Presidential Communication to VCU, VCUHS

Editor's Note: The following is the February 28 message sent electronically to all VCU faculty and staff by President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D. The president will provide the university and health system community with updates regarding General Assembly 2001 budget developments as information becomes available.

A s has been widely reported, the General Assembly failed to reach a budget accord during the 2001 session. As a result, the 2000-02 state budget, which was passed last year, remains in place. Since that time, however, state revenue growth has slowed, resulting in a projected budget shortfall. According to the Governor's Chief of Staff, Mr. M. Boyd Marcus, Jr., state budget expenditures could exceed revenues by $421 million by July 1, 2002.

On February 24, 2001, the Governor issued Executive Order Number Seventy-Four to ensure that actual expenditures in this fiscal year and the next not exceed estimated revenues. This Executive Order requires state agencies, including higher education institutions, to submit plans outlining the means by which targeted savings

Government Recognizes Two VCU Faculty as Outstanding

Jena, Urban Selected from 85 Nominees Representing 36 Institutions

by Donna C. Gregory
University News Services

During a Feb. 16 ceremony at the Capitol, two Virginia Commonwealth University faculty members ranked among 11 individuals recognized as the year's best professors in Virginia. Gov. Jim Gilmore presented 2001 Outstanding Faculty Awards - the state's highest honor for faculty at public and private colleges and universities - to VCU's Purushottam Jena, Ph.D., professor of physics, and David J. Urban, Ph.D., associate professor of marketing.

"I am delighted to recognize these distinguished faculty members of Virginia's colleges and universities for their demonstrated excellence in teaching, research and public service," Gilmore said.

Jena and Urban were selected from 85 nominees representing 36 institutions. The awards program is coordinated by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Jena, a faculty member since 1980, has received two of VCU's top academic awards. Praised by students and faculty alike, Jena is ranked among the most prolific researchers in the country. His studies on atomic clusters led to his election last year as a fellow of the American Physical Society.

Urban, who joined VCU in 1989, has been nationally recognized on several occasions for his teaching talents. In 1998, an American Marketing Association survey of teaching-award recipients ranked Urban number one in the number of awards received. He is a two-time winner of the VCU School of Business Distinguished Teaching Award. "I am proud to represent VCU as a recipient of the SCHEV Outstanding Faculty Award. I am also pleased to be included in such a distinguished group of honorees from the other schools in the common

Teleneutric Correction to VCU, VCUHS

Teledicine Assists VCU Surgical Relief Team

by Erin Lucero
University News Services

With the help of teleneutric, a surgical relief team from Virginia Commonwealth University will have a long-lasting impact on the African country of Kenya. In early February, a 14-member surgical team from VCU traveled more than 19 hours to reach Mombasa, a coastal town on the southeastern tip of Kenya situated along the Indian Ocean. The team traveled to the third-world country representing Operation Helping Hands.

The non-profit organization is headed by Timothy Broderick, M.D., a general and trauma surgeon at VCU's Medical College of Virginia Hospitals, and Michael Abbotanos, M.D., a former VCU resident in general surgery. Abbotanos is currently doing his fellowship at the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center and is affiliated with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"The contrast between Mombasa's beautiful countryside, the shanty towns that make up the city and the concentrated human suffering that filled the hospital was unbelievable," said Broderick. "I saw illness like I've never seen it before - the hospitals wards are open to outside air and to flies, patients' dressings aren't changed regularly and they have no pain medication even for patients who've suffered burns over more than 50 percent of their body."

Mombasa's Coast Provincial General Hospital is the second

High-School Robotics Competition to Hit Richmond

Event Sponsored by VCU School of Engineering, NASA Langley

by Mary Beth Alford
University News Services

After just six weeks of planning and construction efforts, thousands of eager high-school students and engineers will launch their self-designed robots into metal-to-metal competition March 9-10 at Virginia Commonwealth University's Stuart C. Siegel Center.

Seventy high-school teams from 12 states, Puerto Rico and Brazil will compete in the NASA Langley/VCU School of Engineering FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Regional Robotics Competition. Richmond is one of 13 U.S. regional event sites, which will draw a total of 525 teams.

"We look forward to holding our largest robotics event yet at VCU - more than doubling since last year," said Robert Mattauch, Ph.D., dean of engineering. "The competition gives the universi

See ROBOTICS page 2
VCU’s MCV Hospitals Re-Approved as Level I Trauma Center

Designation is Highest Among Facilities in Central Virginia

by Joe Kuttenkuler
University News Services

The Office of Emergency Medical Services in the State Department of Health recently re-verified Virginia Commonwealth University’s Medical College of Virginia Hospitals as a Level I Trauma Center. The verification is for three years — the maximum period allowed.

The only Level I Trauma Center in Central Virginia, and one of just five in the state, VCU’s Trauma Center provides comprehensive, specialized care for severely injured patients. As a Level I Center, VCU offers 24-hour, on-site surgical staff and dedicated operating room space. Additionally, VCU provides treatment of severe burns through its Evans-Haynes Burn Center. The Trauma Center also serves as a referral site for the state and is the coordinating facility for the area during disasters.

“Trauma care — just like emergency, fire and police — must be organized and available at a moment’s notice,” said Ginger Morse, R.N., trauma program director at VCU. “Trauma care is a public service and the designation process is one way of assuring the availability of resources and expertise that are required when someone is injured.”

The trauma designation process is voluntary and intended to identify the varying levels of capability available at participating hospitals. Virginia assigns three designation levels:

• Level I Centers — in addition to 24-hour, on-site surgical staff and dedicated operating rooms, round-the-clock access to laboratory services and sub-specialties including, cardiac surgery, neurosurgery, plastic surgery, anesthesiology and radiology must also be available.

• Level II Centers — typically based in community hospitals — are not required to have designated resources on-site 24-hours a day. For example, surgeons must be promptly available at all times, but may not always be at the hospital. Unlike Level I, Level II Centers are not required to offer constant access to cardiac or pediatric surgeons.

• Level III Centers — generally found in rural communities, it can provide quick assessment, stabilization and some surgical intervention for patients. A general surgeon is required to be promptly available, but no other surgical specialties are mandated. Depending on the severity of the patient’s injuries, Level II and III centers may transfer their patients to a Level I facility.

“Trauma care requires a total institutional effort — it is not a single department job,” said Rao Isatury, M.D., director of the trauma center. “Rehabilitation, social services and psychologists as well as patient and family counselors are an integral part of the process.”

“This verification is evidence of our commitment to the community to provide the best care possible,” said Hermon Kontos, M.D., CEO of the VCU Health System and vice president of health sciences. “Our mission of teaching extends to the public and in addition to trauma care VCU has a number of efforts aimed at preventing youth violence, burns and minimizing injury from accidents.”

FACULTY

continued from page 1

ROBOTICS

continued from page 1

ty a wonderful opportunity to generate interest in science and engineering among young people by providing them insight into the highly rewarding and creative profession of engineering.

Working with corporate and university engineers, students had six weeks to design, build, program and test their robot for competition. Each participating artist will exhibit a group of work from one of the following categories: painting, printmaking, sculpture, communication arts and design, crafts, photography or interior design.

Round 1 of this exhibition will open with an April 27 reception, and Round 2 will open with a May 11 reception. Both receptions will start at 5 p.m. at the gallery. The exhibitions are free and open to the public. For details, call the gallery at 828-1522 or visit www.vcu.edu/artscen/gallery.

Body Awareness Week

In celebration of Body Awareness Week, Feb. 11-23, the Office of Health Promotion, First Year Student Services, University Counseling Services and Aramark set up health booths at Virginia Commonwealth University’s Student Com-

mons. The event was designed to educate students on health and illness prevention. The booths offered many activities, including massage therapy, stress ball assembly and nutritional jeopardy. Bowls of red beans and rice also were available, giving students a taste of healthy eating.
BUDGET

continued from page 1

will be achieved.

The VCU Health System will be exempt from these budget actions, including the hiring freeze, because of its status as an authority of the Commonwealth. Mr. Marcus also acknowledged that the administration is committed to accommodating unique budget issues, and we expect that special consideration will be given to the need to ensure adequate funding for indigent care provided by the VCU Health System.

On February 27,冗络和大学校长, president, and chief financial officers met with Mr. Marcus to discuss the development of reduction plans and to receive specific savings targets for each institution. Reduction plans were due to the Governor's Office by noon on Friday, March 2, 2001. Implementation of the spending reduction plans, following approval by the Governor's Office, is expected to occur in about two weeks.

For VCU, the targeted general fund reductions are $8,765,693 in fiscal year 2001 and $7,402,434 in fiscal year 2002. These amounts represent reductions of about 1.6 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively. The reduction targets are preliminary and have been calculated based only on day-to-day operating programs.

Mr. Marcus emphasized that the savings targets will be reduced based on savings realized from a freeze on capital building and renovation projects not yet under contract. We believe the cumulative savings from all frozen capital outlay projects, at all institutions, will result in reduced savings targets for each school in proportion to its operating budget. At VCU, the capital-outlay freeze will have a major impact on renovations to the University's libraries, which are valued at $1.9 million. Several maintenance reserve projects also could be put on hold.

In addition to the spending reductions, the Governor has instituted a temporary hiring freeze as of February 24, 2001. Exemptions may be made by the cabinet secretaries to fill vacancies needed to provide essential services. The hiring freeze will not affect those who have already been given offers of employment. We believe the hiring freeze will be lifted once the spending reduction plans have been approved.

The Governor has indicated that he will call the General Assembly back into session in late March for the purpose of resolving the budget impasse. If a budget accord can be reached at that time, we believe the spending reduction plans will be modified to reflect legislative action.

We will continue to keep you apprised on the budget as information becomes available. In the meantime, please contact Paul W. Trimble (828-6116), Donald C. Gebrin (828-1235), Hermes A. Konto (828-9771), or me if you have any questions or comments.

VCU to Host Regional Conference Focusing on Women's Health

Women's Health 2001 Links Clinicians With Faculty Experts

by Michael Ford

Unversity News Services

V

rigina Commonwealth University's Institute for Women's Health and Office of Continuing Medical Education will sponsor a two-day conference focusing on women's health issues, aimed at physicians, nurses and nurse practitioners.

"Women's Health 2001: Clinical Insights for the Practitioner" is a multidisciplinary conference featuring faculty experts from VCU and institutions including Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Harvard Medical School in Boston, and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. The program is set for March 23-24 at the Jefferson Hotel,
In Brief

VCU School of Education Announces Infusion Lab Open House

Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Education will hold an open house to introduce the Infusion Technology Lab. The lab provides technical assistance to faculty, pre-service teachers and associates in the school of education. Infusion helps faculty members integrate technology into their classrooms and provides technical assistance. The open house will be held at 11 a.m. on March 6 in Oliver Hall, Room 3107. Free lunch and refreshments will be provided. For more information, call 828-3382.

VCU Libraries to Hold Book Sale

VCU's James Branch Cabell Library will hold a book sale from March 19-25 on its first floor. The sale will include donated books and various LPs with prices ranging from 50 cents for paperbacks to $1 for hardbacks and music. For more information, call 828-1112.

VCU Libraries Introduces Real-Time Online Help

VCU Libraries are offering a new trial service that allows users to ask questions and get answers online in real time from library staff at the James Branch Cabell Library on the Academic Campus or Tompkins-McCaw Library on the Medical Campus of Virginia Commonwealth.

The service is available weekdays from 3-5 p.m. through the library's Website at www.library.vcu.edu/resources.html.

McDavis to Give Keynote Address at Symposium on Ethical, Legal Issues in Counseling

Rodrick J. McDavis, Ph.D., provost and vice president for academic affairs and professor of education, will be the keynote speaker at a symposium on ethical and legal issues in counseling.

The event is co-sponsored by the Counselor Education Core of the VCU School of Education, the Richmond Area Counselors Association and the Virginia Counselors Association. The event will be held on March 9 in room 4084, Oliver Hall. For more information, call 828-1332.

VCU Libraries Expands Online Access to Books

By Mike Frontiero

University News Services

Virginia Commonwealth University's libraries have added two new features to their web site that will make it easier than ever for students, faculty and staff to stay informed about new print and digital publications.

You've Got Books! provides a customized view of the more than 40,000 new books and other materials VCU Libraries adds to its collections every year. Once a month, the service notifies users by e-mail of recent library acquisitions they might be interested in, and lists them in the order they would be found on library shelves. Users may review titles in virtually any field of study including transportation, painting and chemical technology. Special profiles can be found for Virginia and federal documents and dissertations.

NetLibrary allows users to search, preview and check out digital publications 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week from a collection of over 13,000 titles across all subject areas including literature, medicine and philosophy.

Books and other materials converted into digital format can be read online through any Internet browser or offline using a handheld computer, such as a Palm Pilot.

The online service is offered through a network of more than 100 academic libraries, including VCU Libraries, in the southeast and the Caribbean.

"The purpose is to give the university community an easy clickable way to find new books they're interested in," said Karen Carey, interim director of collections management at VCU Libraries.

Both services are free to VCU students, faculty and staff. For more information go to www.library.vcu.edu/connect/newbooks and wwww.library.vcu.edu/connect/netlibrarycount.html.

Legislators Honor VCU Police Officer for Physical Fitness

By Mike Frontiero

University News Services

A Virginia Commonwealth University police officer was among a handful of law enforcement officers recognized by the General Assembly on Feb. 19 for their achievement in a recent statewide physical fitness competition.

Capt. Tina S. Buck placed third in the Top Cop 2000 Fitness Challenge, which involved more than 100 of the state's most physically fit officers. The two-year old event, sponsored by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, promotes fitness among Virginia's criminal justice officers.

Buck, a member of the VCU Police Department for over 19 years, has been actively involved in physical fitness for more than two decades. Her achievements include winning a gold medal for powerlifting and a silver medal in Karate during a World Police and Firefighters competition. She also was a professional boxer for three years and her favorite sport is Greco Roman wrestling.

"The Top Cop Challenge represents 21 years of consistent physical training, which has always been a priority for me as a law enforcement officer," said Buck. "The good physical condition I maintain has a positive affect on my general well being, but also lends a professional image to the community I serve."

The one-day event included a series of fitness tasks, including a 150-yard ability course, timed sit-ups and pull-ups, and a 1.5 mile run. Tasks are age and gender adjusted to provide fair competition for all officers.

The competitions were held last October at Virginia Tech, James Madison University, George Mason University, University of Richmond and Norfolk State University.

"I am really proud of the individual accomplishment of Captain Buck," said VCU Police Chief William B. Fuller. "A physically fit police officer is better equipped to provide for the safety and security of our students, faculty and staff on campus."

Buck and other third place finishers received a state certificate recognizing their achievement, a trophy and a $50 prize.

VCU Surgeons Publish Book on Nutritional Support for Cancer, Transplant Patients

By Erin Lucero

University News Services

Two Virginia Commonwealth University surgeons recently edited a newly published book, "Nutritional Support in Cancer and Transplant Patients." Reiflat Latiff, M.D., director of Surgical Nutrition Support Services at VCU's Medical College of Virginia Hospitals, and Ronald C. Merrell, M.D., F.A.C.S., chairman of VCU's Department of Surgery, edited the book that addresses the critically important question of how to best offer nutritional support to cancer and transplant patients. According to Latiff, this issue is still debated in the surgical community.

"Both cancer and transplant patients may suffer from a great deal of malnutrition and associated complications," said Latiff, whose primary research interest is in the area of nutritional support for surgical patients.

"The development of modern and sophisticated surgical techniques, powerful chemotherapeutic and radiation protocols will prove to be nothing but abstract achievements if they are applied to a severely malnourished and slowly dying cancer or transplant patient."

The editors dedicated the book to Stanley J. Dudrick, M.D., who pioneered the use of intravenous nutritional support and was Latiff's mentor in the field of surgical nutrition.

Landes Bioscience published the book in February as part of its Intelligence Unit Series. The book also will be available on the Web.
TELEMEDICINE

continued from page 1

largest hospital in Kenya, with about 300 beds. It serves as a referral hospital for its region, but is unlike any medical center in the United States. With little or no running water on the wards and outdated techniques for burn care, the treatment provided is far from ideal.

The surgical relief team approached this environment with some high-tech help from VCU’s Medical Informatics and Technology Applications Consortium. MITAC is a NASA Commercial Space Center focused on teledmedicine and applying information and telecommunications technologies to support health-care delivery. With the help of MITAC’s advanced teledmedicine technology, OHH sent an advance team to Kenya to establish an Internet-based audio and video link that connected the Monroe Medical Center with the VCU hospitals. "That allowed us to screen patients in advance, which saved valuable time in the hospital and prevented patients from being discharged if they weren’t candidates for surgery," said Broderick.

The link also allowed OHH to draw on medical and surgical expertise from halfway around the world. MITAC’s Nathaniel Merriam, who accompanied the OHH team on its relief mission, sent images of patients’ procedures from the operating suite in Kenya to consulting physicians at MCV Hospitals for input and feedback. The ability to successfully conduct this type of surgical telemonitoring will be a critical component of any extended manned space mission.

Over a five-day stretch, the surgical team performed about 60 surgical procedures — more than 10 times what the hospital would normally do in a week. In addition to surgeons and nurses from MCV Hospitals, the team also included a Richmond anesthesiologist and a northern Virginia gynecologist who are former VCU residents. The OHH surgeons brought laparoscopic surgical equipment along on the relief trip and were able to perform procedures that resulted in reduced pain and recovery times for patients.

Broderick believes that this was the first time this type of surgery had been performed in Kenya. Even though the medical center has some laparoscopic equipment on hand from past donations, the Kenyan physicians had not been trained in its use.

The VCU surgical plans to continue their use of teledmedicine to provide post-surgical follow-up for their Kenyan patients. Without undertaking expensive and time-consuming travel, the system also will allow the surgeons to provide guidance to Kenyan physicians.

"While what we do in a week’s time is rewarding, a far greater number of patients are helped via the training that we provide to local physicians, nurses and patients," said Broderick. "It allows us to continue helping even after we’ve returned to the U.S."

Last year, OHH coordinated a relief trip to the Dominican Republic, and a trip to Nepal is planned for next year. Through the World Health Organization and the International Committee of the Red Cross, OHH has identified a number of communities in need around the world and plans to add a new location to the sites they visit each year. OHH has established an account at the MCV Foundation to receive the private donations that fund their relief efforts.

VCU Dental Researchers Create Advanced Patient Simulation System

by Laura Arbogast
University News Services

A unique patient-simulation system uses new technology to offer a comprehensive dental-education tool that will better prepare students to interact with and treat patients suffering from a variety of conditions and illnesses.

Developed by a team of researchers at Virginia Commonwealth University, the system was recently licensed to NewMentor Group. The California-based software provider will market the system to dental schools throughout the U.S. and the world.

"We recognized right away that this was a breakthrough product," said NewMentor President Jeanne Cohen. "The system is exactly what medical educators have been looking for; it is the only system that involves the direct application of what students are learning."

Louis M. Abbey, D.M.D., M.S., vice-chairman of VCU’s Department of Oral Pathology, led the research team that developed the system known as IMPACT, which stands for Interactive Multimedia Patient Case Tutor.

"This system is as close to seeing a real patient as you can get," Abbey said. "The interactive nature of the system offers extensive possibilities for advancement in all areas of medical education."

During simulated patient visits, students make choices regarding physical examinations, medical history, tests and treatment. Students are challenged to reach the correct diagnosis and treatment of the patient as efficiently as possible. An additional benefit is that educators can create IMPACT cases to give students experience in dealing with conditions they may not see frequently in the general population.

The IMPACT system is part of the growing global trend of using computerized simulations in medical training. Abbey’s main research focus is in the area of informatics, which involves using information technologies to improve healthcare. Over the next two years, Abbey will aid in the development of IMPACT for use in medical as well as dental schools across the country. Eventually he hopes to make the system Web-based for worldwide access.

"It’s an alternative method of detecting when strands of DNA form a double helix. Generally the most popular method of detecting that is through fluorescence, which uses light emitted from a molecule."

Bioelectronic detection would detect that reaction electronically and at a much lower cost.

Guiseppi-Elli contends scientists could develop a detection instrument to a specific task, such as finding whether a particular DNA sequence exists in certain organisms.

"Once you know that certain genes exist under a particular condition then you can develop better drug treatment programs," he said.

The new technique, which is patented by VCU, has drawn interest from pharmaceutical companies and the semiconductor industry, which may wish to use it for commercial applications.

Guiseppi-Elli is helping organize the two-day conference, which is expected to attract about 300 people from across the country. He hopes to bring the conference to Richmond next year.
People in the News

- **HARRY D. BEAR, M.D., Ph.D.,** medical director of the Breast Health Center at Virginia Commonwealth University's Massey Cancer Center and chair of surgical oncology at VCU's Medical College of Virginia Hospitals, hold a monthly breast cancer discussion group last month.

  The discussion group was featured on the medical news website www.ianchow.com, which averages about a million visitors per week. From Feb. 18-March 3, Bear answered questions ranging from the latest treatment options to promising research advances.

- **R. DOBRIN,** professor of history, recently published Migrants Against Slavery: Virginians and the Nation with the University Press of Virginia.

- **KEVIN SUTHERLAND, Ph.D.,** assistant professor of teacher education, recently presented a paper, "An Examination of the Relationship Between Teacher Praise and Students' Opportunities to Respond to Academic Requests" at the Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders in Kansas City, Mo.

---

**Researcher Makes Presentation at National Conference**

by Michael Ford

**Trigger Films Help to Improve Nurse Anesthetists' Training**

Virginia Commonwealth University professor presented a short film, designed to improve teaching techniques in the clinical setting. The film was presented at the annual American Association of Nurse Anesthesia Assembly of School Faculty's national conference in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., last month.

The film's presenter, William Hartland, P.H.D., C.R.N.A., assistant professor and director of education in VCU's Department of Nurse Anesthesia, said the film is part of ongoing research on enhancing clinical teaching effectiveness through the use of trigger films.

Two or three minutes in length, trigger films are short vignettes, depicting challenging situations nurse anesthetists might encounter in the operating room.

"The film basically shuts down the problem which arises, which triggers a discussion by the students concerning an appropriate course of action," Hartland said.

It is routine for clinical instruction to take place in an operating room with a real patient. Hartland's research on trigger films will improve teaching effectiveness by allowing nurse anesthetists to experience a "trial run" before entering an operating room with students.

---

**Forum on Research Issues to Explore Implications of Collecting Data on 'Third Parties'**

Seats Still Available

The Third Party Rights and Risks Forum, to be held this week at Virginia Commonwealth University, is drawing the attention of researchers from around the country.

The forum will focus on issues surrounding the collection of data about "third parties" — the parents, spouses, caregivers, colleagues, siblings and others who may be affected by information provided by subjects who are enrolled in research studies.

More than a dozen researchers, ethicists and patient advocates will share their perspectives at the forum. Presenters include representatives from the National Human Genome Research Institute, the federal Office for Human Research Protections and the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, as well as a pediatrician and ethicist who wrote about the issue for a January edition of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

While family history data is not critical to all research, it is essential and routinely collected for many projects. Because current regulations are unclear about whether anyone other than the primary subject must provide consent, some U.S. researchers have chosen to temporarily discontinue collecting data until the issue is resolved.

Though the issue of third party data often is discussed in the context of genetic research, the issue has the potential to impact all fields of research that ask about the behavior or health of a parent, spouse, sibling or other relative.

More than 25 universities will be represented in the forum's audience. Registrations include researchers and staff from institutions like Yale, Duke and Vanderbilt universities, Cedars Sinai Medical Center and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center as well as federal research centers.

The forum will be held on March 9 in the Medical Sciences Building. The $105 registration fee for the forum will include a copy of the published proceedings and lunch. A reduced fee is available for VCU community: faculty and staff may register for $100, and students with a valid I.D. for $50.

For more details, visit online at www.vcu.edu/trforf.html
Program Creates ‘Safe Zone’ for LGBT Persons

by Donna C. Gregory
University News Services

University Counseling Services has started a program as an outreach service to reduce homophobia and heterosexism on campus. Called Safe Zone, the program at Virginia Commonwealth University trains faculty and staff members to serve as resources for students and others concerned about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.

A pink, triangle sticker, often displayed on doors or in offices, identifies Safe Zone participants. The symbol — initially used during World War II by the Nazis to identify gay men sent to concentration camps — signals to others that participants are open to answering questions and discussing LGBT issues.

Because lesbian and gay individuals make up only 10 percent of the national population, it can be difficult for them to find trusted confidants. "LGBT persons are an invisible minority. They can choose to come out, but many do not. A big part of their lives is invisible," said Jan Altman, Ph.D., Safe Zone coordinator.

The program began in the School of Social Work in 1997. From there, with the help of graduate student Martha Ann Sprull, the program expanded to both campuses. Currently, there are about 50 active Safe Zone participants.

The VCU Safe Zone sticker identifies program participants. "Students may not know about Safe Zone, because it is fairly new here at VCU. The program is actually nationwide. About 80 colleges and universities have implemented it," Altman said.

The launch of the Safe Zone program follows VCU's decision to add sexual orientation to its antidiscrimination policy.

The program's core involves a two-hour workshop session that educates prospective participants on LGBT issues, such as stereotyping, the incidence of open and covert discrimination, sexual identity, heterosexism, homophobia and available resources. Most workshops are led by two people, including one who is LGBT and one ally.

Participants then have the option to display the sticker, letting students and others know that a "safe zone" is available to them. The sticker does not indicate that the participant is a LGBT person, but only identifies them as a resource.

Workshops are held about once a month in the Student Commons and other locations. The next workshop will be held March 12. To learn more about becoming a Safe Zone participant, call 828-6200 or email Jan Altman at jaltman@VCU.edu.

To register for or request a workshop, email Martha Ann Sprull at msprull@vcu.edu.

Tamson L. Six, Ph.D., professor of criminal justice, recently invited author and criminologist, Robert Ressler, to speak to her Criminal Forensics class about his career in the study of criminal behavior. Ressler, who has authored four books on topics ranging from serial killers to crime classification, is a 20-year veteran of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He spent 16 of those years in the Behavioral Science Unit as a supervisory special agent and is an expert on criminal personality profiling and crime scene analysis. While with the FBI, Ressler played a primary role in the formulation and development of their National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime and was the first manager of their Violent Crime Apprehension Program.

Criminal Forensics

Criminal Forensics

VU C to Mark Lymphedema D-Day

by Erin Lucero
University News Services

Virginia Commonwealth University’s Massey Cancer Center will mark Lymphedema D-Day on March 6 with an educational event for health-care providers and patients suffering from lymphedema. The free 3 p.m. event will be held in the Medical Sciences Building on VCU’s Medical College of Virginia Campus, 1217 E. Marshall St.

Lymphedema is a little known condition that causes progressive swelling of the arms, legs or other areas of the body. Affecting both men and women, it results in physical and psychological discomfort and decreased limb function. Lymphedema has no cure and can occur at any time as a result of cancer-related surgery. It can be managed if detected in its early stages. Recent studies have indicated that 20 percent of breast-cancer patients will get lymphedema after surgery and radiation.

For the first time this year, Virginia’s General Assembly passed legislation designating March 6 as Lymphedema D-Day.

The D-Day event will feature brief presentations from those living and coping with lymphedema, including Saxia R.J. Thaidens, R.N., who founded the National Lymphedema Network in 1998. Each year, the National Lymphedema Network sponsors Lymphedema D-Day to honor patients and raise awareness of the condition.

For the first time this year, Virginia’s General Assembly passed legislation designating March 6 as Lymphedema D-Day. Virginia was the first state in the nation to pass such a resolution in 2001.

Lymphedema D-Day: Virginia was the first state in the nation to pass such a resolution in 2001.
SEMINARS
March 6—"The Role of Soy Isoflavones in Breast and Endometrial Cancer." Sponsored by the School of Pharmacy. For details, call 828-4328. Noon/Smith Building, Room 216.
March 7—"Reading, Tayari Jones and Marita Golden." Sponsored by the department of English and the Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Foundation. For details, call 828-1320. 8 p.m./Student Commons, Capital Ballroom.
March 8—"Insights into Electronic Structure of Iron Porphyrin Complexes from Iron K-Edge X-ray Absorption Spectroscopy." Sponsored by the department of Chemistry. For details, call 828-1320. 4 p.m./Oliver Hall’s Kapp Lecture Hall.

WORKSHOPS
March 5—"Academic Success: How to be Successful in a Large Classroom." Sponsored by University Counseling Services of the Division of Student Affairs. For details, call 828-6200.
March 5—"Weight Watchers Weight Loss Program." Sponsored by Employee Health Services and Work/Life Resources. For details, call 828-8502, or E-mail at fjbenson@vcu.edu. 11:45 a.m./Student Commons.

March 8—"Academic Success: Navigating the Academic Student/Professor Relationship." Sponsored by University Counseling Services of the Division of Student Affairs. For details, call 828-6200. 3:30 p.m./Student Commons, Theater.
March 12—"Creating a Safe Zone: Reducing Homophobia and Heterosexism." Sponsored by University Counseling Services, Residential Education and The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs. For details, call 828-6200, or E-mail at masrhoa@vcu.edu. Noon/Smith Building, Room 208.
March 15—"Weight Watchers Weight Loss Program." Sponsored by Employee Health Services and Work/Life Resources. For details, call 828-8502, or E-mail masrhoa@vcu.edu. 11:45 a.m./Student Commons.
March 21—"Word Intermediate." Sponsored by University Computing Services on the MCV Campus. Pre-registration via the web is required. For details and online registration, see www.vcubinfo.vcu.edu/training/it. Cost is $35. 8:30 a.m./Sanger Hall, Room 3-048.

March 22—"PowerPoint Beginner." Sponsored by University Computing Services on the MCV Campus. Pre-registration via the web is required. For details and online registration, see www.vcubinfo.vcu.edu/training/it. Cost is $35. 8:30 a.m./Sanger Hall, Room 3-048.

CONFERENCES
March 9—"Third Party Rights and Risks." Sponsored by the Office of Research Subject Protection. For details, call 828-3640. 8 a.m./Medical Sciences Building, Auditorium.

MCV, Room 1015 Grove Street, Richmond, VA 23298. Phone: (804) 828-1166. Fax: (804) 828-1167. E-mail: mccall@vcu.edu. Web site: www.vcu.edu/mccall.

WORKSHOPS
March 5—"Weight Watchers Weight Loss Program." Sponsored by Employee Health Services and Work/Life Resources. For details, call 828-8502, or E-mail at masrhoa@vcu.edu. 11:45 a.m./Student Commons.
March 8—"Academic Success: Navigating the Academic Student/Professor Relationship." Sponsored by University Counseling Services of the Division of Student Affairs. For details, call 828-6200. 3:30 p.m./Student Commons, Theater.
March 12—"Creating a Safe Zone: Reducing Homophobia and Heterosexism." Sponsored by University Counseling Services, Residential Education and The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs. For details, call 828-6200, or E-mail at masrhoa@vcu.edu. Noon/Smith Building, Room 208.
March 15—"Weight Watchers Weight Loss Program." Sponsored by Employee Health Services and Work/Life Resources. For details, call 828-8502, or E-mail masrhoa@vcu.edu. 11:45 a.m./Student Commons.
March 21—"Word Intermediate." Sponsored by University Computing Services on the MCV Campus. Pre-registration via the web is required. For details and online registration, see www.vcubinfo.vcu.edu/training/it. Cost is $35. 8:30 a.m./Sanger Hall, Room 3-048.

March 22—"PowerPoint Beginner." Sponsored by University Computing Services on the MCV Campus. Pre-registration via the web is required. For details and online registration, see www.vcubinfo.vcu.edu/training/it. Cost is $35. 8:30 a.m./Sanger Hall, Room 3-048.

CONFERENCES
March 9—"Third Party Rights and Risks." Sponsored by the Office of Research Subject Protection. For details, call 828-3640. 8 a.m./Medical Sciences Building, Auditorium.

MCV, Room 1015 Grove Street, Richmond, VA 23298. Phone: (804) 828-1166. Fax: (804) 828-1167. E-mail: mccall@vcu.edu. Web site: www.vcu.edu/mccall.

PEDIATRIC PATIENTS AT VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY's MEDICAL CENTER received a special treat on Feb. 28. In celebration of Read Across America Day, the National Education Association sponsored a visit by the Cat in the Hat. During his visit to the pediatric playroom, the prankish Cat promoted the importance of reading. The theme for the NEA's Fourth Annual Read Across America Day is "Oh, The Places You'll Go!" the title of a 1990 Dr. Seuss book. The Cat in the Hat was created in 1957 when Seuss' friend and publisher sent him a list of 400 words, and then asked him to trim them to 250 words to create a book for first graders.

SPORTS
Baseball
March 9—VCU vs. the University of Maryland 2 p.m./The Diamond.
March 13—VCU vs. Virginia Military Institute 2 p.m./The Diamond.
March 14—VCU vs. Wake Forest University 2 p.m./The Diamond.
March 15—VCU vs. Pace University 1 p.m./The Diamond.
March 16—VCU vs. Pace University 1 p.m./The Diamond.
March 17—VCU vs. Pace University 1 p.m./The Diamond.

PERFORMANCES
March 7—"Jazz Guest Artists in Concert." Sponsored by the Department of Music. For details, call 828-1166. 8 p.m./Performing Arts Center, Virginia Commonwealth Concert Hall.
March 8—"Clarinet Studio Recital." Sponsored by the Department of Music. For details, call 828-1166. 8 p.m./Performing Arts Center, Virginia Commonwealth Concert Hall.

GRAMMY WINNING CELLIST to Perform at VCU

The Mary Anne Reynolds Chamber Concert series will present the inaugural International Samuel Barber Symposium on March 23-24. Hosted by Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of Music, the symposium will feature a performance of Barber's work by Grammy award-winning cellist Janos Starker. A performing artist and teacher of worldwide influence, Starker is recognized as one of the greatest musicians of the 20th century by classical music followers. Called "one of the greatest cellists of modern times, and very likely of all times" by The Ottawa Citizen, Starker's double CD, "Bach: Suites for Solo Cello Nos. 1-6," earned a 1997 Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance.

Born in Budapest in 1924, Starker survived detention in a World War II Nazi camp and emigrated from Hungary in 1948. Ten years later, Starker joined the Indiana University School of Music faculty, where he was named Distinguished Professor of Music in 1992.

On March 23, Starker will teach the Strings Master Class, featuring the music of Barber, who passed away in 1981. The public is invited to attend this free event, which will be held at 5 p.m. at the VCU Music Center Recital Hall, 1015 Grove Ave.

Because Barber's works are so diverse, encompassing strings, vocal and choral music, they lend themselves to the inclusion of the entire music department. More than 300 university students of music will participate in the symposium.

Born in 1910 in West Chester Penn., Barber wrote his first piece at the age of seven and began composing his first opera three years later. At age 14, he enrolled in the Curtis Institute, where he studied voice, piano and composition. Over the next 54 years, Barber created a portfolio of wide ranging work that earned him several prestigious awards, including the American Prize, two Pulitzers and election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

On March 24, Starker will perform works by Richard G. Strauss, Ludwig Von Beethoven and Johannes Brahms during a special concert at 8 p.m. at VCU's Performing Arts Center. Tickets for this event are $25 for adults, $20 for seniors/VCU and $10 for students. For more information, call the VCU Department of Music at 828-1166.

JANOS STARKER

---