Building renamed to honor Meninos

In a gesture of appreciation and gratitude for their unwavering commitment to keeping health care accessible to everyone in the city of Boston, BMC's Board of Trustees recently passed a resolution to rename the hospital's Harrison Pavilion the Thomas M. and Angela F. Menino Pavilion.

During a ceremony held on June 11, a bronze plaque was unveiled in the building, located at 840 Harrison Ave., that reads: “With deep appreciation for their vision, courage and leadership and in honor of their commitment to preserve the legacy of exceptional health care services for all the people of Boston.”

“Making Boston Medical Center a reality was the result of the commitment of both mayor and Mrs. Menino,” said Elaine Ullian, BMC president and CEO. “Eight years ago, the mayor had a very bold vision for which he was willing to put his name and reputation on the line,” she said. “It was about doing the right thing at the right time for the right reason — and the result is a thriving Boston Medical Center, serving all the people in Boston.”

Mayor Menino expressed his pride in the success of the BMC merger. “The merger was about people and how we can help them,” he said. “Boston Medical Center is a hospital of choice today, but it’s still about helping people.”

MassINC presents BMC with civic renewal award

BMC recently received the New Commonwealth Medal for Achievement in Creating Civic Renewal from the Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth (MassINC). The inaugural award was one of four medals presented at Politics Unusual, a gala event celebrating MassINC's fifth anniversary.

“The New Commonwealth Medals recognize the current generation of leaders who are still at work overcoming social or political barriers, building bridges and effecting change for the greater good,” said Tripp Jones, executive director, MassINC.

BMC was recognized for finding solutions for the health care needs of an entire urban community that was put at risk as doubts grew about the long-term financial sustainability of Boston’s public hospital infrastructure. In announcing the award to BMC, MassINC noted:

“The creation of Boston Medical Center in 1996 was set against a backdrop of failed mergers and struggling urban hospitals across the nation. Many at the time feared a deterioration in the quality of care. BMC had a lot to prove. And prove it did. It is today the unquestioned cornerstone of the city’s efforts to provide care for the most vulnerable, as well as a key player in sustaining and rebuilding the surrounding community.”

“Discovery center to support biomedical innovations

To serve the unique needs of start-up biomedical research companies founded within and outside the BU community, the BU Medical Campus recently opened a state-of-the-art facility within the BioSquare complex.

Known as the BioSquare Discovery & Innovation Center (BDIC), the new facility is an important university resource for BU faculty who seek advice and access to facilities in support of the further commercialization of promising new biomedical research discoveries and innovations.

Located on the first floor of the Evans Biomedical Research Center at 650 Albany St., the BDIC contains six fully built, individual laboratories and office suites capable of supporting the research activities of start-up level biomedical research companies. Also contained within the center are a number of shared-equipment facilities that may be used by member companies.

“This new center provides small start-up ventures access to state-of-the-art facilities and advice to help the company grow,” said Michael Donovan, associate vice president for Administrative Services at BU Medical Campus.

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**Operation Housecall enriches many lives**

For more than a decade, a special training program at BUSM has been offering medical students first-hand experience interacting with children with developmental disabilities and their families. The program, Operation Housecall, pairs second-year medical students with a child with developmental disabilities and his/her family, giving the student a unique perspective into the lives of the patients they may one day care for.

"The goal is to make sure the students understand the importance of family involvement in the child's care," said Siegel. "For many of our students, this initial meeting teaches them how to interact with children with developmental disabilities and how to talk to them directly."

Jeoffrey Hunter, DMDD, MED, has been appointed associate dean for Academic Affairs for BUSM effective July 1.

Jean joined SDM in 1997 as director of the Pediatric Endodontics program, and was appointed chair of the Department of Endodontics in 1999. During the first five years, he has significantly expanded and developed the Department of Endodontics, both clinically and didactically, while leading the predecessor program in its own name.

In his new capacity, Hunter will lead the continuing development of the academic mission of the DMD program. The Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs has the responsibility for coordinating academic competencies that reflect outcome measures for both general and specialty disciplines. "Dr. Hunter is a clear and distinct leader in the area of Endodontics," said Dr. Spencer Frankl, DDS, MSD, professor and dean of SDM.

His outstanding leadership skills as a department chair will seem­lessly shift to guide him in his new role. The school's Department of Endodontics has thrived under his leadership and I am entirely confident that he will excel in his new position," he added. Hunter will also continue to work as chair of the Department of Endodontics.

As the immediate past president of the American Association of Endodontists, Hunter possesses a leadership of a major professional organization. Some of his accomplishments include chairing the national search for a new executive director, as well as the completion of a strategic plan for the organization that will guide its growth and development during the next five years.

Hunter earned his bachelor of science degree from Manhattan College in New York, his DDS degree from the University of Park in Chicago, his graduate certificate in endodontics from the Naval Dental School in Bethesda, Md., and a master's degree in higher education administration from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Hunter is a retired captain in the U.S. Navy Dental Corps.

**SDM names dean for Academic Affairs**

**BMC forms strategic alliance**

USM has announced a comprehensive strategic alliance with Beyond Genomics, Inc. to establish collaborative research programs in multiple areas including cardiovascular disease, oncology and central nervous system disorders.

BUSM will provide access to its world-class research faculty and clinical experts, while Beyond Genomics will provide access to its systems biology and drug discovery technologies.

"Systems biology is a research approach aimed at fully characterizing the biotomedical mechanisms of disease. By simultaneously integrating and analyzing data from genes, proteins and metabolites, complex clinical conditions can be evaluated and integrated into biological systems. The goal of systems biology is to discover new therapeutics products more quickly than current research methods."

"Beyond Genomics' unique approach to drug development holds great promise for improved therapeutic diagnostics," said Dr. June Aram Chobanian, MD, provost of BU Medical Campus. "BUSM, as a world leader in basic and clinical research, and medical education, realizes the value that these technologies will have in advancing health care and the quality of patients' lives."

"Successful medical centers of the future must more closely integrate clinical research and basic scientific research to expedite the discovery of breakthrough therapeutic agents," Dr. Joseph Locascio, MD, PhD, Wade Professor and chairman of the Department of Medicine and the Whistler Cardiovascular Institute at BUSM, and physician-in-chief at BMC, noted. "The alliance between BUSM and Beyond Genomics provides such an opportunity," he added. Locolascio is also a newly elected member of Beyond Genomics' Clinical Advisory Board.

"The alliance is a truly unique opportunity to discover and develop new drugs to address unmet medical needs for people of all ages," said Dr. Harvey Leonard, the auctioneer for the live auction that, together with the silent auction, helped raise more than $900,000 for BMC. In a surprise development during the auction, Menino and John Buckley, executive vice pres­i­dent of Administration for the Boston Red Sox, briefly took over the auctioneer duties. Together, they auctioned off a baseball signed by all the pitchers and catchers of the Red Sox, and four seats to any Red Sox game in Red Sox box owner John Henry's private box.

More than 270 companies, hospital departments and other friends of the BMC community con­tributed donations essential to the evening's success. Together, the auction and "Pucks for Patients" raised $500,000 to the medical center. In addition, State Street Corp., PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Fisher Scientific International Inc., BMC Medical and Dental Staff, and Agerance/Cardinal Health each donated $25,000 to thecam­paign and reception sponsors for the event.

"Such a successful auction is good for all of us who help provide the excellent care to the residents of Boston," said Elaine Ullian, BMC president and CEO. "It is also good for the patients who seek help, and to increase standards for quality treatment.

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Research in Brief

Teenage girls and the threat of violence

Research IN BRIEF

More than 60 percent reported physical abuse. However, less than 11.5 percent of the women said they had received any assistance or counseling. The research found that women who had received counseling were more likely to seek assistance programs.

Anita Raj, PhD, MS, assistant professor of social and behavioral sciences at BUSM, appeared in the June 2002 issue of Pediatrics.

Teens ignore sun-damage warnings

Sickles Center offers day program for patients

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Team-building exercise

As part of a group effort to plan strategically for the future of BMC, Department of Generalist Dentistry and professional programs, department members recently attended a day of team-building exercises at Thompson Island's Outward Bound Program in Boston Harbor.

According to Judith Jones, DDS, MPH, chair of the department, the goal of the exercises was to come together as a department because "it is our job to coherently learn and participate in the common cause.

Nearly 50 faculty and staff participated in the events.

A CHECK FOR CHILDREN

The Ronald McDonald House Charities recently awarded $30,000 to BMC's Child Witness to Violence Project. CWVP provides age-appropriate counseling and support services to children and their families who have witnessed significant violence.

The gift will be used to provide additional counseling for children.

Right, Jim Roberts, owner of several McDonald's restaurants in neighborhoods served by BMC, presents the check to Betty McCracken Groves, LSCSW, director of the Child Witness to Violence Project.

Video interpreters offered to deaf patients

Expanding upon its extensive interpreter services program, BMC is now adding video interpreting through a service called Deaf Talk, which will nearly double the number of languages the hospital can interpret for patients, as well as provide American Sign Language (ASL) for its deaf patients.

BMC is the only hospital in Boston to offer this service, which is available in the hospital's Emergency Room, Urgent Care Center and Primary Care clinics.

If a BMC interpreter is not available, video interpreting allows a patient and healthcare provider to connect with a Deaf Talk interpreter via videoconferencing. Deaf Talk currently offers interpreter services in more than 30 languages, including ASL, and all interpreters are nationally certified.

Considered the most extensive in New England, BMC's Interpreter Services Department already provides on-site interpreters who cover 17 languages and are available 24 hours a day.

The timing of the interpreter exchange during videoconferencing is simultaneous," said Oscar Aracha, director of Interpreter Services at BMC. "Although it is always preferable to have a live person signing and interpreting on site, it is not always possible - especially when it comes to seeing patients in our emergency room and in urgent care.

Through video interpreting, a patient needing an interpreter is seen in one of the specially equipped rooms that has been set up with an ISDN telephone connection. After a monitor, a movable camera, and a microphone are rolled into the room and plugged in, a call is made to a toll-free number that connects the hospital with a Deaf Talk interpreter within three minutes.

Once the connection is complete, the Deaf Talk interpreter, the physician and the patient can interact in a real-time video conference.

"This new service allows us to provide an additional level of care for our patients," Aracha added.

BMC launches new Center for Diabetes Complications

In an effort to better understand why cardiovascular disease is two to four times more common in patients with Type 1 diabetes than in the general population, BMC has launched the Center for Diabetes Complications.

Funded by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International for $2.2 million over three years, the center will focus on the link between hyperglycemia (elevated blood sugar) and cardiovascular disease, with the hope of providing insight into the metabolic problems underlying cardiovascular complications.

Under the leadership of Neil Ruderman, MD, MPH, director of the center and director of the Diabetes Unit at BMC, and professor of medicine and physiology at BUMS, the program investigators have proposed a new theory linking diabetic cardiovascular disease to the combination of high glucose and free fatty acids in the blood. This combination appears to damage cells lining the blood vessel walls, as well as cells within the heart muscle.

The researchers will focus their investigations on the role of an enzyme called AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK) in preventing such damage, which they believe is initiated by an abnormality in fatty acid metabolism that AMPK can correct.

"The center's major goal is to understand the mechanisms responsible for the development of premature atherosclerosis and cardiomyopathy in persons who have diabetes and to examine potential therapies for their treatment and prevention," said Ruderman.

"This is not a challenging area, we have already identified such an enzyme called AMPK. This is what we believe is a very early event in the pathogenesis of atherosclerosis in diabetes, namely the damage to endothelial cells initiated by hyperglycemia and free fatty acids," Ruderman's co-investigators include John Kraney, Jr., MD, associate chair of Cardiology at BMC and associate professor of medicine and pharmacology at BUMS; Richard Cohen, MD, director of the Vascular Biology Unit at BMC and the Jay and Louise Coffman Professor of Medicine at BUMS; and Douglas Sweeney, MD, PhD, clinical cardiologist at BMC and assistant professor of medicine at BUMS.

Since its inception in 1970, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation has provided more than $500 million to diabetes research worldwide.

New insurance plan developed at BMC

In an effort to enhance quality, control costs, and increase efficiency and internal control over claims management, BMC has created its own professional (medical malpractice) and general liability insurance company that covers all BMC employees and physicians in the faculty practice plan.

Ed Christensen, Esq., general counsel for BMC, led the team that created the new insurance program. Jeffrey Holden, insurance manager, arrived at BMC last July to assume the role of claims manager.

As part of the development of the insurance plan, a new risk manager role has been filled by Patricia Hughes, MSN, NP. Hughes works closely with other departments to identify and evaluate any situations that may pose a safety risk for patients, employees and visitors. She also plays a principal role in the identification of potential liability exposure and in the investigation and management of any claims and lawsuits related to malpractice or general liability.

In the past, BMC purchased liability insurance in the commercial market. The commercial insurance rates fluctuated greatly depending on market conditions, leaving BMC with little control over the cost of insurance premiums. Over time, BMC predicts the new insurance plan, Boston Medical Center Insurance Co. (BMCIC Ltd.), will help to stabilize rates and increase cost effectiveness and quality.

"What makes an in-house insurance plan successful is good, safe clinical practice, good loss prevention education and good claim management experience," said Christensen.

"Here at BMC, we are already excellent in all of these aspects, so this makes the transition sound and practical," said Christensen.

Civic renewal award

In addition to providing outstanding facilities and services for start-up level companies, the center is also staffed by a full-time center manager and a representative from BU's Office of Technology Transfer.

Faculty interested in learning more about this new university facility and its related services should contact Donna at 617/638-5384 or Jack Cohen, BDC manager, at 617/558-5204 for a tour and briefing.

Biomedical innovations

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Awards

**Lewis Braverman, MD,** chief of the Section of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Nutrition at BMC, and professor of medicine at BUMC, received the American College of Endocrinology’s Distinguished Clinician Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to clinical endocrinology. The award was presented at the college’s annual meeting held on May 4 in Chicago. Cardiology Fellows at BUMC, Arjun Gururaj, MD, Mark Forglone, MD, David Farber, MD, and Sai Costa, MD, recently received the third annual Pfizer “Cardiology Bowl” for 2001. The winning fellows were recognized with a presentation of a silver bowl on May 28, for winning a local competition held in September 2001.

**Conan Kornetsky, PhD,** professor of psychiatry, pharmacology and experimental therapeutics at BUSM, is the recipient of the 2002 Mentorship Award from the College on Problems in Drug Dependence. Kornetsky, a BUSM faculty member for nearly 50 years, was honored at the college’s annual meeting held on June 9 in Quebec City.

**Kyriakos Kypreos, PhD,** instructor of medicine in the Section of Molecular Genetics at the Whittaker Cardiovascular Institute at BUSM, received the American Heart Association’s (AHA) prestigious Irving Page Award for 2002. The AHA’s Atherosclerosis Thrombosis and Vascular Biology Council offers the award annually to young investigators. Kypreos was one of five finalists selected worldwide, based on the quality of their work in the field of atherosclerosis, to present their work during the ATVB’s annual meeting held in Salt Lake City earlier this spring.

**Betsy McAlister Groves, LICSW,** director of the Child Witness to Violence Project at BMC, received the Voice for Justice Award for 2002 from the Support Committee for Battered Women’s (SCBW) 30th Annual Awards Banquet held in May at the Westin Hotel in Waltham, Mass.

**The Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights (BCRHR)** at BMC was recently selected as the recipient of the Political Asylum Immigration Representation Program (PAIR) Outstanding Achievement Award. The center was honored for its outstanding work in treating the medical and psychological needs of people who fled to the United States after being tortured in their homelands.

**Project ASSERT** is the recipient of this year’s Outstanding Outreach Educator’s Award from the Community Health Education Center. The award was presented to the Project ASSERT team at the eighth Annual Outreach Educator Day on June 20.

**Project ASSERT** is an innovative health promotion program based at BMC’s Emergency Department. The program aids Emergency Department patients with substance abuse problems in obtaining access to the substance abuse treatment system and to primary care and preventive services.

**BMC honors long-time employees**

BMC recently held a special Employee Service Recognition Program to honor employees who have reached service milestones to the medical center. More than 500 staff members who served the medical center for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years as of December 31, 2001, were lauded and presented with gifts commemorating their achievements at the ceremony, which was held in the Heibert Lounge on June 25.

**25 YEARS**

Karen Allen, 5 East Nursing Medical ICU
John Barzynski, Admitting
Joan Berry, Inpatient Pharmacy
Christine Blount, 3 West Nursing Neonatal ICU
Mary Dillon, Nursing Surgical Short Stay
Margaret Donnelly, Pathology Lab
Nancy Dorgan, 5 East Nursing Medical ICU
Bernice Duggan, Clinical Support Nursing
Marcia Fein, Nursing Coronary Care Unit
Ida Fortune, Adult Admitting
Carolyn Gauthier, Nursing Coronary Care Unit
Veronica Herzon, 3 West Nursing Neonatal ICU
William Horan, Food & Nutritional Services
Carol Kleno, OR Nursing
Alice Joyce, Medical Records
Joan Karins, Billing Administration
Eileen Lahin, Nursing
Wanda McGovern, Cardiology
Alfred Morrisey, Admitting
Frances Morrisey, Plant Operations
Makia Morley, Primary Care Clinic
Betsy Murray, 6 East Nursing Medical Unit
Makia Rha, 5 West Nursing Obstetrics
Patricia Ross, 6 West Nursing Medical Unit
Elaine Russell, Nursing
Georgia Saia, Social Services
Richard Saars, Environmental Services
Shaila Staples, 3 West Nursing Neonatal ICU
Imogen Stuckey, Orthopedic Clinic
Jennifer Taylor-McGowan, 7 West Nursing Rehab Unit

**30 YEARS**

Zola Veddbom, 3 East Nursing Surgical ICU
Sharleen Wheelan, 7 West Nursing Obstetrics
Maryann Wilcox, Nursing Surgical Short Stay

**35 YEARS**

Thomas Alien, Food & Nutritional Services
Eileen Jarvis, 8 East Nursing Obstetrics
Merrilee Lehnshus, Nuclear Medicine
Eileen Maloney, OR Nursing
George Marcial, Patient/Equipment Transport
Hattie McFyburn, Materials Management
Sarrie McCaskill, Patient/Equipment Transport
Terry Melanson, Materials Management
Helen O’Connor, Case Management
Luis Perez, Purchasing
Francis Potraski, Nursing Coronary Care Unit
Hattie Poulinec, Pediatric Clinic
Diane Rube, Finance Information Systems
Theresa Small, Project Atherosclerosis
Cynthia Smith, 7 West Nursing Rehab Unit
Kevin Sutherland, CT Scan
Felicia Velazquez, 6 West Nursing Medical Unit
Kathleen Winton, Neurosurgery

**35 YEARS**

Catherine Cooper, Guest Support Services
Ellen Crowley, Chemistry Lab
Kathleen Danz, Laboratory Administration
John Heath, Food & Nutritional Services
John Lew, Plant Operations
Gerald O’Connell, Plant Operations
Sheila Ryan, Operator Services
Grace Smith, Life Support Services

**40 YEARS**

Miras Brodner, Radiology Administration