



# CARDWELL

Newsletter of the Health Administration Alumni/ae Association

## Comments

1st Quarter, 2011

### Greetings from the Chair

Cindy Watts Ph.D.

**W**inter. The quiet contemplative months following the frenetic holiday season, right? Not at the Grant House! At the end of the “quiet months,” 1008 E. Clay is brimming with news, most of it exciting, some of it bittersweet, some of it sad.

The sad news first: HAD mourns the loss of Elwyn Lanier (E.L.) Derring (MHA, 1958), who passed away on February 20. “E.L.” served tirelessly for his profession. He was a life fellow at the American College of Healthcare Executives & past board chairman of the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association. A fellowship in his name awards HAD student scholarships, evidence of E.L.’s strong support of the Department throughout his career and retirement.

Next the bittersweet news: Two fixtures of the Grant House, in fact two who helped *secure* the fixtures, are retiring after a combined 60 years of serving and shaping HAD. Dr. Roice Luke, chair of the Department from 1982 to 1989 and again in 2009, midwife to the MSHA program, internationally respected scholar of health care strategy, and generator of an array of fond memories for many of you, will retire in November 2011 to continue his work with the Black History Museum, work on a book, and become even more involved with community affairs. We are hoping he will also spend some time with us in the classroom and out. The other retirement of a long term Grant House occupant is that of Carroll George, the staff member whose door is open first in the morning and often closed last at night. Carroll, who joined HAD in 1981, has handled the copious and varied administrative duties of keeping an academic unit functioning with tenacity, precision, and humor. She has listened to us whine, resolved our problems, and kept the heat on and the paychecks coming for 30 years. We will miss her! To celebrate her 65th birthday, Shirley Gibson, a freshly minted FACHE, will leave her position in HAD to begin a distance format PhD in Executive Leadership from American Sentinel University in Colorado. Ms. Gibson, an MSHA graduate of 1990, began as Director of Professional Development for the MHA program in June of 2005. In her years in the Grant House, she taught executive skills and worked with countless third year residents. As a measure

of her success in these roles, she won the Outstanding Faculty Award in 2009.

Larry Palmer, a more recent member of the Grant House faculty, will also retire at the end of the spring semester. Mr. Palmer joined our ranks in 2009, and has taught both health policy and law to MHA and MSHA students. He held his appointment in HAD jointly with an appointment at the William and Mary Law School. He is looking forward to continuing a variety of scholarly projects and community service activities. Donald C.J. Gehring, J.D., retired from his position as Vice President for Government Relations and Health Policy for VCU and the VCU Health System, will be joining our adjunct faculty to teach our law courses in the coming academic year. In his 15 years with VCU, Mr. Gehring was the chief lobbyist for both organizations with expertise in matters related to health care financing, notably indigent care and Medicaid. He now heads a consulting business focusing on government relations, health care and higher education.

On the exciting front, Pamela Hayter began as the new assistant to the chair in January. Carolyn Wells, who held that position for 9 years, will work with Dr. Jan Clement, who has taken the reins of the HAD PhD program, and continue her support of Dr. Dolores Clement and the MSHA program. Pam has prior experience on the VCU campus, and most recently ran her own event planning business. You can reach Pam at (804) 828-1891 or [pjhayter@vcu.edu](mailto:pjhayter@vcu.edu). Carolyn’s contact information remains the same at (804) 828-7799 or [cwells@vcu.edu](mailto:cwells@vcu.edu).

Warran Dawson will join the Grant House staff on April 11 to assume Carroll’s responsibilities. Mr. Dawson knows his way around VCU policies and procedures, having been on the VCU staff since 1999, most recently as business manager for the Continuing Medical Education Division at MCV. Warran has a BA in English from VCU.

Three excellent candidates have visited the Grant House recently to interview for an open faculty position in organizational theory/behavior. We are hoping to introduce the newest member of our academic team in the next Cardwell Comments.

We are also gearing up for two additional faculty searches: a full time Masters-prepared assistant professor to manage the residency process and provide assistance to both Masters programs, and an associate professor that we will share with the Dean’s Office in the



Virginia Commonwealth University

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## Greetings from the Chair (Continued)

Cindy Watts Ph.D.

School of Allied Health Professions. In the Dean's Office, s/he will direct the School's distance PhD program in health related sciences, replacing HAD alumnus Jim Cotter (PhD 1996) who is retiring from his administrative role.

We had an important set of visitors in early February: our CAHME accreditation site visit team. After a year of preparation, the three days of interviews and conversation about our MHA and MSHA programs went very well. While the official outcome (either 3 or 6 years of full accreditation) won't be announced until fall, our exit interview was very positive. The site visit team concluded that we fully met 53 of 57 accreditation criteria, and partially met the remaining 4. The team also identified six particular strengths of the programs, none of which will surprise you: the use of teams in courses, the leadership of the programs, the scholarship of the faculty, the commitment and contribution of the alumni community (you!), and the residency (deemed a "best practice" in the field). HAD thanks both the internal group that led the preparation effort (Dr. Steve Mick, Dr. Dolores Clement, and Dr. Trish Edinboro) and those of you who took the time to come to Grant House and so thoroughly impress the site visitors!

Following on the heels of our successful accreditation site visit was the publication of the latest US News and World report rankings, listing HAD in fifth place tied with the University of Alabama, Birmingham. Above us in the ratings were the University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, University of North Carolina, and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

We also received a Higher Education Network Award from ACHE for "the graduate program with the greatest percentage of graduates that advanced to Member or Fellow over a one-year period."

Our new website (<http://www.had.vcu.edu/>) is fully functional at this writing. We invite you to check it out and let us know if there are additional features you think would help you keep you informed and in touch with us.

## Richmond is Abuzz!!

**H**ow could we not mention our RAMS??!! Their amazing success is another testimony to the value of good leadership, hard work, and the power of persistence. Go Rams!



## Awards and Promotions

The early winter months also brought announcements of several awards and promotions to the HAD community. Sheryl Garland (MHA 1988) was promoted to Vice President for Health Policy and Community Relations by the VCU Health System. William Downey (MHA 1985) was promoted to President of Riverside Health System in Newport News, VA, and Tim Tobin (MHA 1987), CEO of Spotsylvania Regional Medical Center learned that his hospital was named 2011 Business of the Year by the Fredericksburg Regional Chamber of Commerce. Shirley Gibson (MSHA 1990) was inducted as a Fellow in ACHE and garnered too many other local and state awards recently to keep track! To reflect Jon Perlin's (MSHA 97) additional responsibilities at HCA, he has been given the title of President of HCA's Clinical and Physician Services Group. Dr. Perlin was also one of nine individuals nationally to receive a HIT-Men award from *Healthcare IT News*, an award that honors top leaders in health information technology. Alumnus Jim Cotter (PhD 1996) is a novelist! His recently published science fiction story, *The Bridge Over the Bering Strait*, is available from Amazon.

## Events

HAD was delighted to host several special events in January and February. Students and faculty assembled to hear David Bernd (MHA 1973) describe the recent strategic initiatives he has led at Sentara Healthcare. HAD hosted a special Black History Month presentation for the School of Allied Health by Dr. Shawn Utsey, Chair of VCU's Department of African American Studies, entitled "Chris Baker: Anatomical Man At the Medical College of Virginia in the late 1800's."

The annual ACHE Cardwell Reception was held at the Chicago Hilton in March. The evening was generously sponsored as in previous years by Emily Towey's (MHA/JD 01) firm, Hancock, Daniel, Johnson, and Nagle. About fifty alumni spanning several decades of graduation dates ate, drank, connected, reconnected, and were merry. We were delighted to see you and hope to see you again next year if not before.

### The Taiwanese Return!

The Grant House hosted 35 Taiwanese MHA and MSHA students and faculty from Kaohsiung Medical University. This event is organized each year by Roice Luke and Thomas Wan (former HAD Chair), this year ably assisted by Pam Hayter. The group spends a week attending lectures by HAD faculty and alumni (thank you to Charles Shasky, Ph.D.) and touring local health care facilities. The week ended with a "graduation" dinner and a rousing few hours of karaoke. Dr. Heng-Chia Chiu, the faculty sponsor from KMU, presented the Department with a \$6,000 contribution to the PhD scholarship fund.





## Student News and Activities

A team of MHA students, Shane Connolly, Greg Dadlez and Megan Metzger represented the program at the recent UAB Case Competition in Birmingham, AL. The team received help and support from faculty and alumni in preparing their presentation. We appreciate the support of alumni!

This year's MCV Student Government Association's Community Health Fair was organized by second year MHA student Sarah Riggs. Over 300 health screenings were conducted during the fair.

All 24 students from the Class of 2012 have been placed in administrative residencies, and most of the dual degree students have found summer internships. We are always looking for great residency sites, so if you are interested in learning more about the residency program or have an idea for next year, please contact Dr. Dolores Clement

([dclement@vcu.edu](mailto:dclement@vcu.edu) or (804) 828-5216).

The MHA Class of 2013 adopted the Ronald McDonald House this year for its community service project. The class has been active volunteering with families as well as helping staff with the annual fund raiser to support the facility.

The MHA Class of 2014 is nearly complete. We had over 100 completed applications, and at present have 26 commitments from students who will arrive in the fall, including two dual degree students, one MHA/JD and one MHA/MD.

Applications to the MSHA program were also well above average this year. We have 20 accepted students thus far, with another 10 applications in various stages of the admissions process.

Both MHA and MSHA classes of 2011 are looking forward to May 21 graduation ceremonies!

Two of our PhD students will be presenting research abstracts at this year's AcademyHealth conference in Seattle in June. Albert Lui will present "Efficiency Analysis of Ambulatory Surgery Centers: Evidence from California" and Patrick Shay will present his work with Dr. Roice Luke and Dr. Steve Mick, "Hospital-Based Clusters: The Problem of Boundary Specification."

## Alumni News and Activities

**T**HANK YOU!

We would like to extend our most sincere thanks to the many of you who made our fall fund raising drive so successful. You collectively added nearly \$60,000 to our scholarship endowments, our faculty endowments, and our New Ventures Fund. We will keep you abreast of the important activities your generosity supports.

Dr. Cindy Watts was pleased to visit alumnus Mike Zucker (MHA '91), Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer Baptist Health System) in San Antonio; former HAD Chairman now Associate Dean and Professor in the Department of Health Service Management at the University of Kentucky, Larry Prybil in Lexington, Kentucky; alumnus Jeff Dorsey (MHA '73), President and CEO of HCA Continental Division, and his colleague (and our preceptor) Mary White, President and CEO of Swedish Medical Center, in Denver. Dr. Watts, Dr. Luke, and HAD Alumni Relations Director, Beth Williamson Ayers, spent an afternoon with Dr. Ben Cullen, former Acting Director of the School of Hospital Administration, and Nate Bushnell a graduate of the very first MHA class at MCV.

Six HAD faculty and five alumni contributed to the success of the first annual Virginia Innovators Awards event on March 29. The volunteer group that comprised the event's host organization, Virginia Healthcare Innovators (<http://www.virginiahealthcareinnovators.org/>) was spearheaded by 1988 MHA alumnus Hugh Aaron from Virginia Capital Partners, LLC and Joe McMenamin, from McGuireWoods LLP. The group organized a competition to select the most innovative organizations in Virginia who contribute to health care in one of five categories. Dr. Jan Clement, Dr. Cindy Watts, and Brent Rawlings (MHA/JD '04) served on the planning committee with Hugh, and Karen Cameron (MHA '87), Diane Anderson (MHA '95), Tom Miller (MSHA '94), and David Collins (MHA '00) along with Drs. Deshazo, Edinboro, Luke, Ozcan, and Watts served on judges panels. Dr. Sandy Chung (MSHA '05) accepted the award for her organization, Fairfax Pediatrics Associates, Inc, in the category of Patient Care Organizations with fewer than 250 employees. The event, which also featured Dr. William Hazel, Jr., Secretary of Health and Human Resources for the Commonwealth, as a key note speaker, sold out. Watch for a new round of competition next year!

## Faculty News and Activities

**D**r. Yasar Ozcan spent winter break in Brazil for a series of invited presentations on cardiac care delivery performance among Brazilian hospitals sponsored by the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. The presentations, largely to graduate engineering students, reflect Dr. Ozcan's past and current research using Data Envelopment Analysis to evaluate cardiac care performance. Dr. Steve Mick continues his work with colleagues in France, lecturing in St. Malo, Paris, and in May, Lyon. His focus was leadership and management and physician practice management as well as innovations in health management education.

Dr. Ken White traveled to Italy's LUISS Business School to evaluate management study presentations (in Italian) and to give lectures on leadership and management of health care organizations. He was also the featured speaker at commencement for LUISS Business School's second graduating class of EMPHA (Executive Masters in Pharmaceutical and Health Administration) students. Dr. Watts has been appointed to an Institute of Medicine Evaluation of the Lovell Federal Health Care Center Merger committee.

VCU President Dr. Michael Rao publishes periodic updates about the state of the University and its many accomplishments. You can access the most recent update at [www.president.vcu.edu/updates/20110317.html](http://www.president.vcu.edu/updates/20110317.html).

## Alumni/ae Spotlight

### J. Lee Higginbotham, Jr., FACHE

Written by: Becky Pelini

**L**ee Higginbotham became interested in healthcare through his wife, Melanie. Working as a radiology technologist, she would come home with stories about the health care system. While at first he encouraged her to go into management, he eventually decided that he would pursue his Masters in Health Administration at MCV. Lee is currently the Associate Administrator at the CJW Medical Center's Chippenham Hospital and the Administrator of the Levinson Heart Hospital. Lee has operational responsibilities of ancillary support departments and the Heart Hospital and is also responsible for HCA's Cardiovascular Service Line in the Richmond market. He thoroughly enjoys his current position, as it allows him to work in a competitive, complex environment with an extremely high quality medical staff at a comprehensive medical center with a dedicated team of healthcare professionals. However, the most rewarding part of working at CJW is the care that the organization takes with each patient, family and visitor. He is a firm believer that if patient-centered care is an organization's number one focus, then its finances will follow. Lee began his career in an administrative residency in western New York. That led to a position as Director of Planning and Marketing at Danville Regional Medical Center (DRMC) in Virginia. His interest in operations management led to additional responsibilities at DRMC, and finally to his current position at CJW.

One of his biggest career accomplishments was achieving a number one ranking for all heart hospitals in Virginia at CJW from 2007 to 2009. Another milestone was during his time at DRMC where he helped establish a partnership with Duke University Medical Center to start up a new invasive cardiovascular service line. He is currently overseeing the construction of a new multi-million dollar Intensive Care Unit replacement and bed addition at CJW.

Lee remembers his time at the MHA program fondly. One of his favorite memories of the program is the cohesiveness that his class possessed, demonstrated by the class motto of "Go with the Herd." He introduced his first child to healthcare at an early age while attending MCV. He would often bring his young son to group projects meeting to crawl around the Grant House. He and several MHA classmates continue to gather annually for a long weekend of mountain biking and outdoor activity. The annual event (aka "Yombika") this past Labor Day weekend found the group competing in the inaugural 24-hour Leadville Mountain Race in Leadville, CO.

Lee is still very involved in the MHA program, serving as an alumni advisor, oral exam panelist, and member of the admissions committee. He enjoys being able to give back to the program and to mentor its current students.

