

# NEWS

## “WHAT DO WE DO?”

### The Office of Development

The fifteen staff members in the Office of Development are goodwill ambassadors for the School of Medicine. It is their job to seek out individuals, corporations and foundations that might be interested in making donations to the school and talk with them about the exciting academic research and clinical programs happening here.

Under the leadership of associate dean Pat Madden, the Office of Development has seen a large increase in donations. “For the last two consecutive years, we’ve received more than \$30 million in private gifts and pledges,” he said. “We’re now focused on the Bicentennial Campaign to raise \$200 million by 2007. So far, we’ve raised over \$88 million towards that goal.”

Departments at the school are assigned a development officer to raise money to support research, faculty and patient care programs within that department. Donations come from a range of sources – grateful patients and their families, alumni, corporations, private foundations, and associations.

According to Scott Ward, director of campaign operations and programs, people donate for a variety of reasons. “Patients are looking for a way to say thank you to the doctor and clinical staff who cared for them and to help research efforts related to their specific illness,” he said. “Alumni like to set up scholarships to benefit medical students because they remember what it was like to be a struggling student. Others create endowment funds through bequests and other gift arrangements that provide them with some income now, knowing that the school will benefit after their death.”

Raising more than \$30 million a year is no small feat for a staff of only 15. In FY03, the University of Maryland raised 35 percent more money than other medical schools of similar size. And they did it at less expense to the school. According to Madden, “Other medical schools spend ten cents for every dollar

raised. At the School of Medicine, we spend less than four cents for every dollar raised.”

Madden points out that his staff’s fundraising efforts wouldn’t be as successful without the support of the faculty and staff. “They understand the importance of philanthropy and roll up their sleeves to help us,” he says. “Physicians will suggest patients (with patient approval) and corporate contacts who may be interested in donating and will often go with us to meet potential donors. That input is one of the reasons we’ve had such a dramatic growth in dollars raised over the last few years.”



#### Members of the Office of Development

*Front row, left to right: Michelle Healy, assistant director of constituent relations; Carol Franklin, associate director; Brian DeFilippis, director of constituent relations; and Kimberly Anderson, administrative assistant. Back row, left to right: Cara Petroski, development associate; Edith McKeller, managing director; Tierra Dorsey, associate director; Dennis Narango, assistant dean; Sandra Harriman, director of corporate and foundation relations; Lisa Seischab, associate director; Pat Madden, associate dean; Karen McGuire, associate director; Scott Ward, director of campaign operations and programs; and Joyce Prange, associate director. Not pictured: Pam Nixon, executive administrative assistant.*

### Training the Next Generation of Scientists

In an effort to increase research focused on the area of women’s health and to train the next generation of scientists, the Women’s Health Research Group at the University of Maryland, Baltimore has received \$2.5 million from the National Institutes of Health to fund a program called Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women’s Health (BIRCWH).

One of only 24 programs across the country, BIRCWH brings together junior faculty with more senior faculty to teach them the “ins and outs” of designing a research protocol, submitting a grant application, conducting research, collecting and analyzing data, and preparing a manuscript for publication. Established in 2002 under the leadership of Patricia Langenberg, PhD, professor of epidemiology & preventive medicine in the School of Medicine, the program currently has six scholars and 20 faculty mentors. “Women’s health has been understudied in the past,” says Dr. Langenberg. “The BIRCWH program is an excellent way to interest junior faculty in this dynamic research field. Our scholars’ research focuses on life changes in women’s health, adverse conditions and diseases in women and gender differences in pain.”

According to program director Jodi Flaws, PhD, associate professor of epidemiology & preventive medicine, potential scholars must already be on faculty at any University of Maryland graduate school or be appointed as part of their involvement with the program. And they

have to be within five years of receiving a doctoral degree or completing a residency or fellowship. A review committee of senior faculty members selects scholars for the two-year program based on their curriculum vitae, letters of recommendation, research interests and personal interview. Once the scholar is selected for the program, he or she must then select a primary mentor and mentor team. Funding provided by the National Institutes of Health allows the scholars to devote 75 percent of their time to research.

Jessica Mong, PhD, is an assistant professor of pharmacology & experimental therapeutics and a current BIRCWH scholar. Her research focuses on potential molecular pathways through which hormones influence sleep in women. “The program allows scientists with diverse research interests to share knowledge, with a common goal of better understanding women’s health,” she says. “I have a network of colleagues and mentors that are not only here to discuss scientific questions and methodologies, but to explain and shepherd me through the maze of learning how to be a successful grant writer and independent researcher.”

Peg McCarthy, PhD, professor of physiology, serves as one of Dr. Mong’s mentors. She also has chaired the scholar selection committee. “I chose to become a mentor in the BIRCWH program because this is a critical time in a young person’s career,” she says. “They are making the difficult and very precarious transition from being in training to being independent – a time when a mentor can make a positive difference.”

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## Get Fit Maryland: 10,000 Steps a Day

Obesity is an epidemic in this country. It kills more people than AIDS, breast, lung and prostate cancers combined. As the prevalence of obesity increases, so does the incidence of diabetes, hypertension, osteoarthritis, coronary artery disease, cancer and



other diseases and conditions. In a call to action, the University of Maryland School of Medicine, the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) and Merritt Athletic Clubs are launching the *Get Fit Maryland: 10,000 Steps a Day* program in the spring of 2005. This program will help people take active control of their health through a goal-focused effort to walk 10,000 steps every day.

Primary components of the program include a 12-week walking program and the utilization of pedometers, fitness centers and seminars to provide participants with education, support and encouragement in their efforts to lose weight and implement healthy lifestyle changes. For the benefit of the UMB campus community and for any participating neighbors, walking paths will be designated throughout the campus for those wanting to walk on a lunch break or any other time of the day.

A kick-off event is planned for April 29 on the park square in front of S. Greene Street; the 12-week program officially begins on May 1. Participants can register at the Patient Resource Center in UMMC or at any Merritt Athletic Club location in the greater Baltimore area. The cost to register is \$8.00. All participants will receive a registration kit including a pedometer, log books, shoelaces, program instructions, calendar for health education seminars, and exercise and nutrition information. Additionally, if participants meet their goals throughout the program, they will receive incentives, such as an Under Armour shirt, running socks and a water bottle.

For more information, visit our website [www.getfitmaryland.org](http://www.getfitmaryland.org) and/or call Mariellen Synan, program coordinator, at 800.492.5538.

## Quick Studies

**Robert J. Bloch, PhD**, professor, Department of Physiology, was awarded a two-year \$172,524 competing renewal grant from the Muscular Dystrophy Association for his work entitled "Signaling by RhoGEF Domain of Obscurin."

**Meredith Bond, PhD**, professor and chair, Department of Physiology, received a four-year \$1,415,046 R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute for her project entitled "Synemin is an A-Kinase Anchoring Protein in the Heart."

**Eve J. Higginbotham, MD**, professor and chair, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, was nominated for the 2004 Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Humanism in Medicine Award, which is presented by the AAMC through the support of the Pfizer Medical Humanities Initiative. The SOM's Organization of Student Representatives, who singled out Dr. Higginbotham as a positive and caring role model and a physician whom the students would one day like to emulate, submitted Dr. Higginbotham's nomination. Dr. Higginbotham was one of 65 national nominees.

**Frances T. Sheehan, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Science, published an article entitled "Sensitivity of Femoral Orientation Estimates to Condylar Surface and MR Image Plan Location" in the *Journal of Magnetic Resonance Imaging*.

**Robert K. Shin, MD**, assistant professor, Department of Neurology, edited an article entitled "Neurologic Ophthalmology and Otology" in *Current Treatment Options in Neurology*, Volume 7, Number 1, January 2005.

**Michael T. Shipley, PhD**, professor and chair, Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology, has been voted President-elect of the Association of Anatomy, Cell Biology and Neurobiology Chairpersons (AACBNC). The AACBNC is the largest basic science chairs association, with over 89 active members.

**Paul A. Welling, MD**, associate professor, Department of Physiology, was awarded a five-year \$1,143,450 competing renewal R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases for a project entitled "Molecular Mechanisms of Kidney KATP Channel Function."

**Jill Whithall, PhD**, professor, Department of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Science, wrote an invited editorial, "Stroke Rehabilitation Research: Time to Answer More Specific Questions?" in the 2004 issue of *Neurorehabilitation and Neural Repair*.

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