



King Award Winners

Members of the campus community were honored January 23 in Cole Hall during Martin Luther King, Jr. week at UCSF. Above, Michael Adams was master of ceremonies for the event. Below, those honored with diversity awards were: Jose A. Mirelez, Jr., a fourth-year dental student; Fred Moore, a graduate student; Michael L. Penn, Jr., PhD, a student in the Medical Scientist Training Program (joint MD/PhD program); A. Eugene Washington, MD, chair of the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences, and director of the Medical Effectiveness Research Center for Diverse Populations; Sheila Antrum, assistant director of Support Service Planning and Analysis for the medical center, and Ronald D. Nelson, chief of the UCSF Police Department. Photos by Emmitt Jolly.

One in a Million: Minority Marrow Drive Seeks Matches

by Alex Lee

Next Thursday and Friday, February 6 and 7, the Asian Health Caucus along with the National Marrow Donor Program will be hosting a Marrow Typing Drive in Millberry Union.

Each year, approximately 30,000 people are diagnosed with disorders of the bone marrow including leukemia as well as certain forms of anemia. In many cases, the only course of action is to completely destroy the diseased bone marrow in the patient, and infuse them with the marrow stem cells of a perfect match donor.

Despite a strong effort to recruit donors, especially minorities, there are still thousands currently on the waiting lists looking for donors. A major factor slowing recruitment is the misconception of the actual purpose of the drive.

This is usually everyone's first concern. I've always had a grisly (albeit false) impression of what went on during these bone marrow drives. Somehow, I imagined

the process to be some sort of sadistic blood drive: someone would stick a giant needle to the center of one of my bones and suck the insides out. There would be cookies and an "I Donated Marrow Today" sticker and I would hobble on my way.

To my relief, I found that the point of the drive is not to actually draw marrow. Rather, the point is to draw blood (20 mL to be precise), and analyze it to see if the antigen tissue type matches the needs of a potential recipient. At the drive itself, you will fill out a health questionnaire, have blood drawn, and sign a consent form that allows your marrow type to be released.

Please note that you are not actually agreeing to donate your marrow upon request. You are simply allowing yourself to be added to a potential donor list. If a match is found (Odds: 1/500 to 1/1000) you will be contacted, given a complete health screen,

and then asked if you want to participate.

The donation process itself is a procedure done during local or general anesthesia. The marrow is drawn from the iliac crest (the back of the pelvic bone) by needle aspiration in a procedure that takes from 60 to 90 minutes. Approximately 5 percent of the body's marrow is taken. This amount is regenerated in several weeks.

The discomfort involved afterwards is not insignificant. It has been described a dull backache that lasts from one to three weeks. There is usually no hospitalization, stitches or further complications, although most people take a day or two off of work afterwards.

If you donate blood, the fate of your blood is unknown. Maybe it's used to save a life, or maybe it's thrown away if it doesn't pass through a screening process. If

It's been busy in the UCSF Career Center.

The Center, newly staffed by Director Bill Lindstaedt, Assistant Director Naledi Saul and Administrative Assistant Dan Judd, is located in the Medical Sciences Building, Room S-140. A unit of Student Academic Affairs and under the direction of the Office of Student Relations, its goal is to work with existing departments to provide career development services tailored to the unique needs of students in each of the professional schools and Graduate Division, as well as postdoctoral scholars.

The comments and suggestions of faculty, staff, students, postdocs, and employers have resulted in the Center developing resources and services in the following areas: workshops and information sessions, counseling appointments, web resources, library resources, and career fairs and other collaborations. Take a look:

Workshops and Information Sessions: Bill Lindstaedt began the academic year leading a professional development series for those considering careers in business and industry, and has launched another for those interested in academia.

Students and postdocs have learned how to organize a job search in their respective fields, to write an academic CV, attended a resume writing session in the computer lab, developed interviewing skills, and found out how to apply for an AAAS Fellowship. In the coming months, sessions will include international health opportunities for nurses, working with search firms, salary negotiation, and practice mock interviews. So far, most events have averaged over 100 participants, from every school.

Counseling Appointments: The Center's counselors also schedule individual appointments for those who need additional assistance or are unable to attend Career Center events. The most common counseling appointments involve revising a CV or resume, and exploring career options in and out of academia. Appointments can be made either by visiting the Career Center or calling (415) 476-4986.

Online Resources: The Center's staff is also in the process of redesigning the virtual career center website. The updated site now has separate jump pages for students, postdocs, and alumni from the UCSF Graduate Division and



The entrance to the Career Center in the MedSci lobby. Photo by Joanne Lopez.

the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy, as well as potential employers. There is also a calendar of career-related events within the UCSF community, and a list of library resources that can be borrowed. To suggest new resources, or to place your career-related event on the Career Center webpage, please email Bill Lindstaedt at bill@saa.ucsf.edu

continued on page 4

ASUCSF to Students: 'Run!'

by Jonathan Manaoat

No, this is not another triathlon. But this run may benefit your school: I'm asking you to run for office. Candidate packets are now available for Associated Students of UCSF (ASUCSF) Executive Board positions. Dental, pharmacy, and medical students are eligible to apply. Offices include President, Executive Vice-President, and Vice-Presidents of Academic Affairs, Community Health, Community Relations, External Affairs, and Student Affairs. Descriptions of duties can be picked up at the Student Activity Center in MU108 West. Deadline for applications is Feb. 18.

Why should you care? Because at one time or another, you muttered how more could be done to encourage gatherings among the three professional schools, like offering pizza and a movie. Perhaps you thought health fairs could offer a different or expanded service to the community. Because you thought we as a student body could do more within the University of California to lobby for affordable student housing. Or maybe you thought more could be done to fund campus organizations.

Last year's Executive Board lobbied to renovate the Nursing Mezzanine. Meanwhile, this year's VPs of External Affairs and Student Affairs — Janet Lee, and Jenny J. Lee, respectively — coordinated Pizza Day, and screened *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* and *The Mummy* along with more pizza and gobs of candy and sodas, all in the name of study break.

Our VP of Community Health, Rich Burwick, met with students from other UC schools to represent our housing agenda within the UC system. Furthermore, he hopes to initiate dental and vision coverage for students. And our VP of Academic Affairs heard students complaining about dry-erase boards in the library, but no pens. Place another check mark on our To Do list and banish it into Palm purgatory. These are just a few of the things we have done this year.

The ASUCSF Executive Board was designed to work for you, the students. Stop by the Student Activity Center in MU108 West, pick up a candidate packet, and talk to the present officers. The horse is at the well; now make it drink.

continued on page 5

UCSF announcements

TEACHING AWARDS

The deadline for nominations for the Academic Senate 2002 Distinction in Teaching Award is February 1. For information on the nominating process, see: <http://www.ucsf.edu/senate/0-PDF/DIT-CallForNominations20002.pdf>

Child Care Resource

Looking for infant care? Need a preschool? Have questions about care options? The UCSF Child Care Referral Service can help! This service is specifically designed to assist UCSF students, staff and faculty with their child care needs and concerns. For more information, call 415-476-2692.

Associated Students of UCSF Executive Board Meeting

Join us at the next ASUCSF meeting, Tuesday, February 5, 5:30 p.m. in S-118 (Chancellor's Conference Room). Dinner provided. To RSVP or for more information contact the ASUCSF office at (415) 476-2010, jlopez@osrmail.ucsf.edu or stop by MU-108 West.

Black Heritage Month at UCSF

February 2002

Kickoff Listening Party

Poetry & Music — 12:15 p.m. to 12:35 p.m.

African American Poets: Maya Angelou, Gwendolyn Brooks, Langston Hughes, and others

Readings by UCSF Faculty, Staff and Students

Ricardo Scales Jazz Trio — 12:40 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
"Pianist Extraordinaire"

Artist Signing and Reception — 1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Monday February 4th

Parnassus - Cole Hall

Sponsored by the Black Caucus and Black Student Health Alliance

The Guilded Six-Bits

By African-American Novelist Zora Neale Hurston

Staged & Performed by Word for Word Performing Arts

Friday February 8 — 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Parnassus, N-225

Thursday February 21 — noon to 1:00 p.m.

SFGH - Carr Auditorium

Co-sponsored by Black Caucus, Impact! Presents, and School of Medicine Dean's Office

...And more to come. Watch for poster announcing the complete list of events for the month or call: (415) 514-3226

grand rounds and seminars

Thursday, January 31

Dept. of Medicine

N225, noon-1 p.m.
"Controversies in Cancer Screening"
Richard Haber, MD

Monday, February 4

Dept. of Microbiology and Immunology

HSW301, 5 p.m.
"Host-Virus Détente: NK Cells, Lymphotoxins & Cytomegalovirus"
Carl Ware
La Jolla Institute for Allergy & Immunology

Tuesday, February 5

Dept. of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences

HSW300, 9-10 a.m.
"Decision Making in Ovarian Cancer Treatment"
Lee-May Chen, MD

Wednesday, February 6

Dept. of Surgery

Toland Hall, 7-8 a.m.
Title TBA
Madhulika Varma, MD

Dept. of Geriatrics

N729, 8-9 a.m.
"Alzheimer's Disease and Lipoprotein Metabolism: Is There a Link?"

William R. Hazzard, MD
Director, Geriatrics and Extended Care, VA Puget Sound Healthcare System

Dept. of Endocrinology

Langley Porter Auditorium (LPPI 190), 8:30 a.m.
"The New Biology of Body Weight Regulation: Implications for Obesity Pathogenesis and Treatment"
Michael Schwartz, MD
Professor of Medicine, University of Washington

Thursday, February 7

Dept. of Pediatrics

N217, 8-9 a.m.
"Neonatal Stroke"
Gabrielle DeVeber, MD
Associate Professor of Pediatrics, University of Toronto

Dept. of Medicine

N225, noon-1 p.m.
"Excellence and Equity: The Challenges of Global Health in the 21st Century"
4th Annual Reza K. Gandjei Memorial Lecture
Nils Daulaire, MD
President and CEO, Global Health Council

arts and entertainment

Impact! Presents®
General Info, 476-2675

The Chancellor's Concert Series

Winter 2002 Season
Thursdays, Jan. 10 — Mar. 21
Seating: noon to 12:15 p.m.
Concert: 12:15 p.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Cole Hall, 513 Parnassus Avenue
Admission is FREE.

January 31 Betty Woo, piano
Chopin: Sonata in B minor, Op. 58

Cole Hall Cinema

Winter 2002 season
Concessions sponsored by Courtyard Café, Bear Snacks, and UCSF Bookstore
Admission Prices: \$2.50-4
Located in Medical Sciences Bldg., 513 Parnassus Ave.
Tickets available at the door only.
Box office opens 1/2 hr. before showtime. (One discounted ticket

per I.D. only) Open to the general public!
Cinema hotline: 415-476-2675

Indie Night

Ghost World • R
Thurs. Jan. 31 5:45 p.m. & 8 p.m.
Fri. Feb. 1 6:30 p.m. & 8:45 p.m.
The Sound of Music FREE!
Thurs. Feb. 7 5:45
Fri. Feb. 8 6:30 p.m. Sing along!
First Friday Free Art Videos
Featuring Joan Miro
Friday, March 7, 2002
Location: TBA
Admission is FREE.
Take a break from your busy work day and enjoy an informative and entertaining video screening presented by UCSF's Visual Arts Club. For more information, call Impact! Presents at (415) 476-2675.

events, speakers, etc.

Brown Bag Lunch

Wednesday, February 6, HSW300, noon-1 p.m.
"Nurse Practitioners: A New Role in Health Care"
You've got a nurse practitioner appointment? What does that mean? Kathleen Dracup, RN, DNSc Professor and Dean, UCSF School of Nursing.

Student Enrichment Series

Tuesday, February 5, N225, noon-1 p.m.: Taxes
This presentation will address issues specifically related to students filing income tax returns. Reduce the stress involved in paying Uncle Sam by getting sound information from an IRS professional. Bring your questions and take away resources to tackle the tax task.
Presenter: Victoria Rex, IRS professional

Co-sponsored by Student Financial Services and the Student Activity Center

Transgender Panel

Wednesday, February 6, HSW301, noon-1 p.m. JoAnne Keatley, MSW, Project Director for UCSF's groundbreaking transgender research initiatives, moderates a panel of local transgender activists, including Yosef Lewis, Cecilia Chung, and Diana Villegas. Panelists will share their stories, discuss areas of concern and activism, and answer audience questions. For information, contact LGBT Resources at (415) 502-5593 or ssnowdon@genderequity.ucsf.edu.

UCSF Vehicle Donation Program

Did you know UCSF has a vehicle donation program? For donations,

call the Hospitals Auxiliary Vehicle Donation Chair, Mr. Tommy Thompson, at 510-649-1340 or Manager, Teru Hirano, at (415) 353-1366. Proceeds benefit patients and their families at UCSF Parnassus.

Art Exhibits

January 28–February 25
Art Exhibit and Sale, Moffitt/Long Hospitals, first floor. Pamela Spears, mixed media. Hospitals Auxiliary, (415) 353-1366
February 25 - March 25
Art Exhibit and Sale, Moffitt/Long, first floor. Mike Kimball, etchings and monoprints. Hospitals Auxiliary, (415) 353-1366

Bay Area Vegetarian Fair

Saturday, February 9, 9 a.m.- 6 p.m. Santa Clara Convention Center
Speakers, food samples, cooking demonstrations and more!
For more information, call 408-249-3683 or visit www.vegfair.com

outdoors

Outdoors Unlimited General Info, (415) 476-2078

Learn how to be a Whitewater Rafting Guide

Every year we look for a few good people to join our rafting community. More & more people are discovering that rivers are an awesome source of fun, adventure and camaraderie! Learning to raft is less about thrill seeking and more about respecting the river, working as a team and learning a new set of skills. There will be an orientation on February 7, 7-9 p.m. For more informa-

tion, call (415) 514-1603 or e-mail ssskin@casmail.ucsf.edu.

Tahoe Snow Cabins Still on Sale

Rentals for the Tahoe cabins are ongoing at the OU center. Visit during open hours (Mon-Fri 5-8p.m.). We have lots of mid-week availability. Mid-week means less traffic, less crowded slopes & even better prices! For more information or availability call the rental center during open hours. (415) 476-2078.

opinion

The Idiot's Guide to the Super Bowl

by Anu Sinha

This Sunday is a day that has been marked on the calendar of every American male since way back when the leaves began to change their colors (assuming you live a place where the aforementioned event happens). Yes, it's Super Bowl Sunday, a day when red-blooded males everywhere will be plopped down on their couch, stuffing their faces with nachos and beer while watching men in tights run into each other and try to force each other to the ground. (Well, at least those who are not enrolled in medical school at UCSF, since someone decided that "Manic Monday" would be the perfect time to have a pharmacology exam.)

ply cheered because a score meant the cheerleaders came out and danced is debatable. What isn't debatable is that the next time there's a football game in Japan, you can bet that thousands of Japanese will be watching the cheerleaders.

Ignorance about foreign sports is something that is common to everyone. I, for instance, was watching an Irish sport called "hurling" with my roommate (who happens to be from the UK), where men quite literally beat each other with sticks. This sport makes anything done in the U.S. look like a game of Candyland. I didn't know what was going on so I had to rely on my

game is to take the big orange vat of Gatorade and dump it on the coach, an old obese man in a sweater who spends the entire game screaming obscenities at anyone within 20 feet of him.

The game is divided into four 15-minute quarters, which each take about an hour. Between the second and third quarters is a musical extravaganza featuring every out-of-work Elvis impersonator, Gong Show reject, and this year, U2. The purpose of this event is to tear up the field for the second half of the game and to allow television viewers to watch the MadTV Halftime Special instead.

The game begins when a much smaller man with a name that barely fits on the back of the jersey kicks the ball (the "kickoff") and then hurries off the field. After the opposing team catches the ball, the referee places it on the imaginary line of scrimmage and both teams form huddles where they determine who will be doing the celebratory dance at the end of the "play."

The play itself happens very quickly, so you mustn't blink. First, the quarterback

hunches behind a large man known as the center in a manner that would get him executed if the Taliban were in power. Second, all the players get up and run into each other. Finally, the party ensues where the predetermined players perform celebratory dances while referees throw bright cloths into the air.

After the play, you get to watch slow motion replays from every possible angle, including the Hubble Telescope. After about thirty seconds of this, the referees will announce that the play doesn't count, which is the signal for three minutes of SUV and beer commercials to ensue. After that it's back to the huddle for more non-stop excitement!

Yes, to those who are new to football this can seem like a complex and difficult game, but if you just take the time to learn the basics, you'll realize why millions of Americans are glued to the television. We're waiting for the cheerleaders to come out and dance.

The object of the game is to take the big orange vat of Gatorade and dump it on the coach.

But what if you are one of those who believe that "football" really means "soccer," or if you're a woman who really doesn't care what's going on? Will you use Sunday afternoon to take a walk or finish some errands? Of course not, you'll sit down on the couch and eat nachos and beer because it's the proper American thing to do.

Football, and by "football" I don't mean soccer, has been making a serious attempt to achieve worldwide popularity. There was even an exhibition game in Tokyo a few years back between the Dolphins and Raiders. Thousands of Japanese males flooded the stadium and cheered loudly whenever a team scored. Whether or not they actually cared about the game or sim-

roommate to answer my questions such as, "Is that guy dead?"

Getting back to the Super Bowl, if you don't have someone to tell you what's going on, are your chances of being with the hip American "in" crowd lost? Unfortunately yes, but thankfully I've prepared my Idiot's Guide to American Football to save you from the embarrassment of using the term "tickling the pigskin" in the improper context.

The game is played on a field 100 yards long with "hash marks" in the middle that determine where the players have emptied their midday meals. On the sidelines, the 300 players who are not involved in the game wave to their mom and call their brokers on their cell phones. The object of the

Quack by Melinda Barnett

IRRATIONAL FEARS OF A MEDICAL STUDENT



#1: Dying of boredom while retracting.

letters

Dear Synapse:

Golden Gate Park is a grand, historic urban park, larger than New York's Central Park, where every tree, bush, and blade of grass was planted by human hand, on what would otherwise be sand dunes. In it reside bison and acclaimed museums of art and science, to name just a few of many notables. This park belongs not only to San Francisco, but to the world.

I can understand that losing the luxury of free, all-day parking in San Francisco can be tough. But it is simply the right thing to do.

I hope that commuters will rise to the challenge, not try to skirt the law, and find other places to park or ways to get to work. Visitors to the park will thank you heartily!

Bev Eschenburg, Administrative Assistant
Dept. of Urology

Dear Synapse:

I am writing to address some misinformation listed in last week's paper in the article by Alex Lee (MS I). In his story on the library, he stated the following: "...From a library filled with future and current doctors, dentists, pharmacists, and PhDs..."

Now, the last time I checked, all of these people (especially if they are awarded their degrees at UCSF) are all doctors! It seems that it would have been more correct to say "physicians, dentists, pharmacists, and PhDs."

What his statement proves to me is the lack of respect continually showed to other professions on this campus outside of med-

icine. I, myself, am less than five months away from graduating with my Doctor of Dental Surgery degree, and would definitely like to see a physician try to care for him or herself the next time they have toothache or some other ailment of the oral cavity. We, as dentists, show the medical profession respect, but are frequently not treated with the same respect. No, we may not be able to deliver a baby or perform neurosurgery (in extreme situations we probably could, since we do take anatomy, histology, physiology, pharmacology, and a host of other basic science courses), but we do have the ability to heal and make a difference.

Still, we may not be physicians; yet, when we write our titles after our names, we have a lot more letters than you do (e.g., DDS, Pharm.D, and PhD versus MD)!

LaQuia Walker
Dent IV

Dear Synapse:

As we experience another successful commemoration of the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., I wish to offer my compliments to the editors and writers for Synapse for your consistent attention to matters of diversity at UCSF, not only on special occasions but throughout the year. Recent articles are examples which help us all advance our understanding of each other and our society. Thank you for all your efforts.

Michael B. Adams, Director
Office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, and Diversity

synapse Millberry Union 123 W • University of California, San Francisco • (415) 476-2211 • Fax 502-4537 • synapse@itsa.ucsf.edu

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Career Center ...

from page 1

When complete, the web pages will be updated regularly, with targeted career information and employment links. This week, the Nursing pages include resume samples for those with advanced degrees. All students can use CareerSearch, a database with over 1.5 million companies to research hospitals, academic institutions, pharmaceutical firms, and more. The Medicine web pages highlight an article about international residency opportunities written by the American Medical Students' Association. Those in the Life Sciences use the Career Center's subscription to NextWave, which offers job market information, career transition advice, salary information, and job search assistance. To access this information, visit the Career Center webpage at <http://saawww.ucsf.edu/career>.

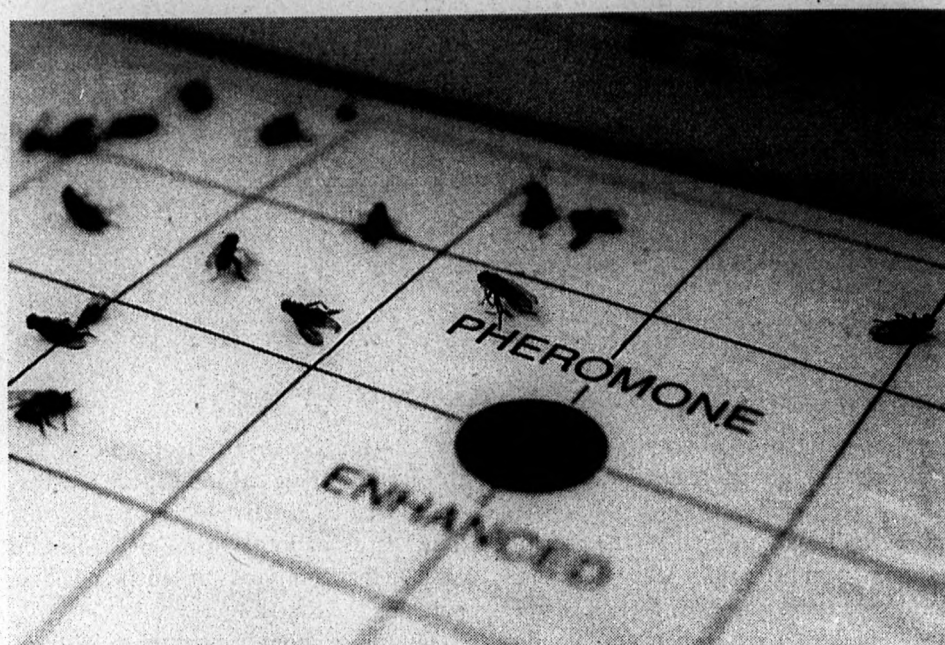
Resource Library: The Career Center is in the process of developing a professional library. The library has 132 titles addressing issues unique to the UCSF population, including: *Life After Medical School: 32 Doctors Discuss Their Stories*, *The Chicago Guide To Your Academic Career*, *101 Secrets of a High Performance Dental Practice*, *Health Opportunities Abroad*, and a video, *Talking Science*, on the art of giving a science presentation. With the support of the Postdoctoral Scholars Association, the Center will soon purchase video equipment for the resource library to conduct mock interviews and presentations. Most resources can be borrowed for two weeks with a valid UCSF ID.

Career Fairs and Collaborations: In addition to these new initiatives, there are several established events still organized by the Center, including the 5th Annual Biotech Industry Day Career Fair, sponsored by *Science*. This year, Biotech Industry Day will be held on February 28. Over thirty employers are expected to attend, including Avigen, Aviron, Genentech, Cytokinetics, Pharmacyclics and the Buck Institute for the Aging. The Center is also helping to plan GSA's Career and Research Day on February 27, which will include professional development seminars on such topics as: Developing a Teaching Philosophy Statement, Employment Contract Negotiations, and Trends in R&D. Information about Biotech Industry Day and Career and Research Day is available on the Career Center web page.

Lastly, the Center is also working with the Graduate Division and eight other campus units to stage Celebrating UCSF, A Night At The SFMOMA. For information, visit <http://saawww.ucsf.edu/celebrate>.

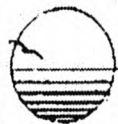
The Center continues to connect with the UCSF community through faculty, departmental, staff and student group meetings, evaluating surveys, and reviewing services offered by comparable institutions. Feedback from the UCSF community about the Career Center's services and resources are most welcome. So either drop in Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., or contact Bill Lindstaedt at (415) 502-2422 or bill@saa.ucsf.edu, or Naledi Saul at (415) 514-3306 or naledi@saa.ucsf.edu. And tell a friend!

Fallen Flies



A view of one of the flytraps recently installed in HSW classrooms in an attempt to rid the building of a pesky fly invasion. As this photo indicates, the fly population is on the wane. Photo by Brad Morikawa.

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Millberry Plaza
500 Parnassus Ave

How Poetic

In next week's issue, available on February 7, *Synapse* will be publishing a special literary edition. We are asking members of the campus community — students, faculty and staff — to share your poetry, short stories, plays, whatever with our readers.

Deadline is Monday, February 4. Email your work to

synapse@itsa.ucsf.edu or drop them by the Synapse office, 123

Millberry Union West.

classifieds

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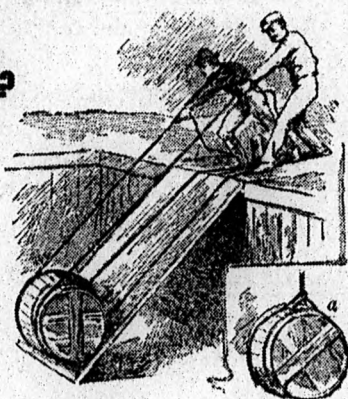
- Interested in influencing UC policy?
- Being a voice for students?
- Having your tuition waived for a year?

Be the next Student Regent!

Interested students should plan on attending an informal reception for the current Student Regent, Tracy Davis.

Monday, Feb. 4, 5 to 6:30 pm City Lights Room, Millberry Union

Contact Irene Yun at the Office of Student Relations, 476-4318 for more info and applications.



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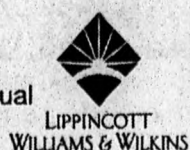
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health & science update

by Dustin Mark

From cholesterol buster to bug crusher

Chagas' disease (also known as American trypanosomiasis) is caused by the parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi*. Transmitted through the feces of the reduviid bug (aka "kissing bug"), *T. cruzi* is responsible for the deaths of nearly 50,000 people worldwide each year, and chronically infects over 16 million more. *T. cruzi* is also a public health concern due to its ability to contaminate blood supplies and transmit from infected mothers to newborn or nursing children. The disease tends to be localized primarily in rural South and Central America, but there have been rare cases of infection in the southern United States.

Treatment options for Chagas' disease are limited and only effective during the acute phase of infections, offering no substantial protection against progression to chronic infections.

Searches for effective drugs have been largely in vain due to the complex physiology and adaptability of the protozoan parasite. One of South America's leading researcher of Chagas' disease, Julio Urbina of the Venezuelan Institute for Scientific Research in Caracas, has fought long and hard with limited resources to better understand the biology of *T. cruzi* and find its weak spots. In 1996, Urbina and his research team, using hand-me-down drugs from pharmaceutical companies, were able to cure mice of *T. cruzi* infections using one of these drugs, an antifungal agent. The drug works by blocking the synthesis of ergosterol, an essential component in both fungi and *T. cruzi* cell membranes. Unfortunately, as is common with most antifungals of this class, the drug was too toxic to be used effectively to treat infected humans.

Now, Urbina and his colleagues have turned to anticholesterol drugs, often better tolerated by humans, to try to find a drug that can stop *T. cruzi*. Although the tests have been limited to laboratory culture plates, the results look very promising already.

At the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy last December, Urbina's group announced they had been using a new anticholesterol drug made by AstraZeneca to kill *T. cruzi* in the laboratory. The drug, BPQ for short, inhibits the enzyme squalene synthase, thus blocking the synthesis of both cholesterol and ergosterol. The specificity of this drug as compared to the previously mentioned antifungal drug increases the likelihood that it will be better tolerated by patients.

The results of the experiments with BPQ are particularly exciting because the drug was able to kill both the free-living form of *T. cruzi*, the epimastigote, and the tenuous intracellular form, the amastigote, which has proved impervious to other treatments.

If BPQ proves to be effective in vivo against the amastigote stage of *T. cruzi*, this research may have breached a major obstacle faced by those in the fight against Chagas' disease: a treatment for the 16 million chronically infected people.

More on Estrogen receptors and blood vessels

In the Jan 17 issue of *Synapse*, Health and Science Update summarized findings concerning the role of estrogen in limiting the extent of brain damage following stroke. This study was conducted using rats that lacked the estrogen- α receptor. The mechanism by which estrogen exerts this protective effect is unclear, but may involve either vasodilatory or anti-apoptotic effects mediated by the estrogen- α receptor.

Recent research published in *Science* may lend more evidence to the vasodilatory hypothesis in the former case. In the January 18 issue, Zhu *et al.* describe a genetically engineered mouse that are unable to express another receptor for estrogen, the estrogen- β receptor.

Estrogen receptors (α and β) are expressed on vascular endothelium, smooth muscle cells and myocardial cells, but their role in cardiovascular physiology is not well understood. Normally, estrogen is able to act on blood vessels to attenuate vasoconstriction by increasing the expression of inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS). Nitric oxide is a natural vasodilator that tends to become less inducible with age.

Zhu *et al.* created the mice in order to better understand how the estrogen- β receptor played into the effects of estrogen on blood vessels. In contrast to the attenuated vasoconstriction seen with estrogen in normal mice, vasoconstriction was instead augmented by estrogen in the estrogen- β receptor deficient mice. The vascular smooth muscle from these mice demonstrated numerous abnormalities of ion channel function, which vaguely suggests that the estrogen- β receptor may act through modification of ion channel function in the cell membrane.

Since genetically engineered mice tend to have unknown or unaccounted for abnormalities, no definitive claims can be made from this research as to the function of the estrogen receptors in cardiovascular physiology. However, given that separate research groups knocked out different estrogen receptors and reported findings that could be explained with a single hypothesis, I think it is a reasonable assumption that estrogen receptors are able to attenuate vasoconstriction after all!

Marrow ...

from page 1

you decide to donate marrow, you will be saving a life.

To register at Thursday and Friday's drive, you must be non-Caucasian. It is surprising to see such seemingly blatant bias in such an enlightened place as UCSF, but there is a good reason. Many of the antigens in marrow are specific to ethnic groups. Currently, over 90% of Caucasians (including those of Jewish and Middle Eastern descent) have a representative match in the NMDP (National Marrow Donor Program). Asians have less than a 60% match rate simply due to a lower population fraction here in America. Since marrow typing costs approximately 50 dollars, the government has decided only to sponsor minority matching.

Although the drive is sponsored by the Asian Health Caucus, all minorities are actively encouraged to attend. Also, those who have "mixed ancestry" (which could apply to pretty much everyone) are also encouraged to attend.

Simply put, no one has an excuse not to spend a few minutes giving a small sample of blood on Thursday and Friday. I'll see you there.

Alex Lee is a first year medical student.

The Minority Bone Marrow Drive will be held Wednesday February 6 and Thursday, February 7, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. in the Millberry Union Conference Room For more information, visit www.marrow.org or itsa.ucsf.edu/~alankuo or email ale8@itsa.ucsf.edu.

food

Palio D'Asti

by Kuo-Chiang Lian

It's a slow economy, folks. Stocks are sluggish, rents are down, tourists are hard to spot even on some of the most fog-free days of the year. Good ol' Clint and Jack are on TV pushing California tourism at Pebble Beach and at the Staples Center (you gotta go to the sports section for team names, buddy). What climate could be better for the student?

"Er, what?" you ask. Counterintuitive? Perhaps not. Allow me to explain (I swear there's a restaurant review in here somewhere). You're a student on a budget. You filled out financial aid, and there was that little line in monthly expenses that said "personal," and you put oh, 50 bucks there thinking that you'll actually get out every once in a while. Meanwhile, those poor chums at dotcom.com are languishing with their options in the proverbial toilet, and can no longer get out to pack those ever-rizy eateries and bars.

You, on the other hand, are relatively financially stable. Not in the black, mind you, but stable. What's another 50 bucks on top of thousands in school loans, when it's your drive to escape school and your delectable palate on the line? Why not go on out? Precisely. (My mom actually clipped coupons, until the day she realized her boy was down for twenty G's at his friendly alma mater. It was then that she dropped the scissors and hiked it over to Macy's, 'cause how much damage is another nice outfit going to do?)

Enter Palio D'Asti. You, the student, should go to this place if you appreciate good food and don't mind the dent in the pocket. I should say that those financial aid dudes are right: if you made every meal and cut down on eating out, you would save money. But there's only so much Rice-A-Roni (the San Francisco treat) that you can have. This place is worth it, trust me – if it's for a special occasion coming up (that

Valentine's thing) or just for a nice break away from the usual.

Here's the skinny. First off, it's not Palio at the student center. That would be the (little) sister bistro of Palio D'Asti, appropriately named Palio Paninoteca which roughly translates to ritzy Italian sandwich joint. No, Palio D'Asti is nicely nestled on the demarcation line between Chinatown and the business district, and is strictly top Italian cuisine.

Owner Gianni Fassio traces his roots back to the thirteenth century in Northern Italy in Asti, and took his restaurant's name from a bareback horserace "Il Palio," that has been held annually to celebrate the harvest since medieval times. It's easy to see that the history runs deep from the racing colors that compose the restaurant's outside sign to the racing banners and portraits that hang within the beautifully decorated restaurant.

from the Piemonte and Toscana regions being assembled by the chefs.

At the helm of this marvelous place is executive chef Daniel Howard Scherotter, who will dazzle you with the breadth and intricacy of his repertoire. Indeed, as the four of us (a couple of friends, my date, and I) sat indecisive about the various choices, we had to ask for extra time to choose our dishes.

What we decided on was an appetizer of Carpaccio di Tonno con la Sua Bottarga – it sounds delicious and it most certainly was, translating to a thinly shaved sliced raw ahi tuna with cured tuna roe, garnished with fresh horseradish, arugula, and lemon. In addition, we selected the romaine salad to share, consisting of tender hearts of romaine, sweet dates, walnuts, and goat cheese, drizzled with a balsamic vinaigrette. Other choices included a prosciutto plate with seasonal fruit as well as a tartare filet of beef with parmesan curls and truffle oil, just to name a couple. It turned out for our group that the two dishes were delightfully refreshing and enticing, with just enough substance to leave the taster wanting.

Accelerate to the main course. Our friends chose the risotto of the day and the fish of the day. The risotto, in this case, featured tender, juicy rice, enveloping succulent chunks of sausage, chicken, and vegetables, while the fish of the day turned out to be a beautifully presented filet of

grilled rosemary bread. And it tasted even better. It was possibly the very best seafood stew that I've had, bursting with flavor and fresh seafood.

For those with an interest in fine wines, Palio is well stocked in that department, offering upwards of a hundred different labels, many of which originating from the same regions of Tuscany and Piedmonte as the dishes served. Fassio himself prides himself on tasting 10-15 wines each day in order to match perfectly the offering of dishes to the selection of wine.

After our respective main courses, it was clear that none of us were going to make it to the mouth-watering selection of dolci, or desserts, that Palio has to offer. From the classic Tiramisu, to the exotic butternut squash cheesecake, to traditional favorites such as biscotti and lemon sorbet with fruit, this part of the meal is most definitely not to be missed. Even if you are stuffed, I would suggest trying one of the many gelati and sorbets that are made fresh at the restaurant – precisely what we did. The four of us were able to share a very refreshing lemon sorbet and a velvety rich caramel gelato to finish our delightful meal. I'd have to say that every bit of it was well worth the cost and effort.

At the end of our evening, we surveyed the damage. All in all, it cost \$122.50, pre-tax, for the appetizer, salad, four main courses, and two desserts. Not too bad for a memorable evening with some good friends. For all the ups and downs that we may see in the sometimes inclement financial world today, it is indeed nice to just forget about cost once in a while and enjoy some of the very best that San Francisco (and life) have to offer.

Kuo Lian is a second-year medical student.

This galloping gourmet bistro
is not your Millberry Union Palio.

It's an experience from the moment that you enter the door. The staff is exceedingly gracious, bending over backwards in order to make you comfortable. As you enter the restaurant, you'll be caught first by the banners, then by the soothing bronze tones that offset the crisp white tablecloths. A sleek bar floats near the front of the restaurant, but it's the open kitchen that catches your eye, allowing you to see Italian creations calling

flounder, golden brown on the surface while a pristine flaky white underneath. I was able to sample a bit of the risotto, and it was heavenly, filled with the aroma of herbs and a tangy creamy sauce.

My date opted for the hefty "grilled, peppered 12-ounce New York strip steak" (ooooohh, yeah), accompanied by chateaufort mushrooms, caramelized cipollini onions, and potato puree. Someone was most definitely going to be more than satisfied, which meant that some lucky chap to the left might be able to get a taste before the night was done (call me a chauvinist...actually, just call me a pig). In any case, the dish was more than heavenly, full of flavor and wonderfully nestled in the bouquet of mushrooms and onions.

My meat craving fulfilled (as it seemed), I was free to choose something truly remarkable from the dizzying docket of delightful dishes, which included milk-fed veal stuffed with prosciutto and truffles, braised short-ribs, as well as a vast array of seafood, pastas, and pizzas. My appetite settled on the chef's prize, the Cacciucco dal Marione, or the famed Tuscan stew modeled from Trattoria Marione in Florence. Featuring seven different succulent fruits of the sea, presented in a chianti tomato broth, it was a magnificent sight to see, served with

Palio D'Asti

★★★★★ (out of five)

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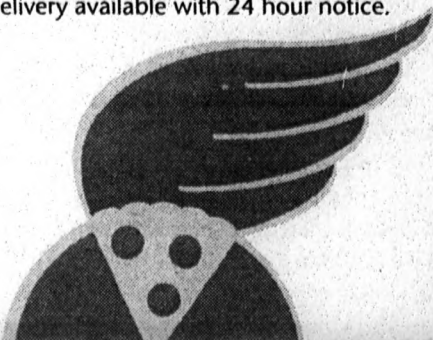


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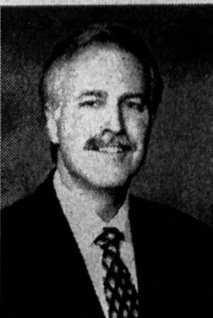
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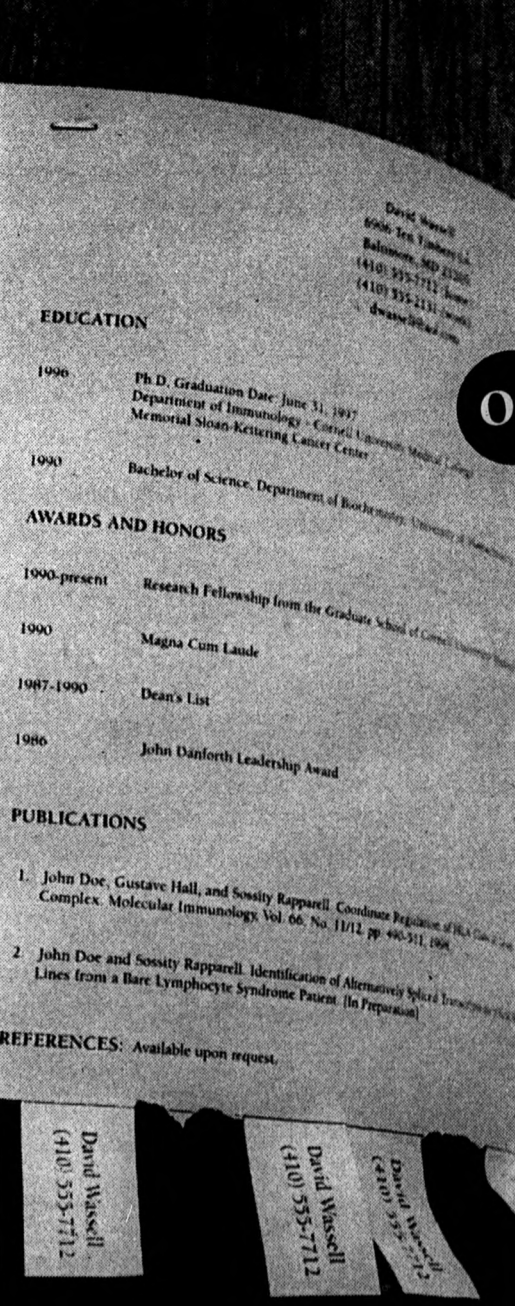
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EDUCATION

1996 Ph.D. Graduation Date: June 31, 1997
Department of Immunology - Cornell University Medical Center
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

1990 Bachelor of Science, Department of Biochemistry, University of Washington

AWARDS AND HONORS

1990-present Research Fellowship from the Graduate School of Cornell University

1990 Magna Cum Laude

1987-1990 Dean's List

1986 John Danforth Leadership Award

PUBLICATIONS

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