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MedCenter News: May 1999

MAY 1999

MedCenter News

BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER, BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS OF MEDICINE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND DENTAL MEDICINE

Gala raises record amount

Without ever setting foot outside Boston, more than 700 guests explored cultures from around the world at "International Avenue," BMC's third annual fund-raising gala. Held on May 1, the event and auctions raised a record $525,000 to help support various hospital programs.

After making their way through an Italian portico in the grand foyer of the Boston Marriott Copley Place, attendees were transported into a lush international garden. During the cocktail reception, guests bid on many extravagant and one-of-a-kind items at extensive live and silent auctions, including trips to London, San Francisco, Aruba and Cancun; tickets to the Ryder Cup; meals at many of Boston's finest restaurants; and a private viewing of a Red Sox batting practice.

The evening's events continued in the ballroom, where guests feasted on international cuisine and danced to the electric sounds of "Motown Express." The gala also featured an international fashion show.

Former radio talk-show host Marjorie Clapprood was emcee for the evening, and was joined on stage by Heather Kahn of WCVB-TV Channel 5 for the live auction. The gala was co-chaired by Patricia Barry, MD, MPH, president of the medical-dental staff and chief of the Geriatrics Section at BMC; Marshall Carter, chairman and CEO of State Street Corp., which was one of the evening's lead sponsors; and Angela Menino, wife of Mayor Thomas Menino. Mayor Menino was also the special guest. ✧

Timothy Babineau, MD, chief, Section of Gastrointestinal and Minimally Invasive Surgery at BMC, relishes his moment as the top bidder for Ryder Cup tickets during the live auction. For more photos of the evening, please see page 5.

Graduations planned for May 23

As the first notes of "Pomp and Circumstance" by Sir Edward Elgar reverberate through the air, cramming for exams and lengthy research papers will become a distant memory for more than 500 graduating BU Medical Campus students. On Sunday, May 23, friends and family will gather to congratulate the 1999 graduates of BUSM, SPH and SDM on their tremendous accomplishment.

BUSM's graduation events will begin with a luncheon at 1:30 p.m. for 155 students and their invited guests at the World Trade Center. Commencement immediately follows at 3 p.m. Hunter "Patch" Adams, MD, who inspired the recent Universal Studios movie "Patch Adams" and founded the Gesundheit! Institute, will address the graduates.

The graduation ceremony for 170 SPH students will be held at BU Medical Center at BioSquare, across from the Talbot Building at 715 Albany St., at 3:30 p.m. A reception will immediately follow.

The Rev. Dr. Ray Hammond, head of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Jamaica Plain and an active community leader, will be the featured speaker.

Following a 1:30 p.m. luncheon in Melville Lounge on the Charles River Campus, SDM will hold its commencement exercises for 196 graduates at 3 p.m. in the Morse Auditorium on Commonwealth Avenue.

All graduating students are also expected to attend commencement exercises at Nickerson Field on the Charles River Campus at 11 a.m. on May 23 ✧

Boston HealthNet expands to 13 community partners

Harbor Health Services Inc., which includes Neponset Health Center and Geiger-Gibson Community Health Center in Dorchester, recently became the newest member of the Boston HealthNet team.

"The addition of Harbor Health Services Inc. to Boston HealthNet broadens our network and our ability to provide top-quality medical and public health services to Boston's neighborhoods," said Frank Doyle, executive director of Boston HealthNet. "It's great to have them on board."

Boston HealthNet, a partnership of BMC, BUSM and 13 community health care providers in Boston's neighborhoods, provides outreach, prevention, primary care and dental services during more than 1 million patient visits each year. Boston HealthNet established its integrated health care network in 1995 to provide Boston's residents with convenient and comprehensive health care services.

As part of Boston HealthNet, Neponset Health Center and Geiger-Gibson Community Health Center will strengthen and expand the services they now offer their patients in cooperation with BMC and BUSM. ✧

INSIDE

BMC Volunteers Jeanette Daley (left) and Anne O'Leary receive a grateful group hug from a few new friends at the recent BMC Volunteer Appreciation Night. Held in the Hiebert Lounge, the evening featured music, dinner and a performance by the Jeannie Lindheim Clown Troupe.

Towle appointed senior VP at BU

Richard Towle, vice president for Administrative Services at BU and chief business officer of BU Medical Campus, has been named senior vice president at BU.

Towle, who has held a variety of senior administrative posts at the university for the past 19 years, has served as the principal liaison between the Charles River and medical center campuses, and will continue to have an active role in medical campus activities.

As senior vice president, Towle will take on increased levels of responsibility in campus planning and in the oversight of major campus development projects for the university. Included among the projects is BioSquare, the $350 million research park being developed on Albany Street by BU and BMC to support innovation in science and business.

Towle will also play a major role in the development of a 1,000-car parking garage on the medical campus.

Richard Towle

"Richard has played an important role in nearly all the major projects on the medical campus," said BUSM Dean Aram Chobanian, MD, provost of BU Medical Campus. "He is an outstanding administrator who has continually demonstrated the leadership abilities and administrative acumen to handle the largest of tasks. He is most deserving of this new position." ✧

Project HEALTH:

Making a difference in people's lives

Eleven-year-old Muriel was heavier than other children her age. After participating in FitNut, Muriel has lost weight and now serves as a mentor to other overweight children in the program.

Twins Tyrone and Tashia missed nearly two weeks of school a month because of their chronic asthma. Thanks to the Asthma Swim Program, though, the twins' health has dramatically improved, and they are learning how to manage their disease.

A recent immigrant from Haiti, Jean had difficulty providing for his family. Students staffing the Family Help Desk helped him navigate the bureaucracy of the Department of Transitional Assistance, and today his family is thriving.

The Fitness and Nutrition Program, the Asthma Swim Program, and the Family Help Desk are only three of 13 innovative programs designed by BMC's Project HEALTH to improve the health of inner-city children. Made up of student volunteers from Harvard and MIT, the organization tackles the social, economic and medical ills that often plague urban families.

Rebecca Onie, a Harvard graduate and the group's current director, founded Project HEALTH (Helping Empower, Advocate and Lead Through Health) in 1996. Frustrated with the lack of volunteer opportunities available to undergraduates and fueled by her passion to help children, she approached Barry Zuckerman, MD, chief of the Division of Pediatrics at BMC and chairman and professor of Pediatrics at BUSM, with an idea to establish a student volunteer corps at the hospital. Zuckerman eagerly accepted her proposal, and with only 10 recruits in tow, Onie launched the project.

"Project HEALTH volunteers give more than just time; they utilize their creativity, energy and leadership to serve the community," said Onie. "BMC is the ideal outlet for them."

Today, the Project HEALTH team consists of 150 culturally diverse undergraduate students, all of whom have completed a rigorous application process. Program ideas come from both the students (who are pursuing a variety of majors) and medical center staff. With the guidance of physicians, nurses, educators, lawyers, and social workers, the students work out the logistics of each program, from procuring funding to finding meeting space.

At the end of each week, volunteers grapple with the social issues of the families they've seen and weigh the impact of the programs through reflection sessions. Speakers, including community members and hospital staff, address a range of topics, from trends in public policy to the challenging aspects of providing services for the city's poor.

"The students have not only empowered and educated families to help them meet their own health and social needs, but they have also developed critical leadership skills," said Zuckerman.

All of Project HEALTH's programs are free of charge. Offerings include a support program for adolescents with sickle cell anemia, job-training, child-injury prevention and a food cooperative. The multi-faceted programs provide therapy, support, and education to chronically ill children, and assist families in locating housing, food or childcare.

With 13 programs currently running and more being developed, funding is a constant challenge. In the past year, however, Project HEALTH has raised more than $150,000. Most recently, the Boston Foundation provided $24,000 to support the project's community-based public policy initiative. In addition, last summer, BankBoston became the project's first corporate sponsor with a two-year, $20,000 commitment. Other sponsors include BMC, Harvard University, MIT, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Staples Inc., Medicine in the Public Interest and the Stride Rite Foundation.

Although it's too early to measure the effectiveness of many programs, the project has produced some remarkable results. In the past year alone, volunteers have logged more than 20,000 hours designing, developing and implementing programs, and served more than 1,100 families.

As Onie and her corps look to the future, they hope to bring the programs into neighborhood health centers and other Boston-area hospitals. In the meantime, Project HEALTH is being implemented through collaborative relationships between pediatric hospital programs and universities in other states. ✧

WE CARE

Patients say 'Thanks'

Since the start of the WE CARE initiative last fall, staff and employees at BMC are placing an increased emphasis on patient and customer satisfaction every day. The initiative (With Exceptional Care And Respect for Everyone), an ongoing service-improvement process that empowers employees to establish high levels of service, is having an impact.

More and more patients and family members are returning to BMC for their care, as well as taking the time to send grateful letters that praise the people who made their time in the hospital as pleasant as possible. The following are excerpts from letters sent to BMC over the last few months. Their words clearly show the effort and care we put into our jobs at BMC.

"I was seen in the E.R. department Sunday night ... Dr. Crespo has to be the most kind doctor I have ever had the pleasure of seeing. He was prompt, professional and his bedside manners were honest and caring. He examined me with tender care and made me very comfortable right away. I left with my pain under control and my mind at ease."

"Not only were you good to me, but every single person in your office ... were just as decent and kind as people can be — I kind of thought that people who really cared were a thing of the past."

"Many thanks to you for my experience at Boston Medical Center. I am now 99 percent back to my normal state of health. My 82-year-old body is happy and proud to wear the beautiful, thin, pink line (not really a scar) which denotes the skill of my surgeon, Dr. Kavanah."

"You have some of the most wonderful, efficient and caring nurses in that hospital. I say this not only because of my husband but I saw how they were with the other patients as well."

"The staff at Boston Medical Center gave more than 100 percent effort, attention and medical care to my husband ... As far as I am concerned, a miracle happened that night."

Wisdom of the years

At the BUSM MedCAREERS Alumni Day, students Melissa Glasser and Paul Ko (above) learn from the experiences of Peter J. Deckers, MD, '66 (right). Deckers, who is now the dean of the University of Connecticut School of Medicine, spoke on the topic of "What Really Matters?" Over the course of the morning, 20 BUSM graduates addressed an array of topics that ranged from the challenges of combining careers to the transition to residency.

BUSM alumni to walk down memory lane

As soon-to-be graduates put their rigorous days as medical students behind them, past BUSM graduates from across the country will gather to muse over their medical school experiences during Alumni Weekend, May 21-23. Over the course of the three-day event, alumni will reunite at various events, as well as learn about on-going activities at BUSM and innovative developments in medicine.

The Scientific Program for the weekend will feature a comprehensive discussion about new advances in the treatment of cardiovascular disease. Keynote speakers at the Friday afternoon event include Joseph Loscalzo, MD, PhD, Wade Professor and chairman of the Depart-ment of Medicine and director of the Whitaker Cardiovascular Institute at BUSM, and physician-in-chief at BMC; Harold Lazar, MD, professor of cardiothoracic surgery at BUSM and a cardiothoracic surgeon at BMC; Jeffrey Isner, MD, professor of medicine and pathology at Tufts University School of Medicine and chief of Vascular Medicine and Cardiovascular Research at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center; and Eugene Braunwald, MD, Hersey Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, faculty dean for Academic Programs at Brigham and Women's and Massachusetts General hospitals, and vice president for Academic Programs at Partners Health Care System.

On Friday, old classmates can take a guided tour of the Museum of Fine Arts before attending one of 13 class reunions that evening. The next day, alumni can sightsee around Boston in a WWII-era amphibious vehicle with Boston Duck Tours.

The weekend will culminate with the 124th Annual Meeting and Banquet of the Alumni Association on Saturday evening at The Westin Hotel. After a brief business meeting, alumni and guests, faculty, staff and members of the Class of 1999 will enjoy an evening of fine dining and dancing. To conclude the weekend, alumni are invited to attend BUSM commencement at the World Trade Center on Sunday afternoon.

For more information, contact the Alumni Association at 638-5150. ✧

Researchers find link between grip strength and osteoarthritis in hand joints

We've all heard the phrase "get a grip," but who would have suspected it might be bad for your health? BU Arthritis Center investigators have determined that people with a strong grip are at increased risk for osteoarthritis in certain hand joints.

In a study that appeared in a recent issue of "Arthritis and Rheumatism," researcher David Felson, MD, MPH, professor of medicine and public health at BUSM, and his colleague Christine Chaisson, MPH, analyzed both grip strength data and enhanced X-ray data for 453 men who were in their 70s. They found that those with a strong grip were more likely to have osteoarthritis in the thumbs and in the two finger joints closest to the palms.

According to Chaisson, this is the first study to examine the relationship between osteoarthritis and grip strength in different types of hand joints. "The forces at the joint and the frequency those forces are applied is new territory in arthritis research," she said. "We've had some studies about hand biomechanics, which show force along the joints, but no one has evaluated this particular association before."

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis and is caused by the deterioration of joint cartilage. It affects approximately 20 million Americans over the age of 45.

Paper examines factors underlying malignant melanoma and exposure to UV radiation

Barbara Gilchrest, MD, professor and chairman of Dermatology at BUSM and chief of the Department of Dermatology at BMC, recently published a review paper in the April 29, 1999, issue of "The New England Journal of Medicine," outlining mechanisms of disease in melanoma resulting from exposure to ultraviolet radiation.

According to Gilchrest's review, the final effect of ultraviolet radiation is not attributable simply to cumulative exposure, but may be strongly influenced by patterns of exposure, as well as dose per exposure. "Those who are more likely to take mid-winter vacations in warm climates, yet do not normally receive daily exposure to UV radiation, may be more likely to develop melanoma over time," she said.

Gilchrest and her colleagues reviewed the epidemiologic features of skin cancers, emphasizing that incidence of both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers increase exponentially over time. "The rate of increase with age is an independent risk factor from the risk factor of environmental sun exposure," she noted.

The paper also emphasizes that protection from the sun is critical to the prevention of both melanoma and nonmelanoma skin cancer, and that protection is most effective when begun in early childhood. "It is especially important to protect against intermittent sun exposures in order to reduce genomic damage, and to reduce the risk of melanoma," added Gilchrest.

Glucose solution improves coronary bypass outcomes in diabetic patients

Cardiothoracic surgeons at BUSM have recently concluded an investigation into the use of glucose-insulin-potassium (GIK) solution to improve the outcomes of patients with diabetes mellitus who undergo coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery.

Harold Lazar, MD, professor of cardiothoracic surgery at BUSM, and cardiothoracic surgeon at BMC, presented the results of the study at the annual meeting of the American Association for Thoracic Surgery, held in April.

According to Lazar, using GIK solution benefits diabetic patients. "Our previous studies have shown that GIK solutions improve clinical outcomes in non-diabetic patients following urgent CABG. However, we wanted to determine whether the same would be true for diabetic patients," he said.

Results of the study were clear. "Use of GIK solution does improve myocardial performance, limits weight gain, and reduces the need for ventilatory and inotropic support following CABG surgery," said Lazar. Other results showed a decrease in the incidence of atrial fibrillation, as well as faster overall recovery time following CABG surgery.

Nurses focus on cancer patients and fatigue

Cancer wreaks havoc with an individual's life, health and family. BMC nurses, however, are learning how to recognize and address one of the most overlooked aspects of the disease and its treatment: patient fatigue.

"Fatigue is a very big problem," said Kerry Mahar, RN, clinical instructor for oncology. "Most patients experience fatigue, especially when they undergo combined treatments, such as chemotherapy and radiation."

As part of a national effort by the Oncology Nursing Society during the month of April, BMC nurses in the Outpatient, Inpatient and Radiation Oncology departments spent the better part of Friday, April 9, learning how to recognize the signs of patient fatigue and the best ways to address it.

"The goal of the awareness day is to help health care providers understand and recognize the symptoms of fatigue," said Gail Wilkes, RN, MS, oncology nurse practitioner.

"Most patients experience fatigue, especially when they undergo combined treatments, such as chemotherapy and radiation."

Kerry Mahar, RN

"Often when patients are talking with medical personnel, they forget to mention fatigue."

Cancer-related fatigue is described as a feeling of tiredness more severe than what a healthy person would experience. It can take on many forms, and patients use words such as weakness, exhaustion, sleepiness, drowsiness and confusion to describe how they feel. Chemotherapy patients often report that fatigue is more distressing than nausea and vomiting.

The day-long event at BMC included educational displays in the inpatient, outpatient and radiation oncology areas; Wilkes' presentation on cancer-related fatigue and assessment, management and patient education strategies; and a luncheon and brief chair massages for nurses.

Mahar said the events were well-attended and very informative. "The staff learned to be more sensitive to the needs of patients receiving treatment," she said.

According to Wilkes, the day was a way to empower nurses so that they, in turn, can help their patients cope with cancer-related fatigue and prioritize activities to conserve their energy.

"We can help them understand what they can do, what they should do and what they can give to someone else," Wilkes said. ✧

'Chronicle' devotes episode to BMC

WCVB-TV Channel 5's "Chronicle," the highly rated nightly news-magazine program, recently dedicated an entire 30-minute broadcast to the people, programs and mission of BMC.

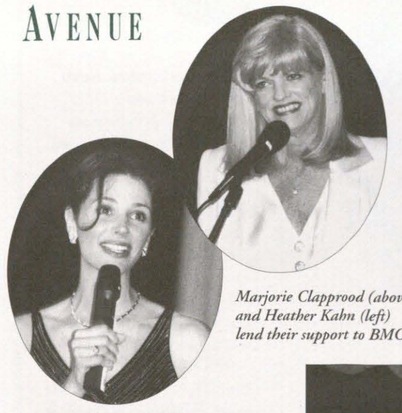
Filmed in February, the show aired on March 30 and highlighted the three years since Boston City Hospital, Boston University Medical Center Hospital, and Boston Specialty and Rehabilitation Hospital merged to create BMC.

In its report, "Chronicle" focused on many of BMC's initiatives, including The Grow Clinic for Children, Project HEALTH, and the Geriatric Home Visit Program, as well as the hospital's Family Medicine, Interpreter Services and Emergency departments.

A condensed version of the program was shown at the third annual BMC Gala, held on May 1.

"We are most appreciative of WCVB Channel 5 for showcasing Boston Medical Center and the patients we serve," said Elaine Ullian, president and CEO of BMC. ✧

Jet-setting on International Avenue



Marjorie Clapprood (above) and Heather Kahn (left) lend their support to BMC.

From left, Patricia Barry, MD, MPH, president of the medical-dental staff and chief of the Geriatrics Section at BMC; Marshall Carter, chairman and CEO of State Street Corp.; Elaine Ullian, BMC president and CEO; Angela Menino; Mayor Thomas Menino; and Manuel Ferris, chairman of the BMC Board of Trustees, enjoy the evening's festivities. Barry, Carter and Angela Menino co-chaired the gala.

Congratulations to the following BMC employees who were selected in a raffle to attend the gala with a guest:

Makerra Brookins, enrollment assistant, Boston HealthNet Plan; Luis Molina Jr., general service associate, Environmental Services; Vivien Marie Morris, registered dietician, Pediatric AIDS; Susan LaCroix, executive assistant, Cardiothoracic Service; and Yuklin Norman, patient accounts specialist, Inpatient Financial Services.

Gala guests dance up a storm to the sounds of "Motown Express."

BU Medical Campus continues Y2K preparations

With seven months remaining until the world ushers in a new millennium, the BU Medical Campus is readying for whatever Jan. 1, 2000, may bring.

According to Deacon Economos, acting executive director of the Office of Information Technology for the BU Medical Campus, there may be a few minor bumps in the road leading into the next century, but overall he expects a smooth trip.

"Most of the problems employees could encounter will be minor inconveniences," Economos said. "In general, the critical Y2K transition issues have been, or will be, dealt with."

University preparations for the Y2K transition began five years ago, according to Economos, but have been most intense during the past 18 months as the deadline has inched closer. Economos, the BU Y2K Task Force representative for the medical campus, said the university is taking the lead in getting ready for the next century.

"Boston University has made preparing for Y2K a top priority," he said. "We are matching that effort here on the medical campus."

BU Medical Campus and BMC share the responsibilities of preparing the physical plant, such as the buildings, heating, air conditioning, elevators and security equipment, for the year 2000. According to Economos, the two institutions have been working on these issues for more than a year, and he expects minimal problems at the start of the new year.

Now the focus is on what Economos calls the "embedded systems" at the medical campus — namely, those systems that may be run by an embedded computer chip that might not be Y2K-compliant. Economos said the university has contracted with a consulting firm to review and verify the university's discovery and remediation process for these chips, to ensure that all necessary precautions and actions are appropriately taken.

The third area to which Economos and his team will turn their attention involves the desktop computers and systems employees use each day. Although much of the responsibility of determining whether an individual computer will work after Jan. 1 lies with the user and his or her department, help is available. BU Medical Campus employees seeking information on evaluating their computer's Y2K-compliance can check out the BU Web site at www.bu.edu/y2k or the medical campus' Year2000 Web site at www.bumc.bu.edu/bumc/oit.

"If end-users pay some attention to what they have on their desktops — the applications most important to their particular job — they should be fine," Economos said. ✧

ITMA receives national awards

BUMC's Interinstitutional Transportation Management Association (ITMA), representing BMC, BU Medical Campus and the Public Health Commission, recently won two national awards for the services and leadership it provides patients, employees, students and visitors.

The Association for Commuter Transportation, a nationwide group dedicated to commuter transportation, has awarded the ITMA honorable mentions in two categories: Board Member Leadership and Outstanding TMA (Transportation Management Association).

Bill Gasper, associate vice president for Business Affairs and assistant treasurer for the BU Medical Campus, was recognized in the board member leadership category. President of the ITMA since 1993, Gasper also serves as the chairman of its Board of Directors.

"Bill has been a motivating force in the development and growth of the ITMA since it began in 1990," said Maureen Lacey Flaherty, ITMA director. "He brings a constantly fresh and creative perspective to this challenging role."

As president, Gasper has been committed to working collaboratively and cooperatively with ITMA members. In addition, he has promoted the mission of the ITMA to educate the medical center's personnel about transportation demand management in order to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.

The ITMA was also given the nod for being an Outstanding TMA. What sets the ITMA apart, Flaherty said, is its members' willingness to remain excited and enthusiastic about the goals of improving accessibility to the medical area, encouraging use of public transportation, and promoting and marketing transportation options.

This is not the first time the ITMA has been recognized on the national level; however, this time is different. "We've won three awards for projects and campaigns, but this is the first time the ITMA has won an award for being a creative, innovative organization," Flaherty said.

Gasper and Flaherty accepted their awards at the national TMA Summit meeting held in Boston on April 30.

Tackling the warning signs of alcohol abuse

To raise awareness of a disease that touches almost half of all households in America, BMC took part in the first annual National Alcohol Screening Day on April 8.

The day-long event included information tables staffed by substance abuse counselors, physicians, social workers and graduate students; a discussion of the disease of alcoholism and its warning signs; and a video presentation. Richard Saitz, MD, MPH, associate director of BMC's Clinical Addiction Research and Education Unit, and assistant professor of medicine at BUSM, coordinated the day's activities.

According to Saitz, an individual can use a simple, four-question evaluation to determine whether he or she may have a problem with alcohol.

"The questions are basic," Saitz said. "Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking? Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking? Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking? Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover?

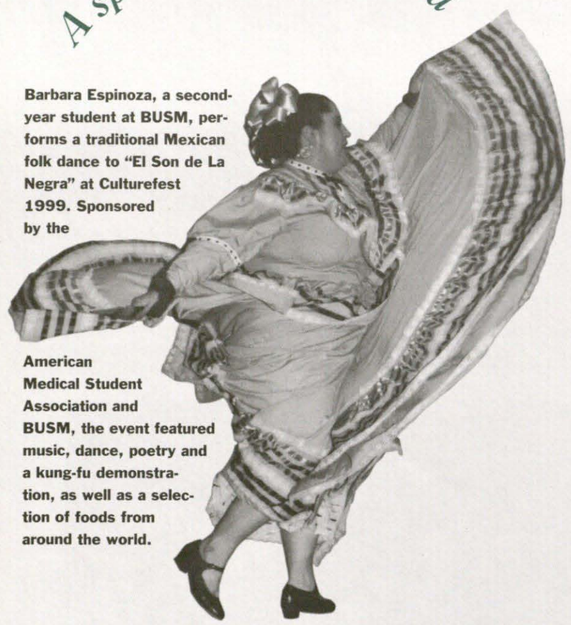
"If you answer yes to any of these questions, you may have a problem with alcohol," he continued. "Consulting with your primary care physician is a good place to start when seeking help."

Individuals should also think about how much they drink. According to Saitz, men should not consume more than two drinks a day, four drinks at a special occasion or 14 drinks a week. Women should not consume more than one drink a day, three drinks at a special occasion or seven drinks a week.

"An individual can be drinking less than those guidelines and still have a problem with alcohol," Saitz said. "If someone even suspects that he or she may be drinking too much, I encourage that person to seek professional advice."

For more information, contact Addiction Services at 534-5554, Project Assert at 414-4388, or your primary care physician. ✧

A spin around the world



Barbara Espinoza, a second-year student at BUSM, performs a traditional Mexican folk dance to "El Son de La Negra" at Culturefest 1999. Sponsored by the American Medical Student Association and BUSM, the event featured music, dance, poetry and a kung-fu demonstration, as well as a selection of foods from around the world.

SDM holds Clinic and Research Day

SDM's annual Clinic and Research Day was recently held at 100 East Newton St. Twenty-three dental equipment vendors displayed their products and were available throughout the day to speak with students.

In the afternoon, guest speaker Vicky Rosen, PhD, senior scientist and director of Tissue Growth and Repair at the Genetics Institute in Cambridge, spoke about potential therapeutics for tissue growth and repair. She was followed by Sadru Kabani, DMD, MS, professor of diagnostic sciences and patient services and director of the Division of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology at SDM, who gave a lecture titled, "Know Thy Tongue."

Faryal Farshadu, DMD '99, (right) chats with a vendor at SDM's Clinic and Research Day. The day also involved student presentations and an awards ceremony for research projects.

ON*Track*

BMC departments move to new locations

Several BMC departments have moved to new locations. The following offices have relocated to 660 Harrison Ave.: Research and Grants Administration; Managed Care; Physician Network Development; Physician and Affiliated Services; Boston HealthNet; Legal Services; and Faculty Practice Plan.

In addition, the Boston HealthNet Plan moved to the Nurses Education Building at 35 Northhampton St., and the Elders Living at Home program is now located on the mezzanine of the Ambulatory Care Center. Occupational Environmental Medicine (OEM) can now be found on the 5th floor of the Preston Building.

New drug database available on the intranet

A new information database, accessible through the intranet, is now available at BMC and to hospital affiliates. The Micromedex system contains the following databases:

- Drugdex — a drug information system;
- Poisindex — a poison identification and treatment system;
- Identidex — a drug identification system that uses the markings on tablets/caplets;
- ReproRisk — a system for identifying the reproductive risks and hazards of drugs and other agents; and
- DrugReax — a system that identifies drug-drug, drug-food, drug-disease, drug-ethanol and drug-laboratory interactions.

CALENDAR

May

10 **Street survival course** - A course titled "Street Survival - Personal Safety Awareness and Response" will be offered in two sessions beginning May 10 and concluding May 12. Sessions will also be held on May 18 and 20 and again on May 25 and 26. Training will focus on effective verbal and physical responses, with emphasis on risk management and avoidance techniques. Classes comprise two four-hour sessions from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in the Newton Pavilion, function rooms 1 and 2. To register, call Organizational Development and Training at 414-5488.

10 **Bike check-up** - In preparation for the BUMC Bike to Work/School Day, to be held May 18, the Interinstitutional Transportation Management Association (ITMA) will hold a free bike check-up on Talbot Green from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. The rain date is May 12. For more information, call ITMA at 638-7473.

12 **Event registration** - The BUMC Bike to Work/School Day registration will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the East Newton Street Campus and the Harrison Avenue Campus cafeterias, and the BUSM lobby.

13 **Osteoporosis Awareness Day** - A free osteoporosis screening, sponsored by the office of Michael Holick, MD, MPH, professor of medicine, dermatology and physiology at BUSM, and chief of Endocrinology, Nutrition and Diabetes at BMC, will be held on the H-2 bridge, East Newton Street Campus from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free bone density scans will be available, as will risk-factor questionnaires. Participants can discuss methods of prevention and new treatments with experts. For more information, call 638-6767.

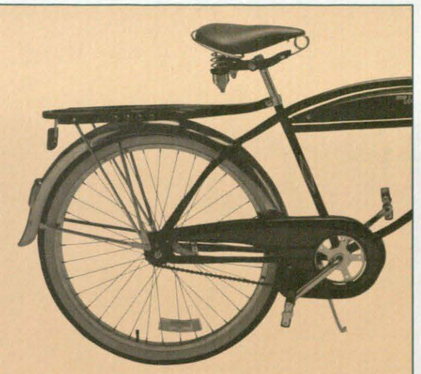
18 **Bike to Work/School Day** - The BUMC Bike to Work/School Day and corporate challenge takes place. Lunch for registered cyclists will be held on Talbot Green from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

20 **Cultural forum** - A talk titled "Providing Culturally Sensitive Health Care to the Brazilian Community" will start at noon in the Dowling Auditorium on the Harrison Avenue Campus. Those attending are encouraged to bring lunch; refreshments will be served.

21 **Melanoma seminar** - BUSM and BMC's Cancer Care Committee are sponsoring a day-long course on melanoma titled "Skin Oncology 1999: Update on Melanoma." The event will be held at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel and is scheduled from 7:15 a.m. to 5 p.m.

21 **Alumni Weekend** - SDM celebrates the return of alumni from class years ending in 4 and 9 with a reunion dinner cruise on Friday, May 21. On Saturday, May 22, Herbert Schilder, DMD, chairperson of SDM's Department of Endodontics, will present a continuing education lecture, "Periodontic-Endodontic Interrelationships." That evening, the Spring Gala will be held at the John F. Kennedy Library beginning at 6 p.m. The weekend will conclude on Sunday with commencement exercises at 3 p.m. in Morse Auditorium on Commonwealth Avenue. For more information, contact Cindy Briggs at 638-4732 or e-mail cjbriggs@bu.edu.

21 **Alumni Weekend** - BUSM celebrates a weekend-long series of events, including scientific programs and class receptions, on Friday, May 21; the annual meeting and banquet on Saturday, May 22; and commencement at the World Trade Center on Sunday, May 23. For more information, call 638-5150. (See story page 3.)



25 **Golf tournament** - BUSM and the Huntington's Disease Society will hold a golf tournament at the Ferncroft Country Club in Danvers. Proceeds will be directed to BUSM to fund Huntington's Disease research.

June

3 **NICU Reunion** - A reunion of former NICU patients and their families will be held from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Harrison Avenue Campus. For more information, call Kate Williams at 414-3769 or e-mail kate.williams@bmc.org.

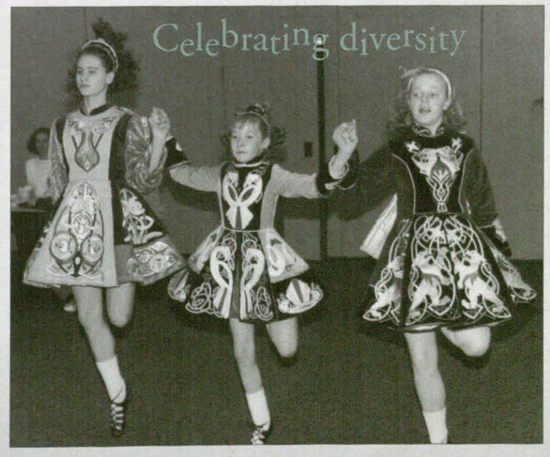
4 **Comedy night** - "Laughter is the Best Medicine," a night of comedy, will be held on Friday, June 4, to benefit the BMC Children's AIDS Program. The event will be take place at Mosely's in Dedham, at the intersection of Routes 1 and 109, beginning at 8 p.m. Lenny Clark and Steve Sweeney are among the comedians who will perform. For more information, call (617) 327-2777.

BMC plans week-long celebration of nurses

May 6 - 14 is designated the 1999 National Nurses Week. With a theme of "Nurses Make It Happen," numerous events, ranging from workshops and lectures to two evenings of humor, are planned. The first-ever Nursing Grand Rounds, titled "Ethical Issues in the NICU," will be held on Friday, May 14.

On Thursday, May 6, the week begins with the discussion, "Education Programs in Thailand." Two sessions of a touch therapy workshop will be held on Friday, May 7.

Recognition ceremonies, sessions with a humorist and a workshop focusing on legal issues in nursing practice round out the week's events. For more information, call Karen Proctor at 638-5800.



Helping celebrate the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of BMC employees, students from the Maureen Haley School of Irish Dance perform during the recent BMC International Cultural Diversity Week. In addition to enjoying other entertainment, including a Brazilian jazz guitarist and an African steel drum player, employees were invited to participate in a cultural forum, "Providing Culturally Sensitive Health Care to the Chinese Community." Employees also had the opportunity to mark their families' geographical origins on an interactive map. Art, books, clothing and other symbols of different nationalities were on exhibit in the Newton Pavilion and the Ambulatory Care Center.

People

John Chessare, MD, MPH, senior vice president and chief medical officer at BMC, spent three days in April as a visiting professor in evidence-based medicine at Children's Hospital/George Washington University.

Alan S. Cohen, MD, Distinguished Professor in Rheumatology, Emeritus, and professor of pharmacology and experimental therapeutics at BUSM, is pleased to announce that the journal "AMYLOID The International Journal of Experimental and Clinical Investigation," which he founded and edits at BUMC, has been accepted for indexing in "Index Medicus" and "Current Contents." Cohen has been appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board of a new foundation, the New York-based Institute for the Study of Aging. He has also been appointed chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee of Neurochem Inc. in Montreal.

Lucy Honig

Anthony Gianelly, DMD, PhD, MD, chairperson of the Department of Orthodontics at SDM, received the Award of Merit from the Orthodontic Education and Research Foundation in St. Louis.

Barbara A. Gilchrest, MD, professor and chairman of Dermatology at BUSM and chief of the Department of Dermatology at BMC, has been appointed president of the Society for Investigative Dermatology. In October, Gilchrest was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. She was also selected as the 1999 Marion Sultzberger awardee and lecturer for the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD). In March, Gilchrest delivered the Sultzberger Lecture at the AAD's annual meeting in New Orleans. Her talk was titled "The SOS Response in Human Skin: Implications for Disease Management and Prevention."

Emrey Moskowitz, DDS

Lucy Honig, an assistant professor of international health at SPH, has won the 1998 Drue Heinz Literature Prize for a collection of short stories titled "The Truly Needy and Other Stories," due out in the fall. This award is the latest honor Honig's fiction writing has garnered. She has already published a novel, won two O. Henry Awards, appeared in a number of magazines and been awarded various writing fellowships.

When the Center for International Health became an academic department of the SPH in 1995, it sought a writing specialist to work with students as they researched and wrote the new concentration's required mini-thesis. Honig was a recognized writer, an experienced teacher of English to speakers of other languages, and eager to set up a new writing program specifically for the mix of international and American health professionals in this program.

Although being the writing specialist is a full-time job, Honig still pursues her fiction, and has a new novel underway.

Emrey Moskowitz, DDS, clinical instructor at SDM, recently received the AADS/Warner-Lambert Enid A. Neidle Scholar-in-Residence award. This award is given annually to a woman faculty member of a U.S. dental school. As this year's winner, Moskowitz will spend three months in Washington, D.C., exploring issues of special concern to female faculty, including promotion, tenure, advanced education and research opportunities.

Four BMC employees spent a recent Wednesday morning at the Phillis Wheatley Middle School in Roxbury, sharing with students their experiences in the health care field. **Peter Moyer,** professor and chairman of Emergency Medicine at BUSM, chief of the Department of Emergency Medicine at BMC, and interim executive director of Boston EMS; **Randa Naamani, MS, PT**, manager of the Rehabilitation Therapies Department; **Charles O'Donnell**, manager of the Respiratory Care Department; and **Gail Garvin, RN**, infection control practitioner, spoke with 100 eighth-graders as part of the school's first annual Boston Medical Center Career Day. They discussed their careers as possible options for the students, the education involved, their passion for what they do, and the range of health care positions available.

Raffi Der Sakissian, MD

New appointments

Raffi Der Sakissian, MD, has been named director of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in the Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery at BMC. Der Sarkissian received his medical degree with thesis honors from the State University of New York at Buffalo and pursued his residency training in otolaryngology/head and neck surgery in the Boston University/Tufts University combined program. He continued with fellowship training in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery at the University of Washington in Seattle. His fellowship training included management of all facets of craniomaxillofacial trauma, reconstruction of post-ablative defects in facial and head and neck cancer, and cosmetic procedures for facial rejuvenation and treatment of traumatic and congenital facial deformities. Der Sarkissian has authored numerous abstracts, scientific papers and book chapters on topics in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery.

Dinner honors long-time BU employees

The annual BU Service Recognition Dinner was held on April 22 to honor employees who have served the institution for 10 and 25 years. The evening, held at Metcalf Hall in the George Sherman Union on the Charles River Campus, also acknowledged those who are retiring from the university.

At this year's event, 47 medical campus employees were honored for 10 years of service, 17 were honored for 25 years of service, and seven were acknowledged upon their retirement from Boston University. Congratulations to the following employees on their 25 years of dedication:

Charles M. Bliss, MD, Medicine, BUSM
Manuel Brasil, Mail Center, BU Medical Campus
Anthony Campbell, Facilities Management, BU Medical Campus
Richard Carr, DMD, Pediatric Dentistry, SDM
Elaine Connolly, Continuing Medical Education, BUSM
Richard F. Hoyt Jr, PhD, Anatomy and Neurobiology, BUSM
Margaret Kelly-Hayes, MS, EdD, Neurology, BUSM
Thomas Kilgore, DMD, Associate Dean, SDM
William J. Lehman, PhD, Physiology, BUSM
Melvin Lester, Facilities Management, BU Medical Campus
Jerie McGrath-Cerqua, Biochemistry, BUSM
Lillian McMahon, MD, Pediatrics, BUSM
Rozanne Richman, Opthamology, BUSM
William W. Rogers, Security, BU Medical Campus
Douglas L. Rosene, PhD, Anatomy and Neurobiology, BUSM
George Rosenthal, MD, Medicine, BUSM
Paul A. Toselli, MD, PhD, Biochemistry, BUSM

$3.5 million grant will establish genetic epidemiology center

BUMC has received a $3.5 million grant from Glaxo-Wellcome Inc. to establish a genetic epidemiology center.

"Glaxo-Wellcome has developed a global initiative for the discovery of genes associated with complex diseases," said Lindsay Farrer, PhD, professor of medicine, neurology and public health, and chief of the Program in Genetics at BUSM. "BUMC is proud to be one of the three genetic centers in the U.S. contributing to this work."

The two other centers will be located at Duke University in North Carolina and Vanderbilt University in Tennessee. Each center will be responsible for the design and development of multiple projects lasting approximately three years each.

To aid the study, a state-of-the-art software database designed to accommodate the influx of clinical, epidemiological, genealogical and genetic data will be established at BUMC. Farrer and his team will work with a global network of clinical centers on each project, the first of which will examine metabolic syndrome — a common disorder that comprises diabetes, obesity, hypertension and lipid abnormalities.

"Our immediate goal is to concentrate on building the infrastructure to handle this volume of critical data," Farrer said. "What we will have is an invaluable genetic footprint for many diseases with a complex genetic basis." ✧

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