Mission Statement

To produce, in a humanistic tradition, health care professionals and biomedical knowledge that will enhance and extend the quality of life in our communities.
From Royalty to Pharmacy

Richard Vuu, PharmD has had a varied career – IT specialist, pharmacist in training, and Last Emperor of China.

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Western University of Health Sciences
Message from the President

If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself. -- Henry Ford

To the outside world, “change” seems to be the operative word these days at Western University of Health Sciences. Our institution has seen remarkable growth in the past few years, in our number of colleges, in our student population, in our programs, and even in our physical appearance. The completion in 2009-10 of our new Harris Family Center for Disability and Health Policy, Health Education Center, Patient Care Center, Veterinary Pathology Center and parking structure has literally changed the face of WesternU, and is the most outward sign of our expansion and diversity.

But as much as things change, they stay the same at our University. We remain unwavering in our commitment to training scientifically expert healers with a compassionate touch. We are steadfast in service to our communities. We speak with one voice when we say our mission is to improve the lives of our patients. We do our utmost to be thoughtful, patient and generous, not only in the care we provide but in our daily interactions with patients, the public and one another.

The result of these efforts – of everyone moving forward together, to use Mr. Ford’s words -- is made manifest in the “change” visible to everyone, and in the success WesternU has had in extending its mission. We know such change comes only as the result of pulling together and staying focused on our enduring core values.

My congratulations to the 2010 graduates of WesternU, who received their diplomas in May during our Commencement exercises at Pasadena Civic Auditorium. You will be a force for good in the world, and fine representatives not only of this University, but of the health professions.

And my heartiest greetings to the newest members of the WesternU family – the Class of 2014 – who will join us in August. You are about to embark on the journey of a lifetime.

My best to everyone,
The Western University of Health Sciences Patient Care Center (PCC), at 795 E. Second St., Pomona, brings together a Medical Center, Eye Care Center, Dental Center, Foot & Ankle Center and Pharmacy under one roof – creating a true health care destination for people throughout the Inland Valley and beyond.

The first floor features the Eye Care Center and Pharmacy. The Eye Care Center has an area dedicated to neuro-optometric rehabilitation, such as services for visual therapy and care for people with neurological conditions.

“This new facility for Pomona gives people a chance to have unique optometric services in one place,” said Charles Haine, OD, MS, Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs for the College of Optometry. “There’s no place like it in the Inland Empire.”

Interprofessional education will be in full bloom at PCC, with students and doctors from different disciplines working together.
“It's going to change the face of health care,” Haine said. “No longer will optometrists train in isolation. They will be trained along with other health professionals. If all of us work together, we can manage patients better.”

The collaboration between the disciplines within PCC is phenomenal, said Rudolf Mireles, PharmD, Director of Pharmacy.

“Everyone sees the benefits of working as a team for patient care,” he said.

The pharmacy at PCC is part of the Good Neighbor Pharmacy Network and will provide flu clinics, immunizations for travel, and many other services.

Specific items recommended by the other disciplines on campus, including veterinary medicine, will be featured in the pharmacy, Mireles said.

The teamwork at PCC is already helping patients. Pomona resident Florencia Ibarra was referred to optometry by the medical center because of her diabetes diagnosis. Her daughter, Elsa, brought her to a recent optometry appointment.

Sylvia Walsh, PharmD, working in the PCC Pharmacy.

“It's a nice environment,” Elsa said. “Everyone is nice to us. It's nice and it's clean and the doctor was really nice and funny.”

The Dental Center, opening in summer 2010, features 68 chairs and a full range of services, including dental X-rays, exams, oral cancer screenings, root canals, orthodontics and fillings.

As a teaching institution, the Dental Center can offer lower fees, said Steven Friedrichsen, DDS, Associate Dean for Patient Care and Clinical Education for the College of Dental Medicine.

“Patients will get comprehensive care overseen by excellent faculty at a reasonable cost,” he said.

Members of the public also become partners in the educational process, getting their dental care addressed while helping train College of Dental Medicine students. The center will serve as the primary clinical learning area for dental students, a progression that begins in the classroom and will continue in community health centers and through other outreach opportunities, Friedrichsen said.

“The College wants students to have patient experiences from their first week to their last day,” he said.

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All of the services at the WesternU Medical Center on 887 East Second St. have moved to PCC. The new site will allow the medical center to double its caseload of 1,000 patients a month within three to four years, said PCC Medical Director David Connett, DO, FACOOFP.

The medical center began transitioning to electronic health records about a year ago, and is now paperless in PCC. Electronic records save time when searching for information. For example, if a medication is recalled, staff can sort through more than 5,000 patient records in 15 seconds to flag those taking that medication.

“This is a quality and safety issue,” Connett said. The Medical Center features primary care and subspecialties in internal medicine, infectious disease, cardiology, endocrinology, nephrology, physical medicine and rehabilitation and occupational medicine. Andrew Pumerantz, DO, FACP, is developing a Diabetes Center of Excellence.

Marcel Fraix, DO, is developing the subspecialty of physical medicine and rehabilitation, which incorporates spine care, pain management, sports medicine and physical rehabilitation.

“(PCC) is a big step forward for WesternU, bringing a needed clinical aspect to education right on campus, next to classrooms,” he said. “Students take the information they’re learning and see how it is applied clinically.”

PCC has a strong teaching presence. The Medical Center has a conference room and teaching areas for grand rounds and clinical lectures, Connett said.

“All our providers will be around the table for formal lectures, which we were not able to have before,” he said.
The Foot & Ankle Center is staffed by nationally recognized experts in podiatric medicine.

“Each of us comes with our special background and training,” said College of Podiatric Medicine Assistant Professor Jacqueline Truong, DPM, MPH. “We see the whole gamut of foot and ankle pathologies. Our students will benefit by having hands-on experience under the supervision of faculty members.”

Students have a dedicated conference room where they can study in between patient visits. Patients who come to WesternU are comfortable dealing with students, said Brittany Gallaher, DO ’11.

“It’s a good environment to learn and practice in,” she said. “You feel comfortable. There’s a lot of continuity. You follow a patient over a long period of time.”

Everything is state of the art in PCC, she said.
“Medicine is moving forward so fast,” Gallaher said. “It’s nice to be able to advance with the rest of medicine.”

A lot of patients ask for a dentist, so it’s nice that all the other services are available at PCC, Gallaher said.

“Having all these resources together is going to have a huge impact on the community,” she said. “Having everything here makes it easy for the patients and, in turn, helps us provide better care.”

The first patients at PCC were impressed with the new building. Pomona resident James Perez had gone to the WesternU Medical Center for about a year, and recently visited PCC for the first time.

“(The appointment) was actually faster than before,” Perez said. “I’m in and out. I’m satisfied.”

— Rodney Tanaka
The 180,000-square-foot Health Education Center (HEC), which opened in January 2010, has become home to many faculty and students, offering state-of-the-art classrooms and quiet places to study.

The College of Optometry’s (CO) Preclinical Laboratory features 10 stations, each with a motorized or manual refractor, a monitor and a camera. In “Principles and Practices of Optometry,” CO students learn how to perform vision screenings. But high-tech equipment doesn’t replace a skilled doctor, said CO Assistant Professor Paul Dobies, OD, FAAO. “It’s a thinking doctor’s skill,” he said. “Even though it’s computer assisted and automated, it’s definitely not automatic. The doctor is thinking his or her way through the procedure and paying more attention to the patient, with high-tech equipment improving -- not replacing -- professional judgment.”

The setup helps streamline the teaching process. Dobies can control the image or camera feed that appears on one or all of the monitors. Students at every station can see the same thing without having to get up, change their location, and crowd around a single piece of equipment.
“We can get more done in the same amount of time,” he said. “It’s integrated video instruction in real time and real space.”

College of Dental Medicine students received an introduction to the A-dec dental simulator, which allows them to perform clinical procedures in exactly the same manner as they would with a real patient.

“We’ve been waiting for this day for a long time,” said Farnaz Amini, DMD ’13.

HEC, part of WesternU’s $100-million campus expansion project, houses the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific, the College of Dental Medicine, the College of Optometry and the College of Podiatric Medicine.

The new buildings place WesternU on the cutting edge of academia, said College of Podiatric Medicine Founding Dean Lawrence Harkless, DPM.

“The fact that students are able to be instructed and to participate in this environment speaks volumes,” he said. “This will create a culture of interprofessional education.”

Students have spent one semester in HEC and are growing accustomed to its offerings. The study rooms are especially nice, said Thear Bun, OD ’13. Each room has a monitor that students can connect their computers to so that everyone can see what they’re writing.

“I spend a lot of time here,” she said. “The building has so many study rooms. I go to class here. I study here. Everything is in this building.”

But HEC is more than just bricks and mortar, said WesternU President Philip Pumerantz, PhD.

“The architecture of the building is impressive, but the true value of HEC is in the learning and inspiration that takes place inside,” he said. “Our students will be equipped to enter their professions with skilled hands and compassionate hearts.”

— Rodney Tanaka
WesternU Hosts State of the City

Frank Garcia, Executive Director, Pomona Chamber of Commerce, welcomes guests at the Pomona Mayor’s State of the City Address, titled, “Determined,” which was held at Western University of Health Sciences’ Health Education Center on April 24, 2010.

The Pomona Chamber of Commerce-sponsored State of the City address by Mayor Elliott Rothman, held in WesternU’s new Health Education Center, was a resounding success, with more than 250 attendees enjoying a pre-address reception in the Recital Hall before taking their seats in Lecture Hall I. The large audience, composed of Pomona’s leading citizens, heard a down-to-earth account of the problems created by the recession, but were assured of the resiliency of the city, with WesternU’s $100-million campus expansion project serving as but one example. Dr. Philip Pomerantz, WesternU’s founding president, gave a brief history of the University before the mayor’s presentation. Plans tentatively call for the 2011 State of the City to be held at the HEC again.
WesternU students, faculty and staff celebrated the dedication of a Recital Hall and grand piano on Monday, Feb. 22 during a reception on the second floor of the University’s new Health Education Center.

The dedication ceremony included a “passing of the key” between Dr. Benjamin Cohen, Provost and Chief Operating Officer for WesternU, and Dr. Beverly Guidry, Vice President of Student Affairs. Dr. Guidry, herself a pianist and vocalist, will administer use of the piano by students and staff.

The piano was donated to the University by Dr. Cohen and his wife, Regan. At the Feb. 22 dedication, Mrs. Cohen introduced the students and staff who performed that evening -- Jonathan Bulos, DPT ’11, Christine Le, DO ’12, Joohee Seo, DVM ’13, Craig Thom, DO ’12, Connie Tsai, OD ’13, Lara Pickle, DO ’12, Dr. Paul Dobies, Assistant Professor for the College of Optometry, and Dr. Guidry. During his opening remarks, Dr. Philip Pumerantz, president of WesternU, noted that the relationship between the health sciences and the music that will created and shared in the Recital Hall is a logical and appropriate one.

“Healing is an art. Caring for others is an art, just as music is an art,” he said.

The piano – and two of the students who played it during the dedication – were quickly put to good use. WesternU hosted the Pomona Mayor’s State of the City address on March 26, including a pre-address reception that featured piano music provided by Bulos and Seo.

— Jeff Keating
At WesternU, students’ hands are trained to comfort, to work with precision and skill, and to heal.

These skilled hands are also capable of creating beautiful music and art, which the university encourages through events like the Recital Hall dedication and other campus activities. This combination of art and science helps create better health care professionals.

College of Optometry Assistant Professor Paul Dobies, OD, FAAO, has performed with everyone from Jimi Hendrix to the Righteous Brothers to Sonny and Cher. But at a pivotal point in his life he decided to pursue science rather than music as a career – enrolling in college rather than opening for the Rolling Stones.

He has never regretted his decision, he said, because optometry offers the perfect balance. He works as an optometrist and teacher during the day, and plays music in the evenings and on weekends when he wants.

“I know there are students on campus who know how I feel,” Dobies said. “You have a
feeling for music you never lose, and an ability for science that you can’t ignore. It’s in the genes. You can’t choose one or the other.”

WesternU is a perfect place to blend both loves, because health care professionals must have both scientific knowledge and an art for caring, Dobies said.

“There’s a lot of art in primary care,” he said. “It’s good that this community fosters and encourages that. It will make for better health care providers.”

“Musical Mondays” is one place that fosters a love and appreciation of music. College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific (COMP) Associate Professor David Redding, DO, developed Musical Mondays as an escape from the rigors of the daily grind. Everyone on campus is invited to meet in the Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) lab in the Health Sciences Center at noon on Mondays to learn a new instrument, teach others how to play, or simply perform with other musicians.

The key to Musical Mondays is that no one is obligated to attend every week, and no one is required to practice. That way, Musical Mondays never becomes another source of stress.

“It allows a person to bring balance back into their life,” Redding said. “If you only study and take exams, medical school can be destructive. We talk about the whole person. This is a way, as a DO, to bring little of that balance back.”

Medical school should be more than just something you “tough through,” Redding said. Musical Mondays provides an opportunity, similar to his work in the clinic, to help others.

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“This creates the opportunity to learn and practice and teach,” Redding said. “Music is part of your soul. If it is fed by music, it can be a very welcome break from the rigors of medicine.”

COMP Professor Ray Hruby, DO, has played the guitar since he was a freshman in college. He took music lessons as an intern and during his first year in practice. Performing music with colleagues provides a new perspective, he said. “It’s a completely different topic. You’re not talking shop. You’re in a different environment,” Hruby said. “You see different facets of other people’s personalities and your own.”

Playing music exercises other areas of the brain and personality, Hruby said. “Music is infinite,” he said. “It’s never the same twice. I enjoy the challenge of that.”

New students sometimes put aside their creative interests to focus on their studies. Joohee Seo, DVM ’13, performed at the State of the City Address and the HEC Recital Hall dedication. Prior to signing up for that performance, she hadn’t touched a piano since enrolling at WesternU.

“It’s hard to find time, but once I start playing it helps me to focus better on my academics,” Seo said. “It’s relaxed time away from hard work. When I play music, it’s a whole different world.”

Seo said she is able to express her feelings through the music she plays. “Depending on what music I play or sing or listen to, I feel that takes me to a different world that I can travel through when I immerse myself into it,” she said.

Others create a different world through theater. SANUS, WesternU’s theater troupe, performs a different play each year. The 2010 performances of Melanie Marnich’s “Blur” followed the story of Dot Di Prima, a 17-year-old girl who finds out she has an optical degenerative disease called Leber’s Optical Atrophy, a progressive ailment that eventually results in complete blindness. The play is
about the trials and tribulations of her teenage life. Kif Ewing, DO ’13, who played Dot’s boyfriend, Joey, said fitting rehearsals into his schedule was difficult. The cast met from 5-10 p.m. the week before the performances, but the extra effort was worth it.

“I do it because I love the arts and the theater,” he said. “I love being involved in campus. I love promoting WesternU and all the students we have here. It’s amazing the talent we have. It’s nice to bring everyone together and do something we actually enjoy.”

Jonathan Bulos, DPT ’11, who played piano at the State of the City Address and the Recital Hall dedication, said he practices about four hours per week on a musical keyboard in his apartment and plays two hours a week on the three pianos on campus during breaks.

The addition of the piano makes the Recital Hall even more artistic, elegant and welcoming, Bulos said. The piano can serve as a creative outlet for students and staff members, as well as provide an opportunity for the WesternU community and its visitors to appreciate live music.

All students should have some outlet from their studies that revitalizes them, Bulos said. “Creative outlets such as playing an instrument, dancing, drawing and writing allow students to not only take a break from school, but allow them to express themselves and create something that is original and beautiful, something that carries a piece of them,” he said. “This is in stark contrast to the memorization and analysis of scientific theories and cold, hard facts that we graduate students have grown accustomed to. When I sit in front of the piano and all the individual notes come together to create something more, I find peace.”

— Rodney Tanaka

“It’s hard to find time, but once I start playing it helps me to focus better on my academics.”

-- Joohee Seo, DVM ’13
First-year students learned that interprofessional collaboration begins with having confidence in their own abilities. WesternU introduced the Interprofessional Education (IPE) curriculum in January 2010, bringing together about 850 first-year students for three case studies and grand rounds. The goal of IPE is for graduates to demonstrate an understanding of each other's roles as health professionals and to provide and promote a team approach to patient care and health care management, leading to improved patient care.

Students worked in small groups on patient-centered cases written by faculty members. They worked through each case as if they were experiencing it, learning information about patients such as health problems, living conditions and family dynamics. They talked about how each of them would approach the case from their particular discipline.

“You are student pioneers for this program,” said Siu-Fun Wong, PharmD, Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Administration and one of the many IPE case facilitators. “This program will help all of you demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of a team-based approach to health care. I hope you learn from each other. The discussion will be driven by all of you.”

College of Veterinary Medicine students had a head start, since their problem based learning (PBL) curriculum follows a similar discussion-heavy, small-group format.

“With our PBL curriculum, it gets our class really comfortable with each other,” said Yesenia Esguerra, DVM '13. “We're not afraid of saying something wrong.”

Each discussion raised “learning issues,” or questions that students researched outside of class and shared with the group the following week. Esguerra welcomed learning issues that took her into human medicine.

“Being a veterinarian is not only caring for animals, we deal with owners,” she said.
“It’s important to learn the roles of other professions that care for humans. Veterinarians should know and be aware of other roles.”
Dr. Wong said she observed that her first group of students was shy in sharing information about their own profession.

“Think about that, for future cases, what your profession can contribute,” she said. “You are being humble, but it’s important to recognize your contributions, every one of you.”
Students became more comfortable with the format and knew what to expect in the second and third cases, said Tracy Yee, DO ’13.

“I think that the last case by far has been the most interesting, and also had the most issues to discuss,” she said. “I didn’t feel like we were getting through the case any faster because everybody had thoughts to contribute and I did feel that people were less hesitant to express their thoughts, including myself.”
The goal of IPE is to highlight the need for a team approach in health care, which these cases achieved, Yee said.

“Each case showed that more than one profession was needed to resolve the situation, and it also demonstrated how the different roles of each profession can complement each other,” she said. “The scope of practice for the various professions was brought up a number of times in each of the cases, and that was the primary way that we learned more about our own professions and the professions of our colleagues.

“IPE was definitely a unique experience, and it was nice to be able to meet and interact with people from the other colleges on campus besides my own.”

Just as students adjusted to IPE through the semester, administrators will modify and improve the curriculum for the fall. Incoming students in the fall will have a similar experience as this first class. These second-year students will move on to more teamwork-based training, including a possible disaster response simulation.

“I think it was a very successful venture,” said Susan Mackintosh, DO, director of the Interprofessional Education Program at WesternU.

“As with any new project, we learned lessons from it. We do have some things we will change, but again, I was exceptionally pleased with how it went.”

Friendships are emerging between disciplines, both among students and among faculty, she said.

“This is something I do think will make a difference in health care,” Mackintosh said. “We’re seeing greater awareness and collaboration.”

Students gained confidence in their own abilities and in sharing ideas as the cases progressed.

“We hope they carry this confidence with them throughout their careers,” Mackintosh said. “We think we’re producing the next generation of health care providers with an extra added edge.”

— Rodney Tanaka
WesternU is moving to the forefront of biomedical research, and a key component is the development of the Graduate College of Biomedical Sciences, which welcomed its first class of four students in January 2010.

“GCBS will be a driver of biomedical research going forward at the university,” said GCBS Dean Steven Henriksen, PhD. “Faculty appointments are a critical linchpin, and intersect with our overall strategic plan for research.”

Scientists will work together based on common biomedical research interests, drawing from their various college affiliations, Henriksen said. Doug Ethell, PhD, a recent hire in the Graduate College whose research deals with neurological disorders, is a founding member of the Integrative Neurobiology Group. This grouping of research scientists also includes Dr. Xiaoning Bi, who holds the Sarkaria Professorship at the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific (COMP), and who investigates the brain cellular biology that leads to rare human neurodegenerative diseases. Both scientists are conducting their research in state-of-the-art laboratories on the fourth floor of the new Health Education Center.

“It’s an exciting time to come to WesternU, with the new graduate school and other colleges and expansion of the research base,” Ethell said. “WesternU has provided beautiful new space and, under the leadership of Dr. Henriksen, we are developing an integrated neuroscience research community. The administration has been enthusiastically supportive of this research.”
Ethell’s laboratory works on three major projects dealing with Alzheimer’s disease, Fragile X syndrome and Parkinson’s disease.

He is developing an Alzheimer’s disease therapy with funding from the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM). Ethell’s laboratory has shown that specific immune responses to beta-Amyloid can provide beneficial effects in mouse models of this disease, and is now translating those findings into humans by establishing methods to stimulate those beneficial immune responses. Stem cell technology provides a boost to this project by allowing the development of those kinds of immune cells in the laboratory, first using human cells.

Ethell’s laboratory played an important role in establishing that minocycline is an effective treatment for Fragile X syndrome, which is the most common inherited cause of autism. Ethell is also using stem cells in his Fragile X and Parkinson’s research.

“Induced- pluripotent stem (iPS) cells will play a critical role in medical research and the development of therapies for numerous diseases and disorders, and we’re there now,” he said. “Skin cells, fat cells, or other kinds of cells can be reprogrammed into stem cells that act like embryonic stem cells, but are called induced-pluripotent stem cells, or iPS cells. In my lab, we make iPS cells from fibroblasts taken from skin biopsies. For the reprogramming step, we use viruses that force those cells to express the necessary proteins.”

His Parkinson’s disease research will also benefit from iPS cells, Ethell said. Like many labs that study Parkinson’s disease, he has used cancer cell lines and mice to study what kills the neurons in this disease. “With the advent of iPS cells, we can move beyond animal models to study human neurons directly,” he said. “The cause of most Parkinson’s cases is unknown, but specific gene mutations have been implicated in many cases, including most of those where symptoms began at a young age. We will make iPS cells from Parkinson’s patients who carry those mutations, and that will allow us to produce the same kinds of neurons that are lost in Parkinson’s. Our goal is to determine why those neurons are susceptible to this pathology, and what we can do to stop it.

“Human iPS cells provide a direct link between the laboratory and the clinic, which will allow us to model many diseases and then test new therapeutics on the targeted cells.”

Ethell will mentor GCBS students in his lab and will teach neuroanatomy and neurology to COMP students. He said he has always enjoyed the enthusiasm that students bring into the lab.

“They’re not afraid to say, ‘What if...?′ and that provides the variability to look at the same old problems in a new way,” he said. “Significant progress in science usually comes from one or two people with a good idea, who have the freedom to pursue it. In the new Graduate College of Biomedical Sciences, we are providing students with the skills and knowledge to pursue cutting-edge research in an environment that encourages creative thinking.

“There has been considerable interest in my lab from the students, and as our group expands, I look forward to involving them in our research.”

—— Rodney Tanaka
Cheek swabs were used to collect DNA samples from four prominent Western University of Health Sciences family members to ensure they will leave a unique, artistic representation of their genes on campus. Microscopic snapshots of the four DNA samples -- from President Philip Pamerantz, PhD; his wife, Harriet Pamerantz; Provost and Chief Operating Officer Ben Cohen, DO; and WesternU Board of Trustees Chairman Warren Lawless -- were turned into murals adorning the southwest corner of each interior floor of the Health Education Center (HEC). The sizes and colors of DNA vary on each floor.

DNA11 created the custom art from the DNA samples at the request of Joan Sandell, DMD, Assistant Provost for Strategic Operations and Clinical Services. “This is basically a science experiment turned into our artwork,” she said.

Dr. Pamerantz’s DNA mural is on the first floor. Dr. Cohen’s is on the second, Mrs. Pamerantz’s on the third, and Chairman Lawless’ on the fourth.
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific

The King in *Alice and Wonderland* told the White Rabbit to, “Begin at the beginning and go on 'til you come to the end. Then stop.” Dr. Pumerantz began with a dream 33 years ago, and under his leadership, we are not about to stop.

In May, we opened the newest facility on campus -- the Patient Care Center. COMP has a dedicated floor to provide primary care, osteopathic treatments, and begin the development of a Diabetic Center of Excellence.

Commencement was held in the beautiful Pasadena Civic Auditorium, where 206 graduates were hooded by their families, bringing the total COMP alumni family to 3,828. The University now has 8,138 graduates.

COMP-Northwest, in Lebanon, Ore., is on track to open in August 2011 with 100 students, continuing our institutional commitment to the health care leadership needs of the Pacific Northwest. Please take a minute to view the COMP-Northwest webcam and follow the building from the beginning of construction to the beginning of osteopathic education to the beginning of residencies and to the beginning of practice...I think you get the idea.

WesternU has only begun, and we see no end in sight!

Clinton E. Adams, DO, MPA, FACHE

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

College of Allied Health Professions

The College of Allied Health Professions is home to the Physician Assistant, Physical Therapy, and Health Sciences Education department, all of which are dedicated to training individuals who provide high-quality health care and to educating individuals to teach.

For 24 years, Health Sciences students have distinguished themselves as health professions educators. Alumni include college deans, department chairs, and accomplished faculty. In 2010, graduates of the community health education track will join alumni to educate individuals and communities about behaviors that can prevent diseases, injuries, and other health problems. As experts in program development, implementation and evaluation, they are a vital component of the health care system.

Tina Ziolkowski, MS ’09, is co-pilot/medical advisor with the Vimy Aircraft Project, delivering education around the world. James Lally, DO, MS ’93, is President/Chief Medical Officer of Chino Valley Medical Center. Alan Cundari, DO, MS ’92, chairs the COMP Family Medicine Department.

Plans are underway to establish a Master of Health Administration degree and a PhD in Health Professions Education.
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

College of Pharmacy

The graduating Class of 2010 holds a special place in my heart. I came to WesternU in 2006 as the College of Pharmacy's new dean; that same year, our Class of 2010 began their studies. Together, we have grown, we have learned, and we have witnessed a great transformation in our University.

Change is a constant in an institution as exciting as WesternU. When today’s graduates return to visit as alumni, they will find a thriving campus-based Good Neighbor Pharmacy providing a wealth of pharmacy services to our campus community and the community at large; a CVS/Caremark Student Pharmacist Services Center; and a Professional Development Laboratory and Simulated Pharmacy sponsored by Target and Walgreens. They will see greater student diversity because of scholarship support from Rite Aid and SuperValu, and they will see greater opportunities for leadership due to gifts from Safeway/Vons. They will see growth in our research laboratories and a new home for our Office of Experiential Education.

Nearly all of these changes are due to corporate investment in the future of our graduates. Our corporate partners have recognized what we saw from day one in the faces of our entering students: that the future of the pharmacy profession is in very capable hands.

Daniel Robinson, PharmD
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

College of Graduate Nursing

CGN launched a new program this year: Associate Degree RN in Nursing to a Master of Science Degree in Nursing. Due to the increasingly complex and technologically advanced workplace that hospitals have become, 68% of the nursing workforce in California only has two-year degrees (81% in Orange/Riverside/San Bernardino). Clearly, changes are needed for a better-educated workforce of professional nurses in our region and our state.

Many hospital and health care systems are striving to achieve “magnet” status, which recognizes nursing excellence. Hoag Hospital, UC Irvine, Cedars Sinai, Palomar Hospital System, St. Joseph’s and CHOC in Orange County are some of the “magnet” organizations in our region. They recognize the value in hiring BSN- and MSN-prepared nurses. Research finds that a higher mix of BSN- and MSN-prepared nurses reduces mortality and morbidity of patients.

CGN admitted a small cohort (10) to the ADN to MSN program this past year; enrollment for this year will be 30. It is anticipated that this program will expand quickly due to the demand for a more educated workforce. Dr. Jan Boller, a recognized nursing expert in clinical leadership, is director of the program.
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

College of Veterinary Medicine

The College is in a phase of transition. We have spent more than 10 years developing, reviewing and refining our novel academic program. Our prediction that our curriculum produces high-quality graduates has been validated by comprehensive outcome measures commonly utilized by the veterinary profession – resulting in full accreditation for the college.

Now, while continuous improvement in our academic program remains a priority, the college will shift its focus to developing a robust program of scholarly activity in an effort to enhance the academic environment of the college, advance the health care and well-being of the public good, and provide for the academic interests of the faculty.

Our efforts will continue to be guided by the founding principles of the college:

• We are committed to student-centered learning.
• We are committed to a reverence for life.
• We are committed to excellence in clinical education through the development of strategic partnerships.

This year, we begin new traditions.
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

College of Dental Medicine

After a semester in temporary facilities, our first-year students continued their preclinical training in our newly completed Health Education Center. The Dental Simulation Center provides a state-of-the-art venue that closely mimics the actual clinical environment. This highly realistic simulation facilitates the acquisition of technical skills, and allows students to begin the patient care phase of their program much earlier than in a traditional preclinical setting.

The Health Education Center also provides modern, bright lecture halls and study rooms, where laptops take the place of many textbooks, and in which lectures and small discussion groups are enhanced by the latest in audio-visual technology.

Our talented faculty and staff are busily preparing for the opening of our new Dental Center, where our students will continue their education by providing direct patient care under the supervision of highly qualified faculty.

We hope you will have the chance to visit our campus and experience the tremendous growth and quality of WesternU firsthand.
Just last August, we welcomed our inaugural class of students, and now we are celebrating the accomplishments of the students’ first year.

At our College Honors Day, the students received awards for excelling in academics, service to the community, and outstanding leadership. Seven students were named to the Dean’s List for their academic achievements, and four students received Volk lenses (sponsored by Volk Optical) for demonstrating the University’s core values of Humanism, Scientific Excellence and Caring. The President’s Society Award and Dean’s Award both included a plaque and cash award. The HOYA House Cup (sponsored by HOYA Vision Care) was awarded to the student House that earned the most points during the academic year through its demonstration of the University’s core values.

We could not be more proud of this inaugural class of students. It takes a very special person to choose a new school based on “a picture, a pile of dirt and a promise.”

Elizabeth Hoppe, OD, MPH, DrPH
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

College of Podiatric Medicine

Three years ago, we embarked on a journey to develop a College of Podiatric Medicine of excellence. Despite various obstacles, we have stayed on course and are happy to have our inaugural class completing its first year. The upcoming Class of 2014 is 10 percent ahead of enrollment projections as compared to this time last year, despite the national podiatric medicine applicant pool being down some 12 percent.

Following initial eligibility from the Council on Podiatric Medical Education to seat our first class, we have been granted CPME candidate status after an initial site visit in April 2010. This is the second of three steps in the CPME’s accreditation process.

The CPM continues to make a significant impact in the clinical arena by bringing needed expertise to the clinical campuses at Arrowhead and Riverside Regional Medical Centers in the prevention and healing of problem wounds in patients with diabetes. Excitement and enthusiasm continue to abound from the students, staff, faculty and the community as we continue this journey.

Lawrence Harkless, DPM
WesternU’s newest college, the Graduate College of Biomedical Sciences (GCBS), has completed the first semester with a founding class of four graduate students in our two-year Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences program.

The MSBS course work and laboratory experience provides our students with a broad background and training in fundamental principles of medically relevant research, resulting in the graduation of highly skilled and caring biomedical researchers. Our graduates will acquire state-of-the-art scientific knowledge and research skills, but also the independent and collaborative abilities critical for employment in the biotechnology, bio-pharmaceutical, and health-related professions.

In addition to the thesis masters academic program, in March 2010, we applied to our accrediting agency for a new, one-year, pre-professional program, the Master of Science in Medical Science (MSMS), that will provide opportunities for highly qualified individuals to bolster their skills for successful entry into one of our professional health education colleges. Our accreditation evaluation for this exciting new program was in May; accreditation is expected in Summer 2010.
COMMENCEMENT 2010
Western University of Health Sciences held commencement ceremonies for five colleges on May 20-21, 2010 at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, conferring degrees upon 692 students.
Learning Patients

Second-year students in the Pomona Health Career Ladder (PHCL) program at Western University of Health Sciences furthered their education in 2010 by becoming “patients.” Elizabeth Rega, PhD, Director of Strategic Alliances and Special Projects for WesternU, brainstormed with Sandra Garner, Standardized Patient Program Co-Director, about having the second-year PHCL students — known as Biomedical Scholars — experience what a medical student goes through by training them to be pediatric Standardized Patients.

“What is different about this is, it’s an opportunity for these students to turn that right back around and teach our students,” said Rega.

PHCL started in 2008 as a joint effort between the Pomona Unified School District, WesternU and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Its mission is to identify PUSD students with an interest in science and in health careers, then help shepherd them toward graduation from high school and Cal Poly, and eventually into WesternU to become health-care professionals.

WesternU has had a Standardized Patient Program for more than 20 years, where actors are trained to appear sick or injured. They help medical students sharpen their skills to become physicians, acting as though they are visiting an emergency room or seeing a doctor for an exam.

During Saturday workshops in February and March 2010, the Biomedical Scholars learned about being pediatric Standardized Patients. The select group of mostly seventh-graders began their second year in the program by taking on new challenges: increased responsibility and leadership; conducting research; and designing and presenting topics to sixth-graders and their families who were new to the program, while at the same time receiving targeted advisement and resources from mentors to further their educational path.

These 11- and 12-year-olds were eager to give back to the second-year College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific (COMP) students who mentored them during the Saturday workshops.

Following a Saturday workshop where they learned how to have “injured” knees and studied a script specifically written for their encounter with a COMP “doctor,” the students took a Monday afternoon off from school to be “patients.” During their exams, an adult Standardized Patient — who had coached them earlier — also was in the room portraying their uncle or aunt, providing a new dimension to the process.

COMP student David Lee, DO ’12, thought it was a privilege to see a pediatric Standardized Patient and said the experience will help calm his nerves when he goes on his pediatric rotation.
He thought the pediatric Standardized Patients knew their facts and showed painful emotions at the right times.

“I’m not nervous at all,” Lee said before entering the exam room for his encounter. “I’m more excited and more relaxed than usual. There is less judgment on myself as a student doctor from a pediatric patient than from an adult patient.”

Noemi Valadez, a seventh-grader at Pueblo Middle School, was impressed with the second-year COMP students. She thought they acted like they could be doctors already.

“You see so many personalities on how Standardized Patients work,” said Noemi, who confessed to some jitters before she went down the hall to change into a gown for the encounter. “Seeing this point of view is great.”

Her parents, Jesus and Leticia, said they really like the Career Ladder program, and are impressed with how involved and focused their daughter is at being a Biomedical Scholar.

Jesus said he’s very proud of her, especially because he didn’t finish high school.

Noemi’s mother, Leticia, with her husband acting as an interpreter, said she has also learned a lot about family health issues by attending the Saturday workshops with her daughter.

During Noemi’s encounter, her parents were able to watch their daughter on closed-circuit TV in the Clinical Skills Control Room of the Health Professions Center on campus. Eighteen rooms were being used, half of them for pediatric encounters. The other half were used for traditional encounters.

“I see a strong-willed and confident child,” said Leticia proudly.

Jasmine Cielo, a seventh-grader at Lorbeer Middle School, said she was excited to be a Standardized Patient, especially for the first time.

Garner was impressed with how fast the students learned the case. The second time they met, Standardized Patients trained or coached them on the components of a physical exam.

“They are very bright, very excited,” she said of the pediatric Standardized Patients. “When you get that passion along with their intelligence, it makes them a dynamite Standardized Patient.”

Twenty-three Biomedical Scholars attended and were awarded certificates of participation during this year’s final PHCL workshop on April 17, 2010 on campus. Of those, 18 had perfect attendance.

Twenty-six first year PHCL students were awarded certificates. Nine had perfect attendance.

Verizon Foundation and the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) helped PHCL this year by providing generous financial support. The grant from Verizon Foundation helped fund Saturday academies with food, white coats, medical equipment and faculty development. The grant from OSHPD covered the costs of the seventh-grade outreach component and mentorship events.

Next year’s program will grow and have workshops for sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders.

“Next year we will have experienced pediatric Standardized Patients and will do it again, and over time we will build up a cadre of community members, kids and potentially adults that can come into WesternU and teach students in all these programs,” Rega said.

— Jeff Malet
Annette Scott, Crystal Latimore, and Jeanene White all work in the same building -- the Student Services Center (SCC).

Annette is a secretary in Recruitment. Her daughter Crystal is a Senior Registration Operations Specialist for the Registrar’s Office, and her other daughter, Jeanene, is an Admissions Coordinator for the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Department of Physical Therapy Education and the Department of Physician Assistant Education.

They were already a close family before sharing WesternU as a workplace, and say working together and knowing they are just a few steps away makes the working environment more comfortable. They enjoy the extra time together to talk, especially when they carpool and have lunch together.

Crystal and Jeanene have been working together for about five years. Annette came aboard about three years ago when she started as a temp.

All three also assist with and help organize WesternU’s annual Convocation/White Coat and Commencement ceremonies.

“It is a heartwarming experience to be involved in welcoming new students and their families to Western University of Health Sciences,” Crystal said. “Then, upon completion of the students’ academic program, we are involved with the Commencement ceremony. It brings us joy watching each student walk across that stage with their families cheering them on as they receive their WesternU degree.”

More than 25 families – and counting – have two or more members working at WesternU. — Jeff Malet
A GUARANTEED INCOME

For the rest of your life, Western University of Health Sciences will send you a check every 90 days or once a year. While the economy may rise or decline, your payments are GUARANTEED. You can count on this because we back our commitment with the full assets of WesternU.

The total amount of money you will receive is determined in advance and depends on several things, including your age, whether you want to include a second income recipient, and the amount you give to establish the contract. For example, if you’re 65 years old, you’ll receive more than someone 10 years younger who gives the same amount.

The planned giving arrangement that provides these guaranteed payments is the CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY.

Here are the rates WesternU currently offers for one-life Charitable Gift Annuities:

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*Effective rate reflects the result of tax savings and assumes a 28% marginal tax rate.

PLEASE COMPLETE, DETACH AND MAIL THIS CARD

Dear Friends at WesternU:

- Please send me free information on charitable gift annuities.
- Please send me free information about other planned giving opportunities.
- Please contact me by phone. The best time to call is ____________________.

Name........................................................................................................................

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For the rest of your life, you will enjoy the satisfaction that your **CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY** will someday provide the University and its students with needed financial resources. By allowing WesternU to help you with lifetime financial support, you enable us to educate future generations of health-care providers who will save lives and change lives.

The IRS favors these arrangements and provides the donor with a charitable deduction. Year in and year out, it is the most popular life income planned giving vehicle available.

Would you like to learn more about **CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES** and how they can benefit you and WesternU? Just fill out and return the response card provided. If you include your age or ages, a sample scenario will be prepared for you. Olive Stephens, WesternU’s administrator for planned giving, will provide you with a free information packet.

**A GUARANTEED INCOME YOU CAN’T OUTLIVE? YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN AT WESTERNU!**
WesternU students embraced the Interprofessional Education spirit by providing free health care screenings during a Pomona Community Health Action Team (PCHAT) clinic at Philadelphia Elementary School in Pomona on Jan. 23, 2010.

More than 60 first- and second-year students from the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific and the College of Allied Health Professions’ Department of Physical Therapy and Department of Physician Assistant Education volunteered their time to provide patients of all ages with a history, physical examination, consultation on nutrition and fitness and, if needed, cholesterol and glucose testing.

“The mission of our team is to reach out to the medically underserved population of Pomona,” said Jennifer Lu, DO ’12, PCHAT president and Montclair Clinic coordinator. “We take a lot of pride in providing these services, and feel very lucky to be given the opportunity to help the community in this small way.”

Dr. Rafi Younoszai, Professor of Anatomy at WesternU, created PCHAT in 1995. He was inspired when he returned from the 1988 International Health Council, where health care centers were encouraged to provide primary health care to their communities.

Students run the clinic under the supervision of the University’s licensed physicians and professional health care providers.

Patients who need follow-up care after the exam are referred to the Montclair Clinic, a low-cost facility for community members who have no private insurance or government aid.

“Really, the idea is for the student to get practice seeing patients and see what each discipline does,” said David Selkowitz, PT, PhD, OCS, DAAPM, Professor, Department of Physical Therapy. “This helps reduce the fear factor by practicing. In clinical practice, they want to help out the community, and it’s valuable.”

“I love it for the same reasons. It’s nice to be able to teach with real people who need help,” he added.

Students who provided health care said they found that the interdisciplinary process builds their confidence as they gain key clinical skills.

PCHAT also provides a special women’s clinic and a pediatric clinic during the year.

— Jeff Malet
The College of Veterinary Medicine's Veterinary Ambulatory Community Service (VACS) vehicle racks up serious mileage in order to bring vital medical care to animals throughout the Inland Empire and beyond.

The fully-equipped mobile unit has a full schedule during the school year, traveling to various locations including a homeless outreach center in Ontario, a new multimillion-dollar animal shelter in Upland, and a college in Long Beach with an abundance of rabbits.

A sampling of VACS’ recent travels:

**UPLAND**

CVM students are helping take care of stray animals looking for a home at the new Upland Animal Shelter in Upland, Calif.

The 19,000-square-foot, $5 million shelter opened Feb. 16, 2010 with a capacity to house 90 dogs and 70 cats, said Jon Knowlton, shelter supervisor. The old shelter was only 4,000 square feet.

CVM also provides veterinary services to local residents through a program from HOPE – Helping Out Pets Everyday, an Upland-based animal rescue charity.

HOPE President Margaret Coffman, who is also in charge of the shelter’s volunteer program, said the low-cost services are so popular that there’s a waiting list.

“We really wanted to provide residents of Upland with a low-cost spay and neuter opportunity,” Coffman said. “We’re pleased with our wonderful relationship with Western and VACS. They’re excellent. We have been
working since 2005 with VACS. It’s been a wonderful relationship with the school.”
Kim Salerno recently brought a foster kitten to VACS. Someone had abandoned a pregnant cat at her office, and she had helped adopt out five of the seven kittens. She was getting the kitten spayed so she could adopt it out.
“You want to help animals, but you can’t afford to take care of everyone else’s,” she said. “(HOPE) has been good. I highly recommend everything they do.”

She also had high praise for WesternU’s doctors and students.
“All of them are nice and personable,” Salerno said. “They get to learn as well as we do. They seem to be enthusiastic. They genuinely care.”

LONG BEACH
People have been bringing their pet rabbits to Long Beach City College for years to “set them free,” but these bunnies face a harsh life of diseases, injuries and death.
“They think we’re a bunny sanctuary,” said Donna Prindle, LBCC associate professor of physical education. “But it’s not a safe place for them here. They’re competing for space.”
Rabbits are territorial and will fight when outsiders encroach on their area, she said. There are an estimated 300 rabbits on campus.
Prindle is part of LBCC’s Rabbit Population Management Task Force. The task force has partnered with WesternU, The Bunny Bunch S.P.C.R. (Society for the Proper Care of Rabbits) in Montclair, and Best Friends Animal Society in Utah to provide foster care, medical assistance and adoption.

Continued on page 40
opportunities as a way to humanely address this problem.

WesternU students and faculty assisted by spaying, neutering and providing medical care to about 100 rabbits on March 23-24, 2010.

“We’re so thankful to have WesternU here,” Prindle said. “It’s like an answer to our prayers.”

People see a bunch of rabbits on campus and they think it’s a good place to leave them, said Jacque Olson, LBCC academic administrative assistant and a member of the rabbit task force.

“It’s against the law and it’s cruel to the animal,” she said. “It’s a harsh environment for them. We have so many predators on campus - coyotes, foxes, hawks and feral cats. This is our humane approach to controlling the population and educating the community. That’s our No. 1 goal.”

The main problem they’re seeing is poor body condition – the rabbits are underweight because they’re not getting enough food, said WesternU College of Veterinary Medicine Associate Professor Diane McClure, DVM, PhD.

“They can’t fight off diseases,” she said. “And it makes any other disease that comes along more severe.”

ONTARIO

Through a grant from the nonprofit Feeding Pets of the Homeless, VACS provides veterinary services to the pets of homeless and low-income residents through Mercy House in Ontario, which provides a unique system of dignified housing alternatives, programs, and supportive services in order to end homelessness.

“Since this program has started, it has helped a lot of homeless people who can’t afford to get a cat or dog spayed or neutered,” said Andrea Buttner, support services coordinator for Mercy House. “A lot of these pets are more like family members.
They would do anything for their pets.”
By offering free services, homeless and low-income families can use money they would have spent on their pets on other essentials, such as food, she said.
WesternU also spayed and neutered stray animals living on the Mercy House property, which helps keep the stray population in check, Buttner said.
Veronica Carrera, of Upland, brought her new pet Princess, a 2-month-old female Chihuahua mix, for vaccines and to get spayed. These free services are important for low-income families who can’t afford procedures such as spaying, she said.
“That’s why there are so many puppies running around,” she said.
The partnership with Mercy House arose from an effort to help a homeless encampment that formed in Ontario in summer 2007. Jamie Slingluff, DVM ’10, volunteered at the “tent city” and built relationships with the people there. She developed the connections with Mercy House and Feeding Pets of the Homeless to ensure that homeless outreach would continue long after she left campus.
“It’s not just about treating animals. We’re treating people along with it,” Slingluff said. “Developing that relationship and bond with that person because of their pet puts a face and a whole person behind it. This has definitely given me great determination to change things. You can really make a difference.” — Rodney Tanaka

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Council on Education (COE) has granted Full Accreditation to the College of Veterinary Medicine for three years.
“This is an important and critical step in our College’s development, one which we have worked hard to achieve,” said College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) Dean Phillip Nelson, DVM, PhD. “Every member of the CVM family should be justifiably proud of the pioneering efforts of the faculty and staff in establishing a new model that has proven, by all outcome measures used to evaluate any veterinary college, to produce competent, practice-ready DVM graduates. It is never easy blazing new trails, and creating new models while assuring that quality standards continue to be met. The decision by the COE validates this accomplishment.”
The COE is the only recognized accrediting agency for colleges of veterinary medicine in the U.S. and Canada.
Western University of Health Sciences established the College of Veterinary Medicine on Aug. 8, 1998, and welcomed its first class in fall 2003. The College progressed from Provisional Accreditation in 2003 to Limited Accreditation to Full Accreditation.
This progression is a result of many contributions, Nelson said. Students and alumni invested their faith that the College would prepare them for the careers of their choice.
“The faculty and staff of the College have never taken their vote of confidence lightly,” he said. “Their continued performance in every category that we measure simply validates both our program and our selection of each of them as a member of the CVM family.”
The staff and faculty have also played an irreplaceable role in CVM’s success, Nelson said.
“The faculty are the backbone of any College, and particularly provided the lion’s share of sweat equity, innovations, care, and intellect required to achieve what we intended to achieve – a quality program that focused on student learning,” he said. “I would be remiss if I did not notice the efforts of those founding faculty, led by the founding Dean Shirley Johnston, who have gone on to other ventures. We should all be reminded that we stand on the shoulders of others. My thanks to all of them, past and present, for allowing me to stand on theirs.”
Nelson also thanked the University administration, including WesternU President Philip Pumerantz, PhD, and the Board of Trustees, for their vision and support for the College.
“Words cannot describe the visionary leadership demonstrated by Dr. Philip Pumerantz in deciding to establish a veterinary college on this campus,” Nelson said. “I can personally attest to the enthusiastic support we enjoy by him and his executive team. It is a pleasure to be associated with them.”
Construction work is progressing on WesternU’s COMP-Northwest campus in Lebanon, Oregon, in anticipation of an August 2011 opening for 100 osteopathic medical students and dozens of faculty and staff.

The campus – the first part of a medical/retail/convention/condominium complex being developed by Samaritan Health Services (SHS) of Oregon – will be used to train 400 future osteopathic physicians and surgeons in the Northwest, to stay and practice in the Northwest.

“I could not be more excited or optimistic as we continue to build on our students’ success in the Northwest,” said Clinton Adams, DO, FAAFP, FACHE, dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific and WesternU vice president for clinical affairs. “Our partnership with SHS has created a tsunami that has over taken a small town in Oregon. It is an educational dynamo.”

“This campus represents the next stage of medical education in the Northwest and builds upon a very long tradition of osteopathic medicine in Oregon,” said Paula Crone, DO, founding executive associate dean of COMP-Northwest. “I feel very confident that on the day we open, we will be prepared to train our students to the highest standards possible based on an outstanding curriculum that has been evolving over the last 33 years at its parent institution.”

Recent COMP-Northwest activities:
• In late December 2009, Linn County (OR) Board of Commissioners Chairman Roger Nyquist said construction of the new medical school would yield several dividends for the county, including creating a strong job base and providing health care services to mid-valley citizens.
• On Jan. 19, 2010, Dr. Crone spoke at a Women in Business luncheon sponsored by the Lebanon Area Chamber of Commerce, telling a sellout crowd of nearly 100 women (and a few men) that “We have an opportunity to create something great here. We can do it as a community. We can build Lebanon into a college town.”
• On Jan. 31, 2010, three Lebanon Chamber of Commerce representatives – executive director Shelly Garrett, president Rick Petersen and treasurer Carol Cromwell – traveled to Pomona to visit for a couple of days with WesternU and city of Pomona officials, as well as the Pomona Chamber of Commerce. Garrett said the group was most impressed that whether they were speaking with WesternU students or local business owners, “We learned that Western does whatever it says it will do. They live up to their promises and are really good neighbors.”
• WesternU and COMP-Northwest were honored with the Lebanon Area Chamber of Commerce’s Cornerstone Award during the chamber’s annual Distinguished Service Awards banquet on March 9, 2010.
• Dean Adams spoke to a Lebanon Area Chamber of Commerce lunch crowd on March 31, 2010, telling those gathered that the new medical school will not only have a profound impact on the local economy, but will create a pool of health-care volunteers in the community,
since COMP-Northwest students will seek out volunteer opportunities as part of their studies.

- Nearly 300 people attended the first chamber of commerce economic summit on April 13 in Lebanon, featuring Samaritan Health Services CEO Larry Mullins and William Bryan of WesternU. Mullins told the crowd that the new medical complex that includes COMP-Northwest will generate about $100 million in construction activity in the next five years, and more than $300 million in economic activity when the campus is fully developed. Bryan said the osteopathic college was “only the beginning” for the Lebanon campus, and that other programs related to WesternU’s nine colleges also could develop in the Northwest.

- On April 15, 2010, the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs announced it would build a 100- to 150-bed veterans home on 10 acres of the Lebanon campus. Lebanon City Manager John Hitt said the combination of COMP-Northwest and the veterans home “will have a huge long-term impact on the city of Lebanon and all of east Linn County.”

- COMP-Northwest participated in Lebanon’s second annual Festival of Hope on May 22, 2010, manning a booth during the daytime festival and a table at Linn-Benton Community College during the festival’s evening concert. A COMP-Northwest video for the festival, produced by WesternU’s IT and Public Affairs departments, played on a continuous loop in the lobby and on the theater screen prior to the concert.

- The Samaritan Lebanon Community Foundation sponsored the inaugural Samaritan Western Scramble Golf Tournament on July 19, 2010, with proceeds to be dedicated to enhancing technology and student services in the new COMP-Northwest facility.

— Jeff Keating
Medication errors often result from system failures rather than one person’s mistake, and everyone is responsible for helping to prevent such problems.

That was the message from Michael Cohen, RPh, MS, ScD, president of The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP), keynote speaker for the fourth annual Ray Symposium at Western University of Health Sciences April 15, 2010.

The Ray Symposium is organized by the College of Pharmacy in honor of Max Ray, MS, PharmD, Dean Emeritus of the College of Pharmacy. He joined WesternU as Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Director of the Center for Pharmacy Practice and Development in 1996 and served as Dean of the College of Pharmacy from 1999 to 2006. The Ray Symposium is supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Watson Pharmaceuticals Inc.

ISMP operates a national medication error reporting program that allows practitioners – such as nurses, pharmacists and physicians – and consumers to report mistakes they made and mistakes they are aware of by others. All reports are confidential.

“In looking at errors, an effective approach would be, first of all, assuming that errors will occur,” Cohen said. “We all make them, whether we care to admit them or not.”

Medication errors aren’t the result of only one thing going wrong. They always have multiple factors and involve many different failures in the system, he said.

Sometimes a person will be punished for human error or other types of behavior that would not be considered negligent or reckless.
“Unfortunately, that’s the kind of thing that decreases an individual’s willingness and ability to come forward with information about improvements that are needed in the system, about errors that have happened or things that they feel need to be changed for patient safety purposes,” Cohen said. “People won’t do that if they feel they’re possibly in line for some sort of punishment if they do come forward, or if they’re going to be seen as complainers.”

The “sharp end” - the interface between the health care practitioner and the patient - is where the error often appears, Cohen said. But many times errors are rooted in the “blunt end” - system failures that are not under the control of the practitioner and may even be outside of the organization, Cohen said.

“Labeling and packaging issues that all of us have to face in practice can cause confusion and sometimes lead people to give the wrong medication,” he said. “Some of the policies in our hospitals would be on the blunt end. So all of this has to be recognized if you’re addressing medication errors, and too often the focus is on the sharp end instead.”

One example of addressing a packaging issue is Benadryl, an antihistamine made in several different forms to combat allergies and colds. At least seven people have been hospitalized for swallowing a gel form of Benadryl that should only be used topically. ISMP posted this information on its consumer Web site and contacted the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the company that produces Benadryl, Cohen said.

“The company is modifying the packaging so that it is not as easy to pour it out of the container,” he said. “They’ve also changed the labeling in many ways, and that should be reaching the store shelves soon.”

Another major ongoing problem is the misadministration of heparin, a blood thinner. Several deaths have been linked to inadvertent overdoses of the drug, most recently a 2-year-old in Nebraska in March. Actor Dennis Quaid’s infant twins nearly died because they were given a heparin concentration 1,000 times greater than it should have been, Cohen said. The incident prompted Quaid to become a patient safety advocate. ISMP examined more than 100 instances of heparin problems and developed a table detailing common risks and key improvements that could prevent errors and deaths.

“We’re hoping that hospitals, organizations and multidisciplinary committees will take the time to look at this so that the next one doesn’t happen,” he said.

To improve safety, ISMP recommends being proactive and learning from the experiences of other organizations, focusing on unsafe practices and at-risk behaviors and encouraging error reporting.

“Probably for me the most frustrating thing of all is this information is out there, but for too many hospitals it’s about reacting to the next error rather than being proactive and preventing it,” Cohen said. “And that’s got to change. For some reason we have been unable to convince certain individuals in certain organizations that this is absolutely paramount to preventing many of these fatal errors.”

— Rodney Tanaka
I’d like to introduce you to the future of our profession.”

Dr. Elizabeth Hoppe’s words, and all the hope and pride connected to them, hung in the air of Lecture Hall I Saturday, April 10, as dozens of optometry students came to their feet at the start of the International Congress of Behavioral Optometry’s (ICBO) day on campus at Western University of Health Sciences. Hoppe, OD, MPH, DrPH, founding dean of WesternU’s College of Optometry, started the day’s activities with opening remarks that acknowledged all the work that went into mounting the Congress, and highlighted some of the qualities that make WesternU’s College of Optometry - the newest in the United States, with an inaugural class of 78 students who began their studies in August 2009 - special.

Hoppe saved her highest praise for the students, who came to WesternU based on “a picture, a pile of dirt and a promise,” she said, alluding to a campus expansion project that was still in its early stages when students began applying for the optometry program. The expansion, which is nearly complete, included the four-story, 187,000-square-foot Health Education Center where the ICBO was held, and which is home to the College of Optometry’s administrative offices and its clinical skills lab.

“I want you to know how much they inspire me,” Hoppe said of the students. ICBO is only held once every four years, and includes professionals from the fields of optometry, psychology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, education, neuroscience and others. The 6th International ICBO met April 8-11, 2010 at the Doubletree Hotel in Ontario and on WesternU’s Pomona campus. WesternU, the Optometric Extension Program (OEP) Foundation and the Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association, International (NORA) were co-sponsors of the event.
Conference attendees - about 525 from 17 countries, including 100 optometry students representing 10 schools - sat in on presentations ranging from advances in vision therapy to the fundamental role of vision in cognition, behavior, and social organization, and from managing amblyopia to handling cross-examination questions during a court trial. Saturday’s sessions at WesternU included “Vision - What Has It Done for Me Lately?”, “Where is the ‘Magic’ in Vision Therapy?”, and “Diary of an Expert Witness.”

Several WesternU faculty provided education during the conference:

- Dr. Victoria Graham, Assistant Professor, Department of Physical Therapy Education of the College of Allied Health Professions, addressed the entire Congress audience on acquired brain injury.

- Dr. Chris Chase, Vision Science Course Leader/Professor, provided a breakout session on his research.

- Drs. Jasmine Yumori, Frank Spors, Dan Kurtz, CO, and Viabhav Tiwari, COMP/CO, presented a poster.

Robert A. Williams, executive director of the OEP Foundation and administrator of NORA, described the conference as a “phenomenal, world-class education.” Past conference locales have included Australia, Monaco, and Versailles, France, and Williams was pleased to add Pomona to that list. “We have had successive successes with our conferences over the past 20 years - each one has been better than the previous one,” he said.

Don Fong, OD, president of NORA, was attending his first ICBO and praised its organization and content. “The speakers are really good, all the information is relevant, and there’s not too much theory,” the Sacramento optometrist said. “There’s a lot of practical info, lots of little gems you can take away and use. I like the gems.”

Just as valuable, Fong said, are the connections and reconnections made at such get-togethers. “Every four years, you get to see friends you haven’t seen in awhile, and that’s always a good thing.”

Nancy Torgerson, OD, of Lynnwood, WA, was the “expert” in the “Diary of an Expert Witness” session she led at WesternU. She said the ICBO was “first-class all the way,” and complimented WesternU’s optometry facilities and staff. “The way they’ve set up everything here is just perfect.”

Torgerson said functions like ICBO are great opportunities not only for medical education, but also to discuss somewhat off-the-beaten-path topics like court testimony, because it’s not a subject that comes up in a typical optometrist’s typical day. “I try to help people know how to do it with less stress,” said Torgerson, who often is called as an expert witness for compensation claim cases involving brain injury, or for cases resulting from motor vehicle and other types of accidents. “I offer information as someone who has gone through (being in court), which a general optometrist usually hasn’t,” she said.

The 7th International Congress of Behavioral Optometry is scheduled to take place in Oxford, England, in 2014, and will be sponsored by the British Association of Behavioural Optometrists (“That’s with a ‘u,’” Williams said). Specific dates have not been set.

For more on the OEP Foundation: http://www.oepf.org/
From Royalty to Pharmacy

Richard Vuu has had a varied career – IT specialist, pharmacist in training, and Last Emperor of China.

Vu, PharmD ’11, enrolled in WesternU’s College of Pharmacy as a second career, after working initially in computer science. But his first job, at age 4, took him to China as the title character in “The Last Emperor,” the Academy Award-winning film by Bernardo Bertolucci.

Vu portrayed Pu Yi as a 3-year-old, when he was named Emperor of China. When Pu Yi enters the imperial courtyard, thousands bow to the new Emperor. Vu said he doesn’t remember much of the shoot, but he will always have a reminder in a popular poster for the movie, which features him in royal garb in the foreground with his kingdom behind him.

“They shaved my head,” Vu said. “It was hot in China, so there was lots of crying. It was like getting razor burn all over your head.” Vuu never had Hollywood ambitions. His older brother, Kien, wanted to audition for a role in “The Last Emperor,” so their mother took them and their sister to the audition. Richard said he was “messing around” in the back when a woman tapped him on the shoulder and asked where his mother was.

“I thought I was in trouble,” Vu said. “She asked my mom, ‘Do you want your son to be in the movie?’ The reason … was that I looked like the real Pu Yi. It was based on my looks.”

Richard and his mother spent two months in China filming the movie.

“They actually let me sit on the real throne,” he said. “It’s roped off to everyone. No one can even touch it. It was a big thing to let an American movie production touch all that stuff.”

Richard was treated like a king for two months in Beijing, his mother said.

“People fed him and did everything for him,” she said. “Then he came back to America to be a regular citizen.”
After the movie came out, he had no interest in pursuing an acting career. His mother is very protective, and she wanted him to have a normal life, Vuu said.

Vuu grew up in Chinatown, Lincoln Heights and Alhambra, and graduated from high school in 1999, during the Internet boom. He earned a degree in computer science from UC Riverside and worked for two years in DreamWorks Animation SKG’s IT department.

His two-year review came up, and his supervisor asked him where he saw himself in five years.

“That stumped me. I told him I wasn’t sure,” Vuu said. “I couldn’t see myself doing IT work in five to 10 years. I knew I wanted to do something different.”

At age 24, he asked his brother what he should do, and he replied, “Why not pharmacy?”

“I thought about it a little bit. Why not?” Vuu said. “I saw it as a challenge. I grew up around it, but my parents never said, ‘Do pharmacy.’”

His parents are both pharmacists. They were supportive when he studied computer science, and they supported him when he decided to go back to school, said Vuu, who needed to take prerequisites like biology and chemistry.

“That meant going back to school,” he said. “I had a big decision, to quit a pretty good job when other people are having trouble finding a job. Drop everything and risk it. I didn’t know if I could get into school. I took a shot. I resigned. My supervisor was so shocked. I was doing so well there. It came out of the blue.”

He took prerequisites at whatever community colleges he could get the classes in.

“My parents said, ‘We’ll support you in anything you do,’” Vuu said. “Because it was pharmacy, I’m sure they were more inclined to support me. I was still young. They were still there to support me. Both are still working. I could live at home and go to school, I should take advantage of that situation.”

When he first started working in IT, he didn’t have a goal in front of him.

“There was no change, nothing to look forward to,” Vuu said. “When I started here (at WesternU), everything was different every day. You have a long-term goal, to finish school. You have tests coming up. Things were always changing.”

He learned as a child about different medications, his mother said, so even at an early age he would ask for Robitussin for a cough or Tylenol for a fever.

“I’m happy he loves what he’s studying right now,” she said. “We are already pharmacists. We help ourselves. We don’t need to ask people. We feel confident when we are sick. We take care of ourselves, so then we have a chance to help other people.”

— Rodney Tanaka
Upcoming Alumni Events

**July 15-18**: California Veterinary Medical Association’s Pacific Veterinary Conference in San Francisco, CA. WesternU Reception on Saturday, July 17, 5:30-7 p.m. in the Hilton San Francisco Union Square Hotel.

**July 31-August 3**: American Veterinary Medical Association’s Annual Convention in Atlanta, GA. WesternU Reception/Dinner on August 2 in the Marriott Marquis Hotel.

**August 5-8**: American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians of California’s Annual Scientific Medical Seminar in Anaheim, CA. WesternU/COMP Exhibit Table on August 5 and 6 in the Disneyland Hotel.

**September 10-12**: Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons of California’s Annual Fall Conference in Monterey, CA. WesternU/COMP Exhibit Table on September 10 and 11 in the Intercontinental Hotel—The Clement Monterey.

**October 1-2**: California Physical Therapy Association’s Annual Conference in Oakland, CA. WesternU Exhibit Booth on October 1 and 2 WesternU Reception on Friday, October 1, 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the Oakland Marriott City Center Hotel.

**October 7-10**: California Academy of Physician Assistants’ Annual Conference in Palm Springs, CA. WesternU Exhibit Booth on October 8 and 9. WesternU Reception on Saturday, October 9, 7:30-9 p.m. in the Renaissance Hotel’s Andreas Room.

**October 21-24**: California Society of Health-System Pharmacists’ Seminar in San Francisco, CA. WesternU Reception on Friday, October 22 in the Hilton San Francisco Union Square Hotel.

**October 24-28**: American Osteopathic Association’s OMED Convention in San Francisco, CA. WesternU/COMP Exhibit Booth on October 24-26 in the Moscone Convention Center Booth 1012. WesternU/COMP Luncheon on Monday, October 25, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. in the Westin San Francisco Market Street Hotel’s Metropolitan Ballroom. WesternU/COMP Reception on Monday, October 25, 5-7 p.m. at the ThirstyBear Brewing Co.

**November 13**: WesternU’s “A Tribute to Caring” scholarship fundraising gala in Anaheim, CA, at the Disneyland Hotel.

**December 5-9**: American Society of Health-System Pharmacists’ Mid-Year Meeting in Anaheim, CA. WesternU Reception on Monday, December 6.

For more information, or to RSVP for any of these alumni events, please contact the Alumni Office at alumni@westernu.edu or (909) 469-5274.
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