

# LSU goes global

## LSUHSC Global Pulmonary Exchange Program-Turkey

In 2002 Dr Juzar Ali, a faculty member in the section of pulmonary medicine, traveled to Turkey as a visiting Professor as a Fulbright Scholar awardee and participated in the clinical and academic activities of the Chest Department at Ege University, Izmir, Turkey. This experience led to a faculty exchange program between the two schools as part of the Fulbright Alumni Award over the ensuing years. In 2009, a “fellowship exchange” under the aegis of the **Russell C. Klein, MD ('59)** LSU Alumni Professorship was started wherein pulmonary fellows from LSU and Ege can travel between institutions to participate

in clinical rotations, advance their education, participate in academic pursuits and further their understanding of international medical and practice models.

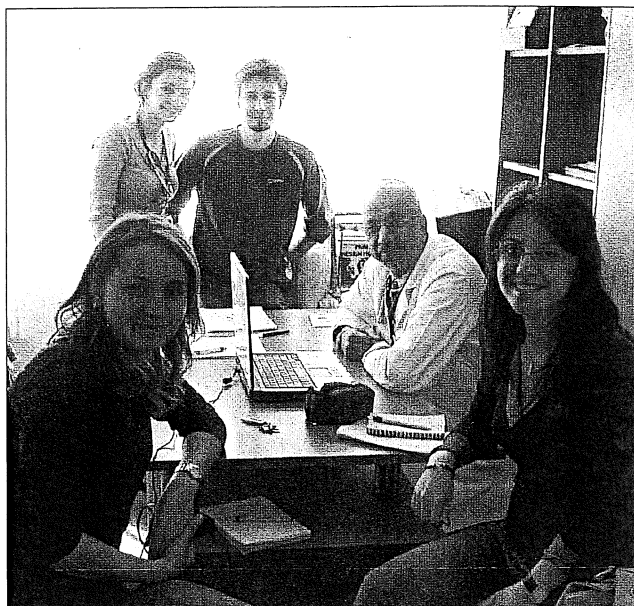
The first visiting fellow from Turkey was Dr Sezai Tasbakan, a senior fellow from Ege. Dr Tasbakan participated in clinical rotations and scientific sessions and also attended the American College of Chest Physician meeting during his stay.

In April 2010, Dr Craig Patterson, a senior pulmonary fellow at LSU, traveled to Turkey to participate in clinical activities at Ege and present his research on the effects of steroids on bacterial host defense at the Turkish Thoracic Society meeting in Istanbul. He related from his experience, “The physicians and staff of the Ege University Department of Chest Diseases were incredibly welcoming and created an experience rich in both academia and culture. The educational experience was a great mix of study in clinical

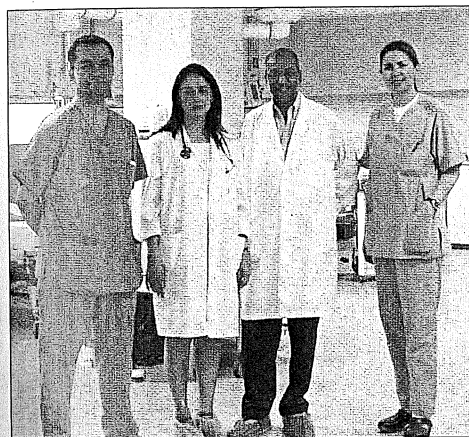
medicine, health care delivery systems, and medical history, while the cultural curriculum afforded me the opportunity to travel within Turkey and interact with the Turkish people - who were among the most hospitable I've encountered.”

In Dr Ali's words, “the Program is more than a professional exchange of scholars.... It is an exchange of ideas and culture, science and knowledge, personnel and personalities in an ambience of goodwill.” Both the institutions are committed to maintain and further enhance this collaboration.

Dr. Patterson added, “In an increasingly global profession, the Global Pulmonary Exchange Program demonstrates LSU's commitment to training physicians with *not only* outstanding clinical skills *but also* open minds and unique perspectives. The educational value of an opportunity to view one's practice through the filter of another culture is immeasurable.”



*Dr. Juzar Ali (second from right), the Russell C. Klein, MD, LSU-Alumni Professor of Clinical Medicine, meets with students in the Global Pulmonary Exchange Program.*



*Dr. Ali (third from left) meets with Turkish trainees.*



*Hard work is rewarded by a picnic given by Ege University in Izmir, Turkey*



## INTERIM LSU PUBLIC HOSPITAL

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The second oldest public hospital in the United States is in New Orleans, Louisiana. In the first 100 colorful years of its history, Charity Hospital existed in five different locations and was battered over the years by storms and fire. The sixth facility was built in 1939 and housed the hospital until it became a victim of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. Charity Hospital and University Hospital were part of the Medical Center of Louisiana at New Orleans. Because of severe storm damage, Charity Hospital will not reopen. At that time, the Medical Center of Louisiana at New Orleans was part of the LSU Health Care Services Division. In November of 2006, University Hospital reopened as the Interim LSU Public Hospital (ILH) to provide comprehensive healthcare services.

## RECOVERY FROM THE STORM

Since November 2008, when Ali joined the hospital team, he has focused on the recovery work begun by his predecessors in further streamlining of the operational function of the hospital from the clinical perspective. "Multiple clinical programs have been restarted, and improved processes that enhance patient care, emphasize patient satisfaction, facilitate access to care, ensure continuity of care and improve throughput have been established. We have now reached the stage where we are a little bit more settled, and look forward to the future," says Ali.

Prior to taking up the position of medical director, Ali was a full-time Professor of Medicine and a clinical educator at the LSU HSC School of Medicine in the section of Pulmonary /Critical Care Medicine. He continues this role in a limited fashion at ILH. "When I took up this position, I asked myself, 'Why?'" he says.

"The answer involves moving this institution to a new academic medical center, which we hope to build by 2014. In this transition period, while we build a new brick and mortar building, we need to get ready for

ILH has a tertiary care, multi-disciplinary, Level 1 "Spirit of Charity" trauma center with a very busy Emergency Department. ILH is affiliated with two medical schools (one is at the LSU Health Sciences Center; the other is at Tulane University). The 300-bed hospital runs an occupancy rate of about 80 percent. Its ambulatory clinics, which cater to the needs of the community with 16,000 patient visits per month, are located in nearby buildings, and the hospital also has a well connected network of community clinics. The two medical schools provide approximately 800 medical staff. There are also community physicians on staff with limited privileges who assist those to refer patients to the hospital system and ensure community care follow up.

"We have about 300 house officers from both schools who rotate through this institution and as part of their graduate medical program. Their training ranges from primary care to specialty and sub-specialty medical and surgical fields," says Dr. Juzar Ali, Medical Director of ILH. Ali's role is to be the liaison and coordinator for the faculty and house staff in organizing and operating clinical services at the hospital. He is also a member of the administrative council that runs the day to day operations of the hospital.



that new facility by enhancing our culture of patient care and streamlining our infrastructure."

Ali also looks to transform the years old vision of Charity Hospital to one of a modern and true academic medical center. "The clinical excellence of our medical staff is world class," he says. "The professional expertise and the cutting-edge research at the core and translational levels are top notch. I want to bring the active engagement of the faculty and house staff into the working of the hospital and to truly take it, not only from bench to bedside, but also from "gown to town." That is what my vision is. Further, no matter what academic medical center we have, this cannot work in isolation. We have to involve the community with its participation and service to its needs."

## STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE INSTITUTION

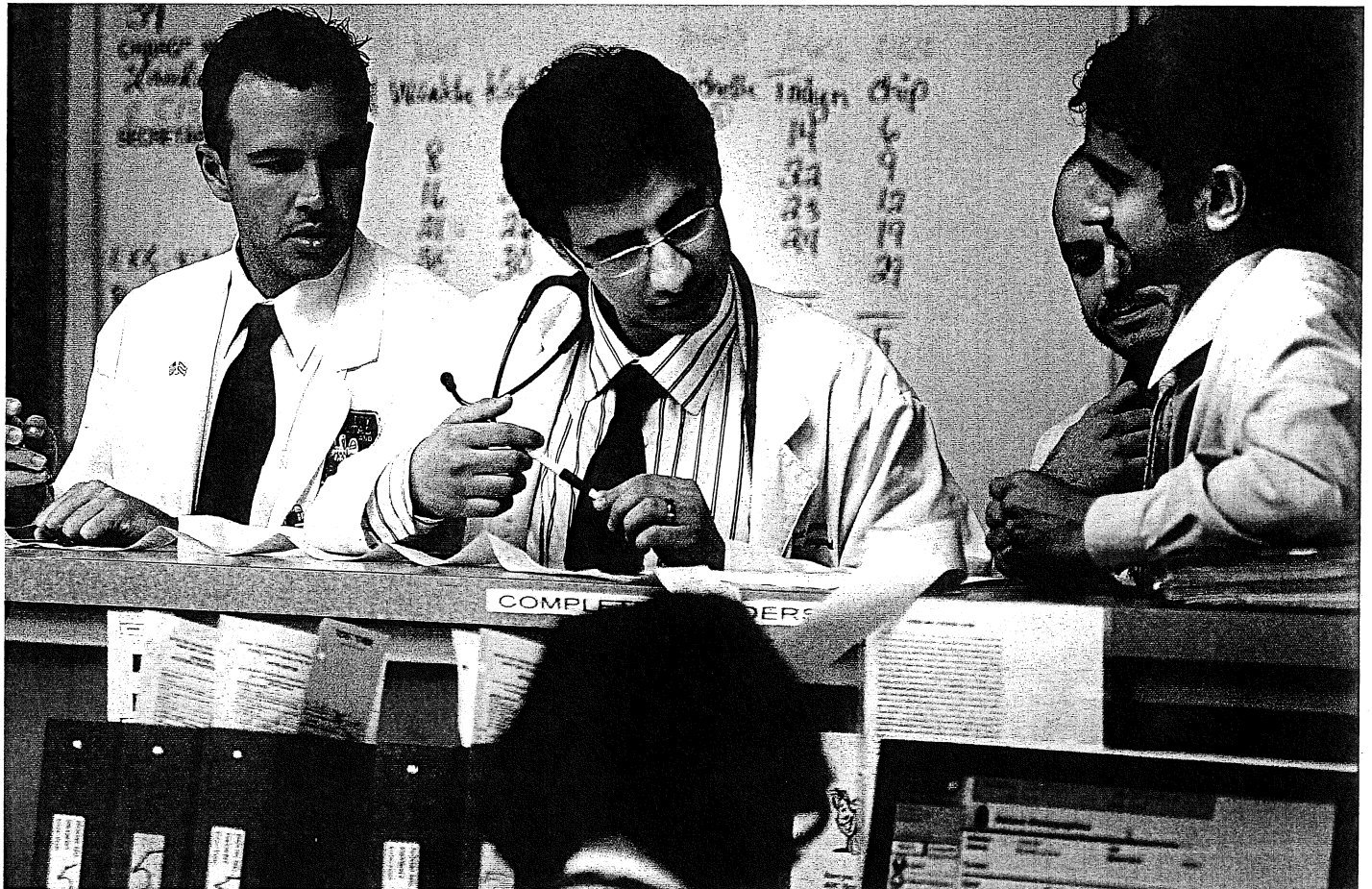
The emergency room department, level one trauma center, specialty surgery and disease management programs, and intensive care units are all on Ali's list

of strengths of the institution. "We are not limited to business as a safety net hospital alone, but we attract patients from all over the community and our sister hospitals in the state network," he says.

It is the physical structure itself that is a weakness for ILH at the moment. The working facility is old, and it has space limitations. "It doesn't mean that we are not improving on things, but we are focusing more on maintaining what we have and on concentrating on improving the processes of delivery of care rather than only capital outlay improvement," says Ali.

Budgetary constraints have forced them to cut staff in the past 16 to 18 months, mainly in the realm of operational and supply costs and by reducing the full-time-employee to bed ratio. "If not today, maybe in the coming years we will be able to look at the possibility of expansion of certain programs," says Ali.

Through the difficulties, Ali holds two areas above compromise. "We have tried not to compromise on how the medical and nursing staff provides services that relate to patient care and achieving national stan-





## On behalf of Louisiana Rehab Products, Inc. we would like to congratulate Dr. Juzar Ali in becoming the new Medical Director at the Interim LSU Public Hospital.

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dards. It's a balancing act, in this day and age of fiscal constraints," Ali says.

"The template we are working with is a very unique one, from the point of view of being a dual focus. In this system, at one end we have the challenges of amalgamating the teaching, training and academic mission of the medical schools and merging it with the mission of patient care and healthcare delivery to a community. This poses business challenges with operational budgetary constraints. It's also providing, what you can see historically, as a change of focus, from where it was previously considered only a safety net public hospital to a more expanded focus of value-oriented care," says Ali. "We are not where we should be, but the new academic medical center is what we look forward to becoming in the next five years, and our journey has begun." Ali concludes.

BY T.M. SIMMONS

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