

# NEWS

## A Message from the Dean

FY 2002-2003 BUDGET REDUCTIONS WERE NOT AS LARGE AS WE HAD INITIALLY EXPECTED AND WE HAD SOME SUCCESS CONVINCING THE LEGISLATURE THAT REDUCTIONS TO HIGHER EDUCATION WOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT DELETERIOUS EFFECTS. UMB's professional schools were also spared the full impact of the reductions to the campus' budget; essentially Dr. Ramsay absorbed some of the pain for us. However, it is extremely important that we manage to the current budget, as there are few resources available to support unanticipated expenses or further declines in revenue. It is almost certain that next fiscal year will present an even greater challenge.

While your research efforts have propelled us into the top tier of the nation's premier institutions, maintaining and improving our competitive position will not be easy. We can expect that smaller increases to the NIH budget will intensify the competition for NIH awards, which could lead to fewer grant dollars coming to the School of Medicine.

School of Medicine faculty and staff provide our community and state with the latest in medical technology and exceptionally high quality health care. Our clinical departments have done a commendable job improving their clinical collections, which are currently ahead of where they were last year. However, we will continue to face greater challenges as payers deal with significant increases in medical cost inflation. This may lead to enhanced efforts to curtail utilization of medical services or to shifting a greater portion of the cost burden to our patients. Either outcome will reduce not only our volume of services provided, but also reimbursement for these services.

Our primary care departments face continued pressures to provide much needed clinical services to the community. But many of these services are uncompensated. The legislature did provide some assistance in the form of increased reimbursement



for physician services to medical assistance patients and a one-time grant; however, this does not fully solve the problem. Our primary care departments continue to experience ongoing financial deficits.

We will face continued pressure on our resources as we pursue our goals of growing our research base, investing in our information technology infrastructure, and improving core facilities and programs. While we look forward to the opening of the Health Sciences Facility II next spring, we will bear significant moving and relocation expenses, which are not included in the capital construction funding. These expenses will have to be paid from School of Medicine operating funds.

While the economic outlook for next year is still evolving, it is clear that the state of Maryland will have to deal with lower revenues and increased expenses. Further reductions to higher education are highly likely.

We will continue to build on our momentum during this challenging time, as the state economy slowly recovers. The School of Medicine's Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee will complete the development of institutional standards for measuring success in meeting our education, research, and patient care missions. Faculty and administrators must continue to identify ways to reduce costs and to make even more efficient use of existing resources.

I am confident that the University of Maryland School of Medicine will triumph over the temporary downturn in the state's economy and be in an even stronger position to take full advantage of the recovery as it, hopefully, unfolds over the next 18 to 24 months. I can assure you that President Ramsay and I will continue to do everything possible to protect the state's investment in higher education, particularly at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. We have one of the best faculties in the country and, with the completion of HSFII, will also have an excellent physical plant. Our collective challenge will be to manage our human and physical resources as efficiently as possible, in order to have the necessary funds for strategic investment in our future.

## DON'T CUT AND SUCK: UM DOCS DISPUTE OUTDATED VENOMOUS SNAKEBITE TREATMENT

IN THE MOVIES, THE VICTIM OF A VENOMOUS SNAKEBITE IS OFTEN SAVED BY A QUICK THINKING COMPANION WHO APPLIES A TOURNIQUET, CUTS THE SKIN, SUCKS OUT THE POISON, AND SPITS IT ONTO THE GROUND.

It makes for a dramatic scene, but it is not good medicine, according to a recent article in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) co-authored Robert A. Barish, MD, associate dean for clinical affairs,

and Barry S. Gold, MD, clinical assistant professor of medicine at the School of Medicine.

"The evidence suggests that cutting and sucking, or



Barry Gold, MD, Robert Barish, MD and friend, a stuffed cobra.

applying a tourniquet or ice does nothing to help the victim," says Dr. Barish. "Although these outdated measures are still widely accepted by the general public, they may do more harm than good by delaying prompt medical care." Dr. Barish says victims of venomous snakebite should be moved out of harm's way, and transported to the nearest medical facility as soon as possible, so physicians can determine whether to administer antivenom.

"Rattlesnake venom is a chemically complex mixture of proteins that damage blood vessels and blood cells, and can cripple the cardiovascular, respiratory, and nervous systems," says Dr. Gold. Symptoms usually emerge within 30 to 60 minutes of the bite, and include pain and swelling followed by nausea, vomiting and weakness. Severe symptoms include low blood pressure, difficulty breathing and shock.

Of the 120 species of snakes indigenous to the United States, about 20 are venomous. The timber rattlesnake and the copperhead are the only two venomous snakes found in Maryland. But ironically, two of the three known snakebite deaths in Maryland were caused by bites from cobras that were owned by the victims.

The most common reaction to snakebite is fear. Many people believe that any bite from a poisonous snake will lead to illness or death. But in fact, 25 percent of all poisonous snakebites are "dry" and do not result in envenomation. Since the advent of antivenom, the death rate from venomous snakebites has declined from five to 25 percent in the 19th century to less than one half of one percent today.

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University of Maryland

School of Medicine

## Quick Studies

**Claudia Baquet, MD, MPH**, associate dean for Policy and Planning, and director of the Cancer Disparities and Intervention Research Program at the University of Maryland Greenebaum Cancer Center, was honored at the first annual National Cancer Institute (NCI) "Cancer Disparities Summit." Dr. Baquet, who served as NCI's associate director for Cancer Control Science and director of Special Populations Research, instituted racial cancer statistics reporting and intervention research trials in tobacco use and screening for special populations. She was acknowledged by the NCI for her research and her role in advancing the national focus on cancer research and outreach to special populations. In addition, Dr. Baquet was recently appointed chair of the Maryland Subcommittee on Cancer Disparities, which produced the first U.S. state cancer plan devoted to cancer disparities.

**Mordecai P. Blaustein, MD**, professor and chair, Department of Physiology, received a four-year \$1,485,000 grant from the NIH's National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute to study "Calcium and Sodium Transport in Smooth Muscle."

**Robert J. Bloch, PhD**, professor, Department of Physiology, has been awarded a four-year, \$1.029 million grant by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences for the "Training Program in Integrative Membrane Biology."

**Francesco Celi, MD**, interim visiting assistant professor, Department of Medicine, is the recipient of the 1st Annual Pfizer Scholars in Endocrinology Grant Program. The award honors outstanding physicians for important contributions to research and patient care in endocrinology. Pfizer donated \$1500 to the Department of Medicine for further research and education in endocrinology in honor of Dr. Celi.

**Suhayl S. Dhib-Jalbut, MD**, professor, Department of Neurology, has been awarded a five-year \$638,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to study "Mechanisms of Virus Persistence in Neurons." Dr. Dhib-Jalbut is also the primary investigator for "Predictors of Clinical Response to Glatiramer Acetate in MS," a three-year, \$300,000 study sponsored by the Wadsworth Foundation.

**Vera A. Golovina, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Physiology, received a two-year, \$132,000 grant from the American Heart Association to study "Store-Operated Calcium Entry in Vascular Smooth Muscle."

**Marian P. LaMonte, MD, MSN**, associate professor, Department of Neurology, and director, Maryland Brain Attack Center, has been appointed to the Governor's Advisory Board for Heart Disease and Stroke. Dr. LaMonte will chair the committee charged with developing a statewide plan for stroke prevention and treatment.

**Michael J. Naslund, MD**, associate professor, Department of Surgery, has been elected president of the American Association of Clinical Urologists. At the Annual Meeting of the American Urological Society in Orlando in May, Dr. Naslund delivered the Charles Hoffman Memorial Lecture entitled: "Supply/Demand in Urology: Can We Stop Discounting Our Fees?"

**Christopher V. Plowe, MD, MPH**, associate professor, Department of Medicine, and chief, malaria section, Center for Vaccine Development, will receive the 2002 Baily K. Ashford Award from the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene at the society's November annual meeting. The award is the highest achievement for a society member and recognizes Dr. Plowe's accomplishments in field malaria research and molecular epidemiology.

**Vivienne A. Rose, MD**, assistant professor, and **Verlyn O. Warrington, MD**, assistant professor, Department of Family Medicine, received a \$225,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for Project REACH (Realizing Excellence through Abstinence education, Career exploration and Healthy lifestyle choices).

**James B. Wade, PhD**, professor, Department of Physiology, received a three-year \$214,500 grant from the American Heart Association to study "Regulation of Renal Sodium Transport"

**SAVE THE DATE:** The 10th Annual Maryland Schizophrenia Conference will be held on Tuesday, November 12, 2002, at Martin's West conference center. For more information, visit [www.mdschizconf.org](http://www.mdschizconf.org) or call 410-402-6051.

## Founders Week 2002: No Limits

UMB will celebrate Founders Week October 21 – 23. This year's theme is "No Limits" and will highlight the limitless potential of this campus.

Recipients of the Founders Day awards are:

- Teacher of the Year – Gary Hollenbeck, PhD, associate dean for Academic Affairs, School of Pharmacy
- Research Lecturer of the Year – Mordecai P. Blaustein, MD, professor & chair, Department of Physiology, School of Medicine
- Public Service Award – Corporal William Griffin, UMB Office of Public Safety

### FOUNDERS WEEK EVENTS:

#### Monday, October 21

Staff Lunch (Tickets required: Free of charge)

Westminster Hall

11:30 AM – 1:15 PM

Student Cookout (Tickets required: Free of charge)

Davidge Hall Lawn

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

#### Tuesday, October 22

Faculty Research Lecture & Reception (No tickets needed)

Davidge Hall

4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Lecture: "What the Plasma Membrane Whispers to the Reticulum: Lessons from Two Centuries of Digitalis Therapy," Mordecai P. Blaustein, MD

#### Wednesday, October 23

Founders Week Gala (Tickets required: \$85)

Renaissance Harbor Place Hotel

6:30 PM (Black Tie)

For more information, call Lisa Kim in Special Events at 6-8035.

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**Submitting Information to SOMNews:** Do you have news or information you would like to see in SOMNews? If so, please e-mail your submission to Jennifer Litchman, Assistant Dean for Public Affairs, at [jlitchman@som.umaryland.edu](mailto:jlitchman@som.umaryland.edu).

# SOMNews

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



Campus Mail

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Interdisciplinary Women's Health Research Symposium will be held on Friday, November 15, 2002, at the Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor Hotel. This year's symposium is entitled "Gender Aspects of Pain – The GAP." For more information and to register, call 6-2866; e-mail [whrg@epi.umaryland.edu](mailto:whrg@epi.umaryland.edu); or visit the Web at [medschool.umaryland.edu/womenshealth/](http://medschool.umaryland.edu/womenshealth/)