

## USC unveils new occupational therapy center

USC's Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, ranked the number one graduate program in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*, is breaking new ground once again.

Its trailblazing research on the use of occupational therapy among senior citizens brought the department international recognition with the publication in 1997 of the Well-Elderly Study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Now the department, which established the discipline of occupational science in 1989, has established the world's first center dedicated to the study of how everyday activities or "occupations" shape human health and well-being.

To create the center, the department has undertaken a \$2.2 million fundraising campaign to renovate Cockins House, a three-story, green Victorian building located at the corner of Hoover and 27th Streets, adjacent to the University Park campus. The location will give students and faculty easy access to disciplines housed there, such as psychology, social work, and gerontology, said Florence Clark, chair of the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.

To mark the grand opening on Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, the department

hosted a luncheon behind Cockins House. Following opening remarks by Clark, the assembled guests were treated to speeches by USC President Steven Sample, Joseph Van Der Meulen, USC Vice-President for Health Affairs, and Sylvia Guillen, program coordinator, Salesian Boys and Girls Club.

Recently voted "College of the Year" by *Time* magazine for its work with the local community, USC has a proud tradition of volunteerism, explained Sample. "This new research, teaching, and community-practice facility is a fitting addition to the nation's preeminent occupational therapy program," said Sample. "The USC Department of Occupational Therapy has become internationally renowned for conducting innovative research and for producing leaders in the field. Indeed, I think it's safe to say that you cannot talk about the field of occupational therapy without referring to USC. Your contributions have been so seminal."

Occupational therapy is nevertheless a profession that isn't always well understood by the public, and a small museum inside the new center will highlight the origin of the discipline.

Indeed, the term "occupational therapy" sometimes leaves people scratching their heads, wondering whether therapists help clients with



Paul Dingsdale

The Center for Occupation and Lifestyle Redesign was unveiled on Dec. 3. Right, USC President Steven Sample and Florence Clark, chair of the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy cut the ceremonial ribbon marking the opening of the Center.



careers or jobs. Instead, occupational therapists teach patients daily living skills to help them overcome a loss or a disability, as well as the emotional and psychological pain often associated with this loss of basic function. For many, these everyday processes are complicated by disease, aging, disability, illness or trauma. Occupational

therapy utilizes "occupation" or "productive activity" to overcome these disabling conditions and work towards improving functional independence.

The discipline of occupational therapy also has a wider mandate, said Clark. "Humans have a unique drive to remain occupied. We socialize, play  
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## Bereaved mother urges awareness of firearm safety

In a tragic accident last month in Arcadia, 12-year-old Paul Lavorico, the son of Karen Dunham, an accountant for administration and finance department, was killed by friends playing with a shotgun.

At the time of the accident, Paul, who was at a friend's house playing on a computer, heard a commotion upstairs and went to investigate what the other youngsters were doing.

As he entered the doorway of the master bedroom, a shotgun that the other children had found under the bed discharged, hitting him in the chest and killing him instantly.

Since the tragedy, Dunham said she is urging all gun owners to make certain that their weapons are stored safely and locked away where children cannot gain access to them — or to refrain from having them in the home.

"I've never owned a weapon because I never wanted to be in the position I am in now. I believe that if someone wants to own a weapon, fine, so long as they're completely responsible for its storage and use," she said.

She added that during the holiday season, this is especially crucial because "the holidays are when kids start seeking where the hiding places are for presents. What they may find is a loaded weapon instead."

To make a charitable contribution in Paul's memory in lieu of flowers, checks may be sent payable to USC, referencing "Paul Lavorico Memorial" in the memo to: Olivia Montes, Keck School of Medicine, 1975 Zonal Ave., KAM-500, Los Angeles, CA, 90033. These funds will be used to purchase pamphlets on weapon safety and for science camp scholarships for youngsters who enjoy learning.

—Jon Nalick

## 2K or not 2K? That is the question for USC computers to handle on Dec. 31

Chances that aliens will land on campus on New Year's Eve: pretty slim.

Chances that the year 2000 problem, or Y2K, will make campus computers or the power supply go awry: probably a bit greater.

No one can say yet just how damaging—or harmless—the much talked-about Y2K problem will be at USC, but staff members from departments on campus and off have been working together throughout the year to ensure as smooth a transition as possible to the year 2000.

"We'll never know until January 1 how things will work out," said Gary Pitassi, director of operations and maintenance, "but we don't believe there's anything we haven't covered."

Pitassi spoke alongside six other faculty and staff members and government agency representatives at a recent public forum on Y2K issues. Officials said all university computers have been

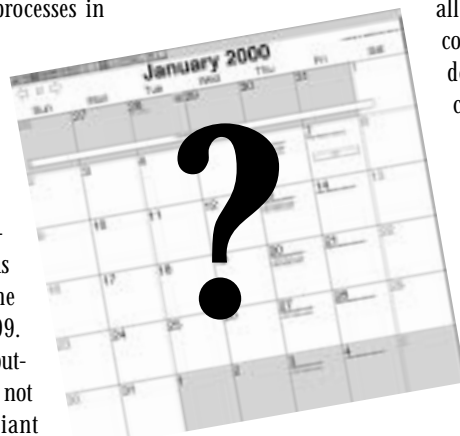
checked for compliance to make sure they will work in the new year, and most of the concerns about Y2K problems are tied to utilities and other off-campus issues.

The year 2000 problem results from computer processes in which information about dates is stored using only two digits—such as "99" for the year 1999. When computers that are not Y2K compliant try to process date information after Dec. 31, 1999, they will malfunction because they are not able to determine whether the date is

1900 or 2000. Such problems aren't limited to computers; they apply to any devices that use dates to function.

Within the campus, information technology staff members have thoroughly checked all known USC computers and devices for compliance. "Y2K has forced us to take a look at our information services systems," said Todd Sahara, year

2000 coordinator in information services. "Financial aid, student information, patient information—all have been extensively checked."



Computers that might still have a problem include hidden machines or researchers' own laptops that have not been examined, Sahara said. Pieces of medical equipment in USC-affiliated hospitals have been checked, with non-compliant equipment already identified and scheduled for replacement before the end of the year.

Most concerns center around the supply of power, water and telephone service to campus. Utility companies have assured university officials that they have checked their equipment and services should continue uninterrupted, but a facilities crew will stand by on campus New Year's Eve to respond to emergencies.

Pitassi said individual buildings on campus vary in their supply of backup power. Some have backup generators that can keep freezers, incubators and go to [www.usc.edu/y2k](http://www.usc.edu/y2k)

See Y2K, Page 2

# Researcher explores possible diabetes-Alzheimer's disease link

Early in 2000, the second edition of *Diabetes Mellitus: A Fundamental and Clinical Text*, will appear — and in it Peter C. Butler's once-heretical view that Type II diabetes is caused by an abnormal handling of a normal peptide has moved closer to accepted medical knowledge.

Butler, who came to the Keck School just six months ago from the University of Edinburgh, wrote the chapter on amyloid plaque in the adult onset form of the disease in the new edition of the Lippencott-Raven text, which has become a standard teaching volume. It sums up a line of basic research that Butler has been pursuing for approximately 15 years, and which is now close to bearing therapeutic fruit — and even producing insight into Alzheimer's disease.

The question Butler is pursuing: are amyloid plaques found in the insulin-producing areas of the pancreas in people with Type II diabetes

“the blood or the bullet” — the cause of the disease, or merely a symptom?

Butler's revised chapter in the new text expands the version he wrote in the work's first edition. “Only 20 percent is new, but I think it's an exciting 20 percent,” he said.

The chapter recapitulates a series of experiments involving numerous species and many techniques. The work builds Butler's case that a form of naturally-occurring peptide that is the chemical precursor of the plaque is the agent that kills insulin-producing beta cells in the Islets of Langerhans, not the plaque itself. Butler's lab has also shown precisely how the damage can take place in the pancreas.

The peptide, called IAPP, is produced for still uncertain reasons by the beta cells. Single molecules of IAPP spontaneously stick to each other (polymerize) to form strands thousands of IAPP molecules long, called fibrils, which then agglomerate into sheets that make up the plaque found in diseased Islets.

The form of IAPP found in humans, dogs, cats and monkeys spontaneously polymerizes in this way — and, he noted “interestingly, it is these species that spontaneously develop Type II diabetes.”

In contrast the form found in mice and rats doesn't polymerize — and these species don't get the disease. In 1996, Butler's lab showed that if genes for human IAPP were inserted in mice, they would get the disease.

Initially, these mice developed the disease without the characteristic amyloid plaques, but in a 1999 refinement of the earlier experiment, Butler introduced the genes into an obese strain of mice — Type II diabetes sufferers tend to obesity — which subsequently developed diabetes with plaque. (Lean strains given the gene had the disease without plaques).

The plaque is harmless to living cells. However, in another series of 1999 experiments described in the article, Butler showed that short fibrils — 50 to 100 IAPP molecules long — could



Peter Butler

rupture intracellular membranes in cells, causing spontaneous cell death.

“We have a situation where the precursor substance, IAPP, is innocuous. If it is present in quantity, it begins to form fibrils, which become dangerous when they reach a certain length, and kill the cell they are part of. When the cell dies, they are left behind, continuing to grow. The longer fibrils, which turn into sheets, are then harmless to

the adjoining cells,” Butler said.

Butler has named these deadly short fibrils “ISTAPES” (for intermediate size toxic amyloid particles).

Butler said he believes that further research may demonstrate parallels with other plaque-forming diseases, in particular, Alzheimer's. There, the plaques are built of a different peptide — “but there is reason to believe a similar mechanism may be operating.”

Butler, who is now chief of the division of endocrinology & diabetes in the Keck School Department of Medicine, is starting to use his insights into the action of ISTAPES to formulate therapeutic strategies.

Which raises the question: will the 3rd edition of “Diabetes Mellitus: A Fundamental and Clinical Text” contain an account of revolutionary new therapy for the disease developed at the Keck School based on the concept of killer ISTAPES?

—Eric Mankin

## OT: Center aims to offer insight into optimal balance of work, play and leisure

Continued from Page 1

sports, read, build and decorate homes, prepare meals — activities that exceed mere survival and give our lives purpose and meaning. This occupational drive is as significant to defining human beings as language, culture, morality and other uniquely human attributes,” explained Clark. “Our new center will analyze occupation from the age of craft to the computer era and how these occupational changes affect us physically, psychologically and spiritually.”

Clark explained that the center's basic *raison d'être* is to investigate how the flood of cultural and technological changes of the 20th century have affected us as individuals.

“No one has adequately addressed how these changes affect us physically, psychologically, and spiritually. While technology greatly expands our access to information, it also serves to support a

more sedentary lifestyle,” she said.

“We are particularly interested in how the use of technology is altering the occupational landscape of people's daily lives. Painting, watching television or surfing the Internet are all relatively sedentary activities, but the cognitive, social and creative processes related to each are quite different,” said Clark. “Our research will explore these differences and suggest how people can find greater levels of health and life satisfaction through their everyday activities within the realities of modern society.”

With 6,000 square feet of classroom, research and laboratory space, the center will combine education and research activities with occupational therapy services for the local community, including “lifestyle redesign,” the process of customizing an individual's routines of daily activities to maximize efficiency and satisfaction.

The department's faculty practice will maintain an office at the center to coordinate community-based occupational therapy services for individual clients and social service agencies in the neighborhood.

In addition to interdisciplinary research and on-site occupational therapy, center activities will include professional seminars and distance learning programs for occupational therapists and scientists around the world.

“We hope to be able to offer people insights into the kinds of optimal balances of work, rest and leisure activities. The idea is to give people access to make more informed decisions about how they spend their time,” said Shanti Blanton, director of development and communications for the department.

Finally, Clark said the proximity of the center to the Occupational Therapy House — the

department's special-interest housing program — will support a unique educational model where students can study and practice in the area in which they live. OT House, as it is known, supports numerous volunteer projects, including a horticultural therapy garden for a local women's shelter and arts and crafts program for low-income neighbors.

—Paul Dingsdale

## Y2K: Top tips include backing up your computer data

Continued from Page 1

other equipment functioning in case of a blackout; others only have emergency generators that power lights and fire alarms; others have no generators at all. Sixteen of the 22 buildings on campus have generators of some kind, he said.

Researchers and other staff members concerned about backup power for their critical research equipment are invited to contact USC facilities and administrative representatives (*see box page 4*).

Pitassi and other staff members working on the Y2K problem suggested that employees, students and others on campus not only back up their computer data, but turn off and unplug their machines over the holiday break just in case of a power surge. “But I'd advise that anyway to save energy,” Pitassi said.

Hospital workers are most concerned about a

combination of challenges for emergency rooms that may worsen the Y2K worries: influenza cases and drunken party-goers.

“When you compound a bad flu season with the biggest party you've ever seen, it could be a problem,” said Darlene Isbell, assistant director of emergency medical services with the Los Angeles County Dept. of Health Services. Public millennium celebrations within the nearby central Los Angeles area are expected to attract close to 100,000 people, campus officials added.

LAC+USC Medical Center will scale back on elective surgeries, but not clinic visits around the new year, Isbell said.

John Casagrande, clinical associate professor at USC/Norris, said the center has no plans to advise patients to avoid the holiday for procedures. “We historically have a decline in our census

around Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's,” he said.

On the financial side, Jeff Huffman, professor, president and chief executive officer of USC Care, warned that health service providers could expect to see a slowdown in payments from insurers in early 2000 due to computer issues.

Y2K coordinators and campus officials said planning for potential problems at the end of the year is a good idea, even if nothing out of the ordinary happens. “We should be talking about these issues anyway,” Pitassi said. “An earthquake will be in our future, sometime. The preparations we're doing now will help us then.”

—Alicia Di Rado

For online campus Y2K updates, links to campus Y2K coordinators, Y2K software downloads or a survival brochure, go to [www.usc.edu/y2k](http://www.usc.edu/y2k)

### HSC Weekly

USC: *Time Magazine's* College of the Year 2000

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Editor: Jon Nalick  
Executive Director of Public Relations:  
Brenda Maceo  
Vice President,  
University Public Relations: Martha Harris

Contributors: Paul Dingsdale, Alicia Di Rado, Alfred Kildow, Brenda Maceo, Eric Mankin, Jon Nalick, Lori Oliwenstein, LaCarol Pratt, Tarun Raison, Richard Stone, Mary Ellen Stumpf and Carol Varma

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

# The birds, bees and retirees:

## In age of Viagra, topic of sex after 60 is less taboo

After undergoing bladder cancer treatments that included the surgical removal of his prostate, Elliott Fuss, 72, was dismayed to learn the operation eliminated his ability to have sex.

"I was so frustrated after the surgery and chemotherapy. I never told my wife how upsetting it was, but it really took away so much. To me, sex is life. It's a very important part of being human," he said.

While it is impossible to say exactly how many American men and women suffer from sexual dysfunction, a recent University of Chicago study revealed that 31 percent of men and 43 percent of women regularly suffer from some form. Further, older Americans suffer from a disproportionate percentage of sexual dysfunction, usually resulting from medical conditions—or, as in Fuss's case, from the side effects of medical treatment.

Until recently, sexual problems often went untreated because older people avoided talk of such intensely personal matters, even with their physicians. In addition, many physicians are themselves uncomfortable talking about the subject, said Loren Lipson, chief of geriatric medicine in the Keck School Department of Medicine.

With the advent of Viagra, however, the subject became, if not an easy one to discuss, less of a taboo, Lipson said.

"There is this acceptance that it's OK, it's all right to talk about it," Lipson said. "The bottom line is, we know more about sexual dysfunction in seniors than ever before. Most patients can be helped."

Fuss said that, for him, help arrived in the form of a penile implant that fully restored his sexual

function, and adds: "Talking to my doctor about it was the smartest thing I ever did."

"Anyone reluctant to talk about sexual problems with their doctor is living in the dark ages. Why would anybody deny themselves the happiness of a normal sex life at any age?" Fuss asked.

Lipson noted that many elderly people mistakenly believe that loss of sexual function is an inevitable consequence of age and therefore often resign themselves to suffering with conditions that are actually easily treated.

Treating sexual dysfunction in seniors traditionally has been difficult.

"People unwittingly accepted that men would lose their ability to have erections at 60 or 70," said Stuart Boyd, professor and chief of urology at USC University Hospital and the director of the Male Sexual Dysfunction Clinic at USC, "which couldn't be further from the truth."

Seniors' traditional reticence when it comes to sexual topics can partly be explained by a prevailing attitude among many older people that private matters should remain private. But sexual subjects are especially taboo to many seniors because we are an "ageist" society that refuses to acknowledge that seniors have sexual feelings, Lipson said.

Erika Banks, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, said the most common sexual problems for women over 60 include vaginal dryness and loss of libido—symptoms usually triggered by the onset of menopause.

Banks says that the use of water-soluble lubricants offers some relief for the problem of vagi-

See **SEX**, Page 4

# Police officer siblings head home after one gives the other a kidney

University Hospital hosted a press conference Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, announcing the release of Los Angeles Police Officer John James Mungia, the recipient of a donor kidney transplant from his sister, fellow L.A. Police Officer Melissa Mungia.

Officers from the Los Angeles Police Department's Hollenbeck Division, gathered in numbers at the hospital to show their support.

After an eight-hour operation on Dec. 3—performed by surgeon Rick Selby, and a team of surgeons using the latest laproscopic procedures—Melissa was released Monday.

A nationwide shortage of organs meant that a live donor transplant was the only option after John experienced kidney failure in November of 1998, explained Mohammed El-Shahawy, medical director, Kidney Transplant Program.

So up stepped John's younger sister Melissa with an offer to donate one of her kidneys. When tests showed that the two siblings shared five of the six commonalities needed for a



Seated from left: Officer John James Mungia, Mohammed El-Shahawy, Melissa Mungia and Rick Selby discuss the transplant operation with the media.

transplant, Melissa said she didn't hesitate for a second.

The relatively short recovery period following the laproscopic removal of her kidney means that Melissa hopes to return to duty in the Rampart Division in January.

Her brother plans to resume his duties with the Hollenbeck Division in March.

John Mungia, the officers' father, who is a 27-year LAPD homicide detective, told reporters at the press conference that this was the proudest day of his life—surpassing the day his two children told him they were following into his footsteps into the police force.

—Paul Dingsdale

## AWARDS AVAILABLE

Deadlines are looming for numerous research grants and awards, listed above, worth millions of dollars. For more information, contact Nicole Garcia the Development Office at x22358.

Foundation	Announcement	Eligibility	Funder's Deadline	USC Deadline	Purpose	Application Process
American Association For Cancer Research, Inc.	2000 AACR Career Development Awards. Two year grant @ \$50K per year.	No restrictions on national citizenship, national residency. Available to junior tenure-track scientists, in the first or second year of an Assistant Professorship.	December 15, 1999	December 15, 1999	To foster cancer research.	Each candidate must be nominated by an AACR member and complete an application. Applications available to download at: <a href="http://www.aacr.org">http://www.aacr.org</a>
American Association For Cancer Research, Inc.	The Gertrude B. Elton Cancer Research Award. One year grant to provide \$30K.	Tenure track scientist at the level of Assistant Professor.	December 15, 1999	December 15, 1999	To foster meritorious basic, clinical, or translational cancer research.	Each candidate must be nominated by an AACR member and complete an application. Applications available to download at: <a href="http://www.aacr.org">http://www.aacr.org</a>
American Association For Cancer Research, Inc.	1999 AACR Research Fellowships. One, two, or three year grant of \$30K per year.	No restrictions on national citizenship, national residency. Postdoc or clinical fellows for at least two, but not more than five years.	December 15, 1999	December 15, 1999	To offer salary support to foster meritorious cancer research by young scientists.	Each candidate must be nominated by an AACR member and complete an application. Applications available to download at: <a href="http://www.aacr.org">http://www.aacr.org</a>
Burroughs Wellcome Fund	2000 Emerging Infectious Diseases. Two Scholar Awards in Molecular Parasitology @ \$425K over five years and Four New Investigator Awards in Molecular Parasitology @ \$210K over three years.	Must be citizen or permanent resident of the U.S. or Canada, must have MD or Ph.D. degree.	January 18, 2000	December 18, 1999	The goal is to foster the development and productivity of scientists who will bring new ways of thinking and new experimental approaches to the study of parasitic diseases.	Institutions nominate one candidate for each award- work with Scientific Affairs: <a href="http://www.bwfund.org">http://www.bwfund.org</a>
Burroughs Wellcome Fund	2000 Emerging Infectious Diseases. New Initiatives in Malaria Research. 1. \$400K @ four years. 2. \$100K @ two years.	Must be citizen or permanent resident of the U.S. or Canada, must have MD or Ph.D. degree and hold a tenure-track faculty appointment.	January 18, 2000	December 18, 1999	1. To support studies that bring new ways of thinking and new experimental approaches to malaria research. 2. To support feasibility studies and pilot work that will underpin higher risk projects in malaria.	Institutions may nominate up to two candidates- work with Scientific Affairs: <a href="http://www.bwfund.org">http://www.bwfund.org</a>
Burroughs Wellcome Fund	2000 Emerging Infectious Diseases. Three Scholar Awards in Molecular Pathogenic Mycology @ \$425K over five years and three New Investigator Awards in Pathogenic Mycology @ \$210K over three years.	Must be citizen or permanent resident of the U.S. or Canada, must have MD or Ph.D. degree.	January 18, 2000	December 18, 1999	To foster the development and productivity of scientists who will bring new ways of thinking and new experimental approaches to the study of disease-causing fungi.	Institutions nominate one candidate for each award- work with Scientific Affairs: <a href="http://www.bwfund.org">http://www.bwfund.org</a>
Burroughs Wellcome Fund	2000 Interfaces between the Physical/Chemical/Computational Sciences and the Biological Sciences. Awards from \$150K per year to \$500K per year for five years.	U.S. and Canadian institutions that grant doctoral degrees are invited to propose predoc or postdoc training programs.	April 10, 2000	March 10, 2000	To support the development of interdisciplinary training programs for graduate and postdoc students coming from quantitative and theoretical backgrounds so they can bring different approaches and new ideas into the biological arena.	The medical school may submit only one application - work with Scientific Affairs. <a href="http://www.bwfund.org">http://www.bwfund.org</a>
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation	2000 Doris Duke Clinical Scientist Development Awards for Junior Faculty & Clinical Research Fellows. Awards funded up to five years each. Clinical Fellow total award is \$95K. Junior Faculty will receive \$100K per year. DDCF expects to fund up to 15 awards.	Research fellows and junior faculty members. Applicants must be selected by the dean of a school. DDCF will accept two applications per disease area (cardiovascular diseases, cancer, AIDS, and sickle cell anemia and other blood disorders) from each institution.	LOI due December 15, 1999. Proposals due January 18, 2000.	December 18, 1999	To help prepare and support new investigators with an MD or MD/PhD, as they begin their careers as independent clinical researchers. The program is limited to the development of researchers in cardiovascular diseases, cancer, AIDS, and sickle cell anemia and other blood disorders.	Institution nominated, the foundation will accept two applications per disease area - work with Scientific Affairs.

# USC enjoys fruits of partnership with 110-year old Hollenbeck Home

California's first retirement home also is the first to partner with USC physicians and health professionals.

Tucked among the houses and bungalows of Boyle Avenue, the Hollenbeck Home spreads across more than eight acres, carrying the genteel air of another time. And it should: The nearly 200-resident retirement home was established in 1890.

That long track record and high level of care, as well as its proximity to the Health Science Campus, has made the home an ideal partner for USC's efforts in geriatrics.

Now underway for more than a year, the partnership between the home and USC pivots on the involvement of Loren Lipson, chief of the division of geriatrics medicine and director of the USC program at Hollenbeck. The partnership brings USC doctors, therapists, dentists, pharmacists and other health care specialists to Hollenbeck, and will provide a place for USC students, fellows and residents to get state-of-the-art training in geriatrics.

"We have wanted to partner with the

Hollenbeck Home for over a decade because of its unique history, quality of patient care and the eagerness of its leadership to bring new ideas and approaches to the care of residents, both in retirement housing and skilled nursing," Lipson said. "The opportunity finally presented itself, and we are most pleased."

Jennifer DeVoll, director of marketing and admissions at Hollenbeck, said several USC health professionals already visit the home regularly, seeing senior citizens in its residential living area—for the home's most independent residents—as well as assisted residential living area and skilled nursing halls, for patients who need more one-on-one help.

"Dr. Lipson acts as a liaison and opens doors," DeVoll said. "He gets our residents appropriately hooked up with doctors and other care providers."

Lipson also has involved several early Alzheimer's disease patients in clinical trials of the drug donepezil, known by the trade name Aricept. He presents seminars to residents, as well as lectures



USC health professionals visit the home regularly, seeing senior citizens in its residential living area—for the home's most independent residents—as well as assisted residential living area and skilled nursing halls, for patients who need more help.

to staff members, on topics such as managing pain.

Dentists from the School of Dentistry also work with the home, seeing patients for checkups and providing dental health information.

In addition, William Bondareff, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, visits the home regularly to work with elderly patients, many of whom suffer from depression or forms of dementia.

Medication and behavioral management often helps such patients.

In the future, Hollenbeck Home leaders would like to offer their residents a sort of "one-stop medical shop" through USC. Once they arrange for patient insurance coverage by a health maintenance organization allied with USC doctors, they will be able to offer their residents a continuum of care by USC physicians and specialists, said Morris Shockley, Hollenbeck's admin-

istrator.

"People are living longer, and the question of how to deal with them is an issue," Shockley noted. "We're looking to implement prevention measures, and having excellent doctors to work with is a great advantage. This affiliation is a wonderful thing to have."

Geriatrics is a growing field nationwide, as the nation's population ages. Today, nursing homes house about 1.5 million men and women, and in the next century, record numbers of people will reach their 80s, 90s and 100s. Yet, relatively few medical students get a chance to intensely learn how to meet the needs of the elderly.

Lipson would like to nurture Hollenbeck as a "teaching nursing home," where students of geriatrics will see residents for their health needs.

"By being a teaching nursing home, Hollenbeck would have students here, walking the halls, talking to people and monitoring charts," Shockley said. "It would keep us on the cutting edge of medical science."

—Alicia Di Rado

## When it comes to Y2K, be prepared

Staff members are preparing for Y2K at the Keck School by looking at backup power needs for important research equipment. The Space Advisory Committee's executive committee (Philip Harris, Richard Lolley, John Nicoloff and Fermin Vigil) is working with Gary Pitassi to identify such equipment, especially ultra-low temperature freezers.

Investigators with freezers or other critical equipment are encouraged to send e-mail to Harris at [pharris@hsc.usc.edu](mailto:pharris@hsc.usc.edu) or Pitassi at [gpitassi@busaff.usc.edu](mailto:gpitassi@busaff.usc.edu), or call Vigil at 442-1842.

When calling or e-mailing, researchers should include:

- Type of equipment (such as ultra-low temperature freezer)
- Location of equipment (building number and room)
- Name of person to contact about equipment and a phone number
- Name of person available to contact on Jan. 1 and home phone number

Inspections will begin the week of Dec. 13, and researchers are asked to submit information as soon as possible.

## SEX: Dysfunction usually treatable

Continued from Page 3  
nal dryness. More significantly, the inevitable drop of estrogen in the body with menopause and the common sexual problems that can result from this drop can usually be reversed with hormone replacement therapy.

"We can replace those hormones and help people feel normal again. A lot of women underestimate the effects of estrogen deprivation on sexual function," she said.

Banks said that loss of libido and other changes in sexual function are only considered a problem when they interfere with the normal enjoyment of life. For example, an elderly woman who has lost her partner may find the loss of interest in sex non-problematic.

According to Banks, more and more women are actively fighting the loss of sexual function today than in years

past because they see it as something that is no longer inevitable.

For men, the most common problem involves the inability to achieve or maintain an erection.

"Probably 100 percent of the cases can be treated," Boyd said. "It just depends on how many hoops you're willing to jump through, how many options you're willing to try."

Viagra is the most common treatment for sexual dysfunction among men. Other treatments include counseling, sex therapy, eliminating alcohol, warm baths or medicine for arthritis and changing blood pressure medications. In some cases, penile problems can be treated with microsurgery, medications, injections, commercial preparations, vacuum erectile devices and implanted prostheses.

—Jon Nalick

## Calendar

### Friday, Dec. 10

3:30 p.m. "Cooperation of Diabetogenic CD8+ T Cells and Macrophages in Islet Destruction: Role of Nitric Oxide," Tatyana Gurlo, USC. PSC 104. Info: 442-1451

### Monday, Dec. 13

3 p.m. "Neurobiology of Aging Chalk Talk," Hadi Zanjani and Cheryl Van Der Zaag, USC. Hedco Aud., UPC. Info: (213) 740-1756

### Tuesday, Dec. 14

8 a.m. Department of Neurology Grand Rounds. "Stroke," Glenn Fischberg, USC. Troy Room, Univ. Hospital. Info: 226-2639

8:45 a.m. New Staff Orientation Part 1. KAM 308. Info: 442-2579

Noon. Cancer Center Grand Rounds. "AIDS-Related Malignancies – What Have We Learned?" Alexandra Levine, USC. Norris Tower 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 865-0800

12:15 p.m. Tuesday Speakers' Forum. "Improving Care for Depression," Kenneth Wells, UCLA. Hoffman Hall, Hastings Aud. Info: 226-4945

### Thursday, Dec. 16

9 a.m. New Staff Orientation Part 2. KAM 308. Info: 442-2579

### Friday, Dec. 17

8:30 a.m. "Transcriptional Regulation of Alpha-EnaC Expression by Signal Transduction Pathways and Redox Potential:

Implication in Health and Disease," David Ann, USC. GNH 11-900. Info: 442-1217

### Monday, Dec. 20

Noon Seminar. "Role of the Mammalian CCAAT-Binding Factor CBE/NF-Y in Transcription," Sankar Maity, Univ. of Texas. Norris Tower 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Conf. Ctr. Info: 442-1145

2-5 p.m. Care by Sharing. Bag Assembly Party to Package Items for Homeless Women. Maria Ramirez, USC. KAM Lobby. Info: 442-2554

### Tuesday, Dec. 21

8 a.m. Department of Neurology Grand Rounds. "Neuromuscular Case Presentation," Richard Rison, USC. Troy Room, Univ. Hospital. Info: 226-2639

8:45 a.m. New Staff Orientation Part 1. KAM 308. Info: 442-2579

12:15 p.m. "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Clinical Case Presentation," John Briere, USC. Hoffman Hall, Hastings Aud. Info: 226-4945

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 [hscwkly@hsc.usc.edu](mailto: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.

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

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