UCM files for prestigious Magnet recognition

AMY ALDERMAN STAFF WRITER

The University of Chicago Medicine took a major step toward achieving Magnet recognition by submitting a 288-page Web application on June 1 to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC).

This represents the next phase in the formal application process, which officially began in May 2016 when UChicago Medicine filed a letter of intent and began preparing its application.

The ANCC is a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association, and Magnet recognition is the nation’s top level, or gold standard, of nursing excellence. It is a reflection of nursing and an organization that supports and empowers its nursing staff to the highest degree to deliver excellence in patient care.

Only a small percentage of health care institutions in the U.S. achieve Magnet status. Accreditation is granted for a four-year period and recognizes excellence in nursing practice, the unique contributions made by nurses in improving patient outcomes and an organization’s commitment to the professional practice of nursing.

Read more about our journey to nursing excellence at the newly launched nursing website, nursing.uchospitals.edu.

$100 million gift establishes Duchossois Family Institute to develop ‘new science’ focused on optimizing health

JOHN EASTON STAFF WRITER

A Chicago-area family with a deep commitment to supporting science and medicine is giving $100 million to establish The Duchossois Family Institute at the University of Chicago. The gift from The Duchossois Group Inc. Chairman and CEO Craig Duchossois, his wife, Janet Duchossois, and The Duchossois Family Foundation will support development of a “new science of wellness” aimed at preserving health and complementing medicine’s traditional focus on disease treatment.

Their investment will help build an infrastructure that stimulates research, data integration and clinical applications, while educating the next generation of young physicians and students in this new science.

By providing resources and research infrastructure, The Duchossois Family Institute:

- Harnessing the Microbiome and Immunity for Human Health will allow faculty and students to focus on preventing disease by optimizing the body’s defenses and finding new ways to maintain well-being.
- With the embedded expertise of the University’s Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, they will work aggressively to bring breakthroughs to market through partnerships with industry, venture capitalists, government agencies, like-minded philanthropists and the public.
- “The Duchossois Family Institute will draw on the creativity and skill of University researchers across many fields in bringing new perspectives to medical science, oriented toward making an impact that greatly benefits human lives,” said University of Chicago President Robert J. Zimmer.

Milestones set for approval of trauma center

This is part of a series of reports in At the Forefront about the University of Chicago Medicine’s historic transformation into a Level I adult Trauma Center. Trauma work team leaders, working with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), have established the milestones that will lead to approval of the University of Chicago Medical Center (UCMC) as a Level I adult Trauma Center next year. Here’s the timeline.

- **January 8, 2018** — The new, more modernized Emergency Department (ED), is scheduled to go live. When trauma services launch a few months later, most victims of trauma will begin their treatment in the ED; however, their care will involve clinicians and services beyond those in the ED.
- **March 1, 2018 (tentative)** — The Medical Center will submit a completed trauma action plan to the IDPH. This details the Medical Center’s plans for managing care of trauma patients.
- **April 13, 2018 (tentative)** — By this date, IDPH representatives will conduct a site visit to the hospital to certify that it has met the requirements for providing adult trauma care. This is the final step for IDPH approval of UCMC as a trauma center.
- **May 1, 2018** — Pending IDPH approval, UCMC will begin treating adults who have suffered injuries from serious falls, motor vehicle crashes, major head injuries, violent crimes, and other emergencies.

Seventh grade charter school kids study brains, bones in Mason lab

“I decided that I wanted to pick his mind, to get the sound of his voice,” Mason said. “I was surprised both by what they knew, such as the prefrontal cortex, and what they didn’t know, like Parkinson’s disease. They spent the morning of May 16th with about 40 young students. Some dissected brains while Mason’s team explained how this miraculous organ works. There was also a session in the next room on bones.

“It was invigorating and challenging,” Mason said. “I was surprised both by what they knew, such as the prefrontal cortex, and what they didn’t know, like Parkinson’s disease. But it was fun. I learned a lot. We’re going to fine tune this process and do it again, and we’re going to hit it out of the park.”
New website aims to improve colon cancer screening rates

**KAREN E. KIM, MD, SPEAKS AT THE MIDWEST HEALTH EQUITY CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO.**

**BSD researchers kick off InnoFest 2017**

**KATHLEEN FERRARO**

Three University of Chicago physicians were among the scientists who presented their latest research and its potential real-world impact to kick off the recent UChicago Innovation Fest. InnoFest is a month-long celebration of entrepreneurship, leading-edge research and scholarship at UChicago.

“Events like this are so important to get the word out about new discoveries and new commercialization of ideas coming from the University of Chicago,” said medical oncologist Jason Luke, MD.

Luke is using genetic information to improve cancer immunotherapies, or treatments that harness a patient’s immune system to fight a disease. His research identifies a cancer patient's gene expressions, or the immune genes that are “turned on” in response to a tumor. The resulting genetic profile allows doctors to select the best treatment for that individual.

This technique can scale into large clinical trial programs on gene expression that allow for personalized cancer treatment on a larger scale. Pharmaceutical companies can create drugs better tailored to certain kinds of patients, and as a result, people can benefit from more customized treatment options.

“We want people to take home the message that personalized cancer immunotherapy is possible, and more broadly than that, should inform the development of new cancer immunotherapy drugs in the future,” Luke said.

By 2050, the population of people over the age of 65 will outweigh those under 18 for the first time, explained Megan Huisings-Schee, MD, a geriatrician and palliative medicine specialist. Because of this ever-growing population of frail elders, she created EngAGE, a technology platform adapted for seniors that promotes physical rehabilitation and social engagement.

Neuroscientist Richard Kraig, PhD, MD, closed out the night with a new brain disease prevention method. Kraig’s tool manipulates eosinophils, or particles released from cells, to repair structures in the nervous system.

“This will help keep the brain healthy, longer — protecting against conditions like multiple sclerosis, migraines, Alzheimer's disease, and more,” Kraig said.

With financial support from the Institute for Translational Medicine (ITM) and entrepreneurial support from the Polsky Center, Kraig started Seurat Therapeutics, a company dedicated to adapting his technology to treatments that can one day help patients.

This annual festival is led by UChicago’s top leaders in innovation, including the Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, ITM, Social Enterprise Initiative at Chicago Booth, and Office of Research, Innovation and National Laboratories. Innovation Fest 2017 is sponsored by the University of Chicago Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies.

‘Genes matter’: Study examines breast cancer mortality gap

**JOHN EASTON**

Although the odds of developing breast cancer are nearly identical for black and white women, black women are 42 percent more likely to die from the disease.

This mortality gap — driven by social and environmental, as well as biological factors — continues to persist.

A large, multi-institutional study, published in May in *JAMA Oncology,* begins to unravel the genetic variations and tumor biological differences between black and white women with breast cancer.

The study is the first “ancestry-based comprehensive analysis of multiple platforms of genomic and proteomic data of its kind,” the authors note.

“People have long associated breast cancer mortality in black women with poverty, or stress, or lack of access to care, but our results show that much of the increased risk for black women can be attributed to tumor biological differences, which are probably genetically determined,” said study author Olufunmilayo Olopade, MD, Director of the Center for Clinical Cancer Genetics.

Findings from this study could lead to more personalized risk assessment for women of African heritage and hasten the development of novel approaches designed to diagnose specific subtypes of aggressive breast cancers early and treat them effectively.

One new finding is that black women with hormone receptor positive, HER2-negative breast cancer had a higher risk-of-recurrence score than white women. The study also confirmed that black patients were typically diagnosed at a younger age and were more likely to develop aggressive breast-cancer subtypes.

“The good news,” Olopade said, “is that as we learn more about these genetic variations, we can combine that information with clinical data to stratify risk and better predict recurrences — especially for highly treatable cancers — and develop interventions to improve treatment outcomes.”

‘Genes matter,’ she added. ‘This is a foot in the door for precision medicine, for scientifically targeted treatment.’
Nurses Week celebrates decades of dedication

AMY ALDERMAN  STAFF WRITER

The University of Chicago Medicine community honored the high quality of care our nurses deliver to patients every day during the 2017 Nurses Week celebration May 8-12. From massages to in-unit celebrations and the beloved traditions of the Blessing of the Hands and the Nursing Excellence Awards Ceremony, there were many ways peers, colleagues and UCM’s community took time to acknowledge our nurses. See Why I’m a Nurse video at https://bcove.video/2pXDj4.

Full circle

MOLLY WOULFE  STAFF WRITER

A high school student was diagnosed with celiac disease, a gluten-triggered autoimmune disorder, her physician provided advice, but the teenager’s symptoms continued to persist. Then she consulted dietician Lori Welstead, MS, RD, LDN, at the University of Chicago Medicine. Welstead, a graduate of Illinois University State (ISU), explained how small dietary changes could minimize gluten exposure at home and in restaurants. That one-hour appointment changed the girl’s life. She went on to earn a degree in nutrition counseling that a nutrition consult made such a positive difference for this patient,” Welstead said, “and to know you for what you do,” the new dietician recently wrote in an email to Welstead, who was thrilled. “It was an honor to hear from a former patient,” said Welstead, “and to know that a nutrition consult made such a positive impact and improved her quality of life.”

Help us acknowledge more colleagues who are transforming lives in big and small ways every day. Nominate them at home.uchospitals.edu/difference. You can also view our Making a Difference Every Day photo album on the University of Chicago Medicine Facebook page.

Story ideas or suggestions?

Do you have story ideas or suggestions for At the Frontline? If so, please contact editor Tracey Robinson-English at (773) 702-8527 or send an email to Tracey.Robinson-English@uchospitals.edu. Thank you!

UChicago Medicine and Google team up to use machine learning for better health care

MATT WOOD  STAFF WRITER

The University of Chicago Medicine is collaborating with Google to study ways to use data in electronic medical records, enabling discoveries that could improve the quality of care.

The work focuses on using new machine-learning techniques to create predictive models that could help prevent unplanned hospital readmissions, avoid costly complications and save lives.

“Prediction helps make patient care better. It’s a core component of prevention, and it can also make complex care safer,” said Michael Howell, MD, MPH, Chief Quality Officer at UChicago Medicine and director of the Center for Healthcare Delivery Sciences and Innovation (HDSI).

By combining machine-learning tools pioneered by researchers at Google with UChicago Medicine’s health care predictive modeling expertise, the ongoing collaboration will bring leading technology to bear on real-world health care problems. UChicago Medicine joins Stanford and the University of California, San Francisco, in the effort, collaborating with Google’s machine-learning research team to improve prediction in health care.

Howell, who is a practicing intensive care physician, has been working with predictive and risk factor models for health care for more than 15 years. Yet, he says much of the most valuable information about a patient’s previous medical care is still inaccessible through electronic medical records.

“One of the amazingly frustrating parts of that work has been knowing that we can’t use much of the data in the electronic health record, like doctors’ notes or X-rays,” he said. “Traditional tools of epidemiology and statistics simply can’t use free text or images to create predictive algorithms that could alert physicians and nurses about patients’ risks for problems. But together with Google, we can.”
Beyond the Forefront:

In search of our next generation of women scientists and engineers

GRAYSON DEBOLT

Hundreds of sixth through eighth grade girls throughout the Chicago area recently had a very unconventional Saturday afternoon. Some of them were working with dinosaur bones in a workshop called “Methods in Paleontology” while others were coding their own web comic in the “Web Comic Remix” workshop.

They even had smiles on their faces while sharing how to use particle collisions to infer things we cannot see in the “Particle Detectives” workshop. This experience was part of the annual Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) symposium, a one-day event held in University of Chicago Laboratories, which allows young women from diverse backgrounds opportunities to engage in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) activities.

“By the end of the workshops, [the participants] all have smiles on their faces,” said Jennifer Raaf, PhD, a mentor and Scientist at Fermilab. “They’re really excited and they start asking more questions.”

During the 2017 EYH event on March 25, the participants formed bonds with 21 Chicago-area women STEM role models, including professors, graduate students and industry leaders, who volunteer and hold the title of mentors during the symposium. Some of the mentors included keynote speakers Emily Graslie, Chief Curiosity Correspondent at the Field Museum, Eugenia Cheng, PhD, a scientist in residence at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and board member Sue Levison, a University of Chicago Graduate Program Administrator for the Committee on Genetics, Genomics and Systems Biology.

The symposium is part of a larger movement to encourage more girls from all backgrounds to pursue STEM to expand their career options in often male-dominated fields. The end-game is to turn the tables to make girls in STEM the norm rather than the exception.

2017 DOSAR serves community, despite rain

From all across the UChicago Medicine campus, volunteers poured into communities for the 15th Annual Day of Service and Reflection (DOSAR) on May 20. Rain showers weren’t enough to dampen the enthusiasm of some 269 employees, their families and friends, who tackled cleanup projects to help out 24 nonprofit sites on the South Side.

“This is what service is all about,” said Laf Elmo, Executive Director of Community and External Affairs. “I’m glad to be a part of it.” Here are a few highlights:

The 2017 Comer Children’s Kids’ Fashion Show turned heads and won hearts with young models strutting down the runway to advance the mission of the hospital. The much-anticipated event raised more than $121,000 to fund critical care programs at the hospital. More than 400 adults and children participated in the annual event. Comer Children’s is built upon a rich history of groundbreaking research and excellence in patient care, deeply impacting the children and families it serves in the Chicago area and around the world. Photo provided.

Next Up

JUNE 14: WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY. Give the gift of life by stopping by the Blood Donation Center from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in DCAM 2E, just before the sky bridge to the Center for Care and Discovery. You may also call to make an appointment at ext. 2-6247.

JUNE 25: SHOW YOUR PRIDE at Chicago’s Pride Parade beginning at noon in the Lakeview neighborhood. This year’s theme is “In Vida! Stand Up, Stand Proud!” The event is supported by the University of Chicago Medicine, LGBT+ Resource Group and the Department of Diversity and Inclusion.

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EMPLOYEE EXPRESS NEWS IN BRIEF

Bring on summer with free skin cancer screenings

In partnership with the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Cancer Society, the University of Chicago Medicine is offering FREE SPOTcan® Skin Cancer Screenings from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, June 16, 2017 in DCAM, room 3A. Screening participants will learn:

• Skin cancer risk factors
• How to identify a skin cancer early
• Where skin cancer typically occurs
• Sunscreen education
• Proper sunscreen application
If you do not have a dermatologist and would like to make an appointment for a free skin cancer screening on June 15, please visit www.eventbrite.com. Walk-ins are welcome. Self-parking and valet parking are available for a fee.