2010: The 18th Annual Congress - March 26-28, 2010 Washington, DC. *We have outgrown our space in Williamsburg, Virginia!*

Under the leadership of the VCU Institute for Women's Health, *Journal of Women's Health*, and the National Cancer Institute, in collaboration with the American Medical Women's Association, we are excited to announce that our 2010 meeting will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott, which is minutes from Reagan National Airport and close to central Washington, with easy Metro access. Our 2010 program will be better than ever. The Congress will be preceded by a half-day pre-meeting symposium on Thursday,

March 25 on health policy followed by a visit to The Hill, under the leadership of The American Medical Women's Association. Please watch for further developments and early registration opportunities via e-mail and on our website: www.bioconferences.com/wh

UPCOMING CLASSES AT VCU

Nutrition Classes

Learn how to make informed food choices by developing sound eating and physical activity habits from our registered dietitian. For more information, call 804-327-8830. To register for any of these classes, call 804-560-8955.

Family Life Education

Classes include Healthy Beginnings Tour, Breastfeeding Class, Car Seat Safety, Childbirth Preparation, Infant CPR, and Newborn Parenting. All classes are for adults only. To register or for more information, call 828-4409.

New Daddy Boot Camp (Men only) Workshop for men, taught by men, dealing with all the new experiences for first-time fathers, including care for the new baby, care for the new mom, finances, diapering and conflicting advice. 3 hour class. VCU Women's Health Center 9000 Stony Pt. Parkway, \$25 To register, call 804-288-3431

Centering Pregnancy Program: A Model for Prenatal Care

Centering Pregnancy groups are made up of 10 to 12 women who will all deliver babies around the same time. The groups include discussion about pregnancy and how to care for the new baby, and in each session, moms will have some private time with a midwife, nurse, or doctor. Groups are available at the Stony Point Women's Health Center. Contact Ellen Coffin at **628-3042** for more information.

WOMEN'S HEALTH CLINICAL TRIALS & STUDIES AT VCU

Volunteers Needed For NIH Study on Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder

Dr. Susan G. Kornstein is conducting a research study of an investigational medication for Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder or PMDD, a severe form of PMS. All research care is provided at no charge. For more information, please call the VCU Mood Disorders Institute at 804-828-5639, or e-mail mdi@vcu.edu. Please also visit www.sospmdd.com.

Visit the new **VCU Mood Disorders Institute** website regularly for information on any current or upcoming studies. www.mood.vcu.edu

Newly Diagnosed Cancer Patients Wanted to Participate in Survey Study

This study is designed to find out patients' information needs during cancer treatment. Participants complete 3 survey sessions over 9 months. Survey sessions take place at the Massey Cancer Center, Stony Point or by telephone. Participants can receive up to a total of \$75.00 for participating. For information on this study, call Laura Kuhn at (804) 628-7528 for more details.

The VCU Program for Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Research & Treatment. The center is currently sponsoring a number of research studies for women with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) and for women with regular menses (normal controls). If you are interested in more information about or in volunteering for one of these studies, please contact Ms. Terre Williams at 828-2663 or Dr. Manar Nazmy@ 827-0171 Compensation is provided for participation for all of the studies For information on current Research & Clinical Studies visit <http://www.vcu.edu/pcos/research.html>

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ABOUT US

The **Institute for Women's Health** was established in 1999 to promote standards of excellence in women's health care, advance cutting edge research, foster community engagement and collaboration, enhance women's leadership, and provide training and education toward the goal of improving the health of women. The Institute one of 20 National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health, serves as a model in providing innovative, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and integrated health care systems for women across the life span. For more information, please call (804) 827-1200 or visit www.womenshealth.vcu.edu

Susan G. Kornstein, MD, Executive Director * Janett Forte, MSW, Program Director

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