

on main campus

Geriatrics enters stealth mode

Armed with a new \$2 million Donald W. Reynolds Foundation Grant, the medical school's geriatrics department plans to transcend the invisible barriers separating the fields of medicine in an approach termed "stealth geriatrics."

"What most of us in geriatrics have understood for a long time is that the principles of care that we believe in are not unique or only supposed to be applied in older populations," said Dr. Lisa Granville, the principal investigator for the Reynolds Grant.

RAY STANYARD



At FSU, medical students are learning to find geriatrics where they least expect it.

For example, a common tool in geriatrics is functional assessment, focusing on a patient's ability to perform tasks such as walking unaided or driving. While geriatricians routinely employ functional assessment, the concept applies to patients throughout the lifespan. Establishing quality communication between a doctor and patient is another practice emphasized in geriatrics, but that all physicians should regard as essential.

Integrating these principles across the four-year curriculum will help students develop a holistic understanding of health care and enable them to promote overall well-being, Granville said. In part, this goal will be accomplished by working with the clinical faculty in years three and four, thereby extending the geriatric training to more than 800 physicians throughout Florida.

FSU is one of 10 medical schools receiving Reynolds Foundation grants this year. The Foundation launched its Aging and Quality of Life Program in 1996 with the goal of improving the quality of life for America's elderly by preparing physicians to provide better care for them.

The Reynolds Grant also will fund two mini-fellowships to enable faculty at the Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare Family Practice Residency Program to create a comprehensive, integrated curriculum in geriatrics. In addition, second- and third-year residents from TMH will work with first- and second-year FSU medical students to promote geriatric health and further their geriatrics education.

—Lindsay Potvin

Young school, high praise

Before it had even graduated its second class, the FSU College of Medicine already was garnering national attention for the quality of its innovative, community-based teaching model.

An editorial in the February issue of *Academic Medicine*, the journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges, praised two universities – FSU and Harvard – for the unique way they are providing clinical training for their medical students.

"The model being employed by the Florida State University College of Medicine and the pilot project underway at Harvard Medical School and the Cambridge Health Care Alliance are examples of the kinds of innovative approaches for teaching clinical medicine in ambulatory settings that are badly needed," wrote *Academic Medicine* editor Dr. Michael Whitcomb.

Like Whitcomb, Dr. Kenneth Ludmerer is impressed with FSU's approach. For historical perspective on medical education in the United States, Ludmerer, a two-time Pulitzer Prize nominee, has few peers.

"This school has a strong mission toward service with the community and reaching out to the various underserved populations, both in terms of providing care, and in terms of attracting individuals from those groups to enter medicine in the first place," Ludmerer said during a November visit in which he delivered the first address given in the medical school's new auditorium.

Having first visited the College of Medicine when it was just being established five years earlier, Ludmerer was able to see how the nation's newest medical school had evolved.

"I am very impressed with what I have seen in the new Florida State medical school in terms of the quality of students, quality of faculty, the curriculum and the educational methods being used," he said.

A professor of medicine and history at Washington University in St. Louis, Ludmerer is the author of *Learning to Heal: The Development of American Medical Education* and *Time to Heal: American Medical Education from the Turn of the Century to the Era of Managed Care*.

Both books were nominated for Pulitzers, and *Time to Heal* has been called "the most important work in medical education since the [1910] Flexner report."

NANCY KINNALLY

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The east wing of the research building was the last phase of the College of Medicine complex to be completed.

Grand Rounds, lectures and special events are held in the medical school's auditorium, which seats 300.

Farewell to plywood and scaffolding

Completion of building opens new avenues in research

RAY STANYARD

The final phase of the College of Medicine complex was completed in March when construction crews put the finishing touches on the 54,000-square-foot east wing of the research building.

The building now houses 48 research labs and a lab animal facility, as well as several core labs that are available to the university at large. These shared facilities include a flow cytometry lab, a biomedical proteomics lab, and a confocal microscopy lab.

Flow cytometry isolates individual cells and enables researchers to tag and sort them in order to perform experiments. The medical school's flow cytometry lab is the only one at FSU.

In the proteomics lab, mass spectrometers and more highly specialized instruments enable researchers to identify and analyze proteins and their functions. Directed by Ewa Bienkiewicz, the proteomics lab is the most comprehensive of its kind on campus.

The confocal microscope produces 3-D images of subcellular components. These images can be produced in a time-lapse series, enabling scientists to observe changes in cells and tissues as they occur.

Maroun Beyrouthy, a doctoral student in biological science, is studying the YY1 protein and its role in the cell cycle. Working under Myra Hurt, associate dean for research and graduate

programs, Beyrouthy examines specially prepared cell lines from cervical carcinomas under the confocal microscope, which allows him to see the location of YY1 at various stages of cell growth and division.

The proximity and quality of the medical school's core labs has made for more efficient and effective research, said Beyrouthy.

"All these things make us enjoy research more," he said.

Hengli Tang from the College of Arts & Sciences, whose research involves the hepatitis C virus, is one of the FSU researchers using the flow cytometry lab most extensively. The flow cytometry and confocal microscopy labs are directed by Ruth Didier.

"I have all good things to say about the lab," Tang said. "The lab and the equipment are kept in top, sparkling shape. Ruth has been wonderful in training my students and assisting with our experiments. It is an essential part of my lab's research."

The 4,300-square-foot lab animal facility is scheduled to open on the building's lower level in August.

"The college's vivarium represents a significant increase in the total amount of animal facility space on campus," said David Balkwill, chair of the medical school's biomedical sciences department. "This should be a big help with the university's initiative to secure more funding from the National Institutes of Health."



RAY STANYARD

Dr. Todd Patterson, left, and Dr. Thomas Truman, neonatologists at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital, demonstrate use of the RetCam II to FSU medical students Tristan Altbuch and Maggie Davis.

"There are an amazing number of students involved. There were over 700 dancers alone, not including everyone else that was involved and didn't dance," said medical student Shannon Hill, who, along with her classmate George Barrio, represented the College of Medicine and its Pediatrics Interest Group.

Previous Dance Marathon events raised money to purchase 10 apnea monitors and a retinal camera called "Ret-Cam II" for the TMH pediatric unit.

Apnea monitors measure respiration and cardiac activity and give an audible alarm should any sudden change occur. The monitors, no longer covered by Medicaid, allow parents to take at-risk babies home safely several days earlier than they could otherwise.

"And, obviously, the home environment is much better for the babies," said TMH neonatologist Dr. Todd Patterson.

The retinal camera records detailed images that can be transmitted to specialists anywhere in the country. It is often used to detect retinal problems in premature babies or to determine whether a baby has suffered inflicted head trauma.

"If our retinal specialists want to get added input or a recommendation for treatment, it's great to be able to send pictures from the Ret-Cam II to places like the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in seconds. It's as easy as sending an e-mail attachment," said TMH neonatologist Dr. Thomas Truman.

An exhausting weekend for FSU students is helping newborn babies at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital have a healthy start in life.

The FSU Dance Marathon, which kept hundreds of students on their feet for 32 consecutive hours last February, raised more than \$270,000. Proceeds were split evenly between the Children's Miracle Network and the College of Medicine's pediatric outreach efforts.

FSU earmarked its share for improvements at TMH, where many College of Medicine students receive their pediatrics training. TMH is using its share this year to help relocate and renovate its pediatrics and neonatal intensive care units. That's rewarding news for the College of Medicine students who helped plan the event.

Donations to FSU Dance Marathon are accepted throughout the year at dm.fsu.edu.