

## Family Medicine Information Express: Highlighting the Scope of Family Medicine at MUSM and MCGG

Volume 2

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### Grant to Study Community-Based Diabetes Prevention Funded by the NIH



*From left: Dr. Girton. Dr. Seale. Dr. Smith. Dr. Boltri*

The Department of Family Medicine led by Chairman Fred Girton M.D. is pleased to announce that the 3.1 million dollar, 5-year **C**hurch-**B**ased **D**iabetes **P**revention and **T**ranslation study has been funded by the NIH. The CBDPT is a community-based program designed to prevent diabetes by partnering with churches to teach lifestyle improvement through healthy diet and physical activity. The goal is to decrease the burden of suffering and health disparities from diabetes in the African American community. This study will take place in Macon, GA and Hartford, CT. The research team includes Principal Investigator Dr. John Boltri and Co-Investigators Drs. Paul Seale, Monique Davis-Smith and Judith Fifield. Dr. Boltri will direct this multi-state investigation and will coordinate the study in the Macon churches, and Dr. Fifield, a nationally recognized investigator, will coordinate the study in the Hartford churches.

This project will translate the NIH Diabetes Prevention Program into a community setting, thereby meeting the Healthy People 2010 objective of reducing the incidence and economic burden of diabetes. The church-based program is relatively brief and inexpensive, and suitable for widespread dissemination. The project will both contribute to a greater understanding of community-based health promotion for preventing diabetes complications and help diminish suffering from diabetes in African Americans.

#### Key Points

- \$ 3.1 million grant to study diabetes prevention in the high-risk African American community
- It is a university-health-community collaborative project that will take place in churches
- It is designed to reduce health disparities and reduce complications from diabetes
- It is focused on achieving and maintaining a healthy lifestyle by improving diet and exercise
- It is a group-based program that provides peer support and encouragement
- It incorporates faith as an important component for maintenance of health improvements

## Dr. Patrick Roche Provides Care to the Poor of Haiti

Dr. Patrick Roche completed a six-month sabbatical to Haiti, where he volunteered at the Hospital Albert Schweitzer (HAS). HAS is a fifty year-old hospital that serves the healthcare needs of almost 350,000 people who live in central Haiti. The staff is comprised of national and international doctors, nurses and administrators.

Dr. Roche was drawn to Haiti after reading the book *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, about the life work of medical doctor and cultural anthropologist Paul Farmer. Dr. Farmer, a professor of medicine at Harvard University, has devoted his life to providing healthcare to some of the world's most desperately poor populations and to challenging others to recognize that difficult, even "untreatable" health problems can and should be addressed effectively, even in poor settings. This ideal is shared by the Hospital Albert Schweitzer.



Dr. Roche describes the experience as one of the most difficult of his professional life. "There was much death and most of it came from illness or trauma that could be either prevented or easily treated here in the United States. When I continued to lose patients to what we think of as 'simple' ailments in this country, I felt sad and, at times, futile. Still, there were those (patients) with tuberculosis and HIV who came to HAS, received therapy in time, and who were able to survive because of the resources that are provided there. Overwhelming poverty and dwindling external (US) support often limited (our) capabilities to intervene when patients needed ventilator support, or expensive therapies not available there."

"Like Farmer, I am convinced that 'fighting disease in impoverished settings also means fighting the poverty at the root of poor health'. I think this can be translated back to Macon and Bibb County, and I think that I (as a medical doctor) can play a role in fighting that poverty, by advocating on behalf of the poor. Working in Haiti reminded me that a strong foundation in primary care is critical to successfully treating specific diseases, but that social programs are necessary to eradicate the settings that promote many diseases. I want to be scrupulous about using social programs and advocating for public health so that there is a just medical system, not simply one that answers my need."

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In memory of  
**Dona Marie Lindquist Harris,**  
a strong advocate and supporter  
of research and scholarly activity.  
January 17, 1945 – June 18, 2008

## Mercer Family Medicine Faculty Join the Family Health Center

After many years of providing clinical care in two different locations, we are pleased to announce that the Department of Family Medicine faculty physicians at Mercer School of Medicine have joined the Medical Center of Central Georgia Family Medicine faculty physicians at the Family Health Center in July, 2008. The **F**amily **H**Health **C**enter is located at 3780 Eisenhower Parkway, Macon, Georgia.

The FHC is a full service center which provides care to patients of all ages with all types of medical problems from newborns to the elderly and every age in between. The Center provides acute and chronic disease management, physical examinations, laboratory and x-ray services as well as many outpatient procedures such as Pap smears, minor skin surgeries, stress testing, colposcopy, and joint injections. Those patients joining us from Mercer will have their records automatically transferred to the FHC, thus enabling them to schedule appointments with their same Mercer Family Physician at the FHC.

The FHC welcomes the Mercer Family Physicians and their patients. With the addition of these physicians we are able to encourage new patients to come see us as well. Please call 478-633-5500 to schedule an appointment.



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## Resident News

### Welcome New Residents

The Department of Family Medicine would like to extend a warm welcome to the incoming class of Family Medicine interns, second year residents and Geriatrics Fellows who began their training on July 1, 2008.

#### New Family Medicine Interns:

- Dr. Bryan Crenshaw** from Dothan, Alabama a graduate of St. Matthew's University.
- Dr. Raquel DeGuzman** from the Philippines a graduate of Fatima Medical Science Foundation.
- Dr. Paul Mathieu** from New York a graduate of Ross University.
- Dr. Ami Patel** from Chicago a graduate of Ross University.
- Dr. Nicola Presley** from Seoul, South Korea a graduate of Ross University.
- Dr. Dustin Russell** from Bakersfield, California a graduate of St. Matthew's University.
- Dr. Carissa SanJuan** from Miami, Florida a graduate of Fatima Medical Science Foundation.
- Dr. Buzz Walton** from San Diego, California a graduate of St. Matthew's University.

#### New Second Year Family Medicine Residents

- Dr. Harminder Kaur** from New Delhi, India a graduate of Lady Hardinge Medical College, completed her intern year in the Family Medicine program at Henry Ford in Detroit, Michigan.
- Dr. Albert Warren** from Cordele, Georgia a graduate of Mercer University, completed his intern year in the OB/GYN program at the Medical Center of Central Georgia in Macon.

#### New Geriatrics Fellows:

- Dr. Claudia Arumala**, from Nigeria a graduate of the Family Medicine Residency at MCGG.
  - Dr. Pramodini Gosukonda**, from India a graduate of Internal Medicine Residency at SUNY, Brooklyn, New York.
  - Dr. Eddie Richardson, Jr.**, from Valdosta, GA a graduate of the Family Medicine Residency at Morehouse in Atlanta.
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## Highlighted in this Issue

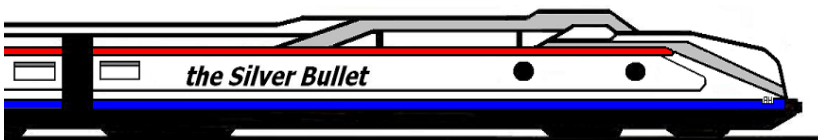
- Department of Family Medicine receives \$3.1 million NIH grant to study community-based methods to prevent diabetes
- Kathy Kemle receives prestigious National PA of the Year Award
- Patrick Roche provides care to the poor of Haiti during sabbatical
- Richard Ackermann receives HRSA grant to expand geriatrics training
- The department welcomes nine new residents and three geriatric fellows
- Department faculty join clinical activities at Family Health Center

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**Faculty:** Fred Girton, M.D., Richard Ackermann, M.D., John Boltri, M.D., David Burtner, M.D., Monique Davis Smith, M.D., Sabry Gabriel, M.D., Alice House, M.D., Steven House, M.D., Warren Hutchings, M.D., Kathy Kemle, PA-C, Hugh McLaurin, M.D., Dipesh Patel, M.D., Patrick Roche, M.D., Paul Seale, M.D., Sylvia Shellenberger, Ph.D., Roberta Weintraut, M.D.

The Silver Bullet is a newsletter dedicated to highlighting the scope of Family Medicine by the members of the Department of Family Medicine at Mercer University School of Medicine and The Medical Center of Central Georgia. Editors: *Dr. A. House & Dr. Boltri*

the Silver Bullet  
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## Highest National Award Given to Kathy A. Kemle, MS, PA-C

Kathy A. Kemle, MS, PA-C, was recently selected as the national **Outstanding Physician Assistant of the Year** by the American Academy of Physician Assistants. As a full-time faculty member in the Department of Family Medicine since 1994, Ms. Kemle has been an innovative leader in geriatrics education and patient care.



Ms. Kemle has been instrumental in developing the Department's Geriatrics Program. For twelve years she has been caring for our nursing home and home-based patients while teaching our residents and students the basics of treatment of the complex elderly population. During the past five years she has worked closely with the Palliative Care team to develop and implement the Palliative Care Unit at the Medical Center of Central Georgia.

Ms. Kemle teaches in our Geriatrics Fellowship Training Program, the first American Board of Medical Specialties fellowship in Macon. This year it graduated its second class, this year three fellows are in training and the program hopes to expand to four in the next academic year.

Ms. Kemle has been a frequent contributor to the scientific literature. Most recently, the Institute of Medicine's report on aging in America quoted her study of the role of physician assistants in reducing hospitalization of nursing home patients (*J Am Geriatr Soc* 1998;46:610-614).

Ms. Kemle has twice served as President of the Georgia Academy of Physician Assistants and is co-founder and chair of the Society of Physicians Assistants in Caring for the Elderly. She also currently serves as the first PA ever to be elected as President of the Georgia Geriatrics Society.

Ms. Kemle has been praised by patients and colleagues for her innovation, ability to recognize and treat complex health issues in older patients, and for her teaching and service to both the local and national community. She speaks at several national meetings every year.

The Department of Family Medicine congratulates Kathy Kemle on receiving this outstanding national award.

## Department Awarded Grants to Improve Care of Older Adults

The Department's Division of Geriatrics, under the leadership of Richard Ackermann, MD has just received two large grants totaling \$1.5 million from the Health Resources Service Administration. One grant (\$660,000) will be administered through the Medical Center of Central Georgia, and the other (\$870,000) through Mercer University School of Medicine. The over-arching goal of the grant initiative is to empower medical students, residents, and practicing physicians in providing comprehensive medical care for frail older adults.

The grants have several ambitious goals:

- 1) Create a teaching Geriatrics Inpatient Service,
- 2) Create a long-term care teaching firm, caring for patients in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and their own homes,
- 3) Establish a geriatrics clinic at the Family Health Center,
- 4) Start the first palliative medicine fellowship in the state of Georgia,
- 5) Design a required medical school clerkship in geriatrics and palliative medicine, and
- 6) Provide continuing medical education in geriatrics and palliative medicine to practicing physicians.

Care of frail older adults across the continuum of care is becoming increasingly fragmented. More than 40% of inpatient beds at our major teaching hospital, the Medical Center of Central Georgia, are occupied by older adults, and the hospital receives "revolving door" admissions and re-admission of these patients, particularly from long-term care facilities. Many of these hospitalizations are potentially preventable.



The growth of the 65+ population in Georgia in the last decade has been twice the national average. By 2030, 16% of Georgia's population will be age 65 or above. Further, the health of Georgia's older adults is poor, whether measured by function, disease, use of preventive services, or life expectancy. Georgia has more older-adults living in poverty (13%) than the national average (10%), and we have a large population of African Americans (28%), a group with disproportionately high burdens of poor health, reduced literacy, and increased mortality.

Our Family Medicine residents receive high quality training in geriatrics, and we have established a first-rate, evidence-based geriatrics fellowship. With this grant support, the Family Medicine residents will increase their required geriatrics exposure and teaching in the 3-year curriculum. The grants will hire five more full-time geriatricians over the next three years, whose practice and teaching will expose our learners to the breadth of modern geriatric practice.