

## Graduation Ceremonies: May 13th, 2010

*Story and Pictures by Leslie Capo*

The annual Commencement Ceremonies for Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, were held Thursday May 13, 2010 where 165 Medical students and 24 Basic Science students from the School of Medicine (SOM) received their degrees. "I will soon be both a father and a Medicine-Pediatrics resident at LSUHSC in New Orleans. The SOM's rigorous curriculum and early clinical exposure has prepared me well, and I know my teachers and colleagues will continue to help me realize my potential while maintaining balance in my life" said Evan Atkinson, newly graduated M.D. "Earning my doctoral degree from LSU has prepared me for a career supported by confidence in my scientific ability. I feel assured that I am capable of handling any future challenges effectively. The diverse background I acquired at LSU SOM has allowed me to transition to virtually any field of biomedical research," said Ryan Bonvillain, basic sciences Ph.D. graduate.

Demonstrating commitment to our state, match results revealed that nearly 60% of graduating medical students chose to enter residency programs in Louisiana – the highest

number in recent years. The fill rate in the LSUHSC residency programs continues to be significantly higher than pre-Katrina with a total of 100% of positions filled. National studies have found that a high number of physicians set up their permanent practices in the areas where they have completed their residency programs. Therefore, match results figure prominently in Louisiana's physician work force. The supply of physicians practicing in Louisiana not only affects access to care, but also local and state economies.

"This year about 60% of our students chose to remain in Louisiana for their postgraduate medical education and training," said Dr. Steve Nelson, Dean of the School of Medicine. "The strong message sent by full support for the new University Academic Medical Center, which will be the cornerstone of the new Biosciences District in downtown New Orleans, made our residency programs even more competitive. We are delighted to keep so many of our graduates here at home while also attracting quality residents from other schools."

Further emphasizing the high quality of our students, LSUHSC medical graduates training in other states will be going to such prestigious programs as Johns Hopkins, Mt. Sinai, Duke, Barnes Jewish Hospital at Washington University in St. Louis, University of California San Diego, Tufts University, and Vanderbilt, among

*(Cont. on page 2)*



*Rear Admiral Richard C. Vinci, United States Navy, presents the Commencement Address*

## Camp Tiger Celebrates 25th Anniversary!

*Story by: Maegen Schaff (Class 2013); Pictures by: Joe DelCarpio*



*Medical student Curtis Bashkharatee with camper Ashton "Lil Curtis" Barrow.*

LSU School of Medicine's Camp Tiger program celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in May with the camp theme "Oh, The Places You'll Go with Camp Tiger!" Camp Tiger, a weeklong day camp for special needs children of the Greater New Orleans area, is organized and staffed by first-year and incoming medical students. Thanks to the fundraising efforts of these students, faculty and staff, alumnae, and other community partners, the Class of 2013 raised over \$130,000 and accepted over 100 campers for whom participation is free.

Activities for this year's camp included

*(Cont. on page 2)*

## NAME THIS NEWSLETTER!

You may have noticed the somewhat unimaginative name of the School of Medicine Newsletter. That's because we'd like to include you in the development of the newsletter. Access the survey at the following link to submit your idea: (<http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dDNoSmIFeTBMRkk0Nm05bFphd00tY0E6MQ>) The Editors will select the top five most imaginative submissions. These five submissions will be published in the next issue of The Newsletter at which time you will be asked to vote on the best name. The winning entrant will receive a prize!

(Graduation cont.)

others.

Not to be outdone by their fellow students, 24 Basic Science students were hooded by their mentors and received their diplomas at the ceremonies. These students completed two years of rigorous class work, passed stringent Qualifying Examinations, and completed 3 – 4 years of intensive laboratory research culminating in the writing and defense of their theses. Attesting once again to the high quality of students trained at LSU SOM, our Basic Science students will be continuing their training at such prestigious institutes as Harvard (two



*Erin Cunningham M.D. receives diploma from her father, Dr. Frank Opelka*



*Greg Casey, Ph.D. receives his hood from Dr. Harry Gould*

students), Yale, Emory (2 students), St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Southwestern Medical School, The Cleveland Clinic, The Centers for Disease Control, and GloriOil (biotech company). Several graduating students have chosen to stay regional by continuing training at LSUHSC (2 students) or Tulane University. Finally, three students have returned to medical school to complete the last two years of training in their M.D./Ph.D. degree.

## Rovaris Named Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic and Multicultural Affairs



Dereck J. Rovaris, Sr., Ph.D., has been appointed Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Multicultural Affairs for the LSU Health Sciences Center. He comes to LSU from

Xavier University where he served as Special Assistant to Academic Affairs. Dr. Rovaris completed his undergraduate training at the University of Kansas where he earned a degree with a triple major in psychology, human development and family life, and crime and delinquency studies. He completed his Ph.D. in higher education administration in Champaign, Illinois in 1990. Dr. Rovaris states "I look forward to working with my new colleagues as we continue to promote academic excellence and educational equity. It is clear to me that LSU leadership is committed to promoting multi-culturalism at LSUHSC-NO."

## Camp Tiger Turns 25!



trips to the Global Wildlife Center, Audubon Zoo and Aquarium, Louisiana Children's Museum, and City Park. The week concluded with a carnival and closing ceremonies at Jesuit High School, where each camper was recognized and awarded a trophy and certificate.



*Campers and students enjoy the pool.*

Since its inception in 1985, Camp Tiger has served over 1,500 children and owes much of its success not just to the medical students, but also to the confidence and support from campers' families as well as the outstanding efforts of Dr. Joseph DelCarpio, the Associate Dean of

Student Affairs, and his support staff.



*Medical student Chris Small with camper Ricky Robin*

Camp Tiger allows children the opportunity to attend a summer camp tailored to their needs and to be accepted by counselors and their peers as the wonderful individuals that they are. Many counselors feel that the camp is an enriching experience for them as well. Camp Director Annette Zacharia says, "Though the demands of medical school can be overwhelming at times, participating in Camp Tiger and seeing the children and parents filled with joy reminds us that we are in a position to change the lives of others with just one laugh, one smile, and one hug at a time."



# Congratulations!

## Copping Award in Teaching Excellence

Story and pictures by Leslie Capo

Congratulations are to be extended to the SOM recipients of the Allen A. Copping Excellence in Teaching Award: John P. Hunt, M.D., Professor in the Department of Surgery (award in Medicine – Clinical) and Peter



Peter Winsauer (right) receives award from Drs. Hollier (left) and Lombardi (center)

Winsauer, Ph.D., Professor in the Department of Pharmacology (award in Medicine – Basic Science). In 1995, friends and colleagues of Dr. Allen A. Copping, then President of the LSU System, raised funds matched by the Louisiana Board of Regents Support Fund to establish the Allen A. Copping Endowed Chair and the initiation of an award recognizing teaching excellence. Recipients are nominated by fellow faculty, students, and residents and the awards are presented each year to members of the LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans in Allied Health, Nursing, Dentistry, Medicine—Clinical,



John Hunt (right) receives award from Drs. Hollier (left) and Lombardi (center)

Medicine—Basic Sciences, and Public Health. The Chancellor, Larry H. Hollier, M.D., and the LSU System President, John V. Lombardi, Ph.D. present the award, which consists of an engraved glass award plus a generous check, at Spring Commencement each year.

## Summer Intern Named Presidential Scholar



Marjorie "Betsy" Bateman, an intern in Dr. Fern Tsien and Dr. Paula Gregory's summer research program, was named Louisiana State's female Presidential Scholar. The Presidential Scholars Award, one of the nation's highest honors for graduating seniors, is presented to one male and one female student from each of the 50 states. Betsy graduated first in her class from Mandeville High School and will attend Tulane University in the fall majoring in Cell and Molecular

Biology. She is presently working on clinical genetics case reports with Dr. Fern Tsien in the Department of Genetics and Dr. Michael Marble at Children's Hospital. She traveled to Washington, D. C. in late June to receive her medal from President Barack Obama.

## Medical Student Named Editor



Jack DePaolo, a second year medical student in the Class of 2013, was recently appointed as Student Editor of *The New Physician*, the magazine of the American Medical Student Association. This magazine has been in print for 60 years, and has a national readership of over 34,500 medical students and residents. Jack

is presently working on a story about health care in the gulf region five years after Hurricane Katrina, to be featured in an upcoming issue.

## From the Editors Pen



As head editor, I'd like to welcome you to the debut issue of the School of Medicine (SOM) Newsletter. I'm Andrew Hollenbach, Ph.D., an Associate Professor in the Department of Genetics. This Newsletter is a direct result of the Dean's Strategic Initiative

and is the first step in our efforts to improve communications at the SOM.

Together we developed the template for the Newsletter, created a production schedule, solicited and wrote stories, edited the final product, and established an electronic mechanism that will be used for future issues to acquire information for and about SOM faculty, staff, and students.

Although publication is an important first step, this Newsletter is still a "work in progress". In addition to reporting on timely stories of interest, we are developing recurring stories and topics to keep you updated on issues relevant to the SOM: "Ask the Experts", Faculty Senate/Faculty Assembly Reports,

recruitment/new hires, meet the new students/residents, "NIH Reports", just to name a few. If you have a story you think may be of interest, feel free to contact either myself ([aholle@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:aholle@lsuhsc.edu)) or the appropriate Associate Editor with your ideas.

Finally, we want to hear from you. We will be sending out a survey in the near future to get your feedback – what you liked, what didn't you like, what would you like to see more/less of, what issues would you like to see covered. We want this newsletter to be a forum for keeping you, the SOM family informed. With your help we can make this newsletter evolve and grow into a regular report that truly represents us!

# Meet the Editors!

*This newsletter was built from the ground up and would not have been possible without the hard work of our Associate Editors: Martha Brewer, Cathi Fontenot, Kevin Gipson, Joy Sturtevant, and Judy Venuti. Take a moment to meet them and learn of their focus areas:*

## Alumni Affairs

Cathi Fontenot, M.D., Associate Dean for Development and Alumni Affairs, will serve as the editor of Alumni information. Alumni activities that may be of interest to SOM faculty will be covered as well as examples of alumni support for students, residents and departments in the SOM. Story ideas for Alumni Affairs or for any issues dealing with alumni can be sent to Dr. Fontenot by e-mail ([cfonte@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:cfonte@lsuhsc.edu)), attention: "Newsletter".

## Clinical Affairs

Martha J. Brewer, M.D., an Associate Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, will serve as the associate editor for Clinical Affairs. Stories of interest to members of the SOM are requested with topics relating to clinical facilities, clinical faculty, clinical services or availability, modifications to residency and expansion of clinical services as potential items that would be strongly considered. Story ideas for Clinical Affairs may be sent to Dr. Brewer by e-mail ([mbrew@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:mbrew@lsuhsc.edu)) attention: "Newsletter".

## Medical Student Affairs

Kevin S. Gipson, a medical student in the class of 2012, is serving as associate editor of Medical Student Affairs. This section seeks to highlight the academic and creative accomplishments of individual students, in addition to bringing to attention the great service that our student body provides to the broader community. Please submit story ideas to Kevin by email ([kgips1@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:kgips1@lsuhsc.edu)) attention: "Newsletter".



*Editors left to right: Kevin Gipson, Andrew Hollenbach, Judy Venuti, Cathi Fontenot, and Joy Sturtevant. (Not able to be present: Martha Brewer)*

## Basic Sciences Student Affairs

Judith Venuti, Ph.D., an Associate Professor in the Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy, will serve as the associate editor of Basic Sciences Student Affairs. This section of the newsletter concerns activities associated with SOM basic science student activities ranging from new course announcements to outreach activities. In particular we are looking for items that highlight the accomplishments of and awards to our basic science students. Basic science Graduate Program Coordinators or basic science students may submit their ideas to Judy by e-mail ([jvenut@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:jvenut@lsuhsc.edu)) attention: "Newsletter".

## Research Affairs

Joy Sturtevant, Ph.D., an Associate Professor in the Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Parasitology, will serve as the associate editor of Basic and Clinical Research Affairs. Stories of general interest to the faculty, students and staff of the SOM are solicited. Potential topics may include new projects, new clinical studies, a particularly exciting or novel result, collaborations with other institutes, invited research presentations at national or international meetings, projects by visiting scientists, or sabbaticals. Submit your ideas to Joy by e-mail ([jsturt@lsuhsc.edu](mailto:jsturt@lsuhsc.edu)) attention: "Newsletter".

## New Hospital Update:

Planning for the new University Medical Center is well underway. Design has been completed and construction document preparation will be finished by July 2010. Land acquisition for both the University Medical Center and the VA Medical Center is proceeding and demolition has begun on the VA site. \$775 million of the \$1.2 million in funding needed for the project has been secured, with \$300 million from the state, \$475 million from FEMA arbitration, and plans to obtain the remaining funds, likely from the bond market, after consultation with bonding consultants. The new facility will include 424 beds in the inpatient towers and an ambulatory care facility with over 250,000 square feet of clinical space. The facility will be hurricane hardened and plans also include a multilevel parking garage, which will likely be the first structure built. The ambulatory care center should be completed in 2013, about a year prior to completion of the hospital. The LSU facility will be bounded by Claiborne, Galvez, Canal, and Tulane Avenues. The LSU Systems Office has engaged a firm to develop a website that can be used in the future to follow progress on this project. More information will follow in subsequent newsletters.



## Calendar of Events

Please excuse our appearance; this section of the Newsletter is a work in progress! In the future, this space will be dedicated to providing you with a schedule of upcoming events within the School of Medicine including seminars, special events, school-wide meetings, etc. So, be patient... it's coming soon!

