



# Scoop

April 7, 2006

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL SCHOOL AT HOUSTON


## Events to Know

### April

- 11 **Dr. John Lantos (University of Chicago)** to present Fifth Distinguished Lecture in Research Ethics and Internal Medicine Grand Rounds on "The Disconnect between Clinical Research and its Effects on Clinical Practice." Noon, MSB 3.001.
- 11 **Health Care Team Competition** between UTHSC-H and UH students with a challenge to create a citywide health and fitness plan. 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m., MSB 3.001.
- 12 "**Employee Motivation**," an HR-Training and Development class. 9 a.m.-11 a.m., MSB B.620. Visit [http://hr.uth.tmc.edu/Training\\_Development/calendar\\_course.html](http://hr.uth.tmc.edu/Training_Development/calendar_course.html).
- 12 **Dr. Trevor Robbins (University of Cambridge)** to present Thirteenth Annual Harold Cooper Lectureship on "Impulsivity and Compulsivity: Neural and Neurochemical Substrates." 2 p.m.-3 p.m., MSB 3.001.
- 13 **Dr. Marschall Runge (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)** to present Special Dean's Lecture on "Change of Heart: Acute Coronary Syndromes, Generation Gaps, and the Physician-Scientist." 4 p.m., MSB 3.001.
- 26 **Spring HUB (Historically Underutilized Business) Vendor Show.** 10 a.m.-2 p.m., MSB 5th Floor Gallery.

## UTMost Interest

**James Willerson, M.D.**, president of the UT Health Science Center, and **Richard Andrassy, M.D.**, chair of the Department of Surgery, were quoted in the March 19 issue of the *Houston Chronicle* about the rise of minimally invasive surgery.

 **Erik Wilson, M.D.**, assistant professor of surgery, was quoted in the March 19 issue of the *Houston Chronicle* about using the da Vinci robotic surgical system to aid with minimally invasive surgeries.

## FELLOW WINS YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARD FOR STROKE RESEARCH

Many patients showing symptoms of a mild stroke do not receive clot-dissolving therapy because of the idea that they will do well without treatment. **Dr. Nicole Gonzales**, a stroke fellow with the Department of Neurology, proved this theory wrong with her study, "Mild Stroke Should Not Exclude Patients from Thrombolytic Therapy." She presented her research at the International Stroke Conference 2006, which is sponsored by the American Stroke Association, and won the Mordecai Y.T. Globus New Investigator Award in Stroke.

Gonzales was one of several young investigators to compete for the award, which carried a \$500 prize and an all-expenses paid trip to the February conference in Kissimmee, Fla. "It was completely unexpected," Gonzales said of winning the award. "Even though I received the award, it really is a reflection of a team effort."

Gonzales' two-year fellowship is through the Medical School's Stroke Treatment Team, which serves as Houston's premier medical team for the treatment of acute stroke emergencies. It was formed in 1988 by **Dr. James Grotta**, the Roy M. and Phyllis Gough Huffington Distinguished Chair in Neurology.

Gonzales and her fellow Stroke Team members screened 885 patients with a diagnosis of mild stroke for the study. The effects from a mild stroke may be a facial droop, difficulty speaking, *(Cont'd. on back)*



Dr. Nicole Gonzales

## MEDICAL SCHOOL DATACENTER UPGRADE UNDER WAY

In an emergency one thinks about the essentials of shelter, water, and personal safety. But, computer and e-mail access are vital communication functions that are quickly missed when not available.

When Hurricane Rita was bearing down on the Gulf, facilities at the Medical School were safe, however access to the institution via e-mail and the Internet were preemptively halted because the datacenter could not sustain operations during a power loss.

As a result of the need for computer access during emergency situations, an upgrade of the existing Medical School's third-floor datacenter is under way.

The project will include dedicated chilled water pumps for the 3,000 square-foot facility cooling system and connections to the building's emergency generators.

The \$500,000 upgrade is scheduled to be completed by July 31. Hurricane season starts June 1.

"We're planning to avoid the peak hurricane season of August to September," said **Perry Graham**, project manager.

This project is occurring simultaneously with the completion of the \$3 million main information technology datacenter that is being constructed on the sixth floor of University Center Tower.

Presently, this MSB data center is limited to 50 percent of its programmed capacity. "The MSB datacenter is being upgraded to allow for future growth to 100 percent of its programmed capacity."

*(Cont'd. on back)*



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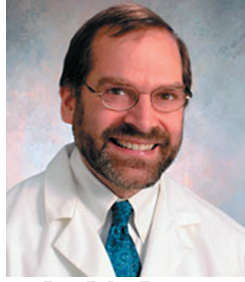
A part of The University of Texas  
Health Science Center at Houston

Stanley Schultz, M.D., Dean  
Darla Brown, Director  
Camille Webb, Editor  
e-mail: [scoop@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:scoop@uth.tmc.edu)  
Phone: 713-500-5114; FAX: 713-500-5533  
E-Scoop online: [med.uth.tmc.edu/comm](http://med.uth.tmc.edu/comm)  
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## Lantos to Present Research Ethics Lecture, April 11

**John Lantos, M.D.**, associate director of the MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics and co-director of the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program at the University of Chicago, will deliver the Fifth Distinguished Lecture in Research Ethics and Internal Medicine Grand Rounds at noon Tuesday, April 11 in lecture hall 3.001 of the Medical School. Lantos will speak on "The Disconnect between Clinical Research and its Effects on Clinical Practice." The Office of Research Support Committees and the Department of Internal Medicine present the lecture, which will offer continuing medical education credit in medical ethics.



**Dr. John Lantos**

Lantos is also a pediatrician at the University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital and La Rabida Children's Hospital. His clinical research interests include immune tolerance, adolescent health, and treating pediatric patients with chronic diseases.

He earned a bachelor's degree from Brown University in 1977 and a medical degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 1981.

### Gonzales award, cont'd.

or slightly impaired strength. With a major stroke, the effects can be paralysis on one side of the body or inability to communicate.

"One of the relative contraindications to administering the clot-busting medication, known as t-PA, is mild deficit, or rapidly improving symptoms," Gonzales said. "Many patients with mild deficit [symptoms of stroke] won't get treated, even if they seek medical attention within three hours."

Gonzales said the reasoning behind that is because the main side effect from t-PA is hemorrhage. "The thought is why subject these patients to the risk of hemorrhage with the use of t-PA if they have a good prognosis anyway," she said.

Gonzales divided the patients into two groups for the study. One group received treatment with t-PA (tissue plasminogen activator), and the other group did not. In order for t-PA to be effective, it must be administered within the first three hours of the onset of symptoms.

"Patients treated with t-PA were more likely to have an excellent outcome," Gonzales said. "As a whole, 59 percent of the t-PA group had an excellent outcome compared to 44 percent of the untreated group. Our findings showed that patients should not be excluded from the use of this medication, based on mild stroke."

Gonzales' study also did not find any hemorrhage rates in either group, which she said was important because physicians are hesitant to administer t-PA because of the risk of hemorrhage. "Our research showed the risk of hemorrhage in mild stroke patients may not be as high as in the entire group of t-PA treated patients," she said.

When her fellowship ends in June, Gonzales plans to stay with the Stroke Team and be a member of the neurology faculty. "It's unbelievable what Dr. Grotta has done here and the learning opportunity," she said. "I can't imagine leaving."

Co-authors for "Mild Stroke' Should Not Exclude Patients from Thrombolytic Therapy" included the following Stroke Team members: **Karen Albright, D.O., MPH; Elizabeth Noser, M.D.; Aslam Khaja, M.D.; Hashem Shaltoni, M.D.; Adam Romman; Neal Zimbaldi; Mary Baraniuk, Ph.D.; Lemuel Moyé, M.D., Ph.D.;** and Grotta.

-C. Webb

## Vanishing Bits & Bytes: Preserving Information Set May 8

Do you create or maintain information in digital formats? Plan NOW for the future availability of that data May 8 at "Vanishing Bits & Bytes: Preserving Information," the annual Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Center Library health informatics conference, which will take place from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at the School of Nursing.

**Samuel Kaplan, Ph.D.**, professor and chair of the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, will be a featured speaker at the conference. Kaplan serves as chair of the Advisory Committee for PubMed Central, the National Institutes of Health free digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature. His session is titled "Digital Preservation of Journal Literature at the National Library of Medicine."

Other speakers include **Clifford Lynch, Ph.D.**, director of the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI), and **Victoria Reich, MLS**, director and co-founder of the LOCKSS Program.

To register, visit <http://resource.library.tmc.edu/Conference.htm>.

**"How to Screen for Domestic Violence,"** a special presentation hosted by the UT chapter of the American Medical Association/Texas Medical Association, will be from noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, April 11 in MSB 2.006.

Red wooden cutouts from Project Silent Witness have been set up in the MSB Leather Lounge, in preparation of the event.

**Dr. Laura Benjamins**, clinical research fellow who is designing a domestic violence curriculum for residents in primary care programs at the Medical School, will engage in a mock screening encounter.

Each attendee will receive a laminated pocket resource card with tips on how to screen for domestic violence, as well as contact information for area domestic violence assistance centers. Free food will be provided to the first 100 attendees.

### HANDS-ON LEARNING



Nearly 800 children and their families attended Brain Night, a mind-blowing evening of science at the McGovern Museum of Health & Medical Science March 16. Faculty, fellows, residents, and students of the Medical School's Neuroscience Research Center volunteered for the event, which included mini-lectures, brain-related demos, face painting, gifts, and balloons.

**Datacenter upgrade, cont'd.**

The new UCT datacenter will house the Campus e-mail, Student Information System, Peoplesoft financial, Peoplesoft HRMS, and other enterprise applications, some of which now reside in the third-floor datacenter.

-D. Brown