



Official News Publication for Loma Linda University Health

March 2016

Volume 29, No. 3

DNA sequencers dedicated at Loma Linda University Center for Genomics allowing researchers to access the future of medicine

By James Ponder

Officials from the Ardmore Institute of Health, an Oklahoma corporation dedicated to promoting health and vitality through healthy lifestyles, attended a special dedication ceremony for the Illumina HiSeq 4000 DNA sequencer on Wednesday, March 9, to learn more about the future of genomics medicine at Loma Linda University School of Medicine (LLUSM).

President and CEO Kevin Brown, MS, MBA; board chair Ron Stout, MD, MPH; board member Franklin House, MD; and Bonnie House, Franklin's wife, traveled to the Inland Empire from Oklahoma for the occasion. Stout and Franklin House are both LLUSM alumni.

The new acquisition doubles the number of DNA sequencers—considered trailblazing tools for unlocking the secrets of health and disease at the molecular level—at Loma Linda University (LLU) Center for Genomics, enabling researchers to access the futuristic world of precision medicine.

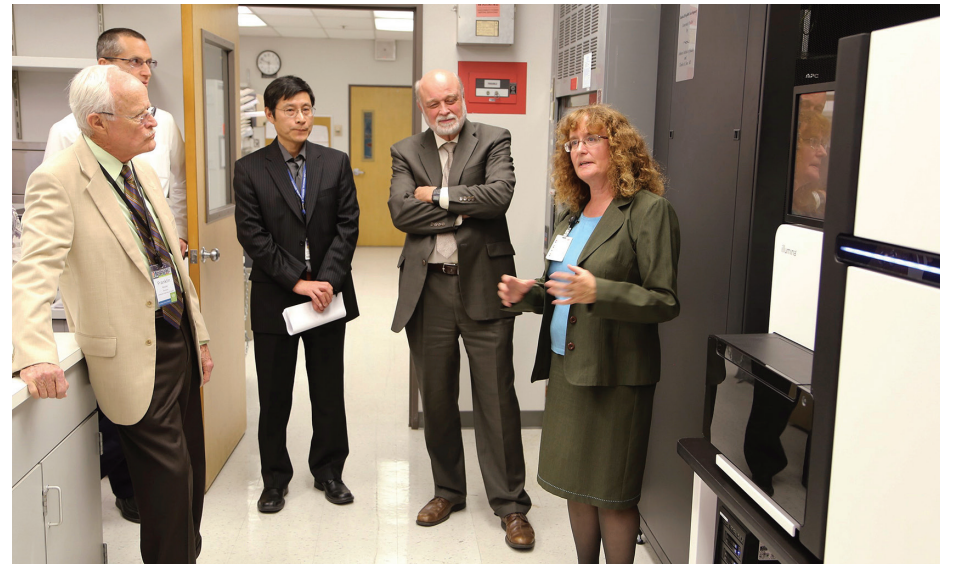
The first, an Illumina NextSeq 550 funded by a \$280,000 NIH grant, can sequence an entire human genome—the complete chromosomal set containing

all inheritable traits of an organism—in just 1.5 days. Charles Wang, MD, PhD, MPH, director of the Center for Genomics at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, says earlier models took 11 or 12 days. “It’s great for small projects and for testing research theories,” he notes.

The second, an Illumina HiSeq 4000, is considerably more powerful. Wang says it allows researchers to carry out very large projects, such as those using data and specimens from the Adventist Health Studies, to determine the effects of lifestyle on epigenomic reprogramming and longevity. This newer, more advanced model can sequence 12 whole human genomes in less than four days. Without it, he says, LLU scientists would not be able to conduct sophisticated studies essential to unlocking the potential of precision medicine.

Purchase of the \$1.1 million sequencer was made possible by the generosity of the Ardmore Institute of Health and by Charles A. Sims, MD. Unfortunately, Sims was unable to attend the dedication.

According to Penelope Duerksen-Hughes, PhD, associate dean for basic sciences at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, each human cell



Penny Duerksen-Hughes, PhD, right, associate dean for basic sciences at Loma Linda University School of Medicine (LLUSM), explains some of the features of the new Illumina HiSeq 4000 DNA sequencer the Center for Genomics recently acquired. Listening are, from left, Franklin House, MD, board member for Ardmore Institute of Health; Kevin Brown, MS, MBA, president and CEO, Ardmore Institute of Health; Charles Wang, MD, PhD, MPH, director of the Center for Genomics at LLUSM; and Richard H. Hart, MD, DrPH, president of Loma Linda University Health.

contains all 23 sets of chromosomes. “Each chromosome is a very long string of sequentially arranged DNA strands containing all the basic information needed to run your life,” she explains.

Essentially a copy of an individual’s DNA, RNA is a message or transcript of a particular DNA section designed to create a specific protein.

Continued on page 2

After nearly 50 years, the Medical Center main entrance will now face Prospect Avenue

By Larry Kidder

Since the opening of the cloverleaf towers of Loma Linda University Medical Center in 1967, the entrance has always been across from

Starr Street. That’s all about to change.

According to Eric Schilt, MBA, assistant vice president for construction at Loma Linda University Health, the organization will take the historic step in mid-April of officially moving its

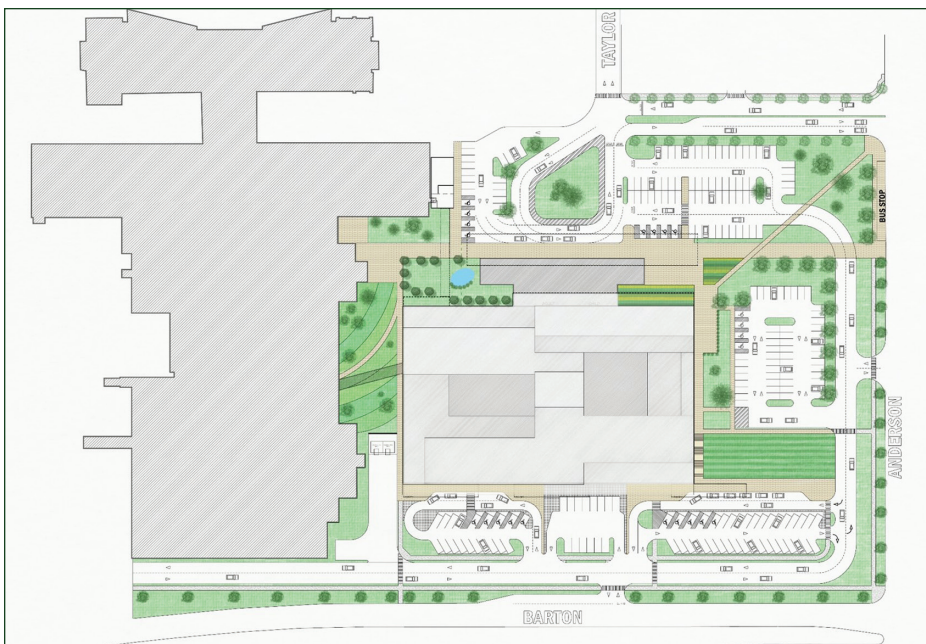
main entrance to face Prospect Avenue, creating a direct corridor to Loma Linda Healthcare System’s VA Medical Center.

“We are on a very tight schedule in order to complete the new hospital by January 2020,” Schilt explains. “The patient parking lot will be completely fenced off right up to the front of Children’s Hospital and the adult hospital.”

Where will patients park? “The patient parking garage next to the emergency department is a few weeks behind schedule,” Schilt continues. “The structure itself is usable to some extent, but the elevators are not yet completed. The garage should be entirely finished by June at the latest.”

That fact and a delay in finishing the Grand Hallway entrance have led construction planners and administrators to improvise.

Continued on page 2



The final plan for the area in front of the current hospital building is shown above. In the coming weeks, patients and visitors will enter at Prospect Avenue and loop in front of the current entrance to the adult hospital, where they will be dropped off. Construction fencing will eventually surround the entire patient parking lot and previous entrance. All patients



and visitors will receive complimentary valet parking until self-parking in the new structure is available. As visitors and employees endure the dust and noise of construction, it always helps to be reminded of the end result. The new hospital towers are on track to be completed in January 2020 when the entrance will look more like the rendering above.

Many Strengths. One Mission.

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH : LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY | SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS | SCHOOL OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY | SCHOOL OF MEDICINE | SCHOOL OF NURSING | SCHOOL OF PHARMACY | SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH | SCHOOL OF RELIGION | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER | UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL/ADULT SERVICES | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER EAST CAMPUS | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY SURGICAL HOSPITAL | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER—MURRIETA | HIGHLAND SPRINGS MEDICAL PLAZA

'LIVE IT: Online Health Show' 12th episode released

By Nancy Yuen

On January 1, 2016, Loma Linda University Health's online health show, "LIVE IT," made its debut just in time for New Year's resolutions. Based on Loma Linda University Health research and encouraging others to LIVE IT, each episode features simple tips to live healthier and longer.

As of mid-March, 12 episodes are now available online, with topics ranging from the benefits of eating avocados and almonds to research findings showing that drinking at least five glasses of water can reduce one's chance of having a heart attack.

So far "LIVE IT" has received 100,437 Facebook views while "The best Super Bowl commercial not to air," an ad promoting the show, went viral on

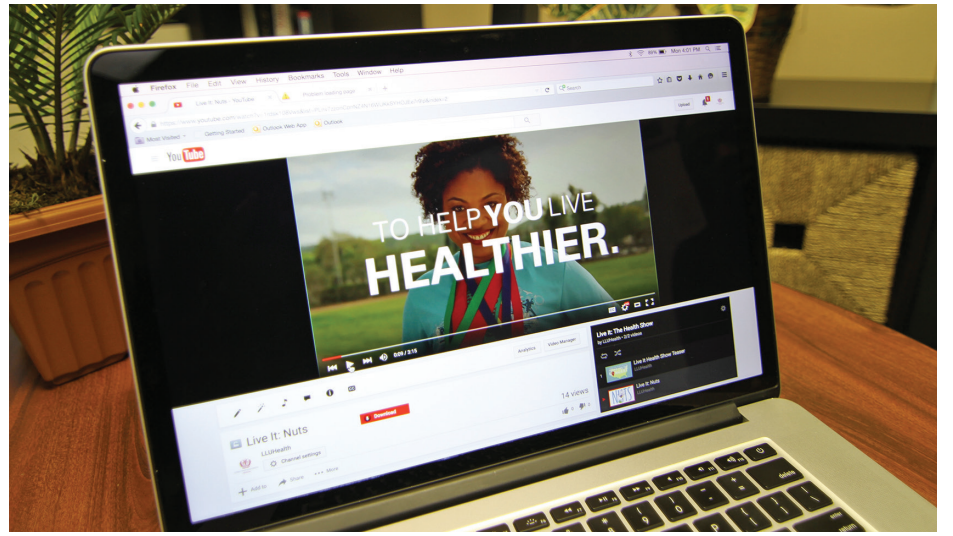
Facebook. To date, it has received more than 465,630 views.

According to Cosmin Cosma, director of advancement films, "The first launch of the 'LIVE IT: Online Health Show' happened on Facebook. We wanted to connect with our fans and friends to inform and promote the new show to them and their friends. This helped us create awareness of the show with people already connected to Loma Linda University Health."

Advancement films, in collaboration with marketing, Web center, and public relations, is creating a strategic plan for the promotion of this new online health and wellness resource.

According to Cosma, the next strategy will be to promote the health information resource of the "LIVE IT:

Continued on next page



"LIVE IT: Online Health Show" debuted January 1, 2016. Twelve episodes are now available to watch.

DNA sequencers dedicated at LLU Center for Genomics ...

Continued from page 1

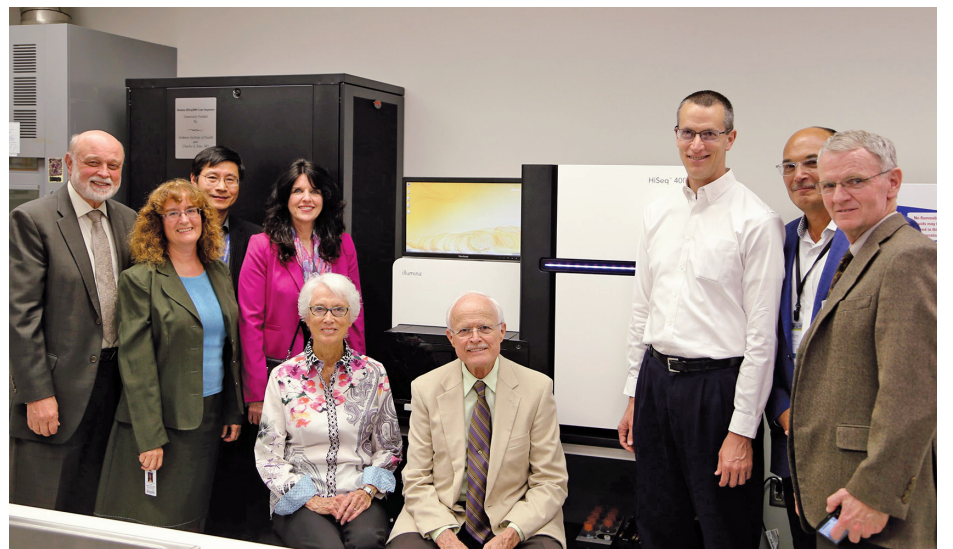
"These RNA messages are used to construct the precise proteins that carry out the individual functions of your body," she reports, noting that cells differ in the specific genes they activate so that liver cells create liver-specific proteins, heart cells produce heart-specific proteins, and so forth. "Importantly, the act of turning a particular gene on or off can influence how an individual responds to internal and external stressors and whether or not a person gets a disease for which they are genetically predisposed."

In one recent study, Lubo Zhang, PhD, director of the Center for Perinatal Biology at LLU School of Medicine, used DNA screening to evaluate outcomes in baby mice whose mothers were subjected to hypoxia. In another, Duerksen-Hughes and Wang developed a novel, DNA-sequencing-based method to discover why the human papilloma virus sometimes integrates into the host genome. If they succeed, physicians may be able to decrease the frequency of genital cancer caused by this common sexually transmitted disease.

The Adventist Health Studies comprise a rare treasury for LLU researchers. Data from the decades-long investigation into a variety of health and lifestyle factors will enable scientists to identify specific genetic, epigenetic, and transcription mechanisms that link certain lifestyle practices to increased health and longevity," says Duerksen-Hughes.

"AHS-2," the second phase of the studies, "has tied inputs and outputs together, but DNA/RNA sequencing will allow us to study the mechanisms and how they work—to learn which genes are being turned on or off and to what degree. There are several interesting ways with which you can fish out the specifics of gene expression and this puts them at our fingertips. This is where it gets really exciting!"

Wang agrees. "Many exciting projects are planned using the gene sequencers. I am very happy with my decision to join the LLU family in 2013, and thrilled at what has been achieved so far. I hope the studies we have planned involving the new technologies will bring LLU into even higher visibility in the world of science."



Officials of the Ardmore Institute of Health, an Oklahoma corporation dedicated to promoting health and vitality through healthy lifestyles, recently visited Loma Linda University School of Medicine (LLUSM) for a special dedication ceremony for the new Illumina HiSeq 4000 DNA sequencer purchased, in part, through their generous gift. (Left to right): Richard Hart, MD, DrPH, president of Loma Linda University Health; Penny Duerksen-Hughes, PhD, associate dean, LLUSM; Charles Wang, MD, PhD, MPH, director of the Center for Genomics at LLUSM; Kimberly Payne, PhD, director of translational research at LLUSM; Bonnie House, MD, board member, Ardmore Institute of Health; Kevin Brown, MS, MBA, president and CEO, Ardmore Institute of Health; Ron Stout, MD, MPH, board chair, Ardmore Institute of Health; and Roger Hadley, MD, dean of LLUSM.

After nearly 50 years, the Medical Center main entrance will now face Prospect Avenue ...

Continued from page 1

"All of our patients and visitors will receive courtesy valet parking," Schilt reveals, "until the elevators are in place and the Grand Hallway is more accessible." A company has been hired to work with the internal valet team to provide the additional resources needed for increased demand through early June, which will allow patients and visitors to receive the best possible experience and minimize the inconvenience.

"The schedule requires 'substantial completion' by January 2020," Schilt shares. "Those who work in construction will tell you that every project has its constant challenges and process variabilities."

Patients, visitors, and employees may wonder what's going on behind the fences. The dust and noise can be annoying, as well as seem never-ending.

"We are making major progress," Schilt assures. "We've worked on the many utilities needed for the new complex to minimize future disruption

of that area." Many of the unplanned adjustments are the result of unforeseen challenges.

"We're looking forward to late May or early June," Schilt adds, "when patients can self-park and access the Children's and adult hospitals through the partially completed Grand Hallway. And we'll continue to deal with the daily surprises that are sure to come our way."

The plan for the area in front of the current hospital building is similar to the finished design. In the coming weeks, patients and visitors will begin using the Prospect Avenue entrance and loop in front of the main adult hospital entrance. Construction fencing will eventually surround the entire patient parking lot and previous entrance. Patients and visitors will drop off their cars for valet.

As visitors and employees endure the dust, noise, and traffic of construction, it always helps to be reminded of the end result. The new hospital towers will open January 1, 2020.



At Loma Linda University Health developing new pathways for a healthier tomorrow is why we live to discover. We have now made our innovative research easy to access with our new LIVE IT online health show.

Follow our **LIVE IT** online health show at liveitlomalinda.org.

[#liveitlomalinda](https://twitter.com/liveitlomalinda)

MANY STRENGTHS. ONE MISSION.



LOMA LINDA
UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services representative offers insights into Affordable Care Act

By Briana Pastorino

Melissa Stafford Jones, regional director of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), gave a dynamic presentation about current health policy and the state of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to Loma Linda University Health staff Wednesday, February 24.

Stafford Jones, a noteworthy expert in health policy who has extensive experience working with hospital systems, began her presentation by highlighting the four main goals of HHS: to strengthen the health care system; advance scientific knowledge and innovation; advance health, safety and well-being of Americans; and improve the program's efficiency, transparency, accountability, and effectiveness.

"Access to high-quality, coordinated, high-value health care services ultimately leads to better health for all Americans and is a central tenet of the Affordable Care Act," Stafford Jones said. "It's up to us to provide the information and tools consumers need so they know their options when choosing insurance plans."

Stafford Jones emphasized throughout her presentation that education and

access are key in the success of the ACA.

While health care costs continue to rise, Stafford Jones says they are rising at a rate much slower than in the past. And more Americans are taking advantage of the ACA—over 17 million or more than 90 percent of Americans now have access to health insurance thanks to the ACA—but there is still work to be done, she said.

"It was an honor to host Melissa Stafford Jones during her first visit to Loma Linda University Health," said Gerald Winslow, PhD, vice president for mission and culture at Loma Linda University Health. "Her visit was a highly informative opportunity to hear from a federal official with significant responsibility for health policy in our region. We were enriched by the time that Ms. Stafford Jones shared with us."

The presentation was part of a series titled "Spotlight on Health Policy," organized by Loma Linda University Health's Institute for Health Policy and Leadership (IHPL), which is devoted entirely to innovative scholarship and service in health policy.

IHPL is committed to developing proactive solutions to the health challenges facing the region, nation,



From left, Wonha Kim, MD, MPH, associate director, Institute for Health Policy and Leadership; Melissa Stafford Jones, regional director of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and Gerald Winslow, PhD, founding director, Institute for Health Policy and Leadership.

and world. By offering a collaborative approach to health policy, IHPL builds on the strength of Loma Linda University's eight schools, in concert with the six hospitals and many clinics of the growing health system.

The institute also serves as the principal research and academic center for the Adventist Health Policy Association.

Its goal is to provide proactive policy solutions with an emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention for whole communities.

By educating diverse stakeholders, including health professionals, policy makers and the public, the institute continues to provide leadership in health policy in the 21st Century.

Helpful Honda People make donation to NICU

By Briana Pastorino

Loma Linda University Children's Hospital's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) is featured in the latest Southern California Honda Dealers' "Random Acts of Helpfulness" campaign.

The television commercial is the first to feature a hospital in the campaign. Both TV and radio spots will run through May 1.

In the SoCal Honda commercial, the men and women in blue delivered three

van loads of equipment to the NICU, including specialized thermometers and stethoscopes, privacy screens, blankets, mobiles, bouncy seats, and a rocking chair. All items are those that can be used by nurses and parents of babies being treated in the NICU.

"We are beyond grateful for the donations made by the SoCal Honda dealers," said Tristine Bates, RN, director, LLU Children's Hospital NICU. "The new equipment will definitely enhance our nurses' ability to provide quality patient care to their tiny patients and will provide

parents with an extra sense of comfort."

Jennifer Gingras, an NICU nurse at Children's Hospital, submitted a letter through the Help Me Honda website, requesting items she and other NICU nurses needed. About three weeks later, she received a call from the Helpful Honda people stating they would fulfill her request.

"I couldn't believe it was actually happening," Gingras said.

Also a mom to a baby who was treated in the NICU at Children's Hospital, Gingras knows firsthand what moms and nurses need on the unit. She attributes her experience at the hospital to becoming a NICU nurse: "We care for about 80 babies, and can always use more equipment."

"Her story perfectly embodies the spirit of Helpful Honda," said Lauren

Kay, spokesperson for SoCal Honda Dealers, "giving back to an organization, in this case Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, that helped save her son 27 years ago, inspiring her to become a NICU nurse."

Since 2007, the SoCal Honda Dealers have been committed to lending a hand in the community and surprising residents with unexpected Random Acts of Helpfulness. Why? Because it's their job to be helpful—no strings attached.

Last year, the SoCal Honda Dealers began sharing their Random Acts of Helpfulness on TV to continue helping people who truly need a hand. Residents are encouraged to share a request for help through its Help Me Honda website, which is exactly what Gingras did. She sent in her story in January this year, and within three weeks she got a call back saying she and the hospital would be getting the help they needed.

the old spaghetti factory Tip-A-Firefighter

All tips collected by the firefighters will be donated to Loma Linda University Children's Hospital

The Old Spaghetti Factory
Tip-A-Firefighter benefiting
Loma Linda University
Children's Hospital

Tuesday, April 19, 2016
11:30 am - 2:00 pm
5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

The Old Spaghetti Factory
1635 Industrial Park
Redlands

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



A production crew films the Helpful Honda commercial at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital on Thursday, March 3.

'LIVE IT: Online Health Show' 12th episode released ...

Continued from previous page
Online Health Show" in one location.

"The platform for this will be YouTube," he says. "By connecting with health and wellness reporters at various media outlets around the nation, and health and wellness bloggers and online influencers, we want the "LIVE IT: Online Health Show" on YouTube

to be a resource—a place to go for the latest research in health and wellness information. This will help place Loma Linda University Health on the map as a leading research organization for wellness and prevention; its audience will be more deeply connected to our organization, returning for more content in the future."

Loma Linda hosts 2016 Healthy People in Healthy Communities conference

By Marcus Chapman

On March 8 and 9, Loma Linda University School of Public Health played host to public health professionals from all over the United States and around the world at its 2016 Healthy People in Healthy Communities Conference.

The conference was open to “any individual or entity, public or private, interested in improving health through lifestyle-based practices, environmental improvements, and/or GIS technologies.”

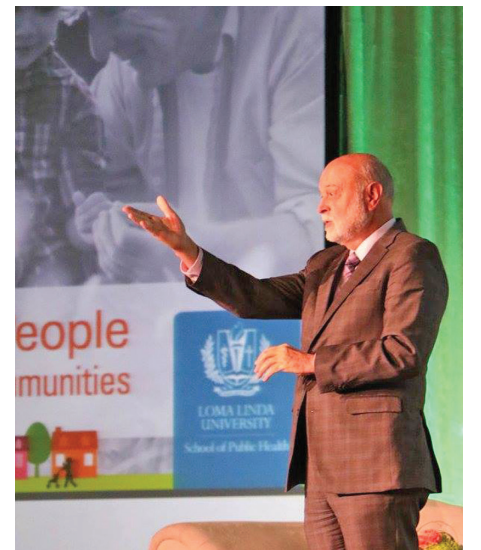
More than 20 exhibitors and over 500 health care professionals participated in the 2016 Healthy People in Healthy Communities Expo.

This year’s theme, “Building a Community of Health,” featured such speakers as LaMar Hasbrouck, MD, MPH, executive director for the National Association of County and City Health Officials; Philip Mangano, president and CEO of The American Round Table to Abolish Homelessness; Meaghan McCamman, MPA, assistant director of policy at the

California Primary Care Association; and Anita Chandra, PhD, MPH, director at RAND Justice, Infrastructure, and Environment.

The conference explored how active technology seamlessly integrates fitness and health into people’s daily lives, and ways geospatial information systems can help connect people with their communities.

Key differences in motivation, participation, and health outcomes for active men and active women were also explored.



Richard Hart, MD, DrPH, president of Loma Linda University Health, kicks off the Healthy People in Healthy Communities conference on March 8.

First-year dentistry students dedicated during 56th Annual Alumni Student Convention

By Doug Hackleman

The Loma Linda University School of Dentistry’s annual student dedication service was held at the LLU Church on February 26, 2016, at 5:00 p.m., during the School’s 56th Alumni Student Convention.

The student dedication service is a high moment for LLUSD’s doctor of dental surgery and dental hygiene classes during which first-year students receive a Bible embossed with their name and graduating students are given personally monogrammed white coats.

The procession of faculty was led by LLU Provost Ronald Carter, PhD, carrying the university mace and welcoming the School of Dentistry family and friends with the reminder that the two symbols on the mace—a Bible and rays of light—represent the dedication of students to service and to learning.

Dean Ronald Dailey, PhD, offered an introductory prayer, and musical praise, “His Love All Over the World,” was rendered by an instrumental ensemble of dental students.

Chris Oberg, DMin, senior pastor, La Sierra University Church, spoke to the gathering in an address titled “The Dental Professional Near You.”

Pastor Oberg developed her message from the minor prophet Amos’ fourth chapter which she said contains the greatest concentration of bad news in the Bible, including from verse six: “And I have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,” which meant

nobody had food to eat.

Along the way, Pastor Oberg’s listeners learned that her father, LLUSD alumnus LeRoy Nelson, DDS, class of 1961, practiced dentistry in the Camas-Washougal, Washington communities for almost 40 years, during which he treated many Russian immigrants who could hardly afford to pay, and that her sister is LLUSD department of pediatric dentistry chair Bonnie Nelson, DDS, class of 1988.

But Pastor Oberg’s primary message was her interpretation of Amos: “You are so blessed you have forgotten your obligations ... and,” consequently, “Yahweh sends droughts, insects, and ‘cleanness of teeth.’”

“You have your four bathrooms, your \$40,000 cars, and your hundreds of thousands in tuition, so that you can be your own boss, so you can leave room for dessert. Meanwhile, two-thirds of the world goes hungry,” Pastor Oberg applied the prophet’s message.

“We need to read Amos alongside Daniel and Revelation,” she insisted. “Our job is to imagine heaven on earth.”

Pastor Oberg concluded, “Let justice and mercy flow; and, along the way, take care of some teeth.”

Shelley Hayton, MAT, assistant professor, department of dental hygiene, followed the presentation of Bibles and white coats with a prayer of dedication, after which all students and dental professionals were led in reciting the dental pledge by Gary Kerstetter, DDS, class of 1982, and director of service learning



Scott Smith, DDS, left, assistant professor in the School of Dentistry, enjoys the moment as James Fedusenko, president, dentistry class of 2016, dons his white coat.

for the School of Dentistry.

A vocal ensemble of 34 LLUSD students performed Crystal Lewis’ musical praise, titled “I Will Go,” and

Scott Smith, DDS, class of 2009 and director, spiritual life and diversity for LLU School of Dentistry, gave the benediction.

AUCA representatives visit LLU campus amid plans for new medical school

By Courtney Haas

Two representatives from the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) recently spent several days on the campus of Loma Linda University Health.

With plans in effect for the construction of a new Seventh-day Adventist school of medicine in Rwanda, Dominique Pagarigan, contractor and builder for AUCA, and Ndahayo Claver, vice president and vice chancellor for academics, came to the Loma Linda University campus to scout and learn what the institution can offer.

“The purpose of our visit is to see Loma Linda University Health,” Claver shared. “We want to be inspired and guided as we make plans to open our own

new medical school in Kigali, Rwanda.”

Claver continued, “Knowing that Loma Linda has such huge experience in academics in the area of medicine, we rejoice to come and seek guidance in this endeavor.”

Richard Hart, MD, DrPH, president of Loma Linda University Health, who recently returned from a trip to Rwanda to discuss this very topic, enthusiastically shared that several key decisions had been made and the planning was underway.

“I feel this is a place that both needs and deserves some major assistance as they build toward the lofty goal of quality medical education to serve Africa,” Hart stated as he discussed Loma Linda’s future engagement in the project.

Continued next page

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

PossAbilities

14th Annual TRIATHLON
5K RUN WALK ROLL

April 24, 2016

PossAbilities provides resources and opportunities for people with diverse disabilities.

To pre-register or sign up to volunteer, go to teampossabilities.org and click on “Upcoming Events” or go to active.com and search PossAbilities.

online registration powered by active.com

Online registration opens January 1, 2016.

LLUSM Annual Postgraduate Convention draws alumni from around the world; 50th anniversary class donates \$300,000

By Chris Clouzet

The Alumni Association of the School of Medicine of Loma Linda University hosted its 84th Annual Postgraduate Convention (APC) during the first weekend of March.

The event gave medical alumni, students, and other medical professionals the opportunity to earn continuing medical education credits, meet together at class reunions, and recognize LLU students and alumni for their research and accomplishments.

Topics such as physician-assisted dying, genomics, and 25 years of proton therapy at Loma Linda were addressed under the theme, "Precision Medicine: The Future of Medicine."

Eight guest speakers included Joanne Lynn, MD, MA, MS, director of the Center for Elder Care and Advanced Illness at the Altarum Institute, and Wayne W. Grody, MD, PhD, director of the Molecular Diagnostic Laboratories and Clinical Genomics Center at the UCLA Medical Center.

More than 100 scientific research posters by LLU students and residents were on display, and information or

takeaway items were available at more than two dozen technical exhibits representing a wide variety of organizations invested in medical professionals.

Attendees also had the opportunity to tour the LLU campus with university historian Dick Schaefer, join a skin surgery workshop, and attend specialty symposia in surgery, plastic surgery, and otolaryngology.

Many took advantage of the special luncheons and worship services available during the weekend, and alumni gathered for class reunions Saturday night to reminisce and catch up with each other.

About 500 people attended the APC Gala Sunday evening, where several LLU School of Medicine alumni were recognized, and the 25th- and 50th-anniversary classes were honored.

The 50th-anniversary class of 1966 presented a gift of \$300,000 to the Centennial Tuition Fund.

A member of the 50th class, Mary L. Small, MD, was named 2016 Alumna of the Year.

Small was a medical missionary in India and an obstetrician-gynecology professor at LLU for many years.

Eight others were named Honored



Mary Small, MD, center, a member of the 50-year anniversary class of 1966, was named 2016 Alumna of the Year by the LLUSM Alumni Association. She was joined for a photo by Honored Alumni, from left: Ernest Zane, MD; David Fang, MD; Glen Van Arsdell, MD; John Jacobson, MD; Small; Wesley Kime, MD; Alan S. Nakanishi, MD; Roland Zimmermann, MD; and Douglas Smith, MD.

Alumni, including Glen Van Arsdell, MD, class of 1986; David Fang, MD, class of 1971; John Jacobson, MD, class of 1971; Douglas Smith, MD, class of 1966; Roland Zimmermann, MD, class of 1966; Alan Nakanishi, MD, class of 1965; Ernest Zane, MD, class of 1956;

and Wesley Kime, MD, class of 1953-A.

Photos and more information can be found at the LLUSM Alumni Association website at www.llusmaa.org.

The 85th Annual Postgraduate Convention will be held on the LLU campus from March 3 to 6, 2017.



AUCA representatives visit LLU campus amid plans for new medical school ...

Left: AUCA representatives meet with Loma Linda University Health (LLUH) and Global Health Institute (GHI) employees as they scout facilities at Loma Linda. From left: Ken Breyer, MS, assistant vice president for construction, LLUH; Ndahayo Claver, vice president and vice chancellor for academics at AUCA; Jerry Daly, MA, MSLS, associate director, GHI; Dominique Pagarigan, contractor and builder for AUCA; Angeli Yutuc, program manager, international service, GHI; Amanda Biddle, project coordinator, GHI; Bing Frazier, program manager international for visiting professionals, GHI.

Continued from previous page

Pagarigan and Claver toured the Medical Center, traversed throughout the university campus, visited Centennial Complex, experienced the simulation center, and were able to see one of the latest construction projects off campus—the San Manuel Gateway College.

Pagarigan shared that the goal is to not rush into this project, but to do the necessary research and assessments to ensure quality, right from the start.

"We've gained many good ideas from this visit," Pagarigan shared. "We want to do this job right the first time and that is why we are putting so much into the planning and scouting as we go to various Seventh-day Adventist medical schools around the world."

Claver went on to say that he was very excited about what he had been exposed to at Loma Linda University Health: "The infrastructure, the order of things that we have seen here, the engagement of the people, the commitment that they have in the work that they are given at the medical school and the university as a whole, I'm just amazed by it all and it is such an inspiration that I can take this knowledge back to Rwanda and apply it."

The tentative plan is for the AUCA School of Medicine to open in September 2017. The first class is estimated to be 45 students.

"While we cannot create a school to the same standard we have seen here, we can still apply the same ideas," Pagarigan stated. "Even though technology and resources are not as advanced, we do plan to build a simulation center for the students."

The new medical school will be a step forward for health care education in Rwanda. Building on a prime location on the new Masoro campus, there is enough space for academic buildings, dormitories, a hospital, and clinics, providing the opportunity for future physicians of Rwanda to grow and learn together.

LA Convention Center
Los Angeles, CA
April 27-29, 2016

Mega Clinic

3000
Volunteers Needed

Services Needed

COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL CARE
Consultations by primary care and other medical specialists
Cardiac evaluations including ECG and echo
Pulmonary evaluation & respiratory care
Gastroenterology consultations
Rheumatology consultations
Women's health well women exams with pap smears and STD screening
Mental health care with a focus on depression
Pediatric evaluation and consultation
Surgical services
General surgery with biopsies and excision of skin cancers and lumps and bumps
Podiatry consultations with ingrown toenail care and other procedures under local anesthetic
Wound care
Orthopedic consultations including injections, aspirations, and other office-type procedures

COMPREHENSIVE DENTAL CARE
X-rays
Cleanings
Restorative care with fillings & crowns
Endodontics
Extractions and oral surgery

EYE CARE
Comprehensive eye exams
Fittings for free glasses

OTHER HEALTH CARE OFFERED
Physical therapy evaluation and treatment with recommendations
Occupational therapy evaluation, treatment and recommendations
X-Ray
Ultrasound
Laboratory services
Pharmacy services
Hair styling
Nutrition and lifestyle coaching
Diabetes reversal
Weight loss
Smoking & Alcohol Cessation
Hypertension Control

1 (888) 44-Pathway
PathwaytoHealthVolunteer.org

Your Best Pathway to Health is a service of Adventist-Laumen's Services & Industries in partnership with the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Adventist Health System, Loma Linda University Health & other entities.

World Affairs Council takes in-depth look at GIS mapping during 50th anniversary event

By Courtney Haas

On March 14, the World Affairs Council (WAC) celebrated its 50th anniversary with more than 150 attendees at the Mission Inn Hotel in Riverside, California.

The theme of the celebration, "Creating Our Future," represents the mission of the organization, which seeks to develop sustainable solutions for challenged areas of the world.

Since its inception in 1964, WAC has been building both local and global connections, dealing with a wide array of world issues.

With Loma Linda University as one of its founding members, the council was only the third formed in California and has since emerged as the premier forum in the Inland Empire for discussion of national and international needs.

"Since I first started working with World Affairs Council during Vietnam, people were realizing that we were connected to a bigger picture, nationally and globally," Marylin Jacobsen, past president emerita for WAC, shared. "The World Affairs Council has that legacy of getting different viewpoints with things that are

out of whatever box you're trying to put them in. We've gone all over the globe with subjects."

Some of the more than 800 speakers who have opened discussions with the council: Her Majesty Queen Noor al Hussein of Jordan; Charles "Chuck" Yeager, who broke the sound barrier; Jane Goodall, primatologist, ethologist, and anthropologist; and Dan Quayle, former vice president of the United States; have all presented to the Inland Southern California council over the years.

The council, in collaboration with local universities and other partners, has provided a platform for leaders and experts in diplomacy, news, media, business, international trade, health, military, arts, and culture to come together and discuss world affairs.

The 50th anniversary celebration showcased just that. Sponsored by Loma Linda University Health, the event focused not only on what the council has accomplished, but also on what has been learned and where it is going in the future.

The evening began with a meet and greet reception, followed by welcoming remarks by Richard Hart, MD, DrPH, president of Loma Linda University Health. As the festivities progressed,

guests enjoyed a look back through the years with a short video featuring Jacobsen, past president emerita.

The evening's featured speaker, Jack Dangermond, founder and president of Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri), is no stranger to Southern California. Having a home base for his business in Redlands, California, he admitted that typically he does not speak at these types of events. But this was something special. He then led the audience through a glimpse into what the future holds based on his specialty, geography and GIS (geographic information systems) mapping.

"Our world is facing many challenges. Geography and GIS are more important than ever. Geography provides the science, GIS the technology for understanding our world and integrating and applying our knowledge to help make better decisions," Dangermond said. "GIS is helping create a better future."

After a brief question-and-answer session, Hart presented Dangermond with the first World Affairs Council Local/Global Impact Award and Ngoma Claude ZAHO, JD, PhD, consul honoraire from Cote d'Ivoire, expressed his greatest appreciation and



Jack Dangermond, founder and president of Esri, talks about the value of geography and advancements in GIS mapping systems.

presented a certificate for the difference that Dangermond's work has made in his country.

As Jacobsen shared her hopes for the future, she said simply, "Local, global connections are what World Affairs Council has been doing from the start. The council, I hope, is going to look at and redefine its vision as to what we can do to help not just one business, country, or group, but to help all of humanity."

Match Day is life-changing for School of Medicine class of 2016

By Larry Kidder

Imagine that a computer somewhere in the United States decided where you were going to be for the next three or more years of your life.

For 168 members of the School of Medicine class of 2016—and their families and loved ones—that very scenario played out during Match Day, March 18, 2016, at 9:20 a.m. Across the U.S., similar scenes took place at many other medical schools.

For the past several years, Loma Linda University School of Medicine leaders have chosen to create a major event to celebrate the accomplishments of their senior class. This year, Match Day festivities were held in Wong Kerlee International Conference Center, located in the lower level of Coleman Pavilion. The School of Medicine is headquartered one floor up.

The room was packed. Students, spouses, children, and—in some cases—parents were on hand to witness the spectacle. After some brief announcements, the name of each student was alternately read by Tamara Shankel, MD, associate dean for clinical education, and Daniel Wongworawat, MD, assistant dean for career advisement.

Classmates cheered as each senior medical student received an envelope sealing his or her future for the next few years and impacting the rest of his or her life. The envelopes had been shuffled to make the order random.

When the envelopes had all been distributed, the group took part in a salutary toast—with sparkling apple cider, naturally. Then, at the same time, the envelopes were opened and seniors erupted into shouts, screams, tears, and smiles.

This was the culmination of weeks of effort. During the months of November, December, and January, senior medical students crisscrossed the country, interviewing at multiple residency sites per invitation. When the travel was over, students and residency programs ranked each other and a mystical computer

somewhere in the country compared those rankings, matching the best picks of students with programs.

The results cannot be challenged. Students go where they are matched, and programs accept them as the incoming residents. Period.

So how did Loma Linda University School of Medicine students fare in the grand scheme of residency education? In line with a growing need for primary care physicians in the U.S., the School of Medicine came through with 44 percent—19 percent internal medicine, 12 percent family medicine, and 13 percent pediatrics.

For anesthesia, 10 percent of the class matched, and psychiatry was slightly behind with 9 percent. General surgery and surgery subspecialties garnered 14 percent of the class.

The journey is far from over for the class of 2016 and families. Written—and in some cases oral—board examinations



Paige Stevens, social vice president of the School of Medicine class of 2016, explains the celebratory process for her 167 classmates.

loom on the horizon. Further subspecialization may follow as their careers develop. They will be most likely be

"newbies" several more times, asked to learn new systems and nuances in their

Continued next page

First Annual Service Learning Colloquium

What we learn by serving

April 18, 2016 (save the date and watch for details)



Judy Hutchinson, PhD
Executive Director



Michelle LaPorte, MEd
Associate Director

Azusa Pacific University
Center for Academic Service-Learning and Research



Hosted by Loma Linda University Institute for Community Partnerships and the Academic Service Learning Committee
For more information, email Brenda Spoelstra at bspoelstra@llu.edu

Event will examine LLU theologian Sigve K. Tonstad's controversial book exploring evils such as the Holocaust

By James Ponder

The biggest philosophical obstacle to having faith in a merciful God will be the topic of a unique program at Loma Linda University Church on Friday, April 1. The presentation, which is open to the public, will begin at 6:00 p.m.

The event coincides with the recent release of a controversial book by Sigve K. Tonstad, MD, PhD, professor at Loma Linda University School of Religion and assistant professor at Loma Linda University School of Medicine.

Titled "God of Sense and Traditions of Non-Sense," the 404-page volume represents a tour de force evaluation of the theological and philosophical implications of the Holocaust and other manifestations of evil in the world.

Three other prominent theologians will join Tonstad at the event: Dragutin Matak, PhD, assistant dean at Adriatic Union College in Croatia; John Webster, PhD, professor of theology at La Sierra University; and Bernard Taylor, PhD, who recently retired as scholar in residence at Loma Linda University Church.

Far from being just a book review, the event will also feature a series of short talks, vignettes, readings, and even a bit of poetry—delivered by faculty members and students, and all focused on personal, philosophical, or theological issues raised by the problem of evil.

The program promises to not shy away from spikier issues raised in Tonstad's book, and attendees should be prepared for a paradigm-shifting presentation.

In the book, Tonstad steps into a theological minefield littered with the broken faith of millions who—finding no possible reconciliation between the merciful God of biblical tradition and the horrendous reality of large-scale historical atrocities—have lined up in droves to renounce their faith.

While the book starts from, and is anchored in, the Holocaust, the majority

of the text consists of careful and, in some ways groundbreaking, expositions of crucial biblical narratives, such as the stories of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Moses, Elijah, Job, and Jesus. "Its most enduring value," Tonstad points out, "is likely to be these expositions."

In the prologue, Tonstad begins by recounting the round-up of 302 men, 188 women, and 42 children, all Jewish, that occurred in Oslo, Norway, on November 26, 1942. A week later, all the women and children were forced to march naked in sub-zero temperatures to the gas chambers of Auschwitz, where all were murdered.

"We know there were many more," he says with extreme understatement. Before the end of Hitler's reign, more than six million Jews, as well as other dissidents and minority groups, had been systematically slaughtered by the Nazi regime. Tonstad is quick to point out that while the Holocaust is an event of the past, "it remains very much present," sickening the consciences and disturbing the faith of millions to this day.

It is this reality of horrendous and unspeakable evil that Tonstad addresses. He portrays humanity as peering into the unconscionably dark abyss of the Holocaust and recoiling at the suddenly fragile notion that a merciful God would allow such tragedy to occur.

But unlike countless other philosophers, he proposes that the prime mover is neither divine nor human, but demonic.

"What most philosophers and not a few theologians are content to describe as human evil, the New Testament will often ascribe to a demonic reality without thereby denying human agency," he writes. "I shall argue—and put forth evidence to support it—that if notions of the demonic are in need of empirical proof, there is no need to dig deep into history to find them."

After asserting that traces of the demonic are fully exposed by events of the twentieth century, Tonstad observes

that, "To the extent that dismissal of the demonic used to be a sign of sophistication and intellectual maturity, the Holocaust has made it much less so."

Perhaps the biggest issue raised by large-scale evil is the seeming absence or inaction of God.

"Absence of divine intervention and intervention by unexpected means are the pieces by which the Bible brings to view what I call a God of Sense," he notes in the prologue.

The first five chapters of the book frame the questions Tonstad examines in his no-holds-barred evaluation of the issues. Squeamish readers are advised that parts of the book are extremely graphic in their depictions of evil, including sections on the torture of little children and other thoroughly despicable and condemnable behavior.

In the first chapter, after retelling the biblical story of Job and his three friends who have allegedly come to comfort him after a series of apocalyptic disasters wipes out his family, property, livelihood, and health, Tonstad takes aim at theologians like Augustine, Luther, Bultmann and Barth for teaching that a just and merciful God would punish sinners in an eternal hell fire and yet refuse to answer or even consider questions about the fairness of His actions.

Those teachings, he maintains, belong to the traditions of non-sense and do not reflect the God of sense found in the Bible.

In the interim chapters, Tonstad examines the thinking of more than 300 notable scholars, skeptics, atheists, theologians, and philosophers from the days of the ancient biblical writers to the 21st century in an attempt to leave no challenge to faith unexamined in detail. Questions posed by Epicurus and Dostoevsky occupy large portions of the book, as they should.

In his final chapter, Tonstad returns to the last book of the Bible to explore what the Word of God says about the



Sigve K. Tonstad, MD, PhD, professor at both Loma Linda University School of Religion and Loma Linda University School of Medicine, is not one to shy away from a fight. In exploring the historic atrocities and horrors of the Holocaust, Tonstad examines the ancient question of how can a merciful God tolerate the existence of evil in the world.

problem. The chapter, titled "The Sense of the Ending," occupies a full 20 pages, so the passage quoted in the next paragraphs, which is taken from page 402, must be read in context. Nevertheless, it provides a prelude to his final conclusion:

We can assert without risk that the ending of Revelation brings to view the destruction of Satan and the restoration of creation, but what is the sense of the ending in the book? The sense of the ending, sense now understood not as premonition but as understanding, has come to rest on the importance of freedom in God's economy. This is the sense of the ending in this book as I propose to read it, a sense foreshadowed in other stories we have explored in this book. The clinching argument for this view is the ideologically fraught release of Satan at the end of the thousand years (Rev 20:1-9).

Revelation grapples with the
Continued on page 8

Basic sciences professor awarded \$1.99 million NIH grant to study periodontal disease

By James Ponder

Hansel Fletcher, PhD, recently learned that he is the recipient of a \$1.99 million grant from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, an entity of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), to study *Porphyromonas gingivalis*, a species of bacteria implicated in periodontal and cardiovascular diseases.

As professor and vice chair of basic sciences in the Loma Linda University School of Medicine division of microbiology, Fletcher has been on the trail of the more than 700 species of microbes

that inhabit the human mouth. Previous studies have led him to conclude that of that number, only a few bacteria are associated with periodontal disease.

In the project narrative—titled "Studies on the virulence regulation in *Porphyromonas*"—Fletcher outlines the purpose of his investigation.

"The post-translational modification of several of the major surface proteins/structures is important for the pathogenic potential of *P. gingivalis*," he writes. "The goal of this research is to characterize the novel protein that is important in virulence regulation in *P. gingivalis*. The success of this bacterium as an important cause of gum disease suggests that this protein is vital for its survival. Essential components of the regulatory system that this protein controls are prime targets for the development of novel therapeutics that will have a positive impact on human health."

Since virulence regulation refers to genetic factors that control the production of molecules that lead to pathologic diseases, what Fletcher hopes to do is find out how to stop the processes that trigger gum disease.

"It means we can develop an effective therapy to prevent gum disease caused

by this bacteria," he explains. "We've been studying this protein for more than 10 years. This represents my third NIH R01 grant on this topic." R01s are research project grants used to fund NIH-approved studies.

Fletcher began his research career at Virginia Commonwealth University in 1990, joining the LLUSM faculty after Barry Taylor, PhD, emeritus professor, recruited him in 1995.

When he's not in the laboratory at LLUSM, Fletcher can often be found at church. As an elder and media director for the Kansas Avenue Seventh-day Adventist Church in Riverside, he maintains a busy weekend schedule.

"I coordinate the execution of the church service," Fletcher says. And although he puts in several hours per week, he maintains it's nothing compared to the demands on his time when he served the church as head elder for two years.

"I was traveling on multiple professional trips that took me all over the world," he says. Fletcher holds adjunct professorships at universities in the United States, India, China, South Korea, and Jamaica.

On December 28 of last year, the



Hansel Fletcher, PhD, professor and vice chair of basic sciences at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, was recently awarded a \$1.99 million grant from an entity of the National Institutes of Health to study a species of bacteria implicated in periodontal and cardiovascular diseases.

Indian Association of Applied Microbiologists conferred the 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award on him.

The Caribbean has been seeing a lot of Fletcher lately. In February, he flew to Northern Caribbean University in

Continued on page 9

Match Day ...

Continued from previous page
practice of the art of medicine.

Each senior medical student received a box of matches. Class social vice president Paige Stevens explained that they were being asked to "share the light" of what they've learned at Loma Linda University with the rest of the world: whole person care that will not only transform the lives of their patients, but change their lives as well.

Lizette Norton joins LLUH as assistant vice president for talent management services

Contributed report

Lizette Norton has joined Loma Linda University Health as assistant vice president for talent management services.

Norton returns to Loma Linda University Health after having previously served as assistant vice president for human resource management (HRM) from 2001 to 2010.

After leaving Loma Linda, Norton became vice president for HRM at Dignity Health Community Hospital of San Bernardino. Most recently, she held the post of vice president for HRM at Parkview Community Hospital in Riverside.

In the past, she also led the human resource function at the Southeastern California Conference, Mt. San Jacinto Community College District, and Loma Linda University.

"I am grateful that we have been able to recruit such a well-qualified candidate for this important role," says Mark Hubbard, senior vice president, talent management services, Loma Linda University Health. "Lizette is very knowledgeable and will be able to provide strong leadership for our talent management services team. In addition, she is a passionate human resource management professional who is dedicated to service excellence in support of our employees."



Lizette Norton

How the guest of honor at 2nd annual Family Fitness Fun 5k and Expo beat the odds

By James Ponder

When 9-year-old Alex Miller joins his family to host the 2nd annual Family Fitness Fun 5k and Expo at the Burrage Mansion in Redlands on Sunday, April 3, the fact that the energetic young athlete almost didn't survive his first five months of life won't be apparent to anyone who doesn't know the story.

Alex will be running, jumping, climbing, and competing with other kids his age, but to his parents, Michael and Alecia Miller, the fact that he's even alive is a miracle.

Alecia knew something was seriously wrong shortly after Alex was born.

"He looked like a healthy, 9 pound 8 ounce boy," she shares, "but he cried all the time."

Nevertheless, physicians at Redlands

Community Hospital couldn't find any reason for his perpetual discomfort until Alex was three-and-a-half months old and an X-ray revealed an enlarged heart. He was then sent post haste to Loma Linda University Children's Hospital (LLUCH).

After an echocardiogram revealed that Alex had a rare medical disorder called unbalanced atrioventricular septal defect, pediatric cardiologist Ranae Larsen, MD, admitted him to LLUCH for surgery.

"Dr. Larsen told us that unbalanced AV is similar to hypoplastic left heart syndrome," Alecia recalls, "except it occurs on the right side of the heart. The right side was overdeveloped and way too large."

A diagnosis of unbalanced AV is usually made while the child is still in the womb, but since Alex was older, Larsen informed Michael and Alecia that the condition would be much harder to treat.

Pioneering infant heart surgeon Leonard Bailey, MD, was tapped to lead the team that would perform the operation to save Alex's life. Before he could do that, however, physicians would have to find a way to reduce the pressure in Alex's lungs, which had risen too high.

A month later, the pressure in Alex's lungs had subsided thanks to medication and oxygen therapy, and Bailey was able to perform the desperately needed reconstructive procedure.

But although the operation was a success, Alex resumed crying once he regained consciousness. The following Tuesday, Larsen readmitted him to the hospital and ordered another echocardiogram.

This time, the test revealed that the surgery—which had enlarged the right side of Alex's heart to normal proportions—had also put a lot of pressure on his mitral valve. Once again, he was rushed to the operating room.

At first, things seemed to be going well after the operation. But when doctors took him off the ventilator, Alex began gasping for air. They put him back on the machine and pondered what to do next.

By this time, the Miller's were beginning to wonder if Alex would ever be healthy. At times, the situation seemed so hopeless that Alecia questioned cardiothoracic surgeon Anees Razzouk, MD—who had assisted Bailey in Alex's first two surgeries—about the prognosis. If he survived, would Alex be weak and sickly for the rest of his life, or was there reason to believe he still might recover and thrive? She desperately wanted answers.

In return, Razzouk proposed a "shotgun approach." He put Alex on a wide array of medications to reduce the pressure in his lungs and prepare him to endure one more operation.

The following week, Bailey and Razzouk took Alex back into the operating room a third time and replaced the defective mitral valve.

The results were encouraging. Alex looked better right off the bat and Alecia noted a definite improvement in his mood. For one thing, he seemed happy for the first time in his life. For another, he wasn't crying any more. He seemed especially cheerful when she breast-fed him.

"He was like a normal, healthy baby his age," Alecia remembers, recalling the wonderful day she was finally able to take him home from the hospital.

Fast-forward eight-and-a-half years and Alex is the picture of health today. He looks great, has tons of energy, and loves active sports, such as golfing, horseback riding, running, and skiing. "We go skiing every Friday," Alecia reports.

"I love skiing," Alex insists.

His mitral valve may need replacing one final time as Alex enters adulthood, but aside from that, the future looks bright. The energetic third-grader from Mariposa Elementary School says his favorite subject is science. His class is

Continued on page 11



Alex Miller gets ready to enjoy some pizza during a family ski trip. The energetic 9-year-old loves the athletic, outdoor life, especially skiing. Alex will be the guest of honor when the Big Hearts for Little Hearts Loma Linda Guild hosts the 2nd annual Family Fitness Fun 5k and Expo at the Burrage Mansion in Redlands on Sunday, April 3.

Event will examine LLU theologian Sigve K. Tonstad's controversial book exploring evils such as the Holocaust . . .

Continued from page 7

question of divine non-intervention more earnestly than any thinker has done, but with better resources at its disposal. The answer that appears 'in the middle' in the heavenly council (5:6) erases whatever distinction we wish to postulate between the character of God and the means God uses in the struggle with evil. To say that commitment to freedom anchors the divine ideology to a degree that is not shared "in heaven, on earth, or under the earth" (5:3), finds staggering expressions in human society. We have in the course of this book seen freedom early on become indispensable to the Christian imperial state. We have seen how Augustine defended the use of coercion, claiming that the apostle Paul was

converted coercively. Lack of regard for freedom and individual conscience endangered the life of Roger Williams in the New World, at the hands of the most pious colonists. In secular society, the dispensability of freedom has emerged as a conspicuous characteristic of the modern security state. If, returning to the ideological parameters of Revelation, the crisis in the heavenly council is triggered by a divine commitment to freedom that intelligent beings "in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" do not share (5:3), the prioritizing of conformity over freedom in the history of Christianity and of security over freedom in the modern state serve as confirmation of Revelation's depiction that acceptance for the divine priority is a hard sell.

Tonstad has done a great service in clearly laying out the issues in the cosmic conflict between good and evil—a topic not unknown in Adventist theology, but perhaps not given sufficient emphasis in the post-modern era—yet his answer is not always easy to swallow nor readily accessible.

But for readers with an intense desire to probe beneath the shallow veneer of surface explanations into the deep dark waters of human and demonic reality, the book provides satisfaction in knowing that one does not have to renounce faith in God in order to be honest about the presence and magnitude of evil.

On the flyleaf of the book, which is published by Wipf & Stock of Eugene, Oregon, it would appear that perhaps the tables need to be turned.

Perhaps it is religion, not atheism,

that ultimately accounts for and resolves the problem of evil:

This is the book's opening salvo. Job speaking of a God of sense, Elihu and Job's three friends inaugurating a tradition of non-sense: this is the existential and theological predicament. The problem of finite suffering in this life addressed in the theological tradition with the prospect of infinite, endless suffering, in this book described as a key element in Traditions of Non-Sense. Back to the millions of Jews, among them 188 women and 42 children from Oslo, deported, gassed, and cremated—in God of Sense this is not seen as a problem that defeats belief, but as the reality that demands a religious and theological account of human existence.

Or, as Tonstad also says, "We've been sending the bill for the calamities of the world to the wrong address."

Why Susanne Montgomery loves the Grow Together program and South Africa

By James Ponder

It just makes sense to Susanne Montgomery, PhD, to support causes she believes in through the Grow Together employee giving program at Loma Linda University Health.

Why? Because Montgomery is busy. According to the faculty directory, she holds six separate campus appointments:

- ◆ Associate dean for research, School of Behavioral Health
- ◆ Head of interdisciplinary studies, School of Behavioral Health
- ◆ Professor of social work and social ecology, School of Behavioral Health
- ◆ Professor of preventive medicine, School of Medicine
- ◆ Professor of public health, School of Public Health
- ◆ Member, Faculty of Graduate Studies

She also has a husband and grown children, so she appreciates the ease of giving through Grow Together.

"That's true," she admits, "but Grow Together helps a lot. It's an easy, no-pain way to give. If I have to remember to write a check, I don't do it, but this way, I select the programs I want to support and the amount I want to give. The payroll deduction plan stays within my budget. It's the right thing to do."

Another reason Montgomery admires the Grow Together program is that it allows employees to pick and choose an existing cause to support or allows them to create one of their own.

Montgomery chose two: one she created because of her concern for the financial difficulties minority students often face, and the other an existing program.

"I support a minority student scholarship program at the School of Public Health and the Seeds of Hope program

through the Behavioral Medicine Center," she shares.

"I wish we could do more to encourage minority students from our community," she continues. "It's hard for minority students to afford a private Christian university like Loma Linda. Normally, it would be out of the question. But a short-term loan from the minority student scholarship program makes it a little easier and allows them some help if they run into financial challenges."

She is equally passionate about the Seeds of Hope program.

"I would like to help de-stigmatize mental health," she says. "We are always willing to treat a broken toe, but we're not so excited about depression or other mental health issues. The Seeds of Hope program makes life a lot better for people in our community struggling with problems we don't usually want to talk about."

Continued on page 10



Susanne Montgomery, PhD, says the convenience of contributing to the Grow Together employee giving program fits her budget and her schedule. "My life is busy, but Grow Together is an easy, no-pain way to give," she observes.

How Donna Gurule sold a cabin without consulting a real estate agent at first

By James Ponder

Philanthropy is a way of life for Donna Gurule, MPH, DrPH candidate, assistant dean and assistant professor at Loma Linda University School of Public Health.

But recently, when she realized the time had come to sell a piece of property she owned in Big Bear, Gurule didn't consult a real estate agent or philanthropy official at first.

"I had to be at the point where I was willing to let it go," she says of the cabin she and her late husband, Andy, had purchased as a weekend getaway for themselves and their twin sons, Evan and Ross.

Instead, Gurule took stock of the situation. The place had significant sentimental value for her and the boys, but it was becoming increasingly difficult for her to maintain, given the physical distance from the cabin to her home in the Inland Empire. So she turned to a friend.

"I promised God that if He helped me sell the cabin, that I would give back," she shares.

Once she did, things happened fast. "It was the last of four or five properties that went on the market on our street," she recalls, "and it was the first to sell. God took care of me and I kept up my end of the bargain, which was to donate \$10,000 to the School of Public Health."



Donna Gurule, MPH, recently sold a cabin in Big Bear and donated \$10,000 to Loma Linda University School of Public Health. She loves the school, philanthropy, and traveling with her twin boys, Evan and Ross.

Gurule—who worked with Albin Grohar, PhD, associate professor, and Kemi Adeoye, MPH, development officer for the school, to establish the gift—has been involved with the school since 1993.

"My other job took me away for awhile," she says, recalling the time she spent as director of environmental health and safety for Loma Linda University, "but I came back up here full-time in January 2013."

Gurule also found another way to express her passion for the school.

"I have a payroll deduction through the Grow Together employee giving program," she adds, explaining that her contributions benefit the environmental health program at the school.

"The Grow Together campaign is an easy, painless way to give back for two reasons: It's payroll deductible so you don't have to worry about remembering to give," she observes. "Plus, you can designate where you would like your contribution to go. Loma Linda University Health is a large place with lots of great things happening and I wanted to designate my contribution to go where I had the greatest connection: the School of Public Health."

According to Darin West, director of the Grow Together program, it only takes a few minutes for employees to set up a payroll deduction plan. He invites interested employees to go online at <http://advancement.lluhealth.org/grow-together> and click on payroll deductions on the left side of the screen to get started.

Gurule thinks it's a great tool. "God entrusts each one of us with resources," she says. "How we develop and use those resources is our choice. And I choose to give part of my resources to Loma Linda University Health."

When Gurule isn't busy with work or writing her dissertation, she enjoys travel. "I've been to over 60 different countries," she says.

"Russia comes to mind first," she replies when asked to name the favorite place she's visited. "But I also thoroughly love Palestine. I enjoy the experience of visiting different places and learning about the culture, the food, how the people live—I've just always enjoyed that."

"Palestine is very similar, in some respects, to what we have here," she continues. "The climate is a little drier, but the Palestinians are wonderful people."

Gurule says the trip gave her a deeper appreciation of biblical history.

"The indigenous Christians are leaving en masse," she observes. "Our guide was getting his doctorate in why Christians are leaving and he has identified more than 100 reasons."

Gurule also enjoys visiting the American Southwest—her favorite destinations are White Sands National Monument in New Mexico and Death Valley National Park in California—and China.

"I love China," she exclaims. "My boys were instant celebrities everywhere we went, partly because they're American boys and partly because they're twins."

At the ripe old age of 11, Evan and Ross have a couple interests in common.

"They like to harass each other," she notes, "They both enjoy music and band. Evan plays trumpet and Ross plays percussion. Evan likes to build things and Ross is more creative. He likes art and cooking. Evan loves performance cars. I told him, 'You need to study hard and get good grades if you want to land the kind of job that will allow you to buy nice cars.'"

Basic sciences professor awarded \$1.985 million NIH grant to study periodontal disease ...

Continued from page 7

Mandeville, Jamaica, West Indies, to deliver the keynote address during that university's 2016 Research Week. His topic was "Vital Elements for Research Success."

This month, Fletcher was again in Jamaica, this time as keynote speaker for Research Day 2016, a collaborative venture between the Brown's Town Community College School of Nursing and the Jamaica Diaspora Education Task Force.

It was held March 22 at Holiday Haven in St. Ann. As a native Jamaican who has found high-level success as a prominent researcher in the field of oral microbiology, Fletcher is frequently called on to speak at similar venues throughout the West Indies and around the world.

"My life is very busy," he acknowledges. "One of the things I am very committed to is Adventist young people. They need the very best education and the best role models. That's what drives

me to do this. That's why I work so hard to be competitive."

Despite numerous offers from other prestigious universities over the years, Fletcher maintains rock-solid loyalty to Loma Linda.

"I said no to the University of Pennsylvania, Ohio State University, and the University of Florida," he discloses. "When the president of the University of Pennsylvania told me they always get whoever they want, it was clear to me she didn't know the depth of my commitment to Loma Linda University. The Lord has blessed me here and I need to share that with others. One of my top goals is that when young people come to Loma Linda University, they leave here with a great experience."

Apparently one of Fletcher's other commitments is to a very clean office and desk. On the day the interview for this article was conducted, the reporter observed that he has seldom seen such a neat office, and never in an academic research setting.

Fletcher lowered his gaze in shocked disbelief. "Really?" he asked. "I'm disgusted with it!"

Disclaimer: Research reported in this publication was supported by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number R01DE025852. The content is solely the responsibility of the author and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

The Joint Commission awards advanced certification to LLUMC's ventricular assist device destination therapy program

By Nancy Yuen

On February 24, 2016, Loma Linda University Medical Center was again awarded advanced certification in Ventricular Assist Device (VAD) destination therapy by The Joint Commission.

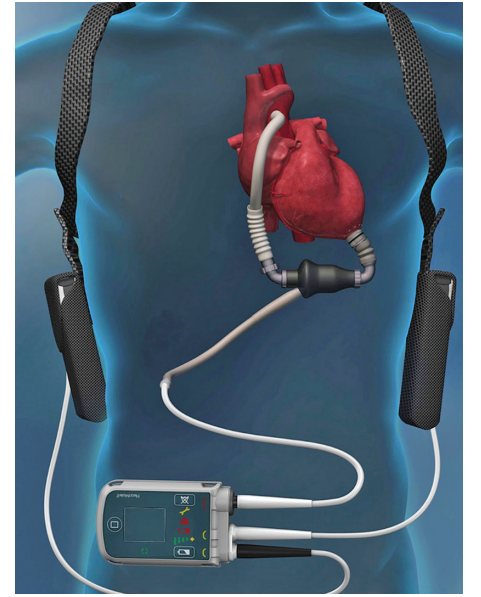
To achieve this certification, Loma

Linda University Medical Center underwent an on-site review February 22 and 23 with a Joint Commission reviewer who evaluated the program's compliance with all requirements for Disease-Specific Certification and Ventricular Assist Device destination therapy standards, practice guidelines, and performance measures.

Awarding of the certification was made possible by demonstration of excellence by the adult cardiac team, as well as staff from the operating room and the emergency department.

The Joint Commission is an independent, not-for-profit organization which accredits and certifies more than 21,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. Joint Commission accreditation and certification is recognized internationally as a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to meeting certain performance standards.

Congratulations to the entire team for their dedication to the patients at Loma Linda University Health and the excellence of care they provide.



Loma Linda researchers propose new public health field of environmental nutrition

By Susan Onuma

Researchers from Loma Linda University School of Public Health (LLUSPH) have formally proposed a new field of research and education within the public health remit.

The new field, environmental nutrition (EN), is the integration of earth and life sciences with nutrition science. EN seeks to address the sustainability of food systems by researching the complex relationships within those systems that impact public health at a local and global scale.

Inputs, processes, and outputs of food systems have significant public health

implications such as air and water contamination with hazardous chemicals, animal waste, and zoonotic disease. Certain food groups have a much larger resource requirement and hence environmental footprint, with animal-based products generally having the greatest impacts and plant foods having the least.

"The types and quantities of resources used influence the type and amount of pollution created, which in turn can compromise the quality of natural resources," said Helen Harwatt, PhD and research fellow at LLUSPH. "It is important to identify foods that have both minimum environmental impacts and maximum health benefits, as well

as develop food labels that communicate such information to consumers."

In an effort to clarify the interaction between current food systems, the environment, and public health, EN is also proposing an environmental nutrition model (ENM), which is intended to provide a useful educational tool to explain, understand, and ultimately contribute to the necessary modifications and changes to the current food system to achieve sustainability.

"The ENM will help show how the

process of food production, such as processing, transportation, storage, consumption, and disposal practices, directly impacts the environment and affects climate change," said Joan Sabaté, MD, DrPH, executive director of the Center for Nutrition, Healthy Lifestyle & Disease Prevention, and professor at LLUSPH.

Currently, most food life-cycle assessments focus only on food production. LLUSPH researchers say there is a need

Continued on page 12

School of Medicine office of diversity hosts 7th annual Black history vespers and dinner

By Nancy Yuen

The evening was filled with music, friendship, and inspiration during the Seventh Annual Black History Vespers and Dinner, held Friday, February 19, from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

More than 70 students attended the vespers, which was sponsored by the School of Medicine office of diversity.

Joining Roger Hadley, MD, dean, School of Medicine, in welcoming the students were faculty presenters Penelope Duerksen-Hughes, PhD, associate dean for basic sciences and translational research; Daisy De Leon, PhD, assistant to the dean for diversity; and Marino De Leon, PhD, director, Center for Health Disparities and Molecular Medicine (CHDMM). Also addressing the students were Carlos Casiano, PhD, associate director, CHDMM; Henry

Lamberton, PsyD, associate dean, student affairs; and Tammi Thomas, MD, vice dean, academic affairs.

The keynote speaker for the evening was Garth Jon Olango, MD, PhD. Olango graduated from the School of Medicine in 2007 and is now practicing child and adolescent psychiatry at Kern Medical Center.

During his presentation, "Peace or pieces," Olango talked about the deeper meaning of several of Christ's miracles, including feeding the 5,000 from a boy's lunch of five loaves and two fish, walking on water, and healing the man who was paralyzed at the pool of Bethesda. "You've experienced miracles during your time here at Loma Linda," Olango told the students. "Tests, tuition—don't carelessly grab the gift of an education that you've been given; consider the deeper meaning. You were hungry, you came to Loma Linda for bread. God gave

you miracles and responded, 'I am the bread of life.'"

Olango concluded by saying that graduating from Loma Linda University wasn't the students' first accomplishment, and that it wouldn't be their last. "God gave you miracles, and He will continue to be there for you," he concluded.

Special music for the evening was presented by students including Ivana Alicea, a basic sciences PhD student; Team Praise, a musical group; and Julio Vega and Hiel Rutanhira, basic sciences PhD students.

At the end of the evening, the graduating students posed for a group portrait and a selfie with Hadley.



Garth Jon Olango, MD, PhD, who graduated from the School of Medicine in 2007 and is now practicing child and adolescent psychiatry at Kern Medical Center, gave the keynote address, "Peace or pieces."



Roger Hadley, MD, dean, School of Medicine, takes a selfie with Tammie Thomas, MD, vice dean, academic affairs; Daisy De Leon, PhD, assistant to the dean for diversity and students.

Why Susanne Montgomery loves the Grow Together program ...

Continued from page 9

When she's not at work, Montgomery enjoys traveling, either alone or with her husband and adult children, reading, athletic activities, and photography.

"I'm an athlete," she says. "An athlete that's gotten old. My knees and joints are creaking, so I walk now instead of running. But I really love to travel. I get to travel a lot for Loma Linda and I enjoy it immensely. I never stay in nice hotels, but I tell my friends I pass by the nicer hotels in the Land Rover en route to the bush country."

She cocks her head and looks to the corner of the room when asked about her favorite place.

"I'd have to say it's South Africa," she answers a moment later. "It is very, very, very beautiful and was the first country I visited in Africa. I was impressed with how friendly the people were and how warmly they treated me. Everybody always says you either love Africa or you

hate it and I fell in love with Africa in South Africa. There is a place called the Valley of a Thousand Hills. It's a beautiful area with literally thousands of small hills rippling off into the distance. Every morning, it gets a little misty. It's like God drew you a picture. Looking out over those hills is where I first fell in love with South Africa. Since then I've been to many other countries—I just got back from Malawi and I love it, too."

Montgomery says giving is sometimes neglected for a very simple reason.

"I think giving is important," she says. "People often don't give because they're not asked. Most people would do more giving if they were asked. We give through church and other agencies, but this smaller giving—this social responsibility giving—is important, too."

Additional information about the Grow Together program is available online at advancement.lluhealth.org/grow-together.

Mother receives gift of life from son

By Susan Onuma

Lucia Zubia desperately needed a kidney transplant. Although dialysis was keeping her alive, the machine also had long-term deleterious effects on her body. Patients on dialysis have higher mortality compared to kidney transplant patients.

After watching her struggle with kidney disease for more than eight years, her army veteran son Emanuel did not hesitate to donate one of his own kidneys, saving her life.

For Lucia, the decision to accept a kidney from her son was not an easy one. "I was hoping that we were not a match, you know, because as a mother you don't want your son to go through this," she said.

For Emanuel, it was the only decision. "If someone was going to do it, I'd rather it be me because it's my mom. I'd do anything for her. I'd die for her," he said.

Emanuel and Lucia both went into surgery, and the transplant was a success thanks to the skill of Duane Baldwin, MD, Emanuel's surgeon, and Pedro Baron, MD, Lucia's transplant surgeon.

Now Lucia can look forward to a much healthier future.

"There are over 100,000 people every year waiting for kidney transplants, and only 17,000 patients get transplanted every year," said Michael E. de Vera, MD, transplant surgeon and director of the Loma Linda University Transplantation Institute. "Because of the shortage of organ donations, many people die

waiting for an organ."

"I'm so eternally grateful to my son for making this decision because he saved my life; and not only did he save my life, but he also helped somebody else go up higher on the kidney list," said Zubia.

The living donor program at Loma Linda University Medical Center has performed more than 800 living kidney transplants since its inception in 1968. The Transplantation Institute also shares the Loma Linda University Health concept of whole person care, providing

extensive counseling on diet and healthy lifestyle, as well as organizing support groups for patients and their caregivers in an environment that welcomes each person's spirituality and individuality.

Doctors say anyone can help others through organ or tissue donation, regardless of age or medical history. If you are inspired to give the gift of life for someone on the kidney transplant list, contact the Loma Linda University Transplantation Institute at 25865 Barton Road, Suite 101, Loma Linda, California 92354, or phone 909-558-3636 or toll-free at 800-548-3790.



Darsha Phillips, journalist at KABC-TV Los Angeles, interviews Michael de Vera, MD, transplant surgeon and director of the Transplantation Institute at Loma Linda University Health.

Rideshare program holds first vanpool formation meetings

Contributed report

Loma Linda University Health, through its rideshare program, is attempting to make vanpooling more accessible to employees throughout the surrounding communities.

In February, the Loma Linda University Health rideshare program and Enterprise Rideshare held vanpool formation meetings.

Designed to educate and inform employees about the benefits of vanpooling, the meetings were attended by Loma Linda University Health employees from Victorville, Apple Valley,

Hesperia and surrounding cities.

There are currently four vanpools originating in the High Desert and one in Beaumont. Due to the positive response, the department is now working on plans to form a sixth vanpool for employees who live in the High Desert.

Information about existing vanpools is available at <http://bit.ly/1UzjiFB>; watch for more information about upcoming invitations to attend an informational vanpool formation meetings.

For more information, contact the Loma Linda University Health rideshare program at 909-651-3033 (ext. 53033), or email rideshare@llu.edu.

How the guest of honor at 2nd annual Family Fitness Fun 5k and Expo beat the odds ...

Continued from page 8

studying the solar system and Alex is enthralled with his research project on the Planet Mars.

According to Dixie Watkins, co-president of the Big Hearts for Little Hearts Loma Linda Guild that sponsors the Family Fitness Fun 5k and Expo, Alex and his family were selected to headline the event because their story showcases the healing miracles that happen at LLUCH every day, and because they exemplify the outdoor fitness lifestyle.

"They're amazing," she notes, "especially when you think of all they've been through. They're exactly the kind of role models we need in our community."

Watkins says the guild "wanted to create an event here in Redlands where families can have a great time doing something healthier than sitting on the couch and watching TV. We also wanted to raise money to benefit the patients of Loma Linda University Children's Hospital and underscore the fact that we have such an incredible place for kids right here in our own backyard."

Watkins says the gates will open at 7:00 a.m. to allow runners time to register for the run and enjoy warm-up activities at 7:30. The run will begin at 8:00 a.m.

Information about registration fees is available online at www.LLUCH.org/5k.

"The run is not timed," Watkins informs. "It's a fun run/walk for people of all ages. We'll have firemen there handing out medals to participants and a representative from the Redlands Police Department will explain the rules and outline the course."

In addition to the run, Watkins says the event will feature a plethora of other

fun and educational activities for kids and families.

"We'll have an obstacle course for the kids," she notes. "Teenagers will escort small groups of up to five kids through the course. There will also be a fire truck and ladder for the kids to crawl on. We'll have a reptile petting zoo with Bill Hayes, face painting, crafts, lawn games, golf, tennis, and lots of other things."

Watkins says there will be plenty of things to interest the adults as well. "At the Expo, we'll have approximately 25 booths with a variety of ideas for how to get fit and healthy," she adds.

Local organizations that have signed up for a booth so far include:

- ◆ CrossFit
- ◆ Fox Dance Studio
- ◆ Garden Pediatrics
- ◆ KFROG 95.1 FM and 92.9 FM
- ◆ Jazzercise
- ◆ Karate for Kids
- ◆ Loma Linda University School of Dentistry
- ◆ My Gym
- ◆ Redlands Country Club
- ◆ YMCA Circus

"The guild recognizes that Loma Linda University Children's Hospital does a really good job of taking care of sick kids like Alex," Watkins concludes. "We support them for doing that. But we also care about all the other kids and families in our community."

She adds, "We want to help them stay well and healthy. That's why we sponsor this event. We think the emphasis on prevention, activity, and exercise in the fresh air is just what the doctor ordered."



Presented by **Big Hearts for Little Hearts**

5k Run/Walk
Check in: 7:00 am
Start: 8:00 am

Expo
Exhibits & Activities: 8:00 - Noon

Featuring:

- ✓ **5k Run/Walk** from the historic Burrage Mansion through the beautiful streets of Redlands.
- ✓ **Health Expo** with exhibitors to show you fun ways to family fitness.
- ✓ **Children's Events** with fun guided activities.
- ✓ **Prizes** provided by each exhibitor.
- ✓ **Dress** to show your heart-felt spirit by wearing red.
- ✓ **Event Shirts** for run/walkers to pick up at check-in.
- ✓ **Medals** for every paid 5k participant.

Fitness and Fun for the Whole Family!

Information and registration at LLUCH.org/5k
You may also contact us at: BHLH@llu.edu | (909) 709-2061



Spiritual plan 2016–2020: built on foundation of faithfulness

By Nancy Yuen

On the cover of the Loma Linda University Health Spiritual Plan is a picturesque photograph of the “Come Unto Me” sculpture adjacent to Loma Linda University Medical Center’s main entrance.

The bronze sculpture depicts Christ welcoming people of all ages into the circle of His friendship and healing.

The Loma Linda University Health Spiritual Plan encompasses many of the ways that the employees, students, and volunteers of Loma Linda University Health are living the organization’s mission, “to continue the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ.”

“The Spiritual Plan,” says Richard Hart, MD, DrPH, “Spans the years 2016 to 2020.”

He continues, “It has been a product of a committee across this campus, embracing both the academic side and the health care side as we chart Loma Linda’s future. This is not a new direction; we have been doing this for 110 years. It is a reaffirmation of our

principles, our values, who we are, and what we are committed to.”

Hart introduces and explains the plan in a short video.

The Spiritual Plan is built around four principles of Loma Linda University Health’s strategic goals: wholeness (a fundamental part of Loma Linda University Health since its beginning); integration across the organization; growth; and the Loma Linda experience (the unique environment and ambiance that is created across campus).

According to Gerald Winslow, PhD, vice president for mission, the plan contains specific ways that employees, staff, and faculty can be engaged in the plan’s implementation.

“Each of the plan’s 19 initiatives,” he says, “has been assigned to a lead office. Achievement of the plan will require the collaboration of thousands of colleagues led by hundreds of leaders.”

The support and participation of each member of Loma Linda University Health will make this an even stronger element of the very special culture at Loma Linda University Health.

World-famous comedian visits Loma Linda University Health to learn about laughter

By Susan Onuma

In his quest to understand the science of happiness, humor, and laughter, Yakov Smirnoff, a world-famous comedian, entertainer, and best-selling author, decided he would find out what wisdom the Internet had to offer.

Googling “experts on happiness, humor, and laughter,” Smirnoff was immediately inundated with articles and references to Lee Berk, PhD, professor and director of Clinical Molecular Research Laboratory at Loma Linda University School of Allied Health Professions.

Once Smirnoff had read several of the articles and findings of Berk’s research on brain health, stress hormone reduction, and immune system benefits of laughter, he found them compelling and called Berk to ask if he could come to Loma Linda to visit with him.

On Monday, February 29, Loma Linda University Health played host to Smirnoff. After a golf cart tour and brief history of the campus, Smirnoff met with Berk and his research team, made up of graduate students, to talk about the ongoing research. A lengthy discussion

ensued, and Berk shared with Smirnoff the surprising results of his research studies on laughter, and how laughter significantly impacts brain health, showing Smirnoff chart after chart of electroencephalogram (EEG) findings.

An electroencephalogram is a test used to detect electrical activity of the brain. This procedure tracks and records brain wave patterns or specific frequencies. Small metal discs with thin wires (electrodes) are placed on the scalp and then send signals to a computer to record the results. Normal electrical activity in the brain makes a recognizable pattern. Berk used this aspect of neuroscience to gauge the effect that laughter and other behaviors have on brain activity (i.e. increases in gamma frequency).

Described as equal parts stand-up, one-man show, motivational speech and TED talk, “Happily Ever Laughter—the neuroscience of romantic relationships” is something Smirnoff has been working on for the last 20 years at his theater in Branson, Missouri. There he created a laboratory for studying happiness, humor, and laughter where he tested his theory on how laughter is the gauge of happiness in relationships.

Loma Linda researchers propose new public health field of environmental nutrition ...

Continued from page 10
to expand the analysis to include other stages of the food system.

“Given the intrinsic relationships between the environmental sciences and the nutritional sciences, it is imperative that public health research and practice begin focusing on the new discipline of environmental nutrition,” said Sam Soret, PhD, executive director of the Center for Community Resilience and associate director of the environmental nutrition research group at LLUSPH. “We need to address the sustainability of our food systems.”

The proposal is introduced in a new paper, titled “Environmental Nutrition:

A New Frontier for Public Health,” which will be published in the May issue of the American Journal of Public Health. The article is currently available online ahead of print at ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdf/10.2105/AJPH.2016.303046.

The Environmental Nutrition team at LLUSPH specializes in assessing and understanding the environmental sustainability and health impacts of foods and dietary patterns. Topics include climate change, water use, biodiversity loss, chronic disease, and food security.

Exploring both the health and environmental impacts of our dietary choices is an emerging field to which



Today, in addition to being a comedian, author and accomplished artist, Smirnoff is an adjunct professor at Missouri State University after having received his master’s degree in psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. He tours the world enlightening and

speaking to audiences with his concept of, “Happily Ever Laughter,” and has a special airing on SoCal PBS, where he cites Loma Linda University’s Berk and his research. Yakov’s special can be viewed on March 18 at 8:00 and 9:00 p.m., and March 19 at 3:30 p.m.



Lee Berk, PhD, second from right, professor and director of the clinical molecular research laboratory at Loma Linda University School of Allied Health Professions, explains his laughter research data to Yakov Smirnoff, third from right, during his recent visit to Loma Linda University Health.

the authors of this paper have made a number of contributions. Further information about environmental nutrition,

including previous work by the authors, can be found at: environmentalnutrition.org.



Joan Sábaté, MD, DrPH



Helen Harwatt, PhD



Sam Soret, PhD

Jack and Sharan Bennett's love affair with Loma Linda and each other

By James Ponder

When Jack and Sharan Bennett tell the story of how they first met, the conversation bounces back and forth between them like a motorized beach ball.

"I'm from a little town in Arizona called Safford," Sharan recalls. "Jack and I both ended up at La Sierra College, and a lady from our church, Mrs. Romero, went to Las Vegas to work for Jack's mother."

"Every time I came home from college, she asked if I knew Sharan Knight," Jack shares. "I said no, because I was so interested in being a good student . . ."

"Phooey," Sharan says in faux disgust. "You played flag ball and basketball. You had a really good time in college!"

"Anyway," Jack continues, "Mrs. Romero kept asking if I knew this young lady, so finally I said I'd look her up."

But when Jack finally found the courage to do that, Sharan already had a date. "Well," a flustered Jack replied, "if you get stood up, give me a call."

Provisionally, Sharan did get stood up that fateful night. But since "girls didn't do that in those days," she decided not to call Jack.

Cupid, however, had other plans. "My roommate threw a nickel at me and said, 'I dare you!'" Sharan laughs. "So I called him."

The couple went to a Jerome Hines concert. "From that time on, we dated as much as dating could be done at that time," Jack explains, referring to school restrictions on boy-girl contact. "I broke some of the rules," he confesses.

"Yes you did," she laughs. "One day I got a call from the dean saying Jack wanted to meet me at the science building. When I got there, we went to the beach."

In 1956, it was illegal for La Sierra students to go to the beach without a chaperone. But they got away with it, had a wonderful time, and trace their identity as a couple to that day. They soon became known as an alpha pair on campus: Jack was elected as senior class president and Sharan as social activities

director for the student association.

After graduating in 1958, they parted ways. Jack went to Loma Linda for medical school and Sharan, who had won an all-expenses-paid Rotary Fellowship, headed to Mexico City to study at Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico.

In Jack's mind, they were engaged. But Sharan—flush with the heady excitement of seeing the world on her own—wasn't sure what she wanted. When she started sending him mixed signals, Jack flew south of the border to find out why.

Sharan was happy to see him and showed him around the city, but the night before Jack left, they got into an argument over whether she was coming home or not.

"My voice teacher said I needed to finish my vocal training in Italy," Sharan

College of Medical Evangelists (CME) in June 1962, they embarked on a career that would lead him from an internship in Los Angeles—where son Douglas Jon was born that November—to Fort Benning, Georgia for a stint of military service. Their second child, Allyson Elaine (Ault) was born there in January 1965.

"I was assigned to an airborne unit," Jack says. "I made 52 jumps."

After his discharge from the Army, Jack went into practice with Sharan's dad, also a physician, back in her hometown of Safford, Arizona, for three years. Their third child, Richard Eugene, was born there in May 1967.

One day, Jack got a call from Loma Linda University Medical Center inviting him to take part in a general surgery residency. "We came back in 1968," he says,

to Loma Linda," Sharan notes. "My grandfather, a physician who headed the Stanborough Park Sanitarium in Watford, England, later came to the States and served as an adjunct professor at the Los Angeles campus of CME."

Spurred on to global mission, Jack and Sharan took their entourage to Mayaguez Bella Vista Hospital in Puerto Rico, where they served for seven years.

"Our children went to both Spanish and English schools and made many friends and spoke both languages very well," Jack discloses. "Loma Linda is the basis of all our medical work under the guidance of the Good Lord."

After returning home, they returned again to Safford where Jack practiced general surgery from 1981 to 2001. Sharan, meanwhile, went back to school.

"I got a masters degree in Spanish and linguistics from the University of Arizona at Tucson in 1987," she says. "Then in 1996 I got a law degree from the same school."

"Originally, I was inspired by an article," Sharan reveals, "about two elderly women lawyers in Los Angeles (my age, now!) who continued to work in a poor area of town, helping people who could pay only the minimum, probably to cover the lawyers' expenses. I thought it would be wonderful to be in a profession that could assist needy people, as long as I had most of my marbles."

She managed to keep her "marbles" and practice law, mostly family law, for the next four years until Jack decided the time had come to retire in California. Thus ended a brilliant, if mostly pro bono, legal career for Sharan.

When Jack retired in 2001, Sharan sent him to a one-day seminar in Washington, D.C. offered by an entity of the Christian Legal Society. While there, he met Bob Baker, CEO and lawyer of an organization called the Albanian Encouragement Project, an outreach organization of evangelical Christians that had entered that country following the death of Enver Hoxha, a man Jack calls "a psychotic dictator."

Continued on page 14



For Jack and Sharan Bennett, giving, sharing, and helping others is a way of life. Sometimes, they even manage to have a little fun along the way.

reports. "I told Jack and he wasn't very happy. We ended up very angry with each other."

But by the time Christmas rolled around, Sharan had made up her mind. The couple married August 23, 1959, and honeymooned in Sedona.

When Jack graduated from the

"and did the four-year surgery program."

During that time, their fourth and final child, Jocelyn Claire (Craig), was born in June 1970. Thirty-one years later, she followed her dad's example and graduated from Loma Linda University School of Medicine in 2001.

"Our family has lots of connections

LLUMC Trauma Center participates in \$4.6 million National Trauma Institute grant

By James Ponder

The National Trauma Institute (NTI) recently received a \$4.6 million Department of Defense (DOD) extramural medical research grant to develop a National Trauma Research Repository (NTRR) and fund three promising studies with implications for both civilian and military trauma care facilities.

According to Xian Luo, PhD, a researcher in the trauma services department at Loma Linda University Medical Center, the grant will fund multi-center studies targeting specific knowledge gaps, including one study that will validate different therapies for vascular trauma.

As the only Level I trauma center in a four-county area, Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC) will participate in one of the studies.

"Dr. Richard Catalano will serve as principal investigator for the portion of the study that will be conducted at Loma Linda," Luo says.

Titled "Prospective Observational Vascular Injury Trial," or PROOVIT, the study will evaluate non-compressible

vascular injury, a significant contributor to mortality in both civilian and military trauma populations.

"The PROOVIT study aims to assess and analyze current vascular trauma injury patterns and presentation," Luo observes, "as well as diagnosis, management—both acute and definitive—surveillance, and outcomes following vascular trauma." It will also evaluate treatment options and outcomes, and determine future therapeutic treatment modalities.

Ahmed Abou-Zamzam, MD, chief of vascular surgery in the department of cardiovascular and thoracic surgery at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, will serve as Catalano's co-investigator for the study.

Luo will facilitate LLUMC's involvement in the multi-center trial.

"Participating in this study will help Loma Linda contribute, on a wider scale, to the care of the trauma patient," Abou-Zamzam explains.

In addition to LLUMC, Luo says more than 10 trauma centers are participating in the study including:

- ◆ University of Texas Health Sciences Center, Houston

- ◆ University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center, Memphis

- ◆ R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, University of Maryland, Baltimore
- ◆ University of Florida, Jacksonville

Continued on page 15



Richard Catalano, MD; Xian Luo, PhD; and Ahmed Abou-Zamzam, MD, celebrate the news that the National Trauma Institute recently received a \$4.6 million Department of Defense grant to develop a National Trauma Research Repository. Catalano and Abou-Zamzam will serve as principal investigator and co-principal investigator for the Loma Linda University Medical Center portion of one of the studies encompassed in the grant. Luo will assist in the research project.

Grant for \$1.72 million means LLU researcher has brought in 13 NIH grants in 12 years

By James Ponder

To say that John Zhang, MD, PhD, is serious about preventing and treating hemorrhagic stroke is like saying the Pope goes to mass now and then.

In the 12 years Zhang has been at Loma Linda University School of Medicine (LLUSM)—where he serves as professor of anesthesiology, neurosurgery and physiology and director of the Center for Brain Hemorrhage Research—he has landed no less than 10 R01 grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Since he also secured a \$6.3 million program project grant (PPG) from the NIH to establish the Center for Brain Hemorrhage Research at LLUSM in 2013 and served as co-investigator on one R01 and one R21 grant awarded to his wife, Jiping Tang, MD, professor of physiology at the school, the tally rises to 13 NIH grants in 12 years.

Add to that the fact that Zhang received a \$1.6 million Department of Defense grant to study stem cell treatment for glioma, a type of brain tumor, in 2011, and it's safe to say he's been busy recently.

The R01 designation indicates a research project grant used to support a specified research project the NIH has approved for funding. The R21 designation refers to an exploratory/developmental research grant awarded in the early and conceptual stages of

project development. Zhang's latest five-year R01 grant is valued at \$1,728,125.

Thirteen NIH grants and one from the Department of Defense in just 12 years is, to put it bluntly, a lot of grants! Altogether, Zhang says the total value of grants he has been awarded in that time period amounts to \$26 million. Since the NIH doesn't keep records on who holds the most grants during a given period of time, it's impossible to say if Zhang is the most successful grant getter in the nation. But if he isn't, he's certainly a top contender.

This latest R01 will allow Zhang and his team to study one particular subtype of stroke known as intracerebral hemorrhage (ICH). Zhang says approximately 800,000 people per year suffer from stroke in the United States and of that number, approximately 120,000 individuals are victims of hemorrhagic stroke.

"Edema, or swelling, is one of the major complications of hemorrhagic stroke," Zhang explains. "When there is massive swelling in the brain, the patient will die unless something is done to reduce the swelling."

In the introduction to his grant application, Zhang cited a year 2000 study by University of Cincinnati researchers Gebel and Broderick who found that ICH is responsible for high mortality rates and that survivors commonly suffer from lasting neurological disabilities.

Zhang created something of a stir last year when he received an NIH R01 grant to study a novel approach

to reducing brain edema by introducing a small amount of a component isolated from rattlesnake venom into the skin to enhance the endogenous coagulation system to reduce bleeding during brain surgery.

So far, results from that study have been encouraging and Zhang and his colleagues recently submitted a paper discussing their findings to a national publication.

But since approximately 140,000 people die from stroke in the United States each year, Zhang, his colleagues, and the NIH are eager to pursue every promising avenue for reducing edema. This latest grant will test another potential treatment.

"We are trying to activate the body's own endogenous defense systems," Zhang says. "When we get injured, the body generates its own defenses. In the case of patients with brain edema, the body will try to limit the swelling."

Zhang hopes to trigger one particular defense mechanism by stimulating the delivery of dopamine, a substance associated with Parkinson's disease.

"When dopamine is absent, it causes Parkinson's," he says. "After an intracerebral hemorrhage, the levels of dopamine and dopamine receptors increase. We did some preliminary studies and found that by activating dopamine receptors, it tends to reduce swelling in the brain."

Zhang is optimistic about the outcome of the study and hypothesizes that by activating increased levels of



John Zhang, MD, PhD, and Jiping Tang, MD, prepare to cut a 12-candle cake commemorating the fact that the husband and wife researchers have together brought a total of 12 NIH R01 and R21 grants to Loma Linda University School of Medicine in the last 12 years. Perhaps the pastry should have had 14 candles: Zhang was also awarded a \$6.3 million NIH PPG grant and a \$1.6 million Department of Defense grant during that same period of time. The event took place the day after Zhang learned that his latest study had been approved for \$1.7 million.

dopamine and dopamine receptors, the team will improve both short- and long-term neurological outcomes after ICH.

Continued next page



Meet the dedicated team that helps John Zhang, MD, PhD, search for treatments and cures for hemorrhagic stroke in his Loma Linda University School of Medicine laboratories. The photo depicts Zhang (front row, eighth from right), his wife and colleague Jiping Tang, MD (front row, tenth from right), and 40 members of the staff at a recent celebration. On February 29, the National Institutes of Health awarded Zhang a \$1.7 million dollar grant to study whether the body's endogenous defense systems can be enlisted as allies in the fight against the deadly disease.

Jack and Sharan Bennett's love affair with Loma Linda and each other ...

Continued from page 13

Baker told Jack the organization desperately needed an American physician to run a clinic in Tirana, Albania. "He kept after me and kept after me," Jack discloses. "Finally, I convinced Sharan that we should talk to him. During the conversation, Sharan told him that we are Seventh-day Adventists. He took a deep breath and said, 'It wouldn't be a problem for me, but some of our people don't think Adventists are Christians.'"

"We prayed about it and prayed about it," Sharan says. God, apparently, considered them Christians, because after a period of time, the door opened for Jack and Sharan to minister to the people of Albania. They served in 2001 and had one of the best experiences of their lives.

"Sharan was the real missionary of the Gospel," Jack reveals. "I was always busy in the clinic."

At the clinic, Jack met an Albanian doctor, a Christian lady, who needed to get some additional training on how to teach family medicine to other doctors.

After praying about it, he and Sharan pitched in to help pay for her to get the training she needed in Scotland. Today, there is a department of family medicine in a medical school in Tirana.

The Bennett's returned to Albania in 2004 with a medical/dental team from Loma Linda University. That same year, Jack went on a mission trip to Ethiopia. From 2006 to 2008, they served as representatives of Loma Linda University at Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital and Zhejiang University, both in Hangzhou, China.

"We've been vegetating since 2008," Sharan declares.

Or not. Jack remains on the faculty at the School of Medicine, non-paid status. He takes students on trips, and has been on multiple mission trips to Honduras, and went to Haiti to help out after the devastating earthquake in 2010. Sharan, meanwhile, has served as president, newsletter editor, and mission chairperson for the Medical Auxiliary of the Loma Linda University School of Medicine. Currently, she serves as President

of the Loma Linda Cultural Arts Association, an organization designed to encourage creative expression through the visual arts.

None of that is enough to occupy all their free time, so they are also involved with projects at Loma Linda University Church, where Jack served as one of the lead deacons for several years. He also conducts tours for the Little White House, a center where people donate clothing, household goods, furniture, and other items for students in need. Together, they brought a Mongolian radiologist into their home for four months. "We had met him in China," Jack explains, "and I went to Mongolia and arranged for him to come here to take some advanced training."

In 2014, the Bennett's deeded their farm in Missouri to Loma Linda University Health, specifying that proceeds from its sale would benefit the Christian bioethics program in the School of Religion, the overseas residency program in the department of

surgery, and Students for International Mission Service, an outreach ministry of the Global Health Institute.

Todd Mekelburg, director of planned giving at Loma Linda University Health, says the support of people like Jack and Sharan Bennett plays a vital role in helping the organization fulfill its mission to continue the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ.

"Jack and Sharan Bennett exemplify the best of Loma Linda University Health," Mekelburg observes. "Their selfless concern and generosity to others have brightened the lives of people they've met all over the world. Their thoughtful gift will ensure that our work and our mission will continue to make the world a better place for generations to come."

By devoting their lives to Christian service, Jack and Sharan express their appreciation for the blessings that have come to them in life in a tangible way.

"We have a great affection for the work Loma Linda has done for us and for others," Jack concludes.

Associate director of research affairs attends malaria summit in Washington, D.C.; named Champions Council member

By Larry Kidder

Obed Rutebuka, PhD, MSPH, has long been an advocate for eradicating malaria for years. Originally from Rwanda, he knows firsthand about the deadly impact malaria has on residents of the sub-Saharan Africa region of the world.

Rutebuka serves as associate director of research affairs, research protection programs administrator, and institutional animal care and use committee member at Loma Linda University Health. In addition, he is a member of the faculty of the Loma Linda University School of Public Health.

But he is also a member of the Champions Council, organized by the United Nations Foundation program “Nothing But Nets,” which is working to eradicate malaria by providing mosquito nets.

“We have members from every age and background,” Rutebuka explains. “We are all advocates of spreading the word about stopping malaria by providing mosquito nets.”

According to the latest World Health Organization (WHO) estimates, released this past September, 214 million cases of malaria during the past 12 months resulted in 438,000 deaths worldwide.

The majority of these deaths were children under the age of 5 who lived in the 50-plus countries classified as sub-Saharan African. Rwanda, Rutebuka’s home country, is part of the list.

The 2016 Champion Summit: Building Leaders to Defeat Malaria took place February 21–23 in Washington, D.C. Rutebuka attended, part of 150 champions from across the United States.

Among the presenters were Abby Wambach, FIFA Women’s World Cup champion; Ivan Blumberg, CEO of Athletes for Hope; and Susan Rice, U.S. national security advisor to President Barack Obama.

In 2005, U.S. President George W. Bush enacted the President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) with the intention of reducing malaria deaths by half in 15 high-burden sub-Saharan Africa and



Those attending the 2016 Champions Summit gather group photo opportunity. Part of their summit was spent visiting legislators and lobbyists to inform and build support for the fight against malaria.

Grant for \$1.72 million means LLU researcher has brought in 13 NIH grants in 12 years ...

Continued from previous page

The study is scheduled to begin in June. When it does, Zhang will simultaneously hold four R01 grants in addition to the PPG. Like his record of 14 total grants in 12 years, that is likely also some kind of a record.

More than that, it’s a LOT of work.

More than enough to send many researchers into spasmodic fits of denial through the sheer feeling of too many deadlines and not enough time.

Not Zhang, however. He’s delighted at the thought of finding a cure for this deadly disease. Give him enough time, the odds are fairly good he’ll do just that.

Trauma center participates in \$4.6 million grant ...

Continued from page 13

- ◆ Eastern Carolina Medical Center, Benson, North Carolina
- ◆ University of Southern California, Los Angeles
- ◆ Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston

- ◆ Ben Taub General Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston
- ◆ Peace Health, Southwest Washington Medical Center, Vancouver
- ◆ Lutheran Medical Center, Brooklyn
- ◆ San Antonio Military Medical Center, San Antonio

Nia Imani, ambassador for children with congenital heart disease ...

Continued from page 16

concluded with the reading of a poem titled, ‘Unlikely Hero.’ It was donated to the organization by one of Tracie’s colleagues, and everyone received a copy of the poem as a parting gift.”

The following Wednesday, December 23, 2015, Mia, Tracie, and Jackie Corina, NIHA president, delivered the toys to the child life department at LLU Children’s Hospital. In addition to teddy bears and dolls, the group delivered bicycles, games, and other goodies to brighten the holidays for the kids on the unit.

Jackie and Nia share a very special grandmother/granddaughter relationship. When Jackie arrived a few minutes after the interview started, Nia almost immediately began coming out of her shell. Now, as the party moves outdoors to take photos on the playground, Nia’s eyes light up and she suddenly finds her voice.

“Can I sit on the swing?” she asks? As

the photographer grants permission, she hurries over and plops down on the seat, smiling from ear to ear.

A moment later, she heads to the other side of the playground to join her mom and grandmother for a photo at the slide. As Johnny Corina Jr., her grandfather, drives up, Nia waves him over to get in the photo too.

The four of them hug tightly, revealing the strong love and family solidarity that enabled them to face all the challenges they’ve endured and come through triumphantly.

When the photographer composes the picture, Nia comes over and gives him a big hug. Once again, the ebullient, positive, and wonderful side of Nia shines forth from the love in her heart.

Whether she becomes a doctor, a firefighter, or whatever she chooses, this little girl is going to make a big difference in the world. As the patients at Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital can testify, she already has.

in Southeast Asia.

At present, 19 PMI-supported countries benefit from PMI partners, including UNICEF and non-government organizations in effort to further reduce malaria deaths and substantially decrease the number of cases.

The original PMI in 2005 led to funding by the U.S. Government of \$669.5 million. President Obama has continued to request support for the initiative, which was funded in 2016 at \$674 million. The President has already requested \$874 million for 2017.

The Global Fund, created to finance efforts to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, has designated \$1.35 billion in 2015, 2016, and 2017 toward the war against these diseases.

WHO estimates that prevention, control, diagnostic, and treatment measures from 2000 to 2015 have already led to a global malaria incidence reduction of nearly 40 percent. During that



Obed Rutebuka, PhD, MSPH

same time period, malaria mortality rates dropped by 60 percent.

“We can beat malaria,” Rutebuka insists. “We need to keep sending mosquito nets. It costs only \$10 to send a net to a child or adult in sub-Saharan Africa.” To help, visit NothingButNets.Net.

Luo notes that as the number of participating trauma centers nationwide increases, a subsequent expansion and extension of the two-year PROOVIT grant is highly likely.

Catalano concludes with an optimistic

appraisal of what the grant means for Loma Linda University Health.

“The grant represents the first major funding for our trauma center research program,” he notes, “and hopefully the first of many.”

PossAbilities and Drayson Center collaborate to create workout center ...

Continued from page 16

Donald Sease, MBA, director of Drayson Center, presided over the ceremony, welcoming guests and providing the closing remarks.

“We are truly grateful to PossAbilities for their funding of this equipment,”

he told attendees. “Although the equipment will accommodate any user, it offers a large range of functional movements for people with some form of physical disability.”

Following the ribbon-cutting, PossAbilities members tried it all out.



Participants in the ribbon-cutting ceremony strike a pose in front of the wall next to the new Technogym equipment. From left: Delmon Dunston, Greg Crouse, and Nick Gleissner, next to their pictures on the wall, are all paralympic hopefuls for this summer’s games in Rio de Janeiro. With them are, continuing, Lyndon Edwards, MBA, and Pedro Payne.

Nia Imani, 10-year-old ambassador for children with congenital heart disease

By James Ponder

In many respects, Nia Imani is a typical 10-year-old child. She loves her family, loves her friends, loves her church and school, loves playing musical instruments, and just generally loves being a kid.

But in two significant ways, Nia differs substantially from most kids her age. First of all, most kids don't have a professional advocacy organization named after them. Nia does. As spokesperson for the Nia Imani Heart Association (NIHA), she seeks to help other children born with congenital heart defects access helpful health and social services resources to make their plight easier.

Second, despite her youthful innocence and sweet disposition, Nia knows firsthand the effect multiple surgeries and extended hospitalization can have on a kid. Before she was born, Nia was diagnosed with not one, but four serious heart conditions.

"She was born with tricuspid atresia, hyperplastic right ventricle, transposition of the great arteries, and

Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome," Mia McNulty, MPA, MEd, NIHA founder and CEO remembers. "I was six months pregnant when we came in for a consult at the International Heart Institute at Loma Linda University Health. That's when we first met Dr. Bailey."

Nia had her first surgery at the ripe old age of two weeks. "Dr. Bailey, Dr. Razzouk, and Dr. Scott did the operation," Mia shares. "It lasted six hours and afterward, Dr. Razzouk said her artery was in a place where they could fully complete the operation. We were very relieved."

Unfortunately, it would not be her last operation. The second surgery occurred when Nia was six months old and the third came between her third and fourth years of life. She spent her first six or seven months of life in the hospital.

During one of her procedures, Nia required intubation. Since she couldn't speak with the tubes in her mouth, she was taught sign language to communicate.

Fortunately, the surgeries were successful and Nia lives a healthy life today. "She has to go in for a catheterization

procedure every three years," Mia adds, "but overall, she's doing very well."

At this moment, Nia is acting uncharacteristically quiet. Instead of her usual outgoing personality, she seems shy today, preferring to hide behind Mia, refusing to make eye contact, and demurring to answer questions directly.

"Answer the question," Mia instructs when Nia says nothing after being asked what she wants to be when she grows up." Nia, however, just looks at her mom in silence. A moment later, Mia explains that Nia wants to be a doctor.

That gets a quick response from Nia. "A firefighter," she signals by sign language.

Last November, Nia required a fourth surgery—this time unrelated to her heart.

"She had spinal fusion surgery," Mia says, adding that her daughter's reserved demeanor today is due to the fact that she's still coping with the somewhat lengthy process of recovering from the lumbar procedure. "She goes for her three-month post-operative check up the end of this month."

Mia founded NIHA five years ago. In 2014, the group solicited funds and toys for a Christmas toy drive for pediatric heart patients on the Leonard L. Bailey Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital.

Because of Nia's hospitalization during November of last year, Mia asked Tracie Montgomery, a member of the NIHA board, to spearhead the toy drive in 2015.

"Tracy did a great job," Mia observes. "She launched a massive social media campaign on Facebook and reached out to friends, family members, and members of the community to support



Nia Imani seems as carefree as other kids her age, but in reality, the 10-year-old had three surgeries to correct four congenital heart defects before she turned five. Recently, Nia—who serves as spokesperson for the Nia Imani Heart Association—underwent a fourth surgery, this time to correct a problem with her spine.

the event. "Toys began arriving by mail from Canada and throughout the United States. "We want to thank all the people, churches, and schools that got behind this and sent toys or money to make the event such a success," Mia adds.

"Another board member, Rosa M. Mosely, donated eight handcrafted teddy bears for the toy drive," she continues. "We met in San Bernardino on Friday, December 18, at 6:00 p.m. to wrap toys and prepare 50 Christmas bags."

The evening wasn't all about the work, however. Mia reports that afterward the volunteers enjoyed warm chili and coconut cake. "The evening

Continued on page 15

PossAbilities and Drayson Center collaborate to create adaptive workout center

By Larry Kidder and Susan Onuma

Nearly 30 people were on hand Monday, March 21, to witness the ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new workout center with six pieces of adaptive weight-training equipment.

Created by Technogym, an organization headquartered in Cesena, Italy, the new equipment is designed for both able-bodied and physically disabled individuals.

The new center, funded by Loma Linda University Health PossAbilities, a free not-for-profit community outreach program powered by Quest Diagnostics and Loma Linda University Medical Center—East Campus, is headquartered at Loma Linda University Drayson Center.

PossAbilities and Drayson Center have a long history of collaboration in creating events, and providing fitness and sports activities for individuals with physical disabilities.

The goal is to provide resources and

support to help these individuals stay active and healthy.

The six pieces of equipment easily adapt to those in wheelchairs, providing easy access and a vast array of strength-training options. Equipment components adjust to a variety of heights and angles.

Michael Rister, aquatics manager at Drayson Center, initially approached Pedro Payne, director of PossAbilities, with the idea of not only updating the existing adaptive equipment but creating a new dedicated area where able-bodied and physically disabled individuals could work out side by side.

Payne immediately saw the value of the idea and took the necessary steps to fund the new equipment.

Lyndon Edwards, MBA, senior vice president for Loma Linda University Health and administrator of Loma Linda University Medical Center—East Campus, also spoke during the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Continued on page 15



Taking part in the actual ribbon-cutting are, from left: Michael Rister, Drayson Center aquatics manager; Lauren Burke-Hodge, PossAbilities program assistant; Cotie Williams, PossAbilities program manager; Lyndon Edwards, MBA, LLUH senior vice president and administrator of Loma Linda University Medical Center—East Campus; Donald Sease, MBA, Drayson Center director; and Pedro Payne, PossAbilities director.



Volume 29, No. 3 | March 2016

Executive editor

Larry Becker
lrbecker@llu.edu

Editor/art direction

Larry Kidder, MA
lkidder@llu.edu

CORRESPONDENTS

Courtney Beckwith Haas
chaas@llu.edu

James Ponder
jlponder@llu.edu

Marcus Chapman
mjchapman@llu.edu

Briana Pastorino
bpastorino@llu.edu

Doug Hackleman, MA
dhackleman@llu.edu

Heather Reifsnnyder, MA
hreifsnnyder@llu.edu

Chris Clouzet
cclouzet@llu.edu

Tony Yang, MBA
thyang@llu.edu

Susan Onuma, MBA
sonuma@llu.edu

Nancy Yuen, MPW
nyuen@llu.edu

Have a story you think is newsworthy? Send it to pr@llu.edu

TODAY is a nonprofit publication of Loma Linda University Health, operated under the auspices of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Internal campus-based advertising accepted for publication is intended to be a service to the staff, students, and faculty of all Loma Linda University Health entities. No outside advertising is included in this publication. The management, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to refuse, without explanation, any advertisement. The acceptance of advertising in this publication does not represent an endorsement or guarantee of any kind by Loma Linda University Health or any of its entities.

Questions about content, campus-related advertising, and circulation should be directed to TODAY, Office of Public Relations, Welcome Center, 11157 Anderson Street, Loma Linda, California 92354. Phone (909) 558-4111. © 2016 All rights reserved.

llu.edu | facebook.com/lluhealth