Greetings from the UA Senior Vice President for Health Sciences

As was recently highlighted in several local, regional and national media outlets, kudos to Dr. Fernando Martinez, Dr. Wayne Morgan, and their colleagues in the UA Asthma and Airway Disease Research Center on the awarding of a $27 million National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute grant to further accelerate their work in the prevention and cure of childhood asthma. The grant will fund a nationwide effort to enroll more than 1,000 babies, 6 to 18 months, who are considered at high risk for developing asthma. The national scope of the clinical trial moves us toward a population health perspective in asthma research. Congratulations to Drs. Martinez, Morgan and the entire AADRC team!

Arizona is a diverse state with about 42 percent of its population belonging to a racial or ethnic minority groups. Across the health sciences, we are working to create a health-care workforce reflective of the community we serve. As we continue to strengthen UAHS diversity-and-inclusion efforts, I am extremely pleased to announce two new leadership appointments at the UAHS Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI). Lydia Kennedy has been named director of ODI and will focus on its mission to increase the diversity of the health sciences workforce statewide and beyond. In addition, Oscar Beita will serve as assistant director of the Arizona Hispanic Center of Excellence, a program within the UAHS ODI and will work to promote the health of the state’s growing Latino population. Please join me in welcoming Oscar and Lydia into their new roles.

In other good news, researchers from UAHS and two other universities have advanced the understanding of the genetic and biological basis of diseases like cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's and rheumatoid arthritis. The UAHS team includes Dr. Yves A. Lussier, associate vice president for health sciences and director of the UAHS Center for
Biomedical Informatics and Biostatistics (CB2); Dr. Haiquan Li, research associate professor and director for translational bioinformatics, Department of Medicine, UA College of Medicine – Tucson; and Dr. Ikbel Achour, director for precision health at CB2. The newly published paper has been selected as among the top 30 of the year in computational biology and bioinformatics. Their work could help in identifying new drug targets and therapies.

This edition also includes the results of a study, led by UAHS researcher Dr. Bentley J. Bobrow, professor at the UA Colleges of Medicine in Tucson and Phoenix, that shows implementation of a telephone cardiopulmonary resuscitation program increases survival rates and favorable outcomes for patients who experienced an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Lastly, we highlight the findings of a multi-center study by UAHS pediatric researchers, led by Dr. Katri Typpo, assistant professor at the UA College of Medicine – Tucson, to improve the health outcomes of infants and children with congenital heart disease. These important efforts demonstrate the success of our ongoing efforts to improve the health of Arizona and beyond.

As we prepare to celebrate the Memorial Day holiday with family and friends, I want to express our gratitude to those who have served in our nation’s armed forces. We are honored to have military veterans among our faculty, students and staff. Notably, the UAHS Veterans Education and Transition Services Center serves as a hub for our student-veterans and was the first VETS Center in the nation to be opened within a health sciences center.

I wish you all a safe and enjoyable holiday weekend!

Best,

Joe G.N. “Skip” Garcia, MD
UA Senior Vice President for Health Sciences

Preventing Asthma in Children: UA Researchers Are One Step Closer

Efforts to improve the health of children at increased risk for asthma will receive a major boost with the launch of a new UA Health Sciences-led, federally funded national clinical study.
Making Precision Medicine a Reality: Genomics
Researchers Discover Road Map to Disease Origin

Researchers are one step closer to understanding the genetic and biological basis of diseases like cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer’s and rheumatoid arthritis and identifying new drug targets and therapies.

UA Health Sciences Supports Diverse and Determined Pathways to Medicine

From a refugee camp in Kenya to growing up in a border town near the Navajo Nation, to leaving a beach-side resort town in Mexico, to being homeschooled through high school in Ohio, four UA graduate students share an unlikely path to medical school.

Help Is Just a Phone Call Away – Telephone CPR Improves Cardiac Arrest Outcomes

The implementation of a Telephone Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation program increases survival rates and favorable outcomes for patients who experienced an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

Pioneering Research Tool Developed at UA College of Medicine – Phoenix

In partnership with the University of Luxembourg, scientists at the UA College of Medicine – Phoenix have developed a new instrument for studying a biological model of the human gastrointestinal tract.
UA Health Sciences Employee Excellence Recognized

The 2016 Awards of Excellence Ceremony is organized by the UA Health Sciences Staff Advisory Committee members, who each year seek nominations for a variety of awards to recognize the service of UA Health Sciences staff and appointed personnel.

UA Nurse Leaders Recognized by Peers

Seven nurse leaders from the UA College of Nursing were chosen by their peers for their role modeling and mentoring of others, concern for humanity and their contributions to the local community and the profession of nursing.

Two New Leadership Appointments Announced at UA Health Sciences Office of Diversity and Inclusion

The UA Health Sciences Office of Diversity and Inclusion has named Lydia Kennedy, as director of the office and Oscar Beita, as assistant director of the Arizona Hispanic Center of Excellence.

Gut Microbiome May be Key in Post-Surgery Organ Failure after Heart Surgery in Children

Katri Typpo, MD, was awarded a grant by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases to study the role of the gut in determining post-operative outcomes after repair of congenital heart defects in infants and children.
Opioid Research by UAHS MD-PhD Student Receives Three Awards

Research aimed at understanding how opioids activate the reward pathway leading to addiction so that an alternative non-addictive pain reliever can be developed has won three awards for Alex Sandweiss.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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<td>JUN 8</td>
<td>Every Day Bias Workshop for the Health Care Professions</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUN 16</td>
<td>13th Annual Arizona Community Health Worker Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUN 17</td>
<td>Advances in Aging Lecture Series</td>
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UAHS IN THE NEWS

UA researchers: Concussions can Lead to Problems Elsewhere in Body

KTAR

AHA Announces Unique Impact of Heart Disease on Women

AZ Big Media

Arizona’s Healthy Workplace Project: Reduced Viral Exposure in an Office Setting

ASPPH Friday Letter

RESEARCH
View a monthly listing of UA Health Sciences grant awards here.