Chancellor's Notes

Dr. Larry Hollier

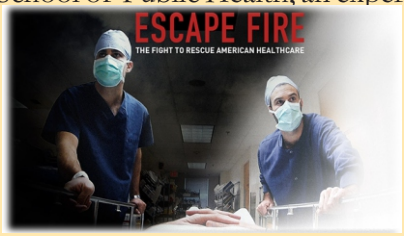
April 5, 2013

Public Health examines health

The LSUHSC School of Public Health hosted a special viewing of the documentary, *Escape Fire: The Fight to Rescue American Healthcare*, yesterday as part of Public Health Week. Sponsored by LPHI, the film sparked a lively

Dr. Richard Culbertson introduces the film

about problems, as well as potential solutions, for improving health care in our country. Moderated by Dr. Richard Culbertson, Professor and Program Director of Health Policy Systems at the LSUHSC School of Public Health, an expert



panel facilitated the exchange of ideas. Panelists included Rebekah Gee, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor, LSUHSC Schools of Public Health and Medicine, Eric Baumgartner, MD, MPH, Director, LPHI Policy and Program Development, and Edward Peters, DMD, SM, ScD, LSUHSC Associate Professor and Program Director of Epidemiology. ■

LSUHSC research discoveries shed light on common STI

Research led by Dr. David Martin, Professor and Chief of Infectious Diseases at LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans, sheds new light on a common Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) that can also increase a woman's risk of premature deliveries and susceptibility to the virus that causes AIDS. The findings are published in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases* and are also highlighted in the prestigious Nature publication, *Nature Reviews*, which reviews research by leading international

Dr. David Martin

Dr. Martin and his group found that a common STI-causing parasite "cultivates" bacteria, changing thinking about which comes first – infection or bacteria. They discovered that there are two unique bacterial communities that are very strongly associated with infection caused by the *trichomonas* parasite. So instead of these unique bacterial communities predisposing a woman to infection as originally thought, the researchers now believe that *trichomonas* takes on the role of a "farmer" by cultivating bacterial communities that are beneficial to it.

Dr. Martin and his group discovered one of these bacterial communities is a new species which they named Mnola because it was discovered here in NOLA. ■

Team Gleason visits LSUHSC Neuroscience Center

Dr. Nicolas Bazan hosted Steve Gleason, the New Orleans Saints player who blocked the Atlanta Falcons' punt in the first game in the Superdome after Hurricane Katrina, and members of Team Gleason at the LSUHSC Neuroscience Center this week. Gleason, diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or ALS, in 2011, and his supporters are dedicated to raising awareness about ALS, inspiring others who are living with it, and working to find a cure.

Dr. Bazan answers a question from Steve Gleason

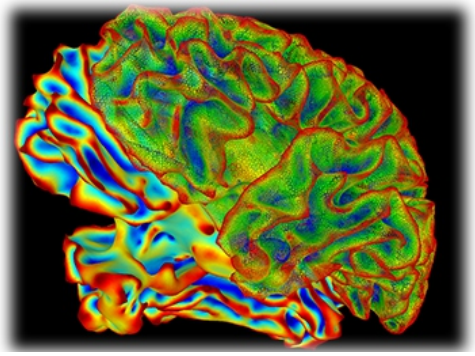
They came to meet the LSUHSC faculty who work in the Neuroscience Center and learn about their research on neurodegenerative diseases like ALS. The LSUHSC Neuroscience Center is known for its innovative approach to the treatment of disorders of the nervous system and the advancement of understanding the mechanisms of disease. ■

LSUHSC research identifies co-factors critical to PTSD development

Research led by Ya-Ping Tang, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Cell Biology and Anatomy at LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans, has shown for the first time that the timely manipulation of a certain gene in the brain during exposure to trauma might prevent the development of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The research is published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Dr. Ya-Ping Tang

The research team conducted a series of experiments using a specific strain of transgenic mice, in which the gene could be turned on and off during exposure to trauma as well as to subsequent stress. Clinically, PTSD may occur immediately following a trauma, but in many cases, a time interval may exist between the trauma and the onset of disease which is triggered by a second stressor. Dr. Tang's team discovered that exposure to trauma and stress was not enough to produce consistent PTSD-like behavior. However, when the gene was turned on during exposure, consistent PTSD-like behavior was observed in all of the behavioral tests.



Once validated in people, these findings may help target potential therapies to prevent or cure this devastating mental disorder. ■

YES Program brings students to LSUHSC to fuel interest in science careers

The pipeline Youth Education in Science Program in Baton Rouge brought students and a teacher from Madison Preparatory Academy to LSU Health Sciences Center today to stimulate and heighten their interest in the sciences, show them what resources are available in Louisiana, and help address health disparities by increasing cultural diversity.

The day included hands-on activities in the Cohn Learning Center and the Klein Center for Advanced Practice with Daryl Lofaso, MEd, RRT, Director of Simulation Operations. After evaluating heart and lung sounds on patient simulators, the students learned about the advantages of simulation technology while getting a first-hand look at the unique resources in the Learning Center. They raced each other on the laparoscopic surgery trainers, and finished up by resuscitating their "patient" in one of the simulated ORs.

Daryl Lofaso runs the code

Meanwhile, LSUHSC Genetics faculty Dr. Fern Tsien and Dr. Paula Gregory arranged activities in one of the MDL labs. With help from Dr. Gregory and Dr. Tracy Dodd, the students learned how to pipette while each took a turn in making a gel to identify the perpetrator in a crime scenario. While the gel ran, David Ward and Dr. Kelley Sherling taught the students some anatomy with organs like the brain, the lungs, the liver. The students donned gloves to touch and hold the organs, while getting answers to their many questions. ■

Dr. Tracy Dodd gives tips on technique