

# DEAN'S LETTER FOR TUFTS MEDICINE

AUGUST 2006

## Medical school ranked well in graduating Hispanic students

Tufts University School of Medicine is among the nation's top 25 medical schools graduating Hispanics, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). With 11 Hispanic students making up 7 percent of the Class of 2006, Tufts ranked 16th out of the 125 U.S. medical schools, tying with Harvard and Temple universities. The NCES data show that the total number of medical school applicants for the 2005–06 school year increased by 4.6 percent, a gain driven in part by the upsurge in Hispanic applicants, which rose 6.4 percent from last year.

The NCES also ranked nursing, pharmacy and dental schools. With Hispanic students comprising 5 percent of the Class of 2006, Tufts University School of Dental Medicine ranked eighth in the nation.

## Alumna honored by her peers

Brookline surgeon **Barbara A.P. Rockett**, M.D., has been honored by her peers as the 2006 recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Massachusetts Medical Society, the statewide organization of physicians.

The award is given annually to a member of the society who has made a lasting contribution to the practice of medicine over a lifetime and who has made significant contributions to the goals of the society.

Rockett, M57, M90P, M93P, J96P, G98P, was the first woman elected president of the society and the only physician to serve two consecutive terms as president (1985 to 1987). She is also a director of the American Medical Association Foundation. Trained as a general surgeon at Boston City Hospital and the Boston Veterans Administration Hospital, she served as a Tufts University trustee from 1988 to 2002 and is a member of the Board of Overseers to the School of Medicine. She is a past president of the Tufts Medical Alumni Association. She and her husband, Francis X. Rockett, A53, have five children. Sons William, M90, and Sean, M93, are graduates of Tufts School of Medicine.

## Grant to support cancer research

**Charlotte Kuperwasser**, Ph.D., assistant professor of anatomy and cellular biology, has been awarded a \$200,000 grant from the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. The funding will support her research on the role of estrogen in cells other than breast carcinoma cells. Kuperwasser seeks to identify the bone marrow cells that are the target of estrogen-mediated angiogenesis and tumor promotion and to determine how these cells may respond to estrogen. Kuperwasser theorizes that a better understanding of estrogen's affect on bone marrow cells, as well as on stromal fibroblasts and endothelial cells, could lead to anti-estrogen breast cancer therapies.

### HERE & THERE

**Joseph C. Corkery**, M.D., assistant clinical professor of medicine, has been appointed chief medical officer of the Lahey Clinic, overseeing Lahey's quality and safety programs and leading the hospital's efforts to advance evidence-based medicine and improve patient outcomes. He has been a member of Lahey's Board of Trustees since 1993.

**Joseph A. Hanak**, M.D., assistant clinical professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation, has been appointed chief of the Adult Division and residency program director in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Tufts–NEMC. Hanak is a board-certified physiatrist who sees patients for spasticity management, acute and chronic pain, fibromyalgia, musculoskeletal/spine issues, performing arts medicine and myelodysplasia.

**Michael B. Rothberg**, M.D., M.P.H., assistant professor of medicine, is one of 23 junior physician-scientists in the country to receive Clinical Scientist Development Awards from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The awards are for \$135,000 a year for three years. Rothberg will use the grant money to support his research on "VTE Prophylaxis in Medical Patients."

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## ZUCKER PRIZES

**Aviva Must**, Ph.D., professor of public health and family medicine, and **Abraham "Linc"**

**Sonenshein**, Ph.D., professor of molecular biology and microbiology, are the recipients of the 2006 Zucker research prizes. Must was awarded the Milton O. and Natalie V. Zucker Prize, given to a woman scientist for outstanding research. She studies the epidemiology of obesity, focusing on its long-term physical and psychosocial consequences. Sonenshein, whose research focuses on gene transcription regulation in spore-forming bacteria, received the Zucker Family Prize, which recognizes outstanding research.

## NEW LEADERSHIP

**Harry C. Webster**, M.D., M.P.H., assistant professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation, has been appointed chair of the School of Medicine's Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and interim physiatrist-in-chief at Tufts-NEMC. Webster has served as chief of the Floating Hospital's Division of Pediatric Rehabilitation since 1988. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and the University of California School of Medicine, he completed his postgraduate training in pediatrics at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the Tufts-affiliated residency program in physical medicine and rehabilitation. Board-certified in pediatrics and physical rehabilitation, his clinical specialties include general pediatric rehabilitation, spasticity/tone management and treatment, pediatric orthotics, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy and long-term care of chronically neuromotor-impaired children and young adults.

## Medical Society scholars

**Johnny T. Chang**, M06, and **Nicole de Rosa**, M06, have been named 2006 Massachusetts Medical Society Scholars. The \$10,000 awards—based on academic performance, community involvement and financial need—are presented annually to two fourth-year students from each of the four Massachusetts medical schools.

Chang developed the MyCare Mental Health Network, a centralized online storehouse of information, expertise and crisis support. He also served as a volunteer and information technology coordinator at the Sharewood Project, a free clinic serving uninsured and underinsured families in greater Malden. Chang is doing his residency in plastic surgery with the Brown University program at Rhode Island Hospital in Providence.

Like Chang, de Rosa volunteered at the Sharewood clinic. She also served as a patient advocate for the Center for Violence Prevention & Recovery at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, was an EMT and is a former delegate to the Massachusetts Medical Society House of Delegates and member of the society's Governing Council. She is doing her residency in general surgery at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine program in New York City.

## Grant to support vision research

The Department of Ophthalmology has been awarded a grant from Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) that will be used to support the Tufts Center for Vision Research (TCVR), a collaborative effort of the School of Medicine, Tufts-New England Medical Center and the New England Eye Center. More than 30 Tufts faculty members collaborate under the auspices of the TCVR.

**Jay S. Duker**, M.D., professor and chair of ophthalmology, said the funds also will be used to support research in the ophthalmology department. Additionally, department researchers are now eligible to apply for individual RPB grants for senior scientists, international scientists and clinical scientists.

A private foundation, RPB promotes research into the causes, treatment and cure of blinding diseases.

## FEEDBACK

The *Dean's Letter for Tufts Medicine* is published eight times a year by the Office of the Dean of Tufts University School of Medicine. We welcome comments and story ideas. Contact Editor Jacqueline Mitchell at [jacqueline.mitchell@tufts.edu](mailto:jacqueline.mitchell@tufts.edu) or 617.636.3602.

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