Save the Dates

Mark your calendars for these two events:
Resident Appreciation Day
October 24
University Hospital small cafeteria: Continental breakfast starting at 7 a.m.; cake will be served 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
2013 Beyond the Doctorate Research Day — March 6

Resident Completes Fellowship in Africa

Dr. Katherine Fry, Pediatrics, won a fellowship allowing her to spend July in Kenya on a pediatrics rotation. She worked at the 74-bed Obama Children’s Hospital, dedicated in 2006 by then-Sen. Barack Obama. Dr. Fry helped with rounds, admissions and daily resuscitations and saw several cases of devastating AIDS. Malaria is also rampant in this part of Kenya.

“I saw the whole spectrum of disease, shown with her fiance Eric Wohlford, from mild illness to death,” said Dr. Fry, an Upstate MD/PhD student. “It was a challenging, yet eye-opening experience. I came back with a new appreciation for our system, even though it is far from perfect.”

Residents Volunteer at Screening Day

Dr. Alosh Madala, Urology resident, and Dr. Rakesh Khanna, assistant professor of Urology, conducted free prostate screenings at the “Get Healthy Connected” screening event September 15 at Dr. King Elementary School in Syracuse.

In addition to the prostate cancer screenings, Upstate Breast Care Center staff did mammograms; Upstate ophthalmologist did glaucoma screenings; and Upstate Healthlink staff offered smoking cessation information. “Get Healthy Connected” is a consortium of Central New York health agencies and hospitals.

Poster presented at Geriatrics Society

Dr. Nidhi Bansal, an Internal Medicine resident, presented a poster at the Geriatrics Society annual meeting in Seattle last spring. Her poster, “Diffuse Lewy Body Dementia (DLBD): Misdiagnosed can be life threatening,” was based on the case of a 65-year-old patient who had been treated elsewhere with neuroleptics.

After a detailed geriatric assessment, a diagnosis of DLBD with sensitivity to neuroleptics was made, followed by a new treatment regimen.

The use of neuroleptics has been associated with adverse reactions, increased mortality and shortened survival times in many patients with DLBD. The use of neuroleptics is associated with adverse reactions, increased mortality and shortened survival times in many patients with DLBD. Dr. Bansal’s research was conducted along with Dr. Divesh Manocha, Gastroenterology fellow; and Dr. Shiran Brangman, professor of medicine and Chief of Geriatrics at Upstate.

2012 Excellence in Graduate Medical Education Awards

Each year the GME office solicits nominations for four awards from program directors, nursing and resident peers. This year the GME office was pleased to offer these awards to five very deserving individuals (below). Also, Ms. Mary Phelan, Neurology, was named Program Coordinator of the Year. Dr. Stephen Knoch, Medicine, was named Program Director of the Year, and Ms. Cheri Stone, BMT/AS, received the GME Appreciation Award.

Teaching

Dr. M. Reza Rajabi, Radiology

Dr. Rajabi was recognized for developing several teaching tools, according to Dr. Michele Lai, program director. Dr. Rajabi developed a simulation lab for medical students to teach vascular access, a project being submitted to the Society of Interventional Radiology.

With Dr. Barry Berg, Dr. Rajabi developed a gross anatomy teaching lab for first-year radiology residents. He also received a faculty invitation from the Society of Interventional Radiology to be the coordinator/moderator of the I R-in-training program at this year’s meeting.

Research

Dr. Manika Suryadevara

Pediatric infectious disease fellow

Dr. Suryadevara’s research accomplishments are outstanding and driven by her ability to develop a project with attention to detail and to follow through to completion, said Dr. Rajesh Manocha, Pediatrics fellow; and Dr. Sharon Brangman, professor of medicine and Chief of Geriatrics at Upstate.

Professionalism

Dr. Scott Van Valkenburg, Orthopedics

Dr. Scott Van Valkenburg goes above and beyond to make sure that the nursing team he is working with is well informed, according to the nurses who nominated him. He shares the details of the case, assists with room set up and instrumentation and is punctual, courteous and polite.

The team knows they can count on Dr. Van Valkenburg for whatever surgical case he is assigned to. He comes to the operating room with a plan, communicates well with the attendings and shows compassion for his patients.

Teamwork

Dr. Jacyln Sisskind, Pediatrics

Dr. Donald Pilch, Psychiatry

Dr. Sisskind calls new residents when they are starting a new rotation to make sure they are adapting well, and constantly looks for ways to improve morale. She makes a point to reach other residents and medical students; she also brings in food for those on call, and makes goodie bags for those in clinic and in the PICU.

Dr. Pilch painstakingly revised the residents’ on-call manual, said Dr. Joseph Dettie. No one asked him to do it, but when he presented his final product, we didn’t know how we managed without it.

Dr. Pilch thought of everything and made numerous improvements to the manual. New residents were able to adjust better with the help of this manual, and patient care improved as a result.
SUNY Upstate Medical University

Resident wants to form global child relief chapter at Upstate

By Dr. Kunal Parikh

As a co-founder of the Foundation of International Medical Relief of Children Chapter at the University of California Los Angeles during my undergraduate years, I wanted to engage our Chapter in a project to promote and aid children deprived of healthcare around the world. With authorization from our national chapter in Washington D.C., our team ventured out to join “Proyecto La Casita” in Costa Rica; our goal was to create a self-sustaining two-story health clinic and pharmacy geared toward pediatric and maternal health for 34,000 Nicarguan refugees.

Our team of 15 members ventured into a completely foreign setting unaware of the magnitude of disease. We were to join the mission to aid any physicians, psychologists and nurses with people within the village, and create an economical and logistic program for the clinic and pharmacy from the ground up. Every morning for three months I witnessed what was a living reality for those children and their standard of living. It was difficult to quell the anger within me as I gaped at such terrible conditions for such wonderful and kind people.

What seemed a daunting task, later collectively understood to be a necessary one, the number of refugees my staff helped seemed unimaginable and amazing. In a short period of time we were able to begin to alleviate a monstrous health calamity and we realized we made an encouraging impact on the ongoing worldwide battle for satisfactory health care.

FIMRC (www.fimrc.org) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving health in the developing world through the implementation of innovative and self-sustainable health improvement programs. It is our goal to establish a chapter here at Upstate Medical University to give our medical community an opportunity to get involved.

If you are interested in getting a chapter started at Upstate and would like more information on the organization or how to get involved, you may contact me at kunalparikh9@gmail.com. There are volunteer positions for President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary available as well.

The UCLA chapter, as well as dozens of chapters around the country and world, has continued to grow and unify in an attempt to make a difference in the lives of children. With incredible projects ongoing worldwide, I hope you will join me in aiding those efforts from here in Syracuse.

Dr. Yuhico said he tries to emulate the best of his experience at Upstate. “These are good people who are well, as good doctors,” he said. “They truly care for their patients and know they’re doing the best thing.”

Dr. Yuhico said serving as chief resident has its challenges, but is an invaluable experience. “Being a chief opened my eyes to the bigger picture of things in a hospital,” he said. “In any business, whether it’s medicine or not, there’s a system, a chain of command and an interplay between multiple departments.”

Residents understand this dynamic and work cooperatively within it for the best of their team and for the system as a whole.”

Dr. Yuhico said he wishes to continue to support excellence in work and achievement of goals. “It’s a wonderful opportunity,” he said. "I wish I could continue for the rest of my life.”

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Neurology Residents Stake Claim to Victory

A team of four Upstate Neurology residents won the regional division of “Neurostarts,” an annual competition testing residents’ basic and clinical knowledge.

Upstate winning team of Drs. Acad Ulfah, Ajay Sood, Sophie Cho and Ilya Bragin (pictured, clockwise from top left) finished first among teams from Albany, Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse. They advance to the finals against the dominion winners at the New State Neurology Society fall meeting Oct. 20 in New York City.

“This is a remarkable achievement as Rochester traditionally has one of the best programs in the country,” said Dr. Deborah Brodsky, Neurology residency program director.

Dr. Carlos Martinez-Balanza presented a case report of a cardiac ICU patient who suffered from fluctuating blood pressure and multiple strokes was complicated by the presence of a rare and poorly understood tumor, pheochromocytoma. The patient’s blood pressure fluctuations were managed, and he was discharged after five days and released after 12 days. A week later, he had the tumor removed.

The outcome was positive despite the case’s unusual evolution, said Dr. Martinez-Balanza. The case illustrated rare complications that can be managed with typical and appropriate treatment. "It’s a good example of what can be done," he said. "We are happy with the outcome."