The following individuals have joined the Department of Pathology since the last issue of the Pathology Scope was published. Please join us in making them feel at home and welcome in their new positions:

- Jillian Abbene, Hematology
- John Adent, Surgical Pathology
- Mary Allen, Phlebotomy
- Tamesha Antrum, Chemistry
- Steven Armstrong, Transfusion Medicine
- Anthony Baker, Phlebotomy
- Heather Barros, Transfusion Medicine
- Mary Holly Bigelow, Transfusion Medicine
- Charles Buckles, Hematology
- Candice Calvert, Hematology
- Victor Clarke, Surgical Pathology
- Katie Corbin, Chemistry
- Shannon Diggs, Chemistry
- Jamie Francis, Toxicology
- Johnny Gary, Specimen Processing
- Lillian George, Specimen Processing
- Tameka Givens, Chemistry
- Irene Gonzalez, Molecular Diagnostics
- Jason Gregory, Chemistry
- Tammie Grubbs, Surgical Pathology
- Amanda Harris, LIS
- Elizabeth Hickey, Chemistry
- Cheryl Hiltaffer, Chemistry
- Dan Huang, Research
- Cara Humbels, Hematology
- Lien Huynh, Microbiology
- Clara Jefferson, Pediatric Oncology
- Jacquelyn Johnson, Surgical Pathology
- Marva Johnson, Outreach
- Cynthia Losco, Molecular Diagnostics
- Harold Maenhout, Outreach
- Kris McCauley, Transfusion Medicine
- Maria Mikenna, Molecular Diagnostics
- Juana Mojica, Chemistry
- Amjad Mustafa, Chemistry
- Angee Nelson, Specimen Processing
- Franz Obusan, Hematology
- Kristen Pepeliaev, Microbiology
- Katharin Schmid, Transfusion Medicine
- Renee Seaman, Client Services
- Tracy Shepard, Phlebotomy
- Esther Smith, Stony Point
- Laura Walser, Transfusion Medicine
- Sylvia Ward-Taylor, Outreach.

Acknowledgements
Thanks to the following individuals for their contributions to this issue of the Pathology Scope. Johnetta Balk, Jeffrey Casterline, Tom Dills, Rob Ferguson, Carleton Garrett, Enrique Gerszten, Ann Harris, Betty Herndon, Dan Holmes, Gary Land, Judy Luck, Greg Miller, Scott Mills, Katherine Page, Debbie Reynolds, Carol Rodgers, Sue Rosett, Jill Sheek, Al Sirica, Joy Ware, and David Wilkinson.

Your Contributions are Encouraged
Please send news and information to:
Larry Vetter
Managing Editor
The Pathology Scope
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Richmond, Virginia 23298-0662
lpvetter@vcu.edu
In May, 2002, the Transfusion Medicine (TM) laboratory passed its American Association Of Blood Banks (AABB) assessment with flying colors. This peer inspection focuses on quality processes and improvements. The team of... available in only a handful of blood banks nationwide.

The Pathology web pages are constantly being modified and improved to reflect the changes being made in the department’s educational, research, and clinical service programs. The homepage has added a search engine, an expanded... with sharing of the website. Web-based educational support has been enhanced with updates to all medical education lab pages. Shared borders (page headers and footers that can be temporarily turned off for more efficient printing of student handouts) have... research labs, and clinical services. Katherine Page has taken the lead role in development and design of the website.

Mid-Atlantic Association of Blood Banks Annual Meeting

The Mid-Atlantic Association of Blood Banks (MAABB) held its annual meeting and seminar in Ocean City, Maryland, in April of this year. The mission of the MAABB is education for all Blood Bankers. Topics covered included technical issues, education, management, and donor issues. The VAH’s own Dr. John McCarty lectured on “Bone Marrow Transplantation” during the annual seminar. Several of our Transfusion Medicine employees are active in the organization and presented at the meeting. Rice Smith (TM Special Studies Supervisor) co-developed and moderated a technical workshop that looked at alternative technologies and automation. Jill Sheek (TM Manager) gave a presentation on the employee retention program developed in our department. Jill’s role will be elevated from Virginia Delegate to President elect for 2003. Other TM attendees were Ginger Brooks, Michelle Andolina, and Steve Rothman, who participated in workshops and lectures covering a variety of topics such as FDA Reporting, Quality Assurance, and AABB Assessor training. The Spring 2003 meeting will be in Williamsburg.

View From The Chair

This special edition of the Pathology Scope represents our second Annual Report issue. We wish to share with our employees, colleagues, and friends the many successes we have enjoyed as a large, diverse clinical department during the past year. It is especially remarkable that we have prospered and grown in an extremely difficult financial climate. The strides that we have made reflect the determination of a highly talented faculty and staff. Our people repeatedly find creative solutions to complex challenges. Time and time again, they have risen to the challenge, finding new ways to raise revenues and reduce costs. We have enjoyed continued success in the areas of teaching, patient care, and research. Several of our faculty members once again earned recognition from the School of Medicine for excellence in teaching. We graduated an outstanding class of residents and fellows, and we recruited an equally talented new group of trainees. We have been leaders in the use of web-based education, and we may rightfully boast that ours is among the finest academic pathology websites in the nation. Our brand new clinical laboratories in the Gateway Building improve our ability to respond to the needs of the patients and physicians of the VCU Health System. These labs benefit our employees by providing a state-of-the-art working environment. Grant funding for our scientific programs continues to increase along with our published research. Our faculty and managers play key roles in the governance of local, national, and international pathology organizations. Each passing year, we set new standards for excellence in the performance of our stated mission “to provide high-quality, cost-effective pathology services in a manner that supports the patient care, education, and research missions of the VCU Health System and the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine”. Employees at every level of the Department of Pathology deserve credit and recognition for their contributions to this continued success.

David S. Wilkinson, MD, PhD
Professor and Chairman

Strategic Planning Update

On March 26, 2002, a group of thirteen faculty and managers (Dave Wilkinson, Carl Garrett, Celeste Powers, Richard McPherson, Greg Miller, Tom Dilts, Jeff Casterline, Ann Harris, Margaret Grimes, Sue Roseff, Andrea Gonzalez, Rosanne Golden, and Larry Vetter) met in an off-campus retreat to discuss strategic planning issues relevant to the clinical enterprise of the Department of Pathology. The objective of this meeting was to recommend ways to enhance the department’s delivery of clinical laboratory services by identifying problems to solve and opportunities to pursue.

The ultimate product of this small group was a concise list of high-impact, realistically achievable initiatives. These initiatives will serve as the Department of Pathology’s Strategic Plan for Clinical Service. A planning horizon of eighteen months was used. The environment in which we operate is dynamic and rapidly changing. Finances, technology, reimbursement, and standards of care are in a constant state of flux. Planning must occur in a timeframe that reasonably accommodates environmental change. Therefore, an eighteen month horizon is realistic and manageable for planning purposes. The planning group’s recommendations were delivered to all faculty and lab managers at a dinner meeting held on August 6th in the Medical Sciences Building. The large group participated in a focused review and discussion of the initiatives, which will become operational in the coming weeks.

This round of planning was modeled on the department’s research planning process in 2001 that resulted in the current Strategic Plan for Research. The roster of participants was carefully chosen to ensure that executive leadership and practical experience from across all functional areas of the department was represented. Members of the Department of Pathology may request copies of the Strategic Plans for Clinical Service and Research by contacting Larry Vetter, Director of Strategic Planning and Development, at 828-3870.

Transfusion Medicine

The Transfusion Medicine (TM) laboratory passed its American Association Of Blood Banks (AABB) assessment with flying colors. This peer inspection focuses on quality processes and improvements. The team of four assessors from Duke, Roanoke, the University of Virginia, and Anne Arundel reviewed processes, procedures, equipment, staffing and documentation for compliance with AABB and federal standards. Transfusion Medicine relocated to new space in the Gateway Building in June. The TM staff worked diligently in preparation for and during the move. Congratulations to the entire staff for a job well done.

In July, TM’s PC backup system became a reality. This is the first step toward going paperless with patient testing results. In August, more LIS software changes were tested validated and implemented, providing TM with the ability of doing electronic crossmatches using a cutting edge technique that is available in only a handful of blood banks nationwide.

Paleopathology

The Paleopathology Program, under the direction of Drs. Marvin J. Allison and Enrique Gerszten, hosted students from outside institutions during 2001 to work on research projects in the Paleopathology Laboratory; Dr. Karen Cline-Fahamovich, Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine; Dr. Linda Wells, 5th Year Resident, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas; Sandy Cope-Yokoyama, 4th Year Medical Student, Baylor College of Medicine; and Nicole Riches, Senior College student, Cornell University. The following individuals, all 4th year students in the VCU School of Medicine, participated in the Paleopathology course in the Medical Anthropology course in the Paleopathology Lab: Amy Janet Lai, Christopher Yuyen Lau, Heather Renee Pepard, Michael Joseph Regal, Melody Robin Rice, Theresa Hilselberger Rosati, and Sunet Kunar Singh.
Accomplishments

EDUCATION

School of Medicine for excellence in teaching medical students.

Five faculty members were honored this year by the VCU Pathology Service.

We established a Resident Award for Excellence in Clinical the match with U.S. graduates.

Our residency program filled all four PGY1 positions in teaching materials are being continuously upgraded in the teaching labs.

Medical School, Dental School, and Physical Therapy presented "Microarray and prostate cancer analysis" at the annual meeting of the American Association for Clinical... Dr. Miller was a member of the Subcommittee on Sequencing Methods (MM-9) for the National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards (NCCLS).

Greg Miller, PhD was re-appointed chair of NCCCLS Area Committee on Clinical Chemistry and Toxicology. He was also re-appointed as a consultant to College of American Pathologists Chemistry Resource Committee.

Dr. Miller was a member of the 2002 Annual Meeting Organizing Committee for the American Association for Clinical Chemistry annual meeting held in Orlando July 28 through Aug. 2. His symposium presentations at the AAC annual national meeting were: "The LIS Database as an Integral Part of the EMR, Impact on Evidence-based Medicine" and "Workshop on Lipid and Lipoprotein Coronary Risk Factors, What and How to Measure, New Tests for Traditional Markers".

Susan D. Roseff, MD will edit the American Association of Blood Banks' 1st edition of the book "Pediatric Transfusion: A Physician's Handbook." A fall 2003 publication date is anticipated.

Alphonse E. Sirica, PhD published an article in the August, 2002 issue of Hepatology entitled "Overexpression and Cyclooxygenase-2 Up-regulation in Human Cholangiocarcinoma and Risk Conditions". Co-authors on the project were K. Endo, B. Yoon, C. Pairojkul, and A. J. Demetrus. Dr. Sirica will present at a Poster Session entitled "Organ Site-Specific Investigations: Colon and Gastrointestinal Cancers" at the American Association for Cancer Research Frontiers in Cancer Prevention Research Conference being held in Boston on October 14-18, 2002. The title of his poster is "Targeting ERBB-2 and COX-2 in a novel Cholangiocarcinoma Cell Line".

Joy L. Ware, PhD was a member of the Ad Hoc NIH Panel (Renal and Urologic Sciences Integrated Review Group) charged with recommending the structure and composition of revised study sections for renal and urologic sciences. This is one of several panels involved in re-organization of NIH study sections. Dr. Ware will give an invited presentation at the Second International Conference on Prostate Cancer Research to be held in Iowa City, Iowa, October 12-15, 2002. The title of her talk is "The Network Paradigm for Growth Factor Receptor Control of Prostate Cell Proliferation and Death".

The Department of Pathology ended the last fiscal year on a positive note. Our budget for fiscal year 2002 projected that we would end the year on a breakeven basis. In fact, we were able to realize a small surplus of funds that we will sorely need in the fiscal years to come.

In many ways this past year was devoted to reconstruction of the administrative office. Staff responsibilities were modified. New reporting methods were under development. New software was acquired to enhance and expand the administrative staff’s working strengths. Additionally, nearly all administrative staff members received specialized training during the year to move them to a higher level of expertise and knowledge. All of this was done to improve customer service and to be more responsive to the needs of the faculty and the technical staff.

As you know, nearly all sources of funding for this department are under stress. The Commonwealth of Virginia has reduced our operating support by nearly 10% for the current fiscal year. The money we receive from the hospital has decreased for the last two years and we see no sign of that changing. Clinical receipts remain flat as Medicare and the managed care payors reduce their payments to us while our work volume is increasing.

It remains unclear at this time what the impact of The Hunter Group consultant review and medical center reorganization will be on this department. Whatever that impact, the challenge facing us as a clinical department will be to provide the best service we can to our patients, faculty, and staff during a period of diminishing resources. The work that we have undertaken in this past fiscal year to enhance and develop our administrative operations will help us in this challenge. The fruits of these efforts will be visible as we progress in the new fiscal year.

Overall Accomplishments

For Fiscal Year 2002

• The Cerner LIS is now a fully functional tool for clinical testing and specimen processing. The Health System places increasing trust and reliance upon our experience as it moves closer to implementing the Cerner Millennium Clinical Information System.

• Our faculty continues to be extremely productive in academics, providing a total of 976 contact hours in formal courses and 1225 additional lecture contact hours in the school of medicine. Their scholarly productivity included 69 peer-reviewed publications, 19 book chapters, and 66 abstracts. They served on 29 editorial advisory boards and peer-reviewed 520 manuscripts.

• We continue to engage the executive management of the Department in an ongoing Strategic Planning Program that most recently developed a comprehensive Strategic Plan for Clinical Service.

• The Pathology web page continues to improve, and it is among the finest academic pathology websites in the country.

• Medical School, Dental School, and Physical Therapy teaching materials are being continuously upgraded in the teaching labs.

• Our residency program filled all four PGY1 positions in the match with U.S. graduates.

• We established a Resident Award for Excellence in Clinical Pathology Service.

• Five faculty members were honored this year by the VCU School of Medicine for excellence in teaching medical students.

Carleton T. Garrett, MD, PhD was appointed for the second consecutive year to direct the CTRF Cancer Genomics Project. The Cancer Genomics Project has received IRB approval to begin collecting tissue. The Project laboratories are currently validating their microarray platforms and will soon begin analysis of human tumors.

Dr. Enrique Gersuten and Carleton Garrett hosted visits to the Department of Pathology by students of the Maggie L. Walker Governors School, providing an overview of the role of pathologists in health care. The students were given a tour of the Molecular Diagnostics clinical laboratory and participated in an exercise that demonstrated the use of molecular testing in human identity cases.

Andrea Ferreira-Gonzalez, PhD presented “Microarray and prostate cancer analysis” at the annual meeting of the American Association for Clinical Chemistry in Orlando, Florida. Dr. Ferreira-Gonzalez has been elected to serve as a member of the Subcommittee on Sequencing Methods (MM-9) for the National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards (NCCCLS).

Jeffrey L. Casterline, Pathology Administrator, was elected the South Eastern Regional Representative to the Governing Council of the Pathology Department Administrators Section of the Association of Pathology Chairs, at the annual meeting of that organization in July at Park City, Utah. At that meeting, Mr. Casterline gave a presentation on “The Basics of informatics.”

Melissa J. Contos, MD was promoted to the academic rank of Associate Professor of Pathology.

Andrea Ferreira-Gonzalez, PhD presented “Microarray and prostate cancer analysis” at the annual meeting of the American Association for Clinical Chemistry in Orlando, Florida. Dr. Ferreira-Gonzalez has been elected to serve as a member of the Subcommittee on Sequencing Methods (MM-9) for the National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards (NCCCLS).

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As you know, nearly all sources of funding for this department are under stress. The Commonwealth of Virginia has reduced our operating support by nearly 10% for the current fiscal year. The money we receive from the hospital has decreased for the last two years and we see no sign of that changing. Clinical receipts remain flat as Medicare and the managed care payors reduce their payments to us while our work volume is increasing.

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Jeffrey L. Casterline Administrator
Laboratory staffing retention program was instituted resulting in a 50% decrease in staff turnover and decreased vacancies.

Specific chemistry and hematology procedures. The lab will support all areas of the hospital, especially the Emergency and trauma care areas. This “Ultra STAT” lab has significantly reduced turnaround time for time-sensitive laboratory results.

A new lab section was created within the chemistry and specimen processing area to provide STAT testing for hybridization) testing for Her-2/neu in breast cancer; T-cell monoclonality by PCR uses PCR with capillary electrophoresis to conduct high-throughput analysis of proteins, lipids, and other molecular entities.

Molecular Diagnostics expanded its testing capabilities in some very important areas: FISH (fluorescent in-situ hybridization) testing for Her-2/neu in breast cancer; T-cell monoclonality by PCR uses PCR with capillary electrophoresis to detect monoclonal populations of T-cells in a background of lymphocytes; Factor II (prothrombin) G20210A polymorphism; T-cell monoclonality by PCR; Prader-Willi/Angelman syndrome; Her2-neu amplification by FISH; Quantitation of t(9;22) by Real Time RT-PCR.

The MDx lab has entered into an agreement to be the national referral center for Fragile X Syndrome and Prader Willi/Angelman Syndrome testing for Esoterix Laboratories. In addition, work has been completed for the clinical trial “Clinical evaluation of the HCV RNA qualitative assay for use in the diagnosis of subjects at risk for or suspected of having hepatitis C infection”. This clinical trial was supported by GenProbe, Inc.

Funded research projects with direct and indirect costs of $1,706,563 were in progress last year.

Shawn Holt was awarded a grant for “Molecular Mechanisms of Prostate Cancer Progression”. The project, in the amount of $350,000 for three years, was funded by the Department of Defense Prostate Cancer Research Program. The goal of the study is to elucidate the mechanism of tumorigenic transformation in prostate cancer cells.

Alphonse Sirica was awarded a Merck Research Grant in the amount of $50,000 to investigate cyclooxygenase-2 in human and rat biliary carcinogenesis.

Joy Ware earned a four-year competitive renewal of her NIDDK grant “Regulation of Prostate Epithelial Cell Growth”. Total funding for the project is $930,290.

Carleton Garrett has taken a leadership role in the Virginia’s Commonwealth Technology Research Fund (CTRF) project grant, which will provide 1 million dollars per year for three years to evaluate gene expression and genetic changes in human brain, ovarian, breast, and hemolympohycytic cancers.

The Functional Genomics program continues to grow under Joy Ware’s leadership, and is using MALDI Mass Spectrometer to conduct high-throughput analysis of proteins, lipids, and other molecular entities.

In February, 2002 we began holding monthly research luncheons to provide our faculty with a regular forum for collegiality and interaction. The event brings together faculty members from across all academic and clinical areas of the department to share lunch and research interests. Each month, a different faculty member shares topics that focus on techniques, issues and research that are of interest to the larger faculty.

Successful relocation of the Surgical Pathology and Transfusion Medicine Services to the 6th floor of the new Gateway Building.

Laboratory support was increased to meet the expanding needs of the Oncology Clinic at Stony Point.

We successfully implemented a conversion of the Cerner Blood Bank Millennium laboratory information system.

The Cytopathology Lab now offers the Autocyte PREP liquid based monolayer technology as an alternative to the conventional pap smear. Autocyte’s enrichment process and differential centrifugation help eliminate obscuring material and increase the concentration of abnormal cells.

The Histology Lab began using the Artisan Staining System by Cytologix. This is the latest generation of staining automation, providing the flexibility of manual staining coupled with the precision and consistency of automation.

Molecular Diagnostics expanded its testing capabilities in some very important areas: FISH (fluorescent in-situ hybridization) testing for Her-2/neu in breast cancer; T-cell monoclonality by PCR uses PCR with capillary electrophoresis (CE) to detect monoclonal populations of T-cells in a background of lymphocytes; Factor II (prothrombin) G20210A detects a polymorphism in the factor II gene which leads to hypercoagulability, which can cause deep vein thrombosis, and pulmonary embolism.

A new lab section was created within the chemistry and specimen processing area to provide STAT testing for specific chemistry and hematology procedures. The lab will support all areas of the hospital, especially the Emergency Department and intensive care areas. This “Ultra STAT” lab has significantly reduced turn around time for time-sensitive laboratory results.

Laboratory staffing retention program was instituted resulting in a 50% decrease in staff turnover and decreased vacancies.

Coordinated and developed a written protocol for the new TransLogic™ pneumatic tube system.

The phlebotomist is often the only laboratory employee a patient sees. Acting as the “face” of the laboratory, the phlebotomist must create a professional atmosphere of trust and confidence when interacting with patients. Calming fearful patients and dealing with difficult customers is all in a day’s work. Phlebotomists often work without direct supervision. They must like challenge and responsibility, be accurate, pay attention to detail, work well under pressure and have good communication skills. The Department of Pathology has an experienced and talented group of phlebotomists who provide phlebotomy services at the following locations on the VCUHS campus, at satellite locations, and for our Outreach customers:

- Gateway Building 1st floor
- Ambulatory Care Center, 2nd floor, 3rd floor, 4th floor
- Nelson Clinic 2nd floor
- AD Williams Clinic 2nd floor
- Dalton Clinic, North Hospital Ground floor
- Pediatric Clinic, Randolph Minor 2nd floor
- Stony Point Laboratory
- Hayes E. Willis Health Center
- Long Term Care Facilities

Some cost saving initiatives in the Microbiology Laboratory include a negotiated three-year contract with Remel for Microbiology media and supplies, the purchase of a new anaerobic chamber for Microbiology to replace the Coy Chamber, and a new Mag+ immunochemistry analyzer. Immunology Quality Control has been totally revamped to be in compliance with CAP Special Chemistry requirements. The lab has been working closely with Materials Management and the Clinical Support Committee to implement urine collection kits in the hospital. These kits have preservative for urine cultures and include a tube for UA that will prevent technologists from having to pour off specimens for analysis. The Microbiology Quality Control Bench was added to perform all QC in Microbiology, helping to prevent duplication of work. Inventory control has also been incorporated into the QC bench. This is a more efficient, cohesive, and cost effective system than the previous one.

In Mycobacteriology, the new Bactec 960 for automated incubation and reading of broth cultures for AFB is in full operation. The Bactec 960 saves tech time and is more accurate, and positive cultures are recognized several days earlier. Microbiology began offering some new tests, including rapid Influenza A and B testing during flu season this year. This offered more information than the previous Flu A only test, which was usually done in light of the “anthrax scare” last fall. A quantitative culture for Bronchialveolar Lavage and bronchial wash specimens is also offered in response to requests by trauma physicians and has been well received and greatly appreciated. We began reporting confirmed ESBLs due to increased awareness and a slight increase in the number of ESBLs seen in the hospital. Finally, Immunology took over Hemoglobin Electrophoresis from Chemistry.
The Department of Pathology first occupied the Autopsy Suite on the second basement level of Sanger Hall almost 40 years ago. The facilities were state of the art at that time. After 40 years of use, the original autopsy space is being renovated in four planned phases. Each phase will include modern equipment and improvements. Phase I of the renovation began just over a year ago in the main autopsy room. All of the old autopsy tables were removed and the first of two new stainless steel stations was installed. The ceiling was painted glossy white and new lighting added brightness to the rooms. The ventilation system was cleaned and improved. The old office ceiling tiles were also replaced. Phase II of the upgrade will include improvements in the isolation room. A new stainless steel autopsy table will replace the current table. A redesign of office space to provide report storage and a reference library for use by residents and staff is also planned. Phase III calls for the installation of a second stainless steel autopsy station and new stainless steel cabinets in the main suite. Phase IV will conclude with the installation of a waterproof, crack free, non-skid epoxy floor. The improved physical appearance and upgrades improve working conditions and staff morale of the autopsy service.

Honors for the Clinical Laboratory Science Program

At the annual meeting of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science held in Orlando, Florida, a faculty member and two students in the Clinical Laboratory Science program at VCU were honored. Michelle Sigelakis, a senior student in the baccalaureate Clinical Laboratory Sciences program, was awarded the Ruth M. French Memorial Scholarship. Ms. Sigelakis obtained her MLT associate degree from J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in May 2001 and began working in the clinical laboratory at Bon Secours St. Mary’s Hospital. She was, however, committed to furthering her education and entered the CLS baccalaureate program at VCU where she has excelled academically. In addition to her work and school responsibilities she has volunteered her services in the community, working for the Fan Free Clinic and the MCV Children’s Medical Center. Also during the ASCLS Annual Awards ceremony, Teresa Nadder and Mike Langley were recognized with a CLS Distinguished Author Award for their article entitled, “The New Millennium Laboratory: Molecular Diagnostics goes Clinical?”. Dr. Nadder is the Associate Chairman of the Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences at VCU. Mr. Langley is the manager of the Molecular Diagnostics laboratory at VCU and a student in the Master of Science program in the Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences.

The Department of Pathology will provide high-quality, cost-effective pathology services in a manner that supports the patient care, research, and education missions of the VCU Health System and the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine.

Our goals in the area of education are to:

• Upgrade digital imaging and computer-based learning.
• Create rotation-specific objectives, skills checklists, pre- and post-tests, case-based tutorials, didactic teaching methods, advanced rotations in specialty areas, and feedback mechanisms.
• Optimize performance in the resident match and attract an increased number of qualified resident applications.
• Expand and develop use of the internet for teaching.
• Develop a resident assistant lab director program.
GOALS

- Continually improve the effectiveness of teaching on rotations.
- Consolidate vendor relationships.
- Use more of capital equipment leases and reagent rental agreements.
- Automate front-end specimen management.
- Improve utilization control.
- Develop a better understanding of physician ordering patterns.
- Decrease the volume of ICU testing.
- Decrease the volume of expensive esoteric testing.
- Decrease the volume of send outs.
- Use information systems to improve operational efficiency.
- Increase informatics skill of existing personnel (faculty and staff).
- Improve the use of Cerner management reports.
- Improve billing effectiveness.
- Improve compliance training.
- Appoint a billing expert for each lab section.
- Improve faculty access to reimbursement information.
- Increase front end registration training.
- Improve reimbursement for Anatomic Pathology consult services.
- Increase Outreach volume.
- Increase marketing of “niche” specialties.
- Collect 100% of negotiated fees on all contracts.
- Maintain charge master on a routine basis.
- Automate charge master maintenance.
- Deploy Retention/Recruitment plan within twelve months.
- Develop a career ladder for all employees.
- Create more opportunity for internal staff to provide continuing education presentations.
- Calculate the real cost of staff turnover and demonstrate how it affects revenue stream.
- Improve customer service by standardizing communication, acknowledging receipt of specimens, and proactively working with Client Services in “special” circumstances.
- Cross train surgical pathology and client services personnel.
- Develop a reference laboratory interface for Cerner LIS.
- Utilize Path Links dial-in functionality for Outreach customers to access lab results.

GOALS

- Maintain a collaborative environment within Pathology.
- Improve infrastructure to facilitate research.
- Educate clinically oriented faculty and residents in research and grantmanship techniques.
- Give priority to research potential in faculty recruitments.
- Provide leadership for the Cancer Genomics Initiative.

Progress in all areas will be made through the thoughtful and deliberate approach to problem solving in a collaborative environment.

Pathology Grand Rounds are held every Friday at noon during the academic year in Sanger Hall 4-026. This Fall, we offer a diverse roster of presenters speaking on a variety of topics relevant to academic pathology. All are welcome.

September 6th
Roger S. Riley, MD, PhD, Associate Professor
VCU Department of Pathology
Thromboembolic Disease: Recent Advances in Diagnosis and Treatment

September 13th
Shirley M. Taylor, PhD, Associate Professor
VCU Department of Microbiology & Immunology
Regulation of DNA Methylation in Normal and Neoplastic Cells

September 20th
Lauren S. Golablan, PhD, Assistant Professor
Texas Tech University
Detection of HPV Infected Cervical Cells Using Nanotechnology

September 27th
W. Greg Miller, PhD, Professor
VCU Department of Pathology
An Integrated Clinical Informatics System to Enable Outcomes Research

October 4th
Lawrence Povirk, PhD, Professor
VCU Department of Pharmacology & Toxicology
Repair of DNA Double-Strand Breaks with Damaged Ends by Nonhomologous End Joining

October 11th
Suzanne Barbour, PhD, Associate Professor
VCU Department of Microbiology & Immunology
The Role of Calcium-Independent PLA2 in Cell Physiology

October 18th
Chris Lehman, MD, Associate Professor
University of Utah Health Sciences Center Department of Pathology
Clinical Validation of the ADWIA 120 Hematology Analyzer: Impact on Hematology Testing

October 25th
David Shafritz, PhD, Professor
Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University
Department of Medicine
Stem Cells and the Liver: Fact or Fiction?

November 1st
Sarah Spiegel, PhD, Professor & Chair
VCU Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics
The Many Hues of Sphingosine-1-Phosphate

November 8th
Mark Brecher, MD, Professor & Director of Transfusion Medicine Services
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine
Bacterial Contamination of the Blood Supply

November 15th
Young Chen, PhD, Associate Professor
Wake Forest University School of Medicine
Department of Cancer Biology
DCC: To Be or Not To Be a Tumor Suppressor

November 22nd
Joy Ware, PhD, Professor
VCU Department of Pathology
The Network Paradigm and Prostate Cancer Growth Control

December 6th
Andrea Ferreira-Gonzalez, PhD, Associate Professor
VCU Department of Pathology
TBA

December 13th
Greg Hannon, PhD, Associate Professor
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories
Mechanisms of RNA
Clinical Laboratories Open in the Gateway Building

After considerable planning and preparation, the Surgical Pathology, Cytopathology, and Transfusion Medicine clinical laboratories relocated to custom-designed space in the Gateway Building in June. This represents a major improvement in our physical plant, in terms of usable square footage, functionality of space, proximity to the operating rooms, and work environment. Design work was done by the certified laboratory architectural firm Mortland Planning and Design, with a great deal of practical input from our service directors and laboratory managers.

As construction progressed, Debbie Reynolds served as project coordinator for the Department of Pathology. Debbie played a key role in ensuring that regular communication was maintained among the architects, contractors, and laboratories. Jill Sheek, Manager of Transfusion Medicine and Judy Luck, Manager of Anatomic Pathology, were actively involved in the planning, design, and relocation activities. Their long and tireless efforts were essential, and helped the project move forward smoothly. Mike Langley, Manager of Molecular Diagnostics, was extremely helpful in an advisory capacity. He brought experience to the project, having overseen the MDx lab construction the previous year. Rudy Muller, Cheryl Ross, and Gael Harman provided critical support in the seamless relocation of computers and networks.

During the move, there was no service interruption. The fact that a move of this complexity was transparent to the patients and physicians of the Health System is a minor miracle, and a tribute to the dedication of the staff, who worked evenings and weekends until the move was complete. All of our clinical laboratories are now situated in thoroughly modern locations.

According to Dr. Jack Frable, who served for many years as the Director of Surgical Pathology in Sanger Hall, “Our space in Gateway is well designed, consistent in temperature and humidity, light, airy and really a joy to work in. The new lab space is a vast improvement from the conditions in Sanger Hall. A few days after we moved in, I had to go back to Sanger for some reason. It was hard to imagine that we were in there for 36 years, and Dr. Kay for 42 years. The old labs were hot, poorly ventilated, and cramped. I think everyone is very happy with Gateway, and the few odd things that always crop up with new construction have been minor. All of the faculty, technologists, transcriptionists, residents, and fellows who produced such consistently high-quality work during four decades in the less than ideal clinical space of Sanger Hall should be commended.” A gallery of Dr. Frable’s artwork hangs in the Gateway 6 office corridor, and Dr. Kay’s portrait has been permanently mounted in the elevator lobby.

Dr. Susan Roseff, Director of Transfusion Medicine, sees the central location as the greatest advantage. “It is much easier for the patients and doctors to reach the apheresis area now. The OR and the main hospital are very close in proximity. The work area is bright and uplifting, with a beautiful view of the city from the south hallway. Communication among the staff is also easier with this open design. In the A.D. Williams building, we were closed off from each other in many small rooms.”

“This relocation was a long time in coming. Through significant planning and a major commitment of resources by the department and the Health System, we have built a clinical space that we can all be proud of.” said Dr. David Wilkinson, Chairman of Pathology. “Our productivity, recruitment, and staff morale are sure to be positively impacted in the coming years.”

Pathology Residency Program Update

The department’s Graduate Medical Education Programs continue to draw talented graduates from respected educational institutions. The professional, collegial atmosphere that we create and the excellent educational opportunities that we provide distinguish our program. Each year, the department hosts a graduation banquet to honor those trainees finishing residencies, fellowships, and doctoral programs. On June 6, 2002, members of the department gathered at the Capital Club to acknowledge those who were leaving the department and those staying on with the department in new capacities after finishing their educational programs. It is at this event that the we traditionally recognize outstanding contributions to our educational mission. This year, five awards were bestowed:

- Fergus O’M. Shiels Resident Teaching Award - Michelle Riddick-Young, MD (PGY-4)
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- Saul Kay Faculty Appreciation Award - Kristen Atkins, MD (Assistant Professor)
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The banquet honored those who were completing their training and moving on, here or elsewhere. Honorees were:

- John Fernandes, MD finished his fellowship in Forensic Pathology and is now a Medical Examiner with the Hamilton Health Science Center in Hamilton, Ontario.
- Matt Foster, MD finished his fellowship in Cytopathology and is now in private practice in Lynchburg.
- Cindy Lindsey, MD finished her fellowship in Cytopathology and is taking time off to attend to her expanding family before returning to practice full-time. She and her family live in Williamsburg.
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- Juan Perez-Berenguer, MD will finish his fellowship in Neuropathology in December, 2002.
- Rob Forsythe, MD finished his residency in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology and is now a Surgical Pathology Fellow at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C.
- Rajat Goel, MD finished his residency in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology and is now a Cytopathology Fellow with our department.
- C. Lee Bridges, MD finished his residency in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology and is now a Cytopathology Fellow with our department.
- Soni Anderson, MD, PhD finished her residency in Clinical Pathology and is now continuing her scientific career in the Washington, D.C. area.
- Christopher Kenney, PhD was recognized for completing his doctorate and is now a first year medical student in the VCU School of Medicine.

The Department is also pleased to welcome new residents and fellow who began their training with us on July 1st. They are:

- Bradly Clark, MD - Molecular Diagnostics Fellow (AP Residency at NIH ’02)
- Deborah Armstrong, J.D., MD - AP/Cp Resident (Virginia Commonwealth University ’02)
- Toby Gray, MD - AP/Cp Resident (University of Texas at San Antonio ’02)
- Daniel Klink, MD - AP/Cp Resident (Indiana University ’02)
- Erin Thibault, MD - AP/Cp Resident (Louisiana State University ’02)

This year’s welcome picnic for faculty and housestaff, scheduled for October 5th at Deep Run Park in Henrico County, was organized by Chief Residents Christine Cesca, MD and Michelle Riddick-Young, MD.
When implementation of the VCUHS Cerner Millennium system is complete, the department’s PathNet LIS product will be merging with the new Cerner Millennium hospital clinical information system. Access to more comprehensive data will also support clinical outcomes.

As noted in our list of accomplishments, we have had a very exciting and successful year. The move of the Transfusion Medicine Services and Surgical Pathology to the Gateway Building is just one of our major strategic actions to move us forward as a department. We have had a good year financially in terms of controlling expenses and growing our outreach program. We continue to face the challenge of decreasing reimbursements, which is offset by revenue brought in by the Outreach Program.

We have a great laboratory operation because we have great staff. This past year we developed an employee retention program that has helped reduce vacancies and turnover in the clinical laboratories. People are our most important resources, and we are committed to supporting and growing our staff. The Department of Pathology and the School of Clinical Laboratory Sciences are working together to develop educational career ladders that allow qualified staff to obtain a medical laboratory technician certification and/or medical laboratory technologist certification while working part or full time. Additionally, the department is finalizing an RFP for new automated instrumentation for Chemistry/Immunochemistry/Toxicology/Hematology. These are just two of some exciting things happening for this present fiscal year as we look forward to additional challenges and opportunities. The graphs to the right illustrate our performance in key areas during the past year.

Thomas Dilts
Director of Laboratory Operations

The Pathology Outreach Program continues to add infrastructure as the volume of referrals and net contributions to the health system increases each year. During FY2002, the program expansion included:

- Creation of a Team Leader position in Outreach Specimen Processing
- Expanded hours of coverage in Processing
- Three Senior Phlebotomists were hired to provide coverage for Long Term Care clients in the area, and perform Paternity collections to support the Human Identity testing offered by the Molecular Diagnostics Division.
- Two Service Representatives (couriers) are available to pick up and deliver samples from local customers from 7 AM to 8 PM daily.
- In the area of Sales, a second Sales Representative and a Sales Support Representative have been added to handle Clinical Trials and research activities.
- A third vehicle has been added to support the Outreach for sales and courier service.

Marketing Focus:
The Marketing and Sales effort primarily targets customers whose needs closely match the scope of services provided in our Clinical, Anatomic, and Molecular divisions, with special emphasis on boutique services including Dermatopathology, Hemostasis, Infectious Disease, Flow Cytometry, Paternity Testing, and Renal Pathology. The Outreach team is building a statewide laboratory network to allow community based laboratory services to respond to public sector and managed care bids.

FY02 Growth Experience:
Growth over the past three years has been modest, while working through the Cerner Millennium installation and the current Cerner Information System (CIS) project for the VCUHS enterprise. Once the new CIS goes live, Outreach intends to pull out the stops and move forward at a more aggressive pace. The attached graph demonstrates the continued success of the program at VCUHS.

Future Enhancements:
The program’s business plan is a moving target, trying to project volume and revenue growth and laboratory infrastructure needs by looking forward in three year increments.

The Pathology Outreach Program Continues to Grow

The Science Museum of Virginia Mini-Medical School

The Fall 2002 term of the Mini-Medical School, sponsored by the Science Museum of Virginia and VCU, is co-directed by Eugene G. Maurakis, PhD, museum scientist, and David S. Wilkinson, MD, PhD, Chairman of the Department of Pathology. The theme of the Fall program is “Pathology: Linking Technology With Good Health”. Eight faculty members in the Department of Pathology will be featured speakers, presenting the latest information about the causes, diagnoses, and treatments of serious conditions including blood clots, cervical cancer, stroke, Alzheimer’s disease, renal failure, and breast cancer. All sessions will meet on Wednesdays, September 18th through November 6th from 7 to 9 pm in the Ethyl Corporation IMAX Dome at the Science Museum of Virginia. Information and registration are available online at www.smv.org. This program is free and open to the public.
When implementation of the VCUHS Cerner Millennium system is complete, the department’s PathNet LIS product will be merging with the new Cerner Millennium hospital clinical information system. The move of the Transfusion Medicine Services and Surgical Pathology to the Gateway Building is just one of our major strategic actions to move us forward as a department. We have had a good year financially in terms of controlling expenses and growing our outreach program. We continue to face the challenge of decreasing reimbursements, which is offset by revenue brought in by the Outreach Program.

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• Continually improve the effectiveness of teaching on rotations.
• Consolidate vendor relationships.
• Use more of capital equipment leases and reagent rental agreements.
• Automate front-end specimen management.
• Improve utilization control.
• Develop a better understanding of physician ordering patterns.
• Decrease the volume of ICU testing.
• Decrease the volume of expensive esoteric testing.
• Decrease the volume of send outs.
• Use information systems to improve operational efficiency.
• Increase informatics skill of existing personnel (faculty and staff).
• Improve the use of Cerner management reports.
• Improve billing effectiveness.
• Improve compliance training.
• Appoint a billing expert for each lab section.
• Improve faculty access to reimbursement information.
• Increase front end registration training.
• Improve reimbursement for Anatomic Pathology consult services.
• Increase Outreach volume.
• Increase marketing of "niche" specialties.
• Collect 100% of negotiated fees on all contracts.
• Maintain a collaborative environment within Pathology.
• Improve infrastructure to facilitate research.
• Educate clinically oriented faculty and residents in research and grantmanship techniques.
• Give priority to research potential in faculty recruitments.
• Provide leadership for the Cancer Genomics Initiative.

Progress in all areas will be made through the thoughtful and deliberate approach to problem solving in a collaborative environment.

GOALS

RESEARCH

Pathology Grand Rounds are held every Friday at noon during the academic year in Sanger Hall 4-026. This Fall, we offer a diverse roster of presenters speaking on a variety of topics relevant to academic pathology. All are welcome.

September 6th
Roger S. Riley, MD, PhD, Associate Professor
VCU Department of Pathology
Thromboembolic Disease: Recent Advances in Diagnosis and Treatment

September 13th
Shirley M. Taylor, PhD, Associate Professor
VCU Department of Microbiology & Immunology
Regulation of DNA Methylation in Normal and Neoplastic Cells

September 20th
Lauren S. Gollahon, PhD, Assistant Professor
Texas Tech University Department of Biological Sciences
Detection of HPV Infected Cervical Cells Using Nanotechnology

September 27th
W. Greg Miller, PhD, Professor
VCU Department of Pathology
An Integrated Clinical Informatics System to Enable Outcomes Research

October 4th
Lawrence Povirk, PhD, Professor
VCU Department of Pharmacology & Toxicology
Repair of DNA Double-Strand Breaks with Damaged Ends by Nonhomologous End Joining

October 11th
Suzanne Barbour, PhD, Associate Professor
VCU Department of Microbiology & Immunology
The Role of Calcium-Independent PLA2 in Cell Physiology

October 18th
Chris Lehman, MD, Associate Professor
University of Utah Health Sciences Center Department of Pathology
Clinical Validation of the ADVIA 120 Hematology Analyzer: Impact on Hematology Testing

October 25th
David Shafritz, PhD, Professor
Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University Department of Medicine
Sperm Cells and the Liver: Fact or Fiction?

November 1st
Sarah Spiegel, PhD, Professor & Chair
VCU Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics
The Many Hues of Sphingosine-1-Phosphate

November 8th
Mark Brecher, MD, Professor & Director of Transfusion Medicine Services
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine
Bacterial Contamination of the Blood Supply

November 15th
Young Chen, PhD, Associate Professor
Wake Forest University School of Medicine Department of Cancer Biology
DCC: To Be or Not To Be a Tumor Suppressor

November 22nd
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The Network Paradigm and Prostate Cancer Growth Control

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TBA

December 13th
Greg Hannon, PhD, Associate Professor
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories
Mechanisms of RNA
The Department of Pathology first occupied the Autopsy Suite on the second basement level of Sanger Hall almost 40 years ago. The facilities were state of the art at that time. After 40 years of use, the original autopsy space is being renovated in four planned phases. Each phase will include modern equipment and improvements. Phase I of the renovation began just over a year ago in the main autopsy room. All of the old autopsy tables were removed and the first of two new stainless steel stations was installed. The ceiling was painted glossy white and new lighting added brightness to the rooms. The ventilation system was cleaned and improved. The old office ceiling tiles were also replaced. Phase II of the upgrade will include improvements in the isolation room. A new stainless steel autopsy table will replace the current table. A redesign of office space to provide report storage and a reference library for use by residents and staff is also planned. Phase III calls for the installation of a second stainless steel autopsy station and new stainless steel cabinets in the main suite. Phase IV will conclude with the installation of a waterproof, crack free, non-skid epoxy floor. The improved physical appearance and upgrades improve working conditions, and staff morale of the autopsy service.

At the annual meeting of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science held in Orlando, Florida, a faculty member and two students in the Clinical Laboratory Science program at VCU were honored. Michelle Sigelakis, a senior student in the baccalaureate Clinical Laboratory Sciences program, was awarded the Ruth M. French Memorial Scholarship. Ms. Sigelakis obtained her MLT associate degree from J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in May 2001 and began working in the clinical laboratory at Bon Secours St. Mary’s Hospital. She was, however, committed to furthering her education and entered the CLS baccalaureate program at VCU where she has excelled academically. In addition to her work and school responsibilities she has volunteered her services in the community, working for the Fan Free Clinic and the MCV Children’s Medical Center. Also during the ASCLS Annual Awards ceremony, Teresa Nadder and Mike Langley were recognized with a CLS Distinguished Author Award for their article entitled, “The New Millennium Laboratory: Molecular Diagnostics goes Clinical?”, Dr. Nadder is the Assistant Chairman of the Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences at VCU. Mr. Langley is the manager of the Molecular Diagnostics laboratory at VCUHHS and a student in the Master of Science program in the Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences.

• The Department of Pathology will provide high-quality, cost-effective pathology services in a manner that supports the patient care, research, and education missions of the VCU Health System and the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine.
• The Department will maintain an ongoing Strategic Planning Program, continually engaging senior leaders to develop creative strategies in the critical areas of education, research, clinical service, and administration.
• We will utilize the most current technological advancements to educate residents and medical students.

Our goals in the area of education are to:
• Upgrade digital imaging and computer-based learning.
• Create rotation-specific objectives, skills checklists, pre- and post-tests, case-based tutorials, didactic teaching methods, advanced rotations in specialty areas, and feedback mechanisms.
• Optimize performance in the resident match and attract an increased number of qualified resident applications.
• Expand and develop use of the internet for teaching.
• Develop a resident assistant lab director program.
Coordinated and developed a written protocol for the new Translogic™ pneumatic tube system.

Laboratory staffing retention program was instituted resulting in a 50% decrease in staff turnover and decreased vacancies.

Specific chemistry and hematology procedures. The lab will support all areas of the hospital, especially the Emergency care areas. This “Ultra STAT” lab has significantly reduced turn around time for time-sensitive laboratory results.

A new lab section was created within the chemistry and specimen processing area to provide STAT testing for Molecular Diagnostics expanded its testing capabilities in some very important areas: FISH (fluorescent in-situ hybridization) testing for Her-2/neu in breast cancer; T-cell mononolarity by PCR uses PCR with capillary electrophoresis (CE) to detect monoclonal populations of T-cells in a background of lymphocytes; Factor II (prothrombin) G20210A polymorphism

T-cell mononolarity by PCR

Prader-Willi/Angelman syndrome

Her2-neu amplification by FISH

Quantitation of t(9;22) by Real Time RT-PCR

The MDx lab has entered into an agreement to be the national referral center for Fragile X Syndrome and Prader Willi/Angelman Syndrome testing for Esoterix Laboratories. In addition, work has been completed for the clinical trial “Clinical evaluation of the HCV RNA qualitative assay for use in the diagnosis of subjects at risk for or suspected of having hepatitis C infection”. This clinical trial was supported by GenProbe, Inc.

We successfully implemented a conversion of the Cerner Blood Bank Millennium laboratory information system.

Carleton Garrett has taken a leadership role in the Virginia’s Commonwealth Technology Research Fund (CTRF) project grant, which will provide 1 million dollars per year for three years to evaluate gene expression and genetic changes in human brain, ovarian, breast, and hemolymphecytic cancers.

The Functional Genomics program continues to grow under Joy Ware’s leadership, and is using MALDI Mass Spectrometer to conduct high-throughput analysis of proteins, lipids, and other molecular entities.

In February, 2002 we began holding monthly research luncheons to provide our faculty with a regular forum for collegiality and interaction. The event brings together faculty members from across all academic and clinical areas of the department to share lunch and research interests. Each month, a different faculty member shares topics that focus on techniques, issues and research that are of interest to the larger faculty.
The Department of Pathology ended the last fiscal year on a positive note. Our budget for fiscal year 2002 projected that we would end the year on a breakeven basis. In fact, we were able to realize a small surplus of funds that we will sorely need in the fiscal years to come.

In many ways this past year was devoted to reconstruction of the administrative office. Staff responsibilities were modified. New reporting methods were under development. New software was acquired to enhance and expand the staff’s work’s strengths. Additionally, nearly all administrative staff members received specialized training during the year to move them to a higher level of expertise and knowledge. All of this was done to improve customer service and to be more responsive to the needs of the faculty and the technical staff.

As you know, nearly all sources of funding for this department are under stress. The Commonwealth of Virginia has reduced our operating support by nearly 10% for the current fiscal year. The money we receive from the hospital has decreased for the last two years and we see no sign of that changing. Clinical receipts remain flat as Medicare and the managed care payors reduce their payments to us while our work volume is increasing.

It remains unclear at this time what the impact of The Hunter Group consultant review and medical center reorganization will be on this department. Whatever that impact, the challenge facing us as a clinical department will be to provide the best service we can to our patients, faculty, and staff during a period of diminishing resources. The work that we have undertaken in this past fiscal year to enhance and develop our administrative operations will help us in this challenge. The fruits of these efforts will be visible as we progress in the new fiscal year.

Jeffrey L. Casterline
Administrator
Mid-Atlantic Association of Blood Banks Annual Meeting

The Mid-Atlantic Association of Blood Banks (MAABB) held its annual meeting and seminar in Ocean City, Maryland, in April of this year. The mission of the MAABB is education for all Blood Bankers. Topics covered included technical issues, education, management, and donor issues. VCUHS’s own Dr. John McCarthy lectured on “Bone Marrow Transplantation” during the annual seminar. Several of our Transfusion Medicine employees are active in the organization and presented at the meeting. The Southers (TM Special Studies Supervisor) co-developed and moderated a technical workshop that looked at alternative technologies and automation. Jill Sheek (TM Manager) gave a presentation on the employee retention program developed in our department. Jill’s role will be elevated from Virginia Delegate to President elect for 2003. Other TM attendees were Ginger Brooks, Michelle Andolina, and Steve Rothman, who participated in workshops and lectures covering a variety of topics such as FDA Reporting, Quality Assurance, and AABB Assessor training. The Spring 2003 meeting will be in Williamsburg.

The Paleopathology Program, under the direction of Dr. Marvin J. Allison and Enrique Gerszten, hosted students from outside institutions during 2001 to work on research projects in the Paleopathology Laboratory. Dr. Karen Cline-Pathamovich, Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine; Dr. Linda Wells, 5th Year Resident, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas; Sandi Copo-Yokoyama, 4th Year Medical Student, Baylor College of Medicine; and Nicole Riches, Senior College Student, Cornell University. The following individuals, all 4th year students in the VCU School of Medicine, participated in the Medical Anthropology course in the Paleopathology Lab: Amy Janet Lai, Christopher Yuen Lau, Heather Renee Peppard, Michael Joseph Regal, Melody Robin Rice, Theresa Hilsenerberger Rosati, and Sunnet Kunar Singh.

Web Page DEVELOPMENTS

The Pathology web pages are constantly being modified and improved to reflect the changes being made in the department's educational, research, and clinical service programs. The homepage has added a search engine, an expanded site directory and a divisional page matrix that includes 71 links from the homepage. These new website developments provide more information with easier, direct access for users of the website. Web-based educational support has been enhanced with updates to all medical education lab pages. Shared borders (page headers and footers that can be temporarily turned off for more efficient printing of student handouts) have been developed. Content has been updated and pages added for resident scheduling, conferences, lab test updates, research labs, and clinical services. Katherine Page has taken the lead role in development and design of the web site.
The following individuals have joined the Department of Pathology since the last issue of the Pathology Scope was published. Please join us in making them feel at home and welcome in their new positions:

- Jillian Abbene, Hematology
- John Adent, Surgical Pathology
- Mary Allen, Phlebotomy
- Tamesha Antrum, Chemistry
- Steven Armstrong, Transfusion Medicine
- Anthony Baker, Phlebotomy
- Heather Barros, Transfusion Medicine
- Mary Holly Bigelow, Transfusion Medicine
- Charles Buckles, Hematology
- Candice Calvert, Hematology
- Victor Clarke, Surgical Pathology
- Katie Corbin, Chemistry
- Shannon Diggs, Chemistry
- Jamie Francis, Toxicology
- Johnny Gary, Specimen Processing
- Lillian George, Specimen Processing
- Tameka Givens, Chemistry
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