

# CREIGHTON MEDICINE

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY ✦ DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE ✦ JANUARY 2004 ✦ VOL. V, No. 1

## Creighton University Medical Center Receives National Community Service Award

### School of Medicine Recognized for Making a Difference in the Community

Creighton University Medical Center (CUMC) and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) have been awarded the prestigious Outstanding Community Service Award for 2003 from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). The award was presented at the AAMC gala on November 8th in Washington, D.C. Among 125 medical schools in the nation, CUMC and UNMC were chosen for their outstanding efforts in meeting the medical needs of people not served by traditional health-care systems.

The AAMC is a non-profit organization representing the nation's 125 accredited medical schools, nearly 400 major teaching hospitals, 105,000 faculty in 98 academic and scientific societies, and the nation's 66,000 medical students and 97,000 residents.

"Creighton University School of Medicine and University of Nebraska Medical Center supply essential health services to the medically underserved, while providing students with the clinical training and experience necessary to become competent, compassionate physicians," said AAMC President Jordan J. Cohen, M.D.

From providing comprehensive health care to the uninsured, to explaining medical services in Spanish and Sudanese, to offering medical services in Nebraska's and Iowa's rural communities, Creighton University Medical Center's community programs serve



Representatives from the School of Medicine and Creighton University Medical Center attended the AAMC Awards Banquet in Washington, D.C.

more than 460,000 patients annually. Creighton is a regional leader in providing free or unreimbursed health care to the underserved which is equivalent to more than \$26 million annually in health care costs. In addition, 100 percent of Creighton medical students volunteer to provide health services during their four years of medical school.

More specifically, the Department of Medicine faculty, residents and staff members have established various programs, clinics, and

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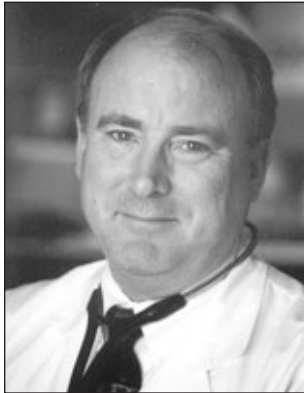
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# From the Chair



Eugene Rich, M.D.

We recently completed a brief report of recent Department accomplishments for the Medical School, and I thought the readers of **Creighton Medicine** might enjoy some of the highlights. I am proud to report this past academic year has once again been rich with accomplishments by our talented faculty and staff.

In Medical Education, we accomplished a broad array of new program initiatives during the past year. These include implementing the use of the "Smart Board" technology in the main department classroom, the development of procedural skill workshops for our residents, implemented a popular new professionalism curriculum (as part of the Dimensions In Clinical Medicine Program for 3<sup>rd</sup> year students), expanded faculty and resident participation in our Clinical Teaching Skills Program, and worked hard to ensure compliance with the new 80-hour work week requirement for residents. Not surprisingly, all these efforts have aided in our success "filling" our residency program through the "match"; the talented medical students comprising our new intern class had the highest USMLE score in our program's recent history! We have had great success guiding these residents to mastery of the content of internal medicine, with in-training exam scores and ABIM pass rates well above the national average. In addition to work on these and many other educational objectives, numerous Medicine faculty members were very active participants in Creighton's yearlong preparation for the October 26-28 LCME site visit.

The Department has continued to make progress in developing its research program. Among the new initiatives accomplished during the 2002-2003 academic year, we recruited clinician investigators in both Nephrology and Pulmonary Critical Care. We reorganized the Department of Medicine Research Conference, developed a new program to assist clinical researchers in meeting subject recruitment requirements for clinical trials, and initiated steps to ensure that all new research faculty members in the department have designated research mentors. We also continued recruitment efforts for biomedical science clinical investigators in Allergy/Immunology and Endocrine, interviewing several candidates for these positions. Our past and ongoing efforts continue to show success, with the department achieving record levels of extramural grant awards (11,400,000) and publications.

Of course, the heart of our department is service to patients, and here we also exceeded expectations. The Department has continued to grow in clinical activity and number of admissions to Creighton University Medical Center. Overall department charges grew by 4.6% to almost \$34 million. Growth was particularly noteworthy in Hematology/Oncology and Pulmonary Critical Care where new division leadership and new junior faculty have augmented the clinical program. In addition, the department accomplished a number of important quality and patient safety initiatives, including developing

enhanced Intensivist physician services at CUMC. Furthermore, we successfully recruited new Gastroenterology and clinical endocrinology faculty who began in September.

These are just a few highlights of what our talented faculty and staff accomplished in the past year. To provide our friends and colleagues better information regarding the full range of activities in Medicine at Creighton, we are planning a more expansive annual report to be published and disseminated through **Creighton Medicine**.

Eugene Rich, M.D.  
Tenet Professor and  
Chair Department of Medicine

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## Clinical Trials Office

by **Thomas Casale, M.D.**  
PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE

If you have patients who would benefit from participation, please contact either the Principal Investigator or the Study Coordinator for the respective trial.

### Clinical Trials outside the Department of Medicine

A Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled, Parallel Group Study of the Efficacy and Safety of Dutasteride 0.5 mg Administered Orally Once Daily for Four Years to Reduce the Risk of Biopsy-Detectable Prostate Cancer. For more information, please contact **Rei K. Chiou, M.D., Ph.D.**, Professor of Surgery, Principal Investigator, or **Wen Chen, R.N., B.S.N.**, Study Coordinator, at (402) 280-4505.

### CREIGHTON MEDICINE Editorial Board

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**Creighton**  
UNIVERSITY  
Medical Center

# Travel Clinic

by **Marvin J. Bittner, M.D., M.Sc.**

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICAL MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY, AND MEDICINE

One of the Infectious Diseases Division's most successful clinics is not located at the VA Medical Center nor in the clinics adjacent to the fifth floor of Creighton University Medical Center. Even though it maintains a sharp focus on infection, it is rare for its patients to walk in with fever and unheard of for clinic staff to collect culture specimens. This clinic sees patients from Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota, but it has no interest in infections acquired in the Midwest.

This unusual clinic is the Travel Clinic. It sees patients planning travel outside the US, and it helps them deal with risks of infection abroad. Its prescriptions range from antibiotics

for standby treatment of travelers' diarrhea to antimalarials for prophylaxis of *Plasmodium falciparum* infection. Its immunizations range from routine updating of tetanus-diphtheria to pre-exposure rabies vaccine.

Some of its patients are among Omaha's wealthiest individuals, people who can afford safaris that will put them close to the East Africa's wildlife—and its malaria-laden *Anopheles* mosquitos. Other patients are traveling on shoestring budgets, like a pastor committed to missionary work (and not committed to becoming a hepatitis A victim) or an immigrant Omahan returning for a visit to his homeland (and hoping to avoid becoming a Typhoid Mary).

Late spring is a particularly busy time. That's when the clinic sees many students who will travel during summer vacation. Some do not venture farther than the Caribbean or Central America, lands where malaria remains susceptible to chloroquine. Others, though, fly halfway round the world. Clinic physicians need to distinguish travel to urban Southeast Asia—where malaria prophylaxis is not indicated—from travel to urban South Asia—where they choose from three different medications to prevent chloroquine-resistant *Plasmodium falciparum*. The choice has become particularly complex with the marketing of Malarone (atovaquone-proguanil), which is very effective, very well-tolerated, and very expensive. Lariam (mefloquine) has become an old standby in this setting, but clinic staff needs to sort out real from imagined contraindications in this drug that has been maligned more than it has been marketed. A third choice is doxycycline, familiar as a drug for community-acquired pneumonia.

Choosing the correct malaria medication can make a big difference. One clinic physician was astounded to see a law student on a tight budget walk in, expecting to spend hundreds of dollars on Malarone—when his itinerary called for chloroquine, at a fraction of the price.



Available Vaccines in the Travel Clinic

Some patients come mainly for yellow fever immunization. Yellow fever is an insect-transmitted viral infection, like West Nile Virus—but for which a very effective vaccine is available. As with West Nile, no specific treatment for clinical infection is available. Consequently, prevention by vaccination is important. Indeed, yellow fever vaccination is required for travel to some countries. Although yellow fever is thought of as a disease of the tropics, it is present only in selected tropical portions of the Americas and Africa—but not in Asia or Oceania. Recent reports of an increased risk of adverse reactions make it more important

for clinic physicians to sort through itineraries in order to distinguish patients who need vaccine from those for whom it offers risk without reward. A frequent occurrence is a patient with defined plans to visit Victoria Falls, plans that can easily take them into a yellow fever zone. Officially recognized yellow fever immunizations are available only at a limited number of government-designated yellow fever immunization centers, like the Travel Clinic.

Japanese encephalitis, yet another insect-transmitted infection related to West Nile Virus, poses special issues. A dramatically devastating case of Japanese encephalitis that struck a U.S. student in China more than a decade ago was one of the factors that led to licensing of the vaccine in the United States. As the U.S. studied the vaccine, though, clinical research uncovered a disturbing side effect of the vaccine. In a small number of patients delayed anaphylaxis occurs. Because this can be as late as ten days after immunization, the vaccine is contraindicated for those with travel within ten days of their clinic visit. For travelers visiting certain areas of rural East Asia, though, the vaccine can be valuable.

The Infectious Diseases Division has structured the clinic to provide clinical educational opportunities unavailable elsewhere at Creighton. Infectious diseases fellows provide staffing alongside faculty members. Residents and students on infectious diseases rotations spend time observing in the clinic. Elsewhere in the Creighton clinical system, they are unlikely to encounter patients talking about malaria or typhoid. Opportunities for in-depth review of adult immunizations are not common in many settings, but the Travel Clinic is a site where, again and again, staff members talk with patients about adequate measles immunization, varicella immunity, tetanus-diphtheria boosters, places in the world where polio persists, hepatitis B

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# Cancer Caregivers Are Different!

by Holly Adams CMSW, LMHP

ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORKER, CREIGHTON HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY

Cancer caregivers are *different* from all other health care professionals. They have a *different* drive professionally. They interact as a team *differently*. They have a *different* kind of empathy and compassion that comes with daily work with patients who are facing their last days. Cancer caregivers have a *different* sense of humor. They have *different* coping mechanisms. They seek a *different* kind of reward from their jobs – a reward that comes from helping cancer patients live life to the fullest with their diagnosis.

Holly Adams noticed these differences early on in her 16 years of work as an oncology social worker. Her work experience has included the good fortune of working on Creighton University Medical Center (CUMC) Unit 5100, the Creighton Cancer Center and with a number of volunteers with the Cancer Support Programs through the Hematology/Oncology Clinic. These experiences prompted the desire to coordinate a retreat for cancer caregivers that would not only honor the caregivers—many of whom have worked in this institution for 15 plus years but would also bring together the inpatient staff, the outpatient staff and support group volunteers. A retreat designed to have fun, pamper the caregiver and honor what they do with introspective speakers who focus on the holy work cancer caregiving is.

The retreat idea was floated to Amgen pharmaceutical representative Stephanie Miller. Amgen agreed to underwrite the entire cost of the retreat.

The retreat became a reality with the hard work of the retreat planning committee. Members of the planning committee are Dee Gaeta, 5100 Nurse Manager, CUMC; Cathie Schmit, Clinical Nurse Specialist, CUMC; Teresa Butler, Nurse Manager, Creighton Hematology/Oncology; Sandra Powers-Jensen, Chaplain, CUMC; Suzanne Walsh, Pharmacist, Creighton Hematology/Oncology; Mary Headley, Manager, Radiation Oncology, CUMC; and Holly Adams, Social Worker, Creighton Hematology/Oncology.

The First Annual Cancer Caregiver Retreat *Celebrating Life: The Cancer Caregiver's Journey* was held on June 4, 2003 and June 10, 2003 at the Knowles Mercy Spirituality Center in Waterloo, Nebraska. Thirty-five cancer caregivers participated. Attendees were awarded 7.2 continuing education hours.

The First Annual Cancer Caregiver Retreat, *Celebrating Life: The Cancer Caregiver's Journey* is the first of its kind both locally and regionally. Evaluation

results were favorable reflecting comments such as: "Exceptional," "Well prepared and organized," "Very rewarding," "It was better than I imagined," "You couldn't have picked better speakers" and "Thank you for the "gift" of the day." The success of the retreat has given all involved the passion and drive to work toward making it a reality on an annual basis.



Pictured above: Staff from 5100, radiation therapy, medical oncology, and support group volunteers are experiencing the labyrinth which involves walking a path focused on insight, strength, healing, and peace at one's center.

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## News From Other Departments

The Creighton University Department of Neurology is conducting Clinical Trials on the following research studies.

### Clinical Trials

A Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled, Dose-Finding Study to Assess the Efficacy and Safety of CEP-1347 in Patients With Early Parkinson's Disease – (PRECEPT). For more information, please contact **John M. Bertoni, M.D., Ph.D.**, Professor and Chair of Neurology, Principal investigator, or Study Coordinators, **Carolyn Peterson**, at (402) 280-4693 or **Larisa Skrypnik** at (402) 280-4197.

A Fourteen-Week Placebo-Controlled Dose-Response Efficacy and Safety Study of NS 2330 in Early Parkinson's Disease Patients (Study for Proof of Concept in Early Parkinson's Disease of a Triple Reuptake

Inhibitor, NS 2330/SCEPTRE). For more information, please contact **John M. Bertoni, M.D., Ph.D.**, Professor and Chair of Neurology, Principal investigator, or Study Coordinators, **Carolyn Peterson**, at (402) 280-4693 or **Larisa Skrypnik** at (402) 280-4197.

An Open-Label, Randomized, Parallel-Group, Multi-Center Study to Evaluate the Efficacy and Safety of Enoxaparin Versus Unfractionated Heparin in the Prevention of Venous Thromboembolism in Patients Following Acute Ischemic Stroke. For more information, please contact **John M. Bertoni, M.D., Ph.D.**, Professor and Chair of Neurology, Principal investigator, or Study Coordinators, **Carolyn Peterson**, at (402) 280-4693 or **Larisa Skrypnik** at (402) 280-4197.

# Pillars, Past and Present



Matthew J. Severin, Jr.,  
M.S., J.D., Ph.D.

**Matthew J. Severin, Jr., M.S., J.D., Ph.D.** Professor Emeritus, graduated from Creighton University in 1955 with an undergraduate degree in English Literature. After military service in the U. S. Navy, he obtained an initial graduate degree in Medical Microbiology from Creighton University and later was the first doctorate recipient from the Medical Microbiology program at the University of Nebraska College of Medicine. He served as Chief of Laboratories and Infections Control

Officer at the Omaha-Douglas County Health Department for nine years. He returned to Creighton in 1972 as Associate Professor of Microbiology and Chief of Microbiology Laboratory Services at Creighton University Medical Center and later was Associate Dean for Student Affairs from 1975 to 1985. In 1986, he earned a Juris Doctor from Creighton and was appointed Director of the Wm. M. Scholl Jurisprudence Division in the Department of Preventive Medicine. He retired in 2000 and now lives with his wife Catherine in Bellevue, Nebraska.

## **Looking back at your career, you seem to have worn several hats. Was this by design ?**

I think so. I had a professor, a Creighton faculty member, Dr. Jim Severens, who advised his students to consider a new direction every ten years – paraphrasing Oliver Wendell Holmes. He felt that a person should be able to set and meet goals within that span and then try a new road – Such advice has made life interesting but at times a bit tenuous.

## **What brought you back to Creighton?**

Two men – Dean Holthaus and Dr. Gene Sanders – After almost ten years in a local Public Health Department I was looking for a change. I had interviewed at several state health departments and actually was considering relocating to Minneapolis when I met Dr. Sanders. His approach to exposing medical students to Infectious Disease, at the time and untried melding of basic and clinical sciences, was very intriguing. During the years, I worked at the health department I had lectured at both of the Omaha-based medical schools. The idea that pure basic science had to be mastered before any clinical relevance could be presented seemed outdated to me and here was some one who could change that approach. I subsequently met with THE DEAN who changed my home town opinion of the direction Creighton was headed. I have never regretted the acceptance of their advice and offer to return to Creighton. I might add that I still seek them out for their counsel.

## **You list a Juris Doctor degree in your educational history. Isn't this an unusual credential for a medical school faculty member?**

I don't think so. During those years when I was at the health department, I spent more and more time in court as the litigious theme of our society has developed. I witnessed the hesitancy and confusion of many physicians and other health care professionals

when they were required to testify not only on civil cases such as malpractice charges but also in the occasional criminal trial. The essentials of the legal system were foreign to them more often than not. With the encouragement of Dr. Henry Lynch, Chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine and the support of the Wm. Scholl Foundation of Chicago, a program to train three medical school faculty members in medical law was initiated so that the principles of Legal Medicine could be presented to medical students, other health care professional students and resident physician who were in training at Creighton. With financial support from this foundation, I was the first to attend and complete law school. As a trained scientist, this endeavor was about as confusing to me as to the law professors who taught me. But we all persevered and the program was successful. Eventually, formal course presentations were made to the M1 and M2 students, a senior elective became reality and quarterly presentations on a variety of topics were presented at Medicine rounds. It is somewhat disappointing to me that in recent years the curriculum demands have reduced the exposure of medical law to the health care students significantly.

## **What do you regard as some of the rewarding moments of your three decades of involvement with the students in the Creighton Health Care Schools?**

That's easy. To see the graduations and well deserved residence slots of the young physicians especially those in the Wyoming program was always a plus. During the years in the Dean's office, I was fortunate to receive the Golden Apple and two Platinum Apples from these young men and women. From a different perspective, a very personal reward was the successful cardiovascular surgery performed on me by a former student – Dr. Dwayne Peetz.

## **You have mentioned the rewards of your time at Creighton, but what about disappointments or frustrations?**

I am sure there have been both but I cannot single out any such event that affected me that much. The endless committee meetings at what ever level the faculty member enjoys are to be endured but seldom appreciated. The changes in the administration of the Medical School at times was disturbing but were events that you just had to live through. I never was research oriented so the failure to receive grant support for my few wonderful hypotheses did not bother me for any length of time. I would have liked to build a state of the art Viral Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in the Medical School proper since initially I was trained as a clinical virologist but the monies were not there in the 70's.

## **How have you handled retirement ?**

You probably would have to ask my wife and family. I can say that I was ready to do what Cathy and I do now – travel – time for family – winters in the South – reading what I want not what I need and time on the golf course. I do miss the confraternity with the many faculty members – not only in the Med School but also from the Arts and Science schools that I did enjoy over the years.

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centers to provide services to the medically underserved population. Since July 2003, the Division of Internal Medicine has been coordinating a clinic once a week at the Siena Francis House in Omaha. Residents, staff members and cardiology faculty members rotate and donate their time to a two hour clinic each week.

## The Cardiac Center Involvement in the Community

by Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.

The Cardiac Center is involved in the community through two programs, Cardiovascular Risk Factor Screening and Intervention (CARSI) and Creighton Heart Education Center (CHEC).

*CARSI* program is a special research study funded by the Nebraska Tobacco Settlement Fund LB692. *CARSI* is designed to help people, primarily in the North Omaha area, reduce their chance of having a heart attack or stroke. The program offers *free* education and support to its participants in reducing specific controllable cardiovascular risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cigarette smoking, and obesity. **Dr. Syed Mohiuddin** is the primary investigator of the study. Sub-investigators include: **Dennis Esterbrooks, M.D.**, **Daniel Hilleman, Pharm.D.**, and **Mark Williams, Ph.D.**, **Leah Jorgensen, A.P.R.N.**, and **Shavonne Washington, B.S.Ed.** of The Cardiac Center at Creighton University; and **Gregory Ochuba, M.D., Ph.D.** and **Jayachree Paknikar, M.D.** of the Charles Drew Health Center. *CARSI* staff consists of **Leah Jorgensen, A.P.R.N.**, Nurse Practitioner/Program Coordinator; **Shavonne Washington, B.S.Ed.**, Health Educator; and **Rita Frickel, R.D., L.M.N.T.**, Registered Dietitian.

*CARSI* is a two-tiered program, known as Arm 1 and 2, which provides both clinical and community participation. Arm 1 of the study, coordinated by Leah Jorgensen, is the clinical, intensive part of the program. To be eligible to enroll in the study, participants must be African American adults at least 40 years old with two or more of the previously mentioned risk factors. Furthermore, qualified participants must be free from symptoms, have not been diagnosed with heart disease, and have not had a stroke. Once enrolled, participants are scheduled initially for three visits with *CARSI* staff members who obtain consent, blood tests, history and physical exam, and provide education on results, goal setting, nutrition analysis, weight management and lifestyle change strategies. In addition, participants who smoke will receive smoking cessation classes. Following the three initial visits, participants schedule three and six month check-ups with a Nurse Practitioner and are encouraged to arrange additional follow-up appointments with *CARSI* staff as needed.

Arm 2 of the *CARSI* program is coordinated by Shavonne Washington and is staffed entirely by community volunteers. Health educators, called Community Health Advocates (CHAs), are recruited, trained, and hired to teach classes known as *CARSI/CHEC* Healthy Living, Nutrition, and Physical Activity Classes<sup>®</sup>. The classes are held primarily in the North Omaha community and are open to anyone in the Omaha Metropolitan area. Arm 1 participants are expected to attend

as well. The classes are designed to provide simplified, accurate education on cardiovascular risk reduction, nutrition, and physical activity to its class members. *CARSI/CHEC* Healthy Living, Nutrition, and Physical Activity Classes<sup>®</sup> are currently held in 11 locations and are available Monday through Saturday in the mornings, afternoons, and evenings. The 1½ to 2 hour classes are held one day a week for 10 weeks.

*CARSI* staff members educated the Creighton University Medical Center (CUMC) Senior Partner's members on cardiovascular risk, risk reduction, and opportunities at their monthly meeting in September 2003. *CARSI* was also involved in several recent events in October and November, such as a Health Fair at the Morning Star Baptist Church, the Second Annual Men's Health Day at the Urban League and a Health Fair at the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge.

*CARSI* staff members Leah Jorgensen and Shavonne Washington are also members of the Douglas County Cardiovascular Health Initiative (DCCHI) and Black Family Health and Wellness Association (BFHWA). Through these memberships, the *CARSI* program is also able to help with other community awareness and initiative campaigns in addition to health screenings.

*Creighton Heart Education Center (CHEC)* was established in November 2002 through a contract with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute to address the issues of cardiovascular disease in Omaha's African American Community. The staff members of CHEC include Theola Cooper, program coordinator and Joni Pagenkemper, R.D., L.M.N.T., Registered Dietitian.



*CHEC* consist of seven main components to meet NHLBI goals and are free to the greater Omaha community.

**Mobile Education Screening Unit (MESU)** is a 35-foot self-contained education and screening vehicle which is available for heart and health fairs, and other community events to provide heart education, blood pressure and cholesterol screenings. MESU has been available to the greater Omaha area since September 2003.

**Heart Fairs** provide free screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose, heart health nutrition information and cooking sessions, and orientation and referrals to existing Cardiac Center programs. CHEC hosted its first heart fair in June 2003 with nearly 80 people in attendance. CHEC will be hosting more fairs at The Cardiac Center, local community centers, and churches.

**Community Health Advocates (CHAs)** are community volunteers who are trained to provide reliable health information during organized

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class sessions and Health Fairs. The CHAs training consists of 15 two-hour sessions where they are provided with materials and techniques necessary to conduct weekly class sessions to the community. In June 2003, CHEC graduated its first class of CHAs. They began teaching classes in September 2003 at various locations including churches, community centers, and health centers.

**Nutrition Education** consists of cooking schools and heart healthy shopping tours. The cooking schools are conducted in The Cardiac Center's auditorium under the direction of the Joni Pagenkemper, R.D., L.M.N.T., CHEC Program Dietitian. These sessions focus on heart healthy food choices, food preparation skills, proper portion size and the concept of a well balanced diet.

Another aspect of the program includes heart healthy shopping tours which assist participants with appropriate shopping habits, healthy food choices and tips on selecting the best produce. These tours are conducted at the Albertson's located at 72<sup>nd</sup> & Ames.

To date, five heart healthy cooking schools and five heart healthy shopping tours have been completed. The overall comments have been very favorable.

**Seminars** are scheduled for primary care providers in Douglas County on a bi-annual basis. These seminars, conducted by The Cardiac Center cardiologists and other Creighton University School of Medicine faculty members, include topics regarding prevention protocols, pharmacology, physical activity, surgical interventions, diagnosis, gender and cultural differences in cardiac care. The first seminar was held in May 2003 at the Charles Drew Health Center (local health center serving the African American community). The topic entitled "Treating the Multi-Metabolic Patient" focused on diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The participants gave many positive comments about the seminar.

**Town Hall Health Meetings** inform the community about cardiovascular diseases, risk factors, cardiovascular anatomy, and appropriate screenings and interventions. Participants will be able to understand the definition of cardiovascular disease, and identify the risk factors and prevention. CHEC gave two presentations to church congregations on identifying the signs of stroke. In addition, CHEC presented information on nutrition and cardiovascular disease to the Douglas County Health and Human Services office.

**Community Awareness** entails of an advisory board of representatives from city government, clergy, public housing, community programs and other health care entities who serve to provide input regarding increasing awareness about cardiovascular disease in the African American community. This group meets bi-annually and has provided the feedback necessary for CHEC to commence its media campaign.

Since March 2003, CHEC has provided free screenings to more than 400 people in the greater Omaha area. Recent events in September, October and November include the CHEC Heart/Health Screening, a Health Fair at the Morning Star Baptist Church, the Second Annual Men's Health Day at the Urban League, and a Health Fair at the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge.

In addition, The Cardiac Center is involved in the community in the following areas.

**Hands Helping Hearts (HHH)** is a program focused on providing assistance to cardiac patients in need. These patients have little or no money to purchase medications, food, transportation, etc. A committee of 11 employees, including one cardiologist, organizes various fundraisers during the year that are supported by the employees of The Cardiac Center. The committee also reviews, and then distributes collected money and/or food to cardiac patients. To date, HHH raised nearly \$3,900 and spent nearly \$2,400 assisting 39 patients with their needs. Recently, a "Fresh Veggie Drive" was held to collect excess fresh produce from Cardiology employees. Other fundraisers include silent auctions, chili cook-offs, soup cook-offs, and Christmas Cookie Friday.

For over nine years, Outpatient Clinic nurses at The Cardiac Center have facilitated a **Medication Assistance Program**. This program helps patients who cannot afford to purchase prescribed medications by pharmaceutical companies who manufacture them. These companies have "compassionate" programs that provide the drugs for people meeting certain criteria. The Outpatient Clinic nurses process the paperwork required by the pharmaceutical companies and then mail the medications to these patients, which enables them to qualify for and receive this help. Since June, 2003, more than 300 patients have received medications valued over \$125,000.

The Cardiac Center staff members have also participated in numerous neighborhood **health fairs** providing blood pressure and cholesterol checks, health information on cardiology issues and patient counseling. Health fairs were held at many Hy-Vee store locations, the Gifford Park Association Block Party and the Eagle Run Days.

## "A Friendly Face in the Community" Creighton University Women's Community Health Center

by Florence M. Brown, RN, BSN, MPA, Administrator



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The Northwest Omaha community has opened its arms to its new neighbor, the Creighton University Women's Community Health Center (WCHC), a section of the Bone Metabolism/Internal Medicine Department which is located in a strip mall at 5420 NW Radial Highway. **John Christopher Gallagher, M.D.**, medical director of the center, has many years of clinical and research experience in women's health to provide excellent services to under-served women in the North Omaha community. WCHC staff members include Florence M. Brown, RN, BSN, MPA, administrator, who provides day-to-day operational services; Patrice Pittman, MPA, health educator; Carol Jones and April Jennings, community outreach workers; and Demetria Duncan, medical administrative assistant.

A women's life expectancy is at a record of 79.5 years; and women who are 85 years and older are the majority of the rapidly growing aging population. Ensuring good health, quality of life and independent living during these years requires partnerships between women and their families, clinicians, health care and community organizations. For this to be effective, women need to have better access, network and coordination of health care services, to integrate prevention and treatment of mental and physical health care, and to enhance the knowledge base through sex and gender based research and multidisciplinary collaboration. In addition, critical elements for improving health care for minority women include implementing the latest research findings on culturally relevant approaches, outcome evaluation, and follow-up process.

To address these issues, Creighton University established the WCHC using the funds provided by the Tobacco Settlement Research Funds (LB 692). Since opening in September 2002, the staff members at WCHC have reached out to more than 1,500 North Omaha residences through providing preventive and educational services.

*WCHC* offers many health related services and programs to the North Omaha community:

- Asthma screenings
- Breast cancer survivors and parenting support groups
- Breast exams
- Cardiovascular risk assessments
- Educational programs every week in the clinic, and every other month in small neighborhood churches and hard to reach areas in North Omaha
- Free to low-cost health screenings for diseases including diabetes, breast cancer, cervical cancer, heart disease, osteoporosis, and other diseases that are specific to women's health
- Health fairs, including free blood pressure checks, cholesterol and glucose checks
- Nutrition classes
- Online health information through the website, <http://wchc.creighton.edu>
- Physician consultations
- Tutorial assistance on laptops provided at the center

*WCHC* is currently working to provide the following services and programs:

- Stroke survivors support groups
- Support groups for parents who have children with disabilities
- Screenings for HIV testing

*WCHC* has coordinated educational classes with the Cardiac Center at Creighton University in regard to the Cardiovascular Risk Factor Screening and Intervention (CARSI) program. As previously mentioned, the CARSI program is a special research study with the goal of helping people reduce their chance of experiencing a heart attack or stroke. The program offers free education and support to assist participants in reducing specific controllable cardiovascular risk factors (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cigarette smoking and overweight/obesity) through cost-efficient, uncomplicated methods. WCHC have regularly scheduled two sessions a week for 10 weeks.

*WCHC* has collaborated with nursing students and an instructor from the Creighton University College of Nursing to provide one on one or group educational sessions on medical diseases related to women's health. In addition, a part-time nurse practitioner, Tony Laguzza, from the Creighton University College of Nursing is assisting in well women's exams and other health preventive services. Because of this collaboration, the clinical services have been recently expanded to provide more clinical hours at WCHC for well woman's exams. These services are funded by the State of Nebraska Office of Woman's Health Every Woman Matters Program and reimbursed by private insurance companies.

*WCHC* developed a successful educational program with the assistance of Dr. Richard Stacy, Assistant Professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the Douglas County Health Department. This program offers training on prenatal smoking cessation techniques to Omaha area health care providers who offer medical care to prenatal women and parents of children unborn to five years of age.

*WCHC* established a year round walking program, "Woman Lead the Way Program," with a grant funded by the State of Nebraska Office of Women's Health. The goal of the Walking Club is to promote healthy lifestyles to women by encouraging mild to moderate walking exercise and health education sessions.

*WCHC* is another partnership established between Creighton University Medical Center and the community to provide easier access to health care information and services.

**Watch us grow!**



# Division News

## Administration

Submitted by **Mary Ann Scramstad**

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Website: <http://medicine.creighton.edu/medschool/medicine>

### National HHS Advisory Committee

**Eugene C. Rich, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine, has been invited by Tommy G. Thompson, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to serve on the Advisory Committee on Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry of the Health Resources and Services Administration. He was nominated for this position by several national internal medicine organizations. As part of this committee, Dr. Rich will provide advice and recommendations on a broad range of public health programs under the Public Health Service Act and the Health Professions Education Partnership Act of 1998.

## Allergy

Submitted by **Tony Romero, M.S., C.C.R.C.**

PROGRAM MANAGER

### Clinical Trials

Alleviating the Asthma Epidemic: From Omaha to the World. For more information, please contact **Thomas Casale, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Kristi Farrington** at (402) 280-3427.

A multicenter, Double-Blind, Randomized, Parallel-Group Study Investigating the Clinical Effects of L-000888839 in Patients with Seasonal Allergic Rhinitis – a Pilot Study. For more information, please contact **Thomas Casale, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Kris Kenealy** at (402) 280-5961.

A Twelve-Week, Randomized, Double-Blind, Double-Dummy Placebo and Active Controlled Study of Symbicort pMDI Administered Once Daily in Adults and Adolescents with Asthma – STEM. For more information, please contact **Thomas Casale, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Jean Kessler**, at (402) 280-5965 or **Kristi Farrington** at (402) 280-3427.

## Cardiology

Submitted by **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.**

Website: <http://cardiaccenter.creighton.edu>

### Drug Eluting Stents at CUMC

A new therapy is now being used to treat an old problem. Since May, we have been using a new drug-coated stent to treat coronary artery disease. This stent, when deployed, works in a manner similar to the “bare metal” stents, but is coated with a drug to prevent re-stenosis. Approximately 20-30% of patients who received a bare metal stent experienced re-stenosis, requiring a second procedure (usually brachytherapy). With the drug-coated stent, re-stenosis rates are now down to the 5-8% range.

Placement of a drug-eluting stent is performed in the Cardiac Catheterization Lab by an interventional cardiologist. The procedure is not different from a routine angioplasty, except that the patient needs to take Plavix® for three months following placement of the stent. For more information, please contact **Michael Del Core, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, at (402) 280-4566.

### PT/INR Home Testing a First

PT/INR Home Testing is now available for Medicare patients with prosthetic heart valves. The Cardiac Center is leasing Protime machines that will be given to patients to obtain weekly INRs for anti-coagulation therapy. Home testing allows the patient to be in therapeutic range more consistently without weekly visits to The Cardiac Center. Two patients have already been given Protime machines, monthly supplies and they have been educated on how to perform fingerstick and obtain INR results. The Creighton Cardiac Center's Therapeutic Monitoring Clinic is the first clinic in the country to provide this service to their patients. For more information, please contact **Amy Arouni, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, at (402) 280-4566.

### Focal Catheter Ablations

The Cardiac Center recently began performing focal catheter ablations for the treatment of Atrial Fibrillation ablations. This procedure consisted of performing several ablations around the ostium of the pulmonary veins to electrically isolate the vein from the left atrium. This isolation prevents the initiation of atrial fibrillation.

This procedure is performed with the assistance of Intercardiac Echocardiography (ICE). Using ICE, the pulmonary veins can successfully be identified for the procedure and is used in guiding the physician in placement of the ablation catheter. This allows for safe application of energy and to prevent pulmonary vein stenosis.

This procedure is most beneficial to those with paroxysmal atrial fibrillation. Success rates for this group of patients have been reported to be approximately 85%. Success rates have been in those with chronic atrial fibrillation. For more information, please contact **Tom Hee, M.D.**, Associate Professor of Medicine, at (402) 280-4566.

### Recipes from the Heart of Creighton's Cardiac Center

In its second printing, copies of The Cardiac Center's cookbook are available, at a cost of \$10.00. The recipes are from patients, staff and friends of The Cardiac Center. Our Dietitian, **Rita Fricke, MS, RD**, has included a nutrition analysis for each recipe.

These recipes have been described in the Omaha World-Herald as down-to-earth, with simple ingredients. The cookbook is 114 pages in a three-ring binder. For more information, please contact **Cathy Ashe** at (402) 280-4900 or **Rita Fricke** at (402) 280-4950.

### Clinical Trials

The Home Automatic External Defibrillator Trial (HAT) studies the survival from risks of previous myocardial infarction, either through emergency training and CPR, versus training and use of an AED. For more information, please contact **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Lois Rasmussen, R.N., B.S.N.**, at 402-280-4618.

Amlodipine vs. valsartan in the treatment of hypertension compares the efficacy of angiotensin II receptor antagonist valsartan (Diovan TM) to calcium channel blocker amlodipine (Norvasc®) in the management of mild to moderate hypertension in

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African-Americans. For more information, please contact Study Coordinator, **Lois Rasmussen, R.N., B.S.N.**, at 402-280-4618.

The I-PRESERVE Study assesses the use of angiotensin II receptor blocker irbesartan (Avapro®) in the treatment of heart failure in patients with preserved systolic function. For more information, please contact **Antonio Reyes, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Lois Rasmussen, R.N., B.S.N.**, at 402-280-4618.

The ARISE trial studies the reduction of vascular inflammation and coronary atherosclerosis with AGI-1067, a V-Protectant, in patients with coronary artery disease. For more information, please contact **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Lois Rasmussen, R.N., B.S.N.**, at 402-280-4618.

## Dermatology

Submitted by **Christopher J. Huerter, M.D.**

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND CHIEF OF DERMATOLOGY**

### Clinical Trials

A multicenter, open label study to observe the effort of etanercept on joint and skin disease in subjects with psoriatic arthritis. For more information, please contact **Christopher J. Huerter, M.D.**, Associate Professor of Dermatology, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Lori Mahon, BSN, RN**, at (402) 280-5968.

## Endocrinology

Submitted by **Mary Ann Scramstad**

**ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR OF**

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

Web site: <http://osteoporosis.creighton.edu>

### New faculty

We are pleased to welcome to the Endocrinology Division and the Department, **Andjela Drincic, M.D.** Dr. Drincic comes to us from the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System in Grand Island, Nebraska where she had been working since November 2000.

Dr. Drincic is a 1990 graduate of the University of Belgrade School of Medicine in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. She completed an internship in Yugoslavia before completing a three-year internal medicine residency at West Suburban Hospital Medical Center in Oak Park, Illinois. She then completed a two-year Endocrinology Fellowship at Northwestern University in Chicago. She is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and American Board of Endocrinology.

Dr. Drincic has an office at the Dundee Clinic at 119 North 51st Street and the phone number is 449-5968.



Andjela Drincic, M.D.

### Clinical Trials

Have you been taking Fosamax or Actonel for the past three or more years? You may be eligible to participate in a research study evaluating the quality of bone in post-menopausal women taking long-term Fosamax or Actonel. Bone density measurements are provided and a money stipend is available. Call **Theresa Conway**, Nurse Project Manager, for more information at (800) 368-5097 or (402) 280-4676.

### Robert R. Recker, M.D., Receives Prestigious Award for Bone and Mineral Research

**Robert R. Recker, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine and Chief of Endocrinology and metabolism was selected by the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research (ASBMR) to receive the Frederic C. Bartter Award. Named for one of the finest scientists and clinical investigators in medicine, the award is given to a member of ASBMR in recognition of outstanding clinical investigation in disorders of bone and mineral metabolism.



Robert R. Recker, M.D.

### NIH Awards Creighton \$1.13 Million Grant to Study Co-Dependence of Calcium and Phosphorus on Bone Health

Creighton University Medical Center was awarded a \$1.13 million grant by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to study the co-dependence of calcium and phosphorus on bone health. The NIH grant will be used for human clinical trials to investigate the effect of calcium and phosphorus supplementation in osteoporosis sufferers who receive bone building therapy. **Robert P. Heaney, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine will conduct the study. Bone-Sparing by Calcium Salts With and Without Extra Phosphorus. The NIH grant follows recent research by Dr. Heaney that indicates osteoporosis can be addressed more effectively by taking nutritional supplements containing both calcium and phosphorus, rather than calcium alone. Other research studies suggest that the safest way for osteoporosis patients to meet their needs for both calcium and phosphorus is to use a source that provides both nutrients, such as dairy products and/or a calcium phosphate supplement. Other data indicate that there may be a phosphorus deficiency among the population most prone to osteoporosis that is often overlooked.

## Gastroenterology

Submitted by **Mary Ann Scramstad**

**ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR OF**

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

### New faculty

We are pleased to welcome back **BaoLong Nguyen, M.D.** who is now a full-time faculty member in the Division of Gastroenterology. Dr. Nguyen is a 1996 graduate of the University of Nebraska



BaoLong Nguyen, M.D.

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# Division News

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College of Medicine. He completed a year of general surgery internship at Shands Hospital with the University of Florida before he returned to Omaha and completed a three-year internal medicine residency at Creighton University. He completed a three-year gastroenterology fellowship at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and started full-time here in September.

Dr. Nguyen is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

## Hematology/Oncology

Submitted by **Bethany Mills**  
RESEARCH PROJECT MANAGER  
and **Teresa Butler**  
OPERATIONS MANAGER

### Presentations

**Adrian Caracioni, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, gave a presentation on June 16, 2003 in Cleveland, Ohio entitled, "Large Granular Lymphocytic Leukemia."

### Clinical Trials

Amgen 20030125: A randomized, open label, multicenter study of darbepoetin alfa administered once every 2 weeks compared with epoetin alfa administered once every week for the treatment of anemia in subjects with non-myeloid malignancies receiving multicycle chemotherapy. For more information, please contact **Peter T. Silberstein, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Bethany Mills**, at (402) 280-4398.

BMS CA163046: A phase III trial of novel epothilone BMS-247550 plus capecitabine versus capecitabine alone in patients with advanced breast cancer previously treated with or resistant to an anthracycline and who are taxane resistant. For more information, please contact **Peter T. Silberstein, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Bethany Mills**, at (402) 280-4398.

## Nephrology

Submitted by **Mary Ann Scramstad**  
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR OF  
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

### New faculty

The Department of Medicine and the Nephrology Division are pleased to announce the return of **Richard J. Lund, M.D.** Dr. Lund is a 1993 graduate of the University of Witwatersrand Medical School in Johannesburg, South Africa. In 1995, he became a Research Fellow in the Department of Surgery before beginning a three-year Internal Medicine Residency at Creighton.



Richard J. Lund, M.D.

Dr. Lund was a Chief Medicine Resident in 1999 prior to accepting a three year Nephrology Fellowship at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri. He completed this fellowship in June 2003 and became a full-time faculty member in July 2003. He is a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society and he is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine. Dr. Lund's research interests include Renal Osteodystrophy and the link between Osteodystrophy and vascular calcification.

We are pleased to have Dr. Lund returning to Creighton University and the Department.

## Pulmonary/Critical Care

Submitted by **Tony Romero, M.S., C.C.R.C.**  
PROGRAM MANAGER  
Submitted by **Mary Ann Scramstad**  
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

### New faculty

We are pleased to welcome to the Department and the Pulmonary/Critical Care Division a new faculty member, **Tammy Wichman, M.D.** Dr. Wichman is a Creighton University graduate with a B.S. in Physics. She graduated from St. Louis University School of Medicine in 1996 and subsequently completed a combined Medicine-Pediatrics residency and a Pulmonary/Critical Care Fellowship at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond.



Tammy Wichman, M.D.

During her fellowship she received nomination for Best Fellow by Fourth Year Medical Students in 2001, 2002 and received the Orhan Muren Award for Outstanding Subspecialty Fellow in 2001 and 2003. She is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, the American Board of Pediatrics and in Pulmonary Medicine. She is board eligible in Critical Care Medicine.

Dr. Wichman has special interests in asthma, sarcoidosis, cystic fibrosis, smoking cessation, pulmonary rehabilitation, and ethics in the ICU. She is also available to help care for teenagers with chronic lung disease as they transition into adult life.

### Clinical Trials

Administration of Drotrecogin Alfa (activated) in Early Stage Severe Sepsis. For more information, please contact **Nareh A. Dewan, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Tony Romero, M.S.**, at (402) 280-5960.

# Travel Clinic

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vaccine, influenza vaccine, and pneumococcal vaccine. This provides many teachable moments, employing adult education principles of providing information that will solve problems that are immediately at hand. Many patients come to the Travel Clinic because of a trip, and later find that they need adult immunizations recommended even if they never left the Omaha city limits.

A few years ago, an infectious diseases specialist fresh out of fellowship at a Big Ten medical school joined a private practice of infectious diseases in Omaha and considered offering travel immunizations. He asked about the Travel Clinic's fee schedule and was shocked to learn that the Travel Clinic charged 20% of the physician fees at the Big Ten school—yet balanced our budget. The secret to the low charges is the lean structure. The Travel Clinic is administratively part of the Douglas County Health Department. It conducts all its routine clinics on Tuesday afternoons at the Douglas County Health Center at 4102 Woolworth Avenue. To make the best use of time, the clinic relies heavily on a collection of forms, information sheets, preprinted prescriptions, and order sheets.

None of the staff members are full-time Travel Clinic employees. Yet a spirit of full commitment is seen throughout the corps of Travel Clinic workers. Patty Friend has key responsibility for administrative issues through the health department's epidemiology section, and Linda Holtberg has been very conscientious about providing clerical services. Several public health nurses have scheduled clinic sessions, with Cindy Ruma, Kathy Bagby, and Roseanne Mastio among the most experienced. Physician staffing includes all three infectious diseases fellows and all four physicians who are faculty in the Infectious Diseases Division. **Marvin J. Bittner, M.D., M.Sc.**, has primary responsibility as chief consultant for international travel medicine. He is certified as a travel medicine specialist by the American Society for Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. This certification required both experience in medicine in the tropics and a passing score on the society's certification examination.

The clinic operates on a strict appointment basis, but generally can see a new patient within a week. For more information about the Travel Clinic services, please call (402) 444-7207.



**Attn: Joann Reynolds**

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