

Women's Health E-News **Fall 2008**

WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWS AT VCU

Retired MCV Foundation Official Feted With Fund in Her Name

For over 12 years, Sharon Larkins-Pederson has gathered support for her Church Hill neighborhood, Richmond's visual performing arts community, and the MCV Campus. When she announced her retirement from the MCV Foundation in June, a group of volunteers decided to host a fundraising campaign to start a fund in her name. A retirement party was hosted for her on Sept. 13th, where the volunteers presented the \$42,000 Sharon Larkins-Pederson Endowed Fund. Sharon served as the Chair of the IWH Development Committee and currently serves on our Professional Advisory Board. She plans to assign the funds to women's health, most likely in research.

<http://www.inrich.com/cva/ric/search.apx.-content-articles-RTD-2008-09-21-0086.html>

VCU Health System Named a 2008 Working Mother 100 Best Company by Working Mother Magazine

VCU received recognition for having such things as the region's first on-site adult day care, a postpartum duola program, tutor waivers for staff and their dependents, and an Employer Assisted Housing Program. With the average age of the employees being 40 years old, most are in the stage between caring for their children and their aging relatives. This is the fourth time the school has received the honor.

<http://www.news.vcu.edu/news.aspx?v=detail&nid=2631>

Dr. Susan Kornstein - work on depression study quoted in Newsweek

In the STAR*D study, findings showed that even though women had more severe depression, they were 33% more like than men to achieve a full remission. "These results are very exciting because they give more confirmation that gender is a factor that should be considered when prescribing treatment for depression," said Dr. Susan Kornstein, professor of psychiatry and obstetrics/gynecology at Virginia Commonwealth University, and one of the study's lead authors. "This is one more big piece of the puzzle as we try to understand sex differences in treatment response." The results were recently published in the online version of the Journal of Psychiatric Research.

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/157911>

VCU Professor Honored By the Women's Caucus for Political Science

M. Njeri Jackson, Ph.D., special assistant for diversity in the Office of the Provost and associate professor in the Department of African American Studies and the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University, received the 2008 Women of Color Professional Achievement Recognition Award from the Women's Caucus for Political Science. Jackson, a VCU faculty member since 1990, was honored for her work in race and gender and the provocative way she has introduced critical and controversial ideas in teaching and research. Njeri is a member of the IWH Education Committee. For more information:

<http://www.news.vcu.edu/news.aspx?v=detail&nid=2619>

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWS

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Began in October 1981, Domestic Violence Awareness Month is an opportunity for organizations, communities and individuals to host local, state and national activities in memory of those who died as a result of domestic violence, and to celebrate those who survive, as well as linking those who work daily to end domestic violence.

Look for the Richmond Area *Style Weekly*–Domestic Violence Awareness Insert in the October 8, 2008 issue.

New Screening Catches More Breast Cancers

A new screening technique known as molecular breast imaging (MBI) is shown to detect three times as many breast cancers in women with dense breasts and who are at a higher risk of developing the disease. An injected radiotracer allows MBI to detect differences in the behavior of cancer tissue compared to normal tissue. MBI was shown to detect 10 of 13 breast cancers in 375 patients versus mammography, which detected 3 of 13. <http://www.4women.gov/news/english/619074.htm>

Kids of Stressed, Low-Income Moms Prone to Weight Problems

Young children from low-income families who are subjected to the stress of their anxious mothers are more likely to develop poor eating patterns that lead can lead to obesity. Children who experienced maternal stress were more likely to run for the 'comfort foods,' which oftentimes are not very healthy. Study authors noted that 17% of kids between the ages of 2 and 19 are obese while 16.5% are overweight.

<http://www.4women.gov/news/english/618955.htm>

Alcohol in Early Pregnancy May Prompt Fetal Cell Death

All it takes is a few glasses of wine over a short period to cause damage to fetal cells. Initial signs of fetal alcohol syndrome include a flat and high upper lip, small eye openings, or a short nose. Researchers are trying to determine if these abnormalities can help detect how much and at which point in the pregnancy alcohol was used. Erhard Bieberich is focusing on how consumption of alcohol affect neural crest cells, which form the upper part of the skull, in mice. <http://www.4women.gov/news/English/618812.htm>

UPCOMING EVENTS

How to Treat a Woman: Strategies for Healthcare & Self-Care

The Institute for Women's Health continues its series of brown-bag seminars focused on women's health for all health care professionals, join us for:

Valerie Coleman, RN, MSN, BCLC, LCCE, Department of Women's Health and Margie Rickell, CNM, MA, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, will speak on "**New Options: Babies, Boots, and Breastfeeding**" on Tuesday, **October 7th**, from 12-1 pm in the Learning Center at the MCV Main Hospital.

Catherine Matthews, MD Associate Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology Division of Urogynecology, will speak on "**Plumbing 101: Can we Cure the Leaky Human Faucet?**" on Wednesday, **November 12th**, from 12-1 pm in the Learning Center at the MCV Main Hospital.

Healthy Mamas – Prenatal & Postpartum Walk/Run Training Team

OmMama, LLC and TRIGirl Training are joining forces to form a Healthy Mamas running team that will combine fitness, camaraderie and philanthropy. The Team will participate in the nTelos 8k on November 15, using the event to raise community awareness of the Richmond Children's Health Involving Parents (CHIP) program. For further information, training schedules, or to download registration forms visit: www.OmMama.com or call 804-612-6366

SAVE THE DATE - Women's Health 2009: The 17th Annual Congress, March 27-29, 2009 at the Williamsburg Lodge, Williamsburg, VA. Presented by the VCU Institute for Women's Health, *Journal of Women's Health*, and the American Medical Women's Association. Program Chair: Dr. Wendy Klein, Program Co-Chair: Dr. Susan Kornstein. For program updates and further details, visit: www.bioconferences.com/Conferences/WomensHealth/index.aspx

UPCOMING CLASSES

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.

Choose to Lose

September 29 – November 17, 2008, Monday Evenings, 7:00 – 9:00 pm
VCU Medical Center at Stony Point, 1st floor conference room

Forget fad diets! Learn how to make your own food choices and lose weight. This eight-week program will teach you how choose a balanced diet, cook healthier and make good food choices when eating out. \$175 for the regular program or \$200 for the "plus" program that includes a one-hour nutrition consultation.

Diabetic Dining Made Easy

Wednesday mornings, 9:30 – 11:30 am, 10/1, 11/5, 12/3

VCU Medical Center at Stony Point, 1st floor conference room

Learn how to eat to control your blood sugar and enjoy what you eat. \$35.

Lean 'N Easy Cholesterol Lowering

Tuesday mornings, 9:30 – 11:30 AM: 10/14, 11/18

VCU Medical Center at Stony Point, 1st floor conference room

Learn how to lower your cholesterol and taste delicious recipes in class. \$35

Sign up to receive the “Your Nutrition News” electronic newsletter. To subscribe, please email Mary-Jo Sawyer, Registered Dietician at msawyer@mcvh-vcu.edu.

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

Participants Recruited for Study on Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder

The Virginia Commonwealth University Mood Disorders Institute is recruiting participants for a national study of a new treatment method for premenstrual dysphoric disorder, a severe and debilitating form of premenstrual syndrome, or PMS. Premenstrual dysphoric disorder, or PMDD, affects between 3 percent and 8 percent of women. Many women with PMDD experience mood swings, depression, irritability, anxiety and feelings that life is not worth living, with 15 percent attempting suicide. These symptoms, which occur only premenstrually, are often accompanied by changes in sleep and appetite, changes in energy, breast pain, and bloating — all of which can be severe and lead to disturbances in functioning at home or at work. The principal investigator, Susan G. Kornstein, M.D., a professor of psychiatry, and obstetrics and gynecology at VCU, said subjects will take the antidepressant sertraline for six months at the onset of symptoms, or will receive a placebo. The goal is to enroll 300 women among three sites — at Cornell, Yale and Virginia Commonwealth universities. The study is supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health. For more information, call the VCU Mood Disorders Institute at 804-828-5639 or visit:

<http://www.news.vcu.edu/news.aspx?v=detail&nid=2362>

Depression Study

Do you feel sad or depressed?
Have you lost interest in activities you used to enjoy?
Do you feel hopeless, worthless, or guilty?
Do you experience sleeplessness or lack of energy?

If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, are between the ages of 18 and 65 and medically stable, you may qualify to participate. Participants will receive study related exams, lab tests and study related care at no cost at our convenient off campus location. For information and to find out if you are eligible for this study call the Mood Disorders Institute at (804) 828-5639.

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 Gerry Meeks, MSW at (804) 628-2622 for more details.

Women With Fibromyalgia Sought for Research Study:

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of stress on symptoms and immune function in women with fibromyalgia. Participants will receive \$25 and free parking or bus pass. This one-time visit takes 90 minutes to complete. In order to participate you must: (a) Be 18 years or older; (c) Have a diagnosis of fibromyalgia; (c) Not be on steroid treatments; (d) Not be pregnant, and (e) Not have immune system problems. Contact Victoria Menzies at (804) 628-3381. E-mail: vsmenzies@vcu.edu (IRB #HM11637).

ABOUT US

The **VCU 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 outreach and collaboration, enhance women's leadership, and provide training and education toward the goal of improving the health of women. The Institute is one of 20 National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health, serving as models for the nation in providing innovative, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and integrated health care systems for women across the lifespan. 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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