JABSOM Geriatrics among top in U.S.

The Geriatric Medicine Program at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s John A. Burns School of Medicine is ranked 16th in the nation, according to the July issue of US News and World Report.

The magazine annually ranks “America’s Best Graduate Schools”. The new rankings place UH’s Geriatrics program among those at the nation’s most prestigious medical schools, including Johns Hopkins (#1), Duke University (#4), Harvard (#7), Yale (#8), Boston University (#13).

“This ranking points to the national recognition of our Geriatric Medicine program and its innovative contributions to the community,” said JABSOM Dean, Dr. Jerris Hedges. “Situated in the middle of the Pacific, it is especially impressive that the excellence of our program has not been overlooked by the leadership of the other medical schools who participate in this ranking effort.”

Team efforts

Dr. Kamal Masaki, acting chair of Geriatrics, said, “We are honored to receive national recognition for our program. This represents the team efforts of all our faculty, fellows, staff and community partners, and the leadership provided to us by Dr. Patricia Blanchette, who founded the program in 1984. We are proud of our diverse education, research, clinical and community service programs.”

Kuakini, others stepped up

“Kuakini Medical Center, headed by its CEO, Mr. Masa Tasaka, stepped up to become our first major community partner,” said Dr. Blanchette. “The program has grown considerably in the past 25 years, and has extended its reach to include other important community partners, including Kaiser, Queen’s and several island nursing homes. One of Geriatrics’ major goals is promoting a good quality of life. All JABSOM students must be trained in geriatrics and palliative care so that they may be equipped to help their elderly patients explore all options for treatment at the end stages of life.

Giving campaign to honor, build upon Dr. Cadman’s vision

Annual internal fundraising drive begins

Drs. Marian Melish and Scott Lozanoff, co-chairs of this year’s Internal Giving Campaign, “Starting from the Inside Out”, are encouraging all faculty and staff to participate in the campaign which runs from now until October 2. In a cover letter to the JABSOM ‘ohana, they said, “We are again facing challenging times. We have been asked to make difficult choices and to do more with less. That’s why we are calling upon you once again to come together and show your support in JABSOM’s Second Internal Giving Campaign.”

The goals of this year’s campaign include 100% leadership participation and 250 gifts or pledges. Participation, with a gift of any amount, is the primary goal, according to Drs. Melish and Lozanoff.

The focal point of this year’s campaign is to honor former dean, Dr. Ed Cadman, through a gift or pledge to the Dr. Edwin C. Cadman Endowed Fund for the Study of Neurodegenerative Disorders. Dr. Cadman retires from JABSOM on October 31st. On October 29, 2009, a community recognition reception will be held in the lobby of the Medical Education Building from 5-7:30 p.m. All JABSOM faculty, students, and staff are invited.

The Internal Giving campaign will run simultaneously with the UH System Aloha United Way campaign, which starts September 1st. AUW campaign forms will be distributed separately.

Please contact Jeffrie Jones at jeffrie.jones@uhf.hawaii.edu or 692-0873, Kristi Bates at kristie.bates@uhf.hawaii.edu or 692-0990 or Joanne Ikehara at joanne.ikehara@uhf.hawaii.edu or 692-0879.

Remember when? In 2004, construction is underway at Kaka‘ako, thanks to legislative and community support garnered by former Dean Ed Cadman and then-Governor Ben Cayetano. The first students attended classes in the Medical Education Building in 2005.

Aloha! We have much to be grateful for and to feel good about this month. Our Geriatric Medicine program is nationally ranked, our Pediatrics department is taking an important leadership role in fighting childhood obesity and our faculty are receiving honors from the UH system and the Mayo Clinic. Our Imi Ho‘ola program continues to nurture promising physicians. And our second annual Internal Giving Campaign kicks off with an opportunity to recognize a leader who helped bring us together in difficult times—and bring us to our new Kaka‘ako campus — Dr. Ed Cadman, former dean, who retires Oct. 31. As you read about these events in this month’s newsletter, we hope you share our sense of pride and know how thankful we are for the continuing support of our community and its leaders. Their kokua allows our school to serve Hawai‘i and the Pacific as former Governor Burns envisioned. Mahalo.
JABSM IN THE COMMUNITY

JABSM FIGHTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Kaiser Permanente and HMSA foundations support JABSM project aimed at helping keiki improve their health

The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSM) at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa has received a $300,000 grant from Kaiser Permanente Foundation to implement programs over the next three years to fight the alarming growth in obesity among Hawai‘i’s young people.

The grant will fund efforts of the Hawai‘i Initiative for Childhood Obesity Research and Education (HICORE), a project of the medical school’s Department of Pediatrics. The mission of HICORE is to provide leadership in education and research to better understand and combat the obesity epidemic and to treat and improve the life of children and adolescents with complications of obesity. The grant will assist physicians at Kaiser Permanente Nanakuli and the Wai‘anae Comprehensive Health Center to implement and evaluate the Hawaii Pediatric Weight Management Toolkit, an office-based resource developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics Hawai‘i Chapter.

“\textit{It is estimated that childhood obesity will trigger disease that will threaten or kill many of Hawai‘i’s obese children before they reach the age of 40},” said Dr. Okihiro.

Kaiser Permanente’s grant builds upon a $419,000 gift last March by HMSA Foundation to help fund personnel and to develop a Continuing Medical Education series on childhood obesity and a website on childhood obesity research in Hawai‘i.

“\textit{Every year, it becomes more obvious that Hawai‘i is witnessing a childhood obesity epidemic},” said Dr. May Okihiro, JABSM Pediatrician and Principal Investigator for the study grant. “\textit{Even though Hawai‘i is thought of as a healthy place to live, we are definitely seeing much more childhood obesity.}"

For example, a study of 10,199 children entering kindergarten from 2002-2003 in Hawai‘i public schools found that 28.5% of the children were overweight or obese. Unchecked, it is estimated that childhood obesity will trigger disease that will threaten or kill many of Hawai‘i’s obese children before they reach the age of 40.

"We are grateful to the Kaiser Permanente Foundation for its willingness to partner with us in this important endeavor," said Dean Jerris Hedges. “The need for a comprehensive and collaborative effort to better understand obesity in our young people is critical."

For more information contact:
Romelynn Stein, HICORE Operations Manager at 271-6980 or rge@hawaii.edu. See the website at: http://www.hicore.org

MEDICINE WON THEM OVER

“Older” students come to medicine after other careers

They introduce themselves as “the old ones,” and you repress a laugh. They’re only in their 30’s, but, we’ll concede, they are a bit older than the average age of students who have completed the Imi Ho’ola (“Those who seek to heal”) Program.

Kit Lee, Natalie Kong and Seabrook Mow took different paths to medical school. Kit completed graduate school and entered the workforce as a microbiologist for the Hawai‘i State Department of Health. Natalie earned a Master’s Degree in Bioengineering, and landed a job in the botany lab at Windward Community College. Seabrook applied his journalism degree from UH Mānoa to work for KHON-TV and The Honolulu Advertiser.

Each of them found themselves wanting to do more. Intrigued by medicine, they enrolled in Imi Ho’ola, a post-baccalaureate program offered by the John A. Burns School of Medicine to train promising students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Natalie was the first to join. The following year, it was Seabrook. Then Kit. One by one, the three learned the jobs they had held in the professional world were simple compared to the rigors of Imi Ho’ola.

“The program compresses two years of medical school training into one very intensive year, with really high expectations,” said Natalie. “It’s painful, but that’s how it is.”

The high expectations, from Imi Ho’ola faculty and staff, were felt by Seabrook, too. “No one babies you,” he said. “That’s for sure.”

The academic tough love worked for all three of the “old ones.” They are medical students in their second, third and fourth years. They have found the “more” they were seeking in life. They are committed to serving as physicians where they are needed most.

After all, the faculty and staff at Imi Ho’ola expect no less. (Editor’s note: NATALIE KONG was recognized as a Young Leader on August 26 at the Native Hawaiian Conference in Waikiki. Congratulations, Natalie!)