CUMC CELEBRATES is a monthly publication that acknowledges faculty, staff, and students at Columbia University Medical Center who receive major research grants, who receive prestigious awards, who are elected to honorary societies, or who take leadership positions in professional organizations. Celebrates also gratefully acknowledges the gifts made by donors and friends of the Medical Center and highlights faculty who have appeared in the news recently.

If you have an award or honor that you would like to have listed in Celebrates, please fill out this online form. Note: all federal grants are automatically included based on institutional data. For more information, please write to the Celebrates editor.

RESEARCH GRANTS

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

Rachel Miller, MD, Department of Medicine-Pulmonary, Allergy and Critical Care, has received $3.2 million over five years from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences for “Black Carbon Exposure, DNA Methylation and Airway Inflammation in Pediatric Asthma.”

Megan Sykes, MD, Department of Medicine and Department of Microbiology & Immunology, has received $1.7 million over five years, in a competitive renewal, from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for “A Tolerance Approach to Xenotransplantation.”

Jonathan Barasch, MD, PhD, Department of Medicine-Nephrology, has received $1.4 million over four years from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases for “Iron Lipocalin NGAL in Kidney Disease.”

Yong-Guang Yang, MD, PhD, Department of Microbiology & Immunology, has received $1.2 million over five years, in a competitive renewal, from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for “Core C: Small Animal Core, A Tolerance Approach to Xenotransplantation.”

Anissa Abi-Dargham, MD, Department of Psychiatry, has received $1.1 million over five years from the National Institute on Drug Abuse for “Alcohol-induced Human Striatal Dopamine Release Related to Alcoholism Vulnerability and Habitual Use.”
RESEARCH GRANTS

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS (continued)

Chunhua Weng, PhD, Department of Biomedical Informatics, has received $600,000 over four years from the National Human Genome Research Institute for “Biorepository for Genomic Medicine in Diverse Communities.”

Riccardo Dalla-Favera, MD, Department of Pathology and Cell Biology, has received $375,000 over one year from the Avon Foundation for the Avon Foundation Breast Cancer Program at the Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center of Columbia University Medical Center and New York-Presbyterian Hospital.

Donald Landry, MD, PhD, Chair, Department of Medicine, has received $275,000 over one year from the Office of Naval Research for “NMR Spectrometer in Support of Drug Discovery Effort.”

MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Erica Gibson, MD, Heilbrunn Department for Population & Family Health and Pediatrics (P&S), has received $1.5 million over four years from the New York State Department of Health Bureau of Maternal and Child Health for “CAPP Component B: Improving Community Healthcare for Adolescents.”

AWARDS & HONORS - EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

The 2011 Award for Excellence, recognizing outstanding P&S staff members, was presented Jan. 26 at the Faculty Club. The recipients were Phyllis Katz, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics, and Danury Sanchez, Taub Institute/Sergievsky Center. Sandra Harris, of the Office of Government and Community Affairs, accepted an award in special recognition of the Medical Center Neighborhood Fund.

L-R: Danury Sanchez, Sandra Harris, Phyllis Katz
AWARDS & HONORS

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

Adam Brickman, PhD, Department of Neurology, has been honored with an Early Career Award from the International Neuropsychological Society.

Glen Gillen, EdD, Department of Rehabilitation and Regenerative Medicine/Programs in Occupational Therapy, has been named the next American Occupational Therapy Association's Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lectureship, the highest scholarship honor given by the AOTA.

Debra Tupé, PhD, Department of Rehabilitation and Regenerative Medicine/Programs in Occupational Therapy, has been named to the American Occupational Therapy Association's Roster of Fellows.

Olajide Williams, MD, Department of Neurology, was honored with a New York State Proclamation by Assemblyman Denny Farrell and a New York City Proclamation by Councilwoman Inez Dickens for “outstanding contributions to medicine, in particular, Hip Hop Stroke.”

Naureen Zafar, MD, Department of Medicine-Harlem Hospital, has received the Marshall England Memorial Public Health Award from the Commission for Public Health, New York. Dr. Zafar also has received the Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from the United States Congress and Congressman Rangel, in recognition of the primary care provided to the West African community in Harlem.

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Bobbie Berkowitz, PhD, Dean; Mary Byrne, PhD; Sarah Cook, DNP; and Judy Honig, DNP, EdD, have been inducted as fellows of the New York Academy of Medicine.

Robert Lucero, PhD, has been inducted as an associate member of the New York Academy of Medicine.
The American Board of Comprehensive Care, based at the School of Nursing, is an independent organization founded in 2007 for the purpose of certifying nurse practitioner graduates of Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs who have met defined and accepted standards for comprehensive care. The ABCC Diplomate of Comprehensive Care (DCC) program and its certification exam have now been accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies. With this newly granted historic designation, the ABCC/DCC program becomes the only organization nationally recognized to offer a certifying examination for DNP graduates in the provision of care throughout the life span and across clinical settings.

Kimberli Loraine Leal ’14 and Omonlegho Briana Ovbude ’14 were selected to receive a Predoctoral Underrepresented Minority Dental Student Scholarship from the ADA Foundation, in the amount of $2,500 each for the 2011-2012 academic year.

Annia-Beatrice Legoff ’13 and José Carlos Castillo ’14, CDM Chapter of the Hispanic Dental Association, were first-place winners of The Hispanic Dental Association 2011 Procter and Gamble Orgullo (Pride) Competition.

Andrew Ferraro ’14 received the New York Academy of Dentistry’s Summer Research Grant for his project, “Identifying Undiagnosed Diabetic Patients in the Dental Setting.” The College of Dental Medicine will receive $4,000 to offset the costs of the research.

Ken Ong, MD, MPH, was elected to the Board of Directors of Health Information Management & Systems Society, a not-for-profit organization focused on providing global leadership for the optimal use of health IT.
PHILANTHROPIC GIFTS
(Gifts received between January 5 – January 25, 2012)

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS
A donor made a gift of $2.5 million to support a professorship in the Department of Psychiatry.

The second half of a bequest totaling $975,000 has been directed toward the Dean’s Discretionary Fund.

A $500,000 grant from the JPB Foundation was made to the Department of Neurology to support Dr. David Sulzer’s work in the mechanisms of Parkinson's disease pathogenesis.

The Avon Products Foundation has made a gift of $375,000 to advance breast cancer research in the Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center.

A gift of $300,000 completes a donor’s commitment of $500,000 to the Columbia Cerebral Palsy Center in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery.

Janssen Scientific Affairs, LLC has made a gift of $230,590 to support continuing medical education at the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

A private foundation made a gift of $150,000 to the Department of Ophthalmology to support the acquisition of equipment.

The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation has made a grant of $150,000 to support breast cancer research in the Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Swim Across America has made a gift of $145,425 to support blood and marrow transplant initiatives in pediatric oncology.

A donor made a gift of $125,000 to the Department of Ophthalmology to advance corneal research.

A donor made a gift of $100,000 to the Department of Surgery’s Pediatric Tumor Biology Laboratory led by Drs. Charlie Stolar and Jessica Kandel.

Verizon has made a gift of $100,000 to the Department of Medicine to advance celiac disease research.

A commitment of $100,000 from a family foundation will support gene therapy research in the Department of Ophthalmology.

A private foundation has made a gift of $100,000 to the Celiac Disease Center at Columbia University in the Department of Medicine to advance celiac disease research.

MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Johnson & Johnson made a commitment of $150,000 to the Mailman School of Public Health to support the Public Health Communication and Diplomacy Initiative.
Path Is Found for the Spread of Alzheimer’s – February 1, 2012
Alzheimer’s disease seems to spread like an infection from brain cell to brain cell, two new studies in mice have found. But instead of viruses or bacteria, what is being spread is a distorted protein known as tau. One study, by Karen Duff and Scott A. Small and their colleagues at the Taub Institute for Research on Alzheimer’s Disease and the Aging Brain at Columbia University Medical Center, was published on Wednesday in the journal PLoS One.

Proposed changes in the definition of autism would sharply reduce the skyrocketing rate at which the disorder is diagnosed and might make it harder for many people who would no longer meet the criteria to get health, educational and social services, a new analysis suggests. Previous projections have concluded that far fewer people would be excluded under the change, said Dr. Catherine Lord, director of the Institute for Brain Development, a joint project of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical College, Columbia University Medical Center and the New York Center for Autism.

Education Life: A Bridge to Recovery on Campus – January 22, 2012
The social fabric of college can be harrowing for students who are trying to shake addictions. “It’s simply a recipe for failure,” says Dr. Jon Morgenstern, director of addiction treatment in the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University Medical Center, which recently collaborated with Hazelden, a nonprofit addiction agency, to establish a recovery residence in the TriBeCa area of Manhattan for college students.

A Gut Check for Many Ailments – January 17, 2012
What you think is going on in your head may be caused in part by what’s happening in your gut. A growing body of research shows the gut affects bodily functions far beyond digestion. Dr. Michael Gershon, professor of pathology and cell biology at Columbia, has been studying how the gut controls its behavior and that of other organs by investigating the neurotransmitter serotonin.

Can a Foodie and Mr. Bland Be Happy? – January 10, 2012
When one person is an adventurous eater and the other has simpler tastes, meal times are often divisive. “Non-foodies feel left out or even judged, and foodies feel that an important part of them isn’t fully understood,” says Drew Ramsey, a Manhattan psychiatrist, Columbia University professor of psychiatry and co-author of “The Happiness Diet.”

Unhappy with today’s health care? Think of what it was like to be sick 200 years ago. Into this medical dark age, two Boston doctors brought a beacon of light. They started what is now the New England Journal of Medicine with the idea that science should guide care — not whoever argued loudest or had the most persuasive theory. “It’s the cream of the crop,” said Dr. Barron Lerner, a Columbia University physician and medical historian.
Medication Helps Some With Mild Depression – January 26, 2012
People with mild depression may benefit from taking antidepressants, suggests a new analysis of past studies that compared symptoms in people on the drugs to those given drug-free placebo pills. “I think there’s a valid concern... that if someone has not-that-severe depression that hasn’t lasted that long, maybe it will get better itself or with therapy,” said Dr. David Hellerstein, from the New York State Psychiatric Institute and Columbia University, who worked on the study.

Overweight Linked to Acne in Teen Girls – January 20, 2012
Overweight girls in their late teens were twice as likely as their normal-weight peers to report having a lot of acne in a large new survey of Norwegian teenagers that did not find the same link in boys. There are physiological factors related to obesity that could explain the Norwegian results, said Dr. Nanette Silverberg, a clinical professor at Columbia University.

Dr. Catherine Lord, one of the experts working on new autism guidelines for the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), said on “CBS This Morning” that the intention of changing the DSM -- the book considered the standard reference for mental disorders, driving research, treatment and insurance decisions -- is not to exclude those that already have been diagnosed, but to better define the condition. ... Lord is the director of the Institute for Brain Development, a joint project of New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical College, Columbia University Medical Center and the New York Center for Autism.

More than 40 percent of rheumatoid arthritis patients live a sedentary life, a new study finds. Dr. Jon Giles, an assistant professor of medicine in the division of rheumatology at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City, said that “the most striking aspect to me about the paper is that although we generally consider joint pain and damage as the reason that rheumatoid arthritis patients may not exercise, this does not appear to be the primary driver of lack of exercise in the group studied.”

A group of 18 scientists wrote to the biosecurity board to say that censoring the papers would do more harm than good, and asked the board to reconsider. Vincent R. Racaniello, a virologist at Columbia University and a co-author of the letter, has argued that the danger is overstated, because the real number of infections is unknown; the 60-percent figure, he said, reflects only a few serious cases that usually end up in hospitals.