

25 years of cancer research

USC/Norris hosts forum on cancer in 'New Millenium'

Some of the brightest minds in cancer research and care will be gathered in celebration of 25 years of cancer research at USC/Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center.

USC/Norris is hosting "Conquering Cancer in the New Millenium," a day-long series of lectures on Thursday, Oct. 29 starting at 9 a.m. in Mayer Auditorium.

The day will cover all types of research performed at USC/Norris: epidemiologic/prevention, basic/translational and clinical, in terms of what research breakthroughs have taken place, and what lies on the horizon.

Dean of Medicine Stephen J. Ryan will give the welcome address, followed by Peter A. Jones, cancer center director, who will present an overview of the groundbreaking achievements at USC/Norris over the past quarter century.

The first session, moderated by Mimi Yu, professor of preventive medicine, will feature Malcolm Pike, professor and chair of preventive medicine, presenting on the epidemiology, etiology and prevention of breast and ovarian cancers, then Ronald Ross, professor of preventive medicine, will cover building polygenic models of hormonal carcinogenesis.

In the second session, focusing on basic and translational research and moderated by Michael Lai, professor of molecular microbiology and immunology, Amy Lee, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, will address stress proteins and cancer. Michael Lieber, professor of pathology, will cover DNA repair at human chromosome breaks and W. French Anderson, director of USC's Gene Therapy Laboratories, will detail the latest advancement and the future of gene therapy.

Jeffery Weber, associate professor of medicine and an expert in melano-

noma and cancer vaccines, will moderate the presentations on clinical research. Robert Seeger, professor of pediatrics, is scheduled to explore the biology and therapy of neuroblastoma, a common childhood cancer. Michael Press, professor of pathology, will delve into HER-2/neu, a genetic marker of poor clinical outcome and responsiveness to cancer treatment, followed by Donald Skinner, professor of urology, on the bladder cancer data base as a launching pad for translational research. Alexandra Levine, professor of medicine and

chief of hematology, will finish the session reflecting on lessons learned from AIDS-related malignancy.

The fourth session called "Where Do We Go From Here?," moderated by Leslie Bernstein, professor of preventive medicine,

will focus on what advances can be anticipated from cancer research in the future. In this session Robert Haile, professor of preventive medicine, will look at the genetic epidemiology of common cancers and Peter Brooks, assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, will explore the new directions for anti-angiogenic therapy. Donald Kohn, professor of pediatrics, will address gene therapy using hematopoietic stem cells and Derek Raghavan, professor of medicine and chief of oncology, will address innovations in clinical trial design to improve the application of laboratory research to the bedside.

The day will culminate at 4:30 p.m. with a presentation by Director of the National Cancer Institute, Richard D. Klausner, who is expected to address the national cancer-fighting agenda. A reception will follow his remarks.

For more information, call 865-0801.



Phil Davis

Almost a year after becoming paralyzed in a body surfing accident, medical student Suzy Kim has returned to classes. Above, she performs rounds during her psychiatry rotation.

Medical student strives to turn a traumatic accident into an asset

Suzy Kim was a third year medical student at USC last year when a body surfing accident bruised her spine and left her mostly paralyzed.

Soon afterward, her mother died from cancer and Kim faced deep depression and an uncertain future.

But grim resignation isn't Kim's style. In the 10 months since her accident, Kim, 26, has regained full use of her arms and hands, can walk with braces and a walker and has now returned to classes at the USC School of Medicine.

"It's all relative," she said. "My problem isn't any bigger than anyone else's problem. The way a person is defined is how they react to the situation. Sure, there are times when I want to dig a hole and disappear, but I'm not ready to go down without a fight."

Kim was body surfing with friends in Laguna Beach in November 1997 when a wave slammed her headfirst into a sandbar—injuring her spine. She retained feeling in her lower body, but doctors told her she had lost the use of her arms and legs.

Kim tackled the dilemma like a marathon. She began a tough regimen of physical therapy—painful workouts

that continue to this day—and within months regained full use of her hands and arms and some use of muscles in her back and abdomen.

She also found herself fighting her insurance provider, who deemed the wheelchair that keeps her mobile an "unnecessary" expense. Her doctors couldn't persuade the insurance company otherwise. Finally, after an exhaustive campaign of letters and phone calls, the company relented and agreed to pick up 70 percent of the cost.

Kim got her wheelchair—thanks in part to a summer fundraiser thrown by her friends—and valuable insight into a patient's side of health care that will ultimately make her a better doctor.

"It's been a very eye-opening experience," Kim said. "Doctors can't just diagnose the disease and come up with a treatment plan. What if the insurance doesn't cover it? I hope to help patients in that way—to be more of an advocate. I definitely gained a different perspective and insight on what it means to be a doctor. I wish that was something they taught in medical school, but unfortunately I think it's something most people learn on their own."



Phil Davis

Suzy Kim

Kim looks forward to her nightly workouts after long—sometimes painful—days in her wheelchair. Because she didn't lose feeling in her lower body, she ends every day with all the aches and tingles akin to riding in a car for 10 hours. Still, she faces the daily challenges with strength and optimism.

"It's tough," she said. "its not like I have a broken arm and there's a clear-cut prognosis. But there are people with similar injuries who are walking now. That's the hill I'm climbing."

To help Kim pay for her extensive medical costs, donations can be sent to "Road to Recovery," 9461 Charleville Blvd., P.O. Box 531, Beverly Hills, CA, 90212.

—Phil Davis

USC surgeons perform liver transplant to save infant's life

When it comes to gift-giving, Sherry Marquez has all other grandmothers beat.

On Sept. 30, the 44-year-old Lancaster resident gave her granddaughter a lobe of her liver that is saving 6-month-old Lydia's life.

Lydia Hand was diagnosed at six weeks with biliary atresia, a failure of the biliary ducts to develop, causing cirrhosis of the liver, growth retardation and jaundice. She underwent a procedure at three months of age, which was not successful, so a living-related liver transplant was her only hope for survival.

Lydia's parents were unable to be donors, as her mother, Nicole's, blood type was not a match and her father, Scott's, liver was too big.

While Rick Selby, associate professor of surgery and chief of the division of hepatobiliary/pancreas surgery and liver transplantation, and Yuri Genyk, assistant professor of surgery, procured approximately a quarter of Sherry Marquez's liver at USC University Hospital, Nicolas Jabbor, assistant professor of surgery, prepared the baby for surgery at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA). The liver lobe and the physicians were transported to CHLA, where they completed the transplantation process.

The procurement and transplantation, which required 12 hours to complete, were successful and marked the first time the two hospitals have worked together on this procedure.

When Marquez was released from University Hospital six days after the procurement, the first thing she did was go to visit Lydia at CHLA. "I'd never seen her look so pink," she said, "Lydia looked beautiful."

Marquez's liver is expected to partially regenerate itself and Lydia's new liver will grow with the child.

Before her release from CHLA less than three weeks after the transplantation, a smiling and cooing Lydia, her parents, grandmother, surgeons and physician Danny Thomas, associate professor of pediatrics, were introduced to the press.

The family and physicians received a warm reception with local and national coverage from CNN, KCBS-TV channel 2, KNBC-TV channel 4, KTLA-TV channel 5, KABC-TV channel 7, KCAL-TV channel 9, KTTV-TV channel 11, KNX-AM and KFI-AM, *Los Angeles Times*, the *Los Angeles Daily News* and the *Antelope Valley Press*.

—Mary Ellen Stumpf

Six-month-old Lydia Hand smiles in the arms of her grandmother, Sherry Marquez, as they meet reporters at CHLA. Baby Lydia had just two weeks earlier received a liver transplant, an operation in which Marquez donated a portion of her own liver.



Photo courtesy of the Los Angeles Times

Transportation Services moves office to a new location

In an effort to provide easier access and better service, USC Transportation Services has relocated to the Keith Administration Building, Room 120, directly across from Mayer Auditorium.

The new location features a walk up window for transit literature and other information, including updated Metrolink schedules that reflect

route changes going into effect Oct. 26.

In addition, the department will conduct a customer service survey of students, faculty and staff next month that will also seek suggestions and comments for potential improvements.

In November, the department will step up parking enforcement to ensure proper permit use and

adherence to parking regulations.

Campus cruisers remain available to provide escort service from 5 p.m. to midnight on weekdays. For more information about the escort program, call 442-2100. For other Transportation Services questions, call 442-1201.

—David Cota

Being Good Neighbors

More than 70 young children and adolescents from the neighborhoods surrounding the Health Sciences Campus benefit from "Project Forward Bound," thanks to generous contributions from USC faculty and staff. The program, created and run by the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, provides after-school activities, tutoring, mentoring and pre-vocational and leadership training to at-risk youth.

Funded entirely by USC neighborhood outreach through the annual Good Neighbors Campaign, the project has grown substantially since it was established three years ago. Project Forward Bound is one of 14 community programs funded by the campaign, three of which are in the neighborhoods surrounding HSC.

Employees should be receiving information through their departments on giving to the USC Good Neighbors program. The campaign is currently underway. For more information, contact USC External Relations at 740-7400.

Left, Occupational therapy graduate student Heidi Boltmeier shows one visitor at the Unity House after-school haven how to make a Halloween decoration.



HSC Weekly

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Editor: Jon Nalick
Executive Director of Public Relations:
Brenda Maceo
Public Relations Consultant:
Alfred G. Kildow
Vice President,
University Public Relations: Martha Harris

Contributors: David Cota, Phil Davis, Carina DuHadway, Eva Emerson, Alfred Kildow, Brenda Maceo, Jon Nalick, LaCarol Pratt, Jonielle Schmidt, Richard Stone, Mary Ellen Stumpf and Carol Varma

323/442-2830
FAX: 323/442-2832
hscwkly@hsc.usc.edu
<http://www.usc.edu/hsc/info/pr/>

USC gene therapy expert spurs national debate on ethics

At a meeting at the National Institutes of Health last month, researcher W. French Anderson took part in two days of intense discussion of the scientific, ethical and public policy issues relating to *in utero* gene therapy.

What most would find exhausting has left Anderson doubly committed to keep pushing the field of gene therapy forward.

Anderson, professor of biochemistry and pediatrics and director of USC's Gene Therapy Laboratories, submitted and discussed two preliminary proposals that lay the groundwork for what may be the next advance in gene therapy technology — treating patients with genetic disease before they are born.

He also stirred up public awareness

of the ethical issues the developing technology brings — an airing that he welcomed. Articles on his proposals appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Business Week*, *New York Newsday* and on the Associated Press news wire, among others.

The meeting of the Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee (RAC) focused on the pre-proposals developed by Anderson and USC researchers Mei-Mei Huang, Bonnie Wu and Yi Zhao. The USC team works in close collaboration with Esmail Zanjani, a professor of medicine at the University of Nevada, Reno, who is a co-author of the pre-proposals.

While the team has immediate plans to study the technique only in animals, the eventual aim is to develop the pro-

cedure for use in humans.

Anderson called the Bethesda, Md. meeting "very successful."

The first day, activists showed up at the meeting to voice opposition to the idea of *in utero* gene therapy. Armed guards were present among the audience. But by the second day, the crowd thinned, leaving only those interested in the details of the proposals, Anderson said.

"Once the activists realized that what we were talking about was still years away, and that we had been very thorough and open about listing potential areas of concern, they left," he said.

Although the meeting was *not* part of a formal review process, a senior administrator who oversees the gene therapy division at the U.S. Food and

Drug Administration (FDA) took part in the discussion. He and the RAC committee chair both commended Anderson for initiating a dialogue well in advance of any formal application process. Researchers need FDA approval to do gene therapy trials in people.

Anderson and his gene team expect to build improved gene therapy vectors — the bits of DNA that will deliver normal copies of genes to cells — by next year. They are also focused on finishing up studies of the technique in small animals. So, at about the same time next year, Anderson will probably be back in Bethesda for another discussion.

Assuming the team's new data are strong, they will propose similar studies on large animals. Only after com-

pleting those studies will they seek approval to carry out the procedure in humans. But there is a caveat: "If we cannot get the level of incidental germline gene transfer to a low enough level, we won't try it in human patients," Anderson said.

Scientists believe that doing gene therapy *in utero* may increase the chance of genetically altering the germline — sperm or egg cells. Genetic changes to those cells are passed on to offspring.

"Up to this point, we have seen zero transfer of introduced genes to germline cells," Anderson said. "But we have only tried it in a few dozen animals. We need to do more studies to get a better idea of how often that transfer might happen."

—Eva Emerson

Breast cancer experts and survivors to gather for USC/Norris' 'Breast Health Day'

More than 500 breast cancer survivors, their families and women from the community are expected to attend the USC/Norris Breast Center's "Breast Health Day '98" on Oct. 24 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at the Mayer Auditorium.

The day's events, organized by a campus-wide committee, will feature educational sessions presented by breast health experts from USC/Norris.

Alexandra Levine, professor of medicine, chief of the division of hematology and medical director of USC/Norris, will open with her presentation, "Hope and Healing."

The first of three educational sessions will focus on prevention and early detection of breast cancer featuring a registered dietitian from USC/Norris, Suzanne Kranz, addressing the role of

nutrition in breast cancer prevention and Robin Clark, associate professor of pediatrics, speaking on the role of genetics in breast cancer risk.

In session two, Yuri Parisky, associate professor of radiology, will discuss new imaging and diagnostic techniques for detecting breast disease.

In his first address as the medical director of the USC/Norris Breast Cen-

ter, Melvin J. Silverstein will cover the latest treatments for early breast cancer.

The sixth annual event, funded in part by Marie Eckstrom and the Thomas F. Eckstrom Family Trust Fund, will also feature 14 booths hosted by various organizations involved in promoting breast health and assisting breast cancer survivors, including the

American Cancer Society and the Wellness Community.

The day will close with gourmet box lunches for all participants and a panel discussion on cancer survivorship.

The cost is \$5 per person and includes a continental breakfast and the lunch.

Free parking is included and the public is welcome. Registration is required by calling 865-3371.

—Mary Ellen Stumpfl

Division of plastic and reconstructive surgery offers service with a smile

Bringing smiles to the farthest reaches of the globe has become a quest for the surgeons and nurses in the USC Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

Working with Operation Smile, a nonprofit organization that provides reconstructive surgery to people all over the world, USC surgical teams have corrected thousands of cleft palates and other deformities from Maizales, Colombia, to Hangzhou, China.

Surgeon Susan Downey and operating room nurse Cheryl Morales recently returned from a 10-day Operation Smile mission to Morocco—where a 28-year-old man who had lived his whole life with a cleft palate thanked them after his surgery with a firm handshake. Downey plans to join a mission to Vietnam in April.

"It's an opportunity to give something back," she said.

Operation Smile was formed in 1982 by Bill and Kathy Magee, a surgeon and nurse couple. Their first mission was to Naga City in the Phillipine Islands. Surgeons returned three times over the next four years.

In 1986, the organization sent missions to Nairobi, Kenya, to Monrovia and Liberia and to Calcutta, India—setting a pace that hasn't let up in more than a decade.

Randy Sherman, professor and chair of the department of plastic and reconstructive surgery, volunteered for Operation Smile to Vietnam in 1986 and was immediately hooked. He now runs the California branch out of his office on the

second floor of the Doheny Eye Institute.

"Most everyone in the department has made at least one trip," Sherman said. "It's basically a divisional pursuit. We see it as part of the fabric of what we do."

So far, Sherman says the only downside of his years with the charity is the poor showing of donors in Southern California. This year, Sherman and his colleagues have raised \$250,000 to contribute to its \$33 million annual budget.

"All of our work is done through fundraising. If we don't get money, we can't go," Sherman said. "In Los Angeles and Southern California, we should be contributing millions of dollars. But because there is so much money here, there are also a lot of people looking for donations. It's like water, water, everywhere, not a drop to drink."

Far from mere sightseeing junkets, Operation Smile missions are nonstop work for two or three weeks. Surgeons operate on up to 50 patients a day and train their in-country counterparts in plastic surgery techniques.

"When Operation Smile came we all just worked hard," said Ha Van Anh, a plastic surgeon visiting from Hanoi, Vietnam, who has worked with Operation Smile. "There was no time for chatting or touring. They do very nice work for the patients—and us, too. We benefit from their knowledge."

Politics often figure heavily into an Operation Smile mission. In the past, surgeons have been escorted to the operating site by armed guards or lost their equipment to unfriendly border guards.



Shown above with a patient and family member, surgeon Susan Downey, right, and operating room nurse Cheryl Morales, left, were part of a recent 10-day Operation Smile mission to Morocco. Downey plans to be part of another working trip in April to Vietnam.

"We sometimes go to some pretty hot places—the Gaza Strip, southern areas of the Phillipines and Columbia. We had armed guards there," Sherman said.

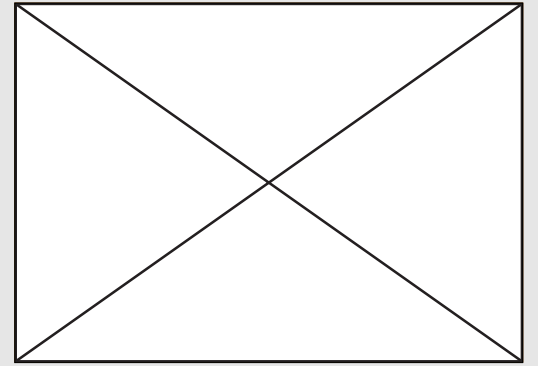
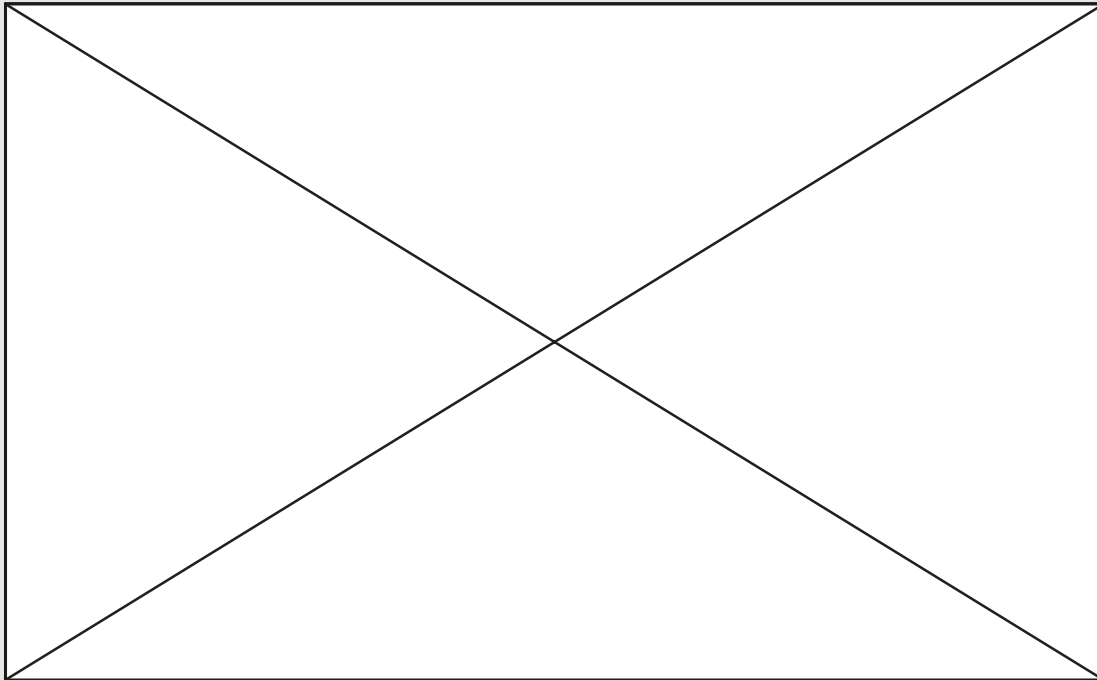
But bad political blood and even the loss of a colleague to a heart attack on one trip hasn't deterred Sherman and his colleague's passion for Operation Smile's mission.

"It's an amazing pursuit," said Sherman. "There are very few things that give you more

bang for your buck than seeing a deformed child transformed into a normal child. It's a little miracle.

"We're giving a bit of life back to a child that was robbed," he continued. "It's particularly awesome. It's much more rewarding than being reimbursed financially. There is great purity in the healing process. That's what's so attractive about this experience."

—Phil Davis



BAD BOYS, BAD BOYS, WHATCHA GONNA DO?—The Department of Public Safety hosted a safety fair this week at the HSC quad, featuring officers from local police departments and the California Highway patrol.

Left, officers from the Bell Police Department offer information on theft and security to passing students. Above, a student sneaks a peek inside an L.A.P.D. squad car.

—Photos by Jon Nalick

Calendar

Monday, Oct. 26

8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. “Robert Farber: A Retrospective,” Satellite exhibit on display until Dec. 12. CSC. Info: 442-1144

Tuesday, Oct. 27

8 a.m. Dept. of Neurology Conference. “Building a Neuro-Oncology Center at USC,” Tom Chen, USC. Troy Room, Univ. Hospital. Info: 226-2639

8 a.m. Pathology Grand Rounds. “Cestodes (Tapeworms),” Moises Zepeda, USC. GNH 1645. Info: 226-7151

9 a.m. New Staff Orientation, KAM 308. Info: 442-1010

Noon. Cancer Center Grand Rounds. “Engineering Retroviral Envelope Proteins for Targeted Gene Delivery,” Paul Cannon, USC. Norris Tower 7th Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 865-0800

12:15 p.m. Dept. of Psychiatry Grand Rounds. “Psychiatric Aspects of CNS Lupus in Children and Adolescents,” Susan Turkel, CHLA. Hoffman Hall, Hastings Aud. Info: (626) 457-4180

Wednesday, Oct. 28

7 a.m. Medical Grand Rounds. “Dermatomyositis,” Francisco Quismorio and Ruth Karunanathan, USC. GNH 1645. Info: 226-7556

8:30 a.m. Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Conference. “Clinical Lecture: Interstitial Lung Disease,” Om Sharma, USC. GNH 11-321. Info: 226-7151

Noon. Cell and Neurobiology Seminar. “HIV cDNA Integration,” Rick Bushman, Salk Inst. AHC Aud., Room 102. Info: 442-2116

5:30. Physical Therapy Seminar Series. “Variation in Fracture Healing Associated with the Timing of Motion Initiation,” Vincent Lin, USC. CHP G15. Info: 442-2900

Thursday, Oct. 29

Noon. “The Nature of Antioxidant Mechanisms: A Lesson from Transgenic Studies,” Ye-Shih Ho, Wayne State Univ. PSC 104. Info: 442-1551

Noon. Research Center for Liver Disease. “Signal Transduction Pathways that Regulate NF- κ B,” Ebrahim Zandi, USC. AHC Aud., Room 102. Info: 442-1168

5 p.m. Dept. of Neurology. “Behavioral Neurology,” Leslie Wiener, USC. Norris Library Conf. Room. Info: 226-2639

Friday, Oct. 30

8:30 a.m. Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Conference. “Asthma of Mice and Men: Role of Leukotrienes and CD49d,” William Henderson, Univ. of Washington. GNH 11-321. Info: 226-7151

11 a.m. Hematology Conference. “Hairy Cell Leukemia,” Dan Douer, USC. GNH 7441. Info: 865-3913

Noon. Special Seminar Division of Nephrology. “Mechanisms of Gene Regulation and Evolvability,” Mark Ptashne, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. CSC, IGM Aud. Info: 442-1144

3:30 “The Effects of Tyrostatins on Transferring Transcytosis in Caco-2 Cells,” Cindy Xia, USC. PSC 104. Info: 442-1451

Tuesday, Nov. 3

9 a.m. New Staff Orientation, KAM 308. Info: 442-1010

Wednesday, Nov. 4

Noon. Cell and Neurobiology Seminar. “Cell Cycle Regulatory Mechanisms of the Human MIT1 Gene: G1 Exit and Apoptosis,” Lingtao Wu, CHLA. AHC Aud., Room 102. Info: 442-2116

Noon. Medical Students of Choice Film Screening. “The Fragile Promise of Choice: Abortion in the United States Today,” Patricia Lohr, USC. McKibben Hall, Room 149. Info: 661-9063

4 p.m. Dept. of Biological Sciences Seminar. “Neural Ensembles in the Rodent Hippocampus: From Molecules to Memory,” Matt Wilson, Mass. Inst. of Technology. Hedco Aud., UPC. Info: 740-9176

Thursday, Nov. 5

Noon. Health, Behavior and Aging Colloquium Series. “The Determinants of Cognitive Decline in Demented and Nondemented Swedish Twins,” Chandra Reynolds, USC. Andrus Gerontology Center, Room 224, UPC. Info: 740-8242

Tuesday, Nov. 10

9 a.m. New Staff Orientation, KAM 308. Info: 442-1010

Tuesday, Nov. 17

9 a.m. New Staff Orientation, KAM 308. Info: 442-1010

Wednesday, Nov. 18

Noon. Cell and Neurobiology Seminar. “To Tear or Not to Tear: How is the Question?” Dee Warren, USC. AHC Aud., Room 102. Info: 442-2116

Friday, Nov. 20

8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. “Robert Farber: A Retrospective,” Satellite Exhibit. CSC. Info: 442-1144

Tuesday, Nov. 24

9 a.m. New Staff Orientation, KAM 308. Info: 442-1010

Wednesday, Nov. 25

Noon. Cell and Neurobiology Seminar. “Sound Localization in Humans and Owls,” Mark Konishi, Cal Tech. AHC Aud., Room 102. Info: 442-2116

Notice: Deadline for calendar submission is 4 p.m. Tuesday to be considered for that week’s issue. Please note that timely submission does not guarantee an item will be printed. Send calendar items to *HSC Weekly*, DEI 2510 or fax to 442-2832, or e-mail to hscwkly@hsc.usc.edu. *Entries must include day, date, time, title of talk, first and last name of speaker, affiliation of speaker, location and a phone number for information.*

Tuesday, Dec. 1

8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. “Robert Farber: A Retrospective,” Satellite Exhibition on display until Dec. 12. CSC. Info: 442-1144

9 a.m. New Staff Orientation, KAM 308. Info: 442-1010

Wednesday, Dec. 2

Noon. Cell and Neurobiology Seminar. “Axonal Transport in Peripheral Nerve Function and Dysfunction,” Kim Topp, UCSF. AHC Aud., Room 102. Info: 442-2116

Thursday, Dec. 3

Noon. Health, Behavior and Aging Colloquium Series. “Filial Piety and Well-Being of Older People in China,” Merrill Silverstein, USC. Andrus Gerontology Center, Room 224., UPC. Info: 740-8242

USC Health Sciences
Public Relations
1450 San Pablo Street
DEI 2510
Los Angeles, CA 90033

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Upcoming event: USC Spectrum will present the Larry Karush Ensemble on Friday, Oct. 30 in the HSC Quad. The group features elements of Indian, African, Brazilian and contemporary Western art music in the framework of a percussion-flavored jazz ensemble.