Provost seeks ‘Year of the Faculty’ input

BY NANCY SEIDEMAN

Developing guiding principles for building and strengthening faculty distinction is at the core of a series of conversations Provost Earl Lewis has initiated with each school and college over the next several months.

For this academic year—dubbed the “Year of the Faculty”—Lewis plans to engage faculty across the University in a wide-ranging discussion of what resources, methods and standards it will take to develop current and future faculty.

Comments from these sessions will be posted on a Web site beginning this month so faculty can join the conversation online as well as in person. By December, at least one town hall will be organized to facilitate intercollegiate and interdisciplinary discussions, and by early next year comments and suggestions will be distilled into a draft document.

“My sincere hope is that this document, once finalized next spring, will serve as a blueprint for building and sustaining a faculty of distinction,” said Lewis, who pointed out that in a decade, many of the nation’s current faculty will reach retirement age.

Emory’s own analysis suggests that at least 50 percent of faculty at the University in 2015 would have arrived within the next ten years.

To achieve faculty distinction, Lewis said it is vital for Emory to “foster a culture that values and supports faculty excellence. We must celebrate, reward and retain distinguished faculty and recruit promising scholars.” To that end, the University recently committed $35 million to a Faculty Distinction Fund that will be applied to the retention and recruitment of outstanding scholars, including those enhancing faculty diversity.

“We must pay full attention to faculty development and balance the hiring of distinguished faculty and the pursuit of building and sustaining a faculty of distinction,” said Lewis.

Lewis launched the series of discussions at a special meeting of Emory College faculty on Oct. 4 where he outlined the communications process and blueprint timetable, and encouraged feedback from about 150 faculty present.

The ensuing conversation touched upon many factors involved in faculty development, including travel and research funds, mentoring, advancement and tenure, diversity, measuring progress and success, and the potential role retired faculty might play in the life of the University.

Lewis encourages all interested community members to attend the special faculty meetings and to visit the Web site dedicated to the “Year of the Faculty” initiative at www.emory.edu/PROVOST/year/yeartoofaculty.html to contribute ideas, comments and recommendations. “It is important that we hear from as many faculty as possible so that whatever plan of action we develop remains true to this university, its value systems, ethos and mission,” said Lewis.

‘Rushdie comes to Emory’ heard around the world

BY ELAINE JUSTICE

When the news broke last week of celebrated writer Salman Rushdie joining the Emory faculty and placing his archive here, James Curran, dean of the Rollins School of Public Health, was in South India. He saw a headline in a local newspaper there—“Rushdie Going to Emory”—and immediately called President Jim Wagner.

“Not only was he proud of Emory’s news about Rushdie, but also that the newspaper headline referred to Rushdie and his works coming to ‘Emory’ not ‘Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.’ It’s nice to know that we are gaining name recognition even in South India,” said Wagner.

News of Rushdie’s appointment as Distinguished Writer in Residence and his considerable archive coming to Emory set off a wave of worldwide media coverage, including articles in The New York Times, The International Herald Tribune and The Guardian. “The teaching appointment of Salman Rushdie and the significance of his archive underscore the importance of the humanities in addressing the global issues of our day,” said Provost Earl Lewis in the announcement.

Rushdie, in addition to being a master of world literature, is one of the most prominent voices for human rights. Though the subject of a nearly decade-long fatwa after his 1988 publication of “The Satanic Verses,” he continued to champion oppressed artists and peoples.

“How we fight it is going to be the great civilizational test of our time,” Rushdie has said about terrorism. Principles of human rights and religious and artistic freedom, he has said. See Rushdie on page 7

CAMPUS NEWS

Salman Rushdie signs books at an earlier appearance at Emory as part of the 2004 Richard Ellmann Lectures in Modern Literature.

CAMPUS NEWS

Special Faculty Meetings

Oxford College: Oct. 26, 8:15 a.m.
School of Nursing: Nov. 13, 10 a.m
School of Law: Nov. 16, 4 p.m.
Business School: Nov. 17, 10 a.m.
Theology School: Dec. 4, 10:30 a.m.
School of Public Health: TBD
School of Medicine:
Emory Faculty: Nov. 14, 5:30 p.m.
Grady Faculty: Dec. 14, 5:30 p.m.
VA Faculty: Jan. 18, 5:30 p.m.

This is a preliminary schedule. Visit www.emory.edu/PROVOST/yearofthefaculty.html for updates and locations.

HUMAN RESOURCES

2007 Benefits Enrollment

• Enrollment Packets
   When: Employees should have received packets by Oct. 16.
   Action: Read and learn about plan details and enrollment instructions.

• Enrollment Meetings
   When: Oct. 10–Nov. 1
   (Visit http://emory.hr.emory.edu/OE07MT-g5Sch.htm for the full schedule.)
   Action: Attend a session to get more information.

• Annual Enrollment
   When: Oct. 23–Nov. 3
   Action: Enroll online at http://leo.cc.emory.edu.

If you have not received your enrollment packet by Oct. 16, or if you have any other questions about your benefits enrollment, please contact the Benefits Department at 404-727-7613.
Emory commits $5 million to improve accessibility on campus

BY KIM URQUHART

K

easton White will always remember Sept. 11, 2001, but for a different reason than most. It was the day a spinal injury at football practice rendered him a quadriplegic.

For the Emory sophomore, who navigates campus in a power wheelchair, the University’s plan to remove barriers and improve accessibility for the disabled on campus is welcome news.

“I think that any and every building should be accessible to anybody,” said White, who factored Emory’s accessibility into his decision to enroll here.

Over the past two years, the University has updated its barrier removal plan and, among other projects, has dedicated about $600,000–$700,000 to fix barriers in existing buildings, facilities and pathways to enable disabled students to live, learn and work on campus.

With the financial resources secured, the University has been in implementation mode. Emory is in the process of removing barriers in existing buildings, facilities and pathways to enable faculty, staff, students and visitors with disabilities to experience campus life side by side with the campus community.

Policies and procedures are also in place to ensure that new buildings, facilities and pathways are designed with accessibility guidelines.

Spearheading this effort is Manager of Accessibility Design and Construction Linda Sheldon, brought on board to assess areas that need improvement under guidelines set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Emory has established priorities for long-range goals and short-term objectives. The first phase of the project targets buildings on Emory’s core campus “that have the highest use and greatest demand for both academic and public functions,” Sheldon said.

Glenn Memorial Church is among the first buildings slated for upgrades, set to begin this summer. The alterations to Glenn will allow for better access, Sheldon said, adding that specifics are still under review. Two other buildings on campus are currently in feasibility studies for upgrades during this fiscal year as well.

Sheldon, who previously served on the transition planning team for Phase I upgrades. Another 60 to 70 are set for the second phase, which will include the Oxford College campus and some off-campus buildings.

Sheldon acknowledged that Emory is “in a constant state of flux” as it is being transformed into a pedestrian-oriented campus under the Master Plan Project. Sheldon sits on the review committees that oversee these plans to ensure they meet all standards.

“There are very few really difficult challenges here as far as making the campus completely accessible,” the primary challenge is just that we live in a topography that is hilly,” Sheldon said, “so how we negotiate accessible routes will be one of our biggest challenges.”

Plans are in the works to update Emory’s Web site to include a map of the most accessible campus routes. And Sheldon said that Campus Services “has a built-in system now, as far as procedures for drawing reviews and project reviews that includes accessibility.”

While the ADA serves as the foundation for codified civil rights, the U.S. government has determined that provisions of these laws applicable to the disabled fall under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act and the Georgia Accessibility Code. Emory is committed not only to meeting its compliance obligations with disability laws, but when possible, to go beyond its legal obligations to remove impediments so that persons with disabilities can take advantage of all that Emory has to offer,” Mandl said.

This year is one of about 300 students who work with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to obtain needed services, and ensure that equal access, reasonable accommodation and compliance are achieved.

The ODS and the Disability and Resources Committee, formerly Provost’s Early Lots to study a broad range of disability issues, were among the organizations that provided feedback on the barrier removal project.

Wendy Newby, co-chair of the committee, said that Emory’s student body has become “more diverse and more aware of their needs.”

For “to set the scene for a more comprehensive view for how Emory needs to plan for this kind of diversity,” the task force has drawn up a list of action items, said Newby, assistant dean for undergraduate education and director of family resources for disability “Mobility diversity is just one of the aspects of this, and is a very important one.”

As for White, he has found Emory’s campus to be “pretty accessible,” though he does have his own wish list of improvements. “What I like is that Emory seems to be willing to make any accommodations as needed,” he said.
EMORY PROFILE
BRANDON FELDMAN

Making a ‘racquet’ at Oxford

By Kim Urquhart

Oxford’s men’s tennis team captured the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III national championship last season.

Oxford’s head tennis coach and athletic coordinator, Brandon Feldman

T he Emory Victory Bell reverberated across Governor’s Hall in the Miller-Ward Alumni House six times, celebrating the resounding success of the Oxford College men’s tennis team. Oxford’s Head Tennis Coach Brandon Feldman was among those who had the honor of ringing the bell in the tri-annual ceremony honoring Emory athletes.

Feldman led the Oxford College Eagles to victory last season, when the men’s tennis team captured the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III national championship. It was an uphill battle, marking the first time in Oxford athletics history that a team had become a national championship trophy, in any sport.

The win’s significance for Oxford goes beyond bragging rights. Feldman provided context: “When you look at our school’s small size, the selectivity of our students, and the academic strength of our particular athletes, it makes everything more special.” With less than 700 students, Oxford was up against schools at least 10 times its size. As part of Emory, Oxford is also one of the most academically demanding schools. Its athletes excel on and off the court, with three Academic All-Americans on the men’s tennis team matched by three on the women’s.

“It shows that we can do all these things and still compete,” Feldman said.

Now in his fourth year as Oxford’s first full-time tennis coach, Feldman also guided the women’s team to their debut at the NJCAA women’s national tennis tournament.

“It’s the first time the women ever ranked as a team in the tournament,” Feldman said. “My first year here we brought one player. This year we brought the whole team, and finished third.” The women had to reschedule their final exams to compete, “which made it even more amazing,” Feldman said.

Before Feldman arrived to transform Oxford tennis into a force to be reckoned with, the tennis program was sandwiched between soccer and basketball season and lacked a full-time coach. The men’s team had made it to the national tournament once before, and finished fifth. “I had a lot to work with,” Feldman recalled, and set about improving that record. “My first year here, we finished third with the men, and then second, and then we won the championship.” Feldman demands the most out of his athletes, yet understands that college comes first. “I try to be a little more laid back, more flexible,” he said. “I tell them this is our little neighborhood, and we can try to be the best on our block.”

Feldman’s competitive streak started at a young age. A natural athlete, his childhood in Florida was spent playing tennis, soccer, volleyball and baseball. By age 12, he had won the state championship in soccer and was an All-Star baseball player. “I thought, ‘I haven’t done anything yet in tennis,” he recalled, so at age 13 he decided “to put everything into tennis.” Little did he know this would be the defining focus of his life.

At Skidmore College, Feldman earned his undergraduate degree in government with a minor in coaching. He went on to study exercise physiology at the University of Miami, where he was also an assistant coach for the women’s tennis team. “I decided that I liked being on the tennis court more than I liked being in my laboratory,” he said, and his career choice changed course.

He was working as a USPTA certified tennis pro in a Miami tennis center—when his best friend, a coach at Washington College in Maryland, invited Feldman to work with the NCAA Division III powerhouse.

He was at a turning point. Did he stay at the club level, or go into college coaching? “I threw on competition and enjoy being in a healthy competitive environment, and college sports can provide that,” Feldman explained of his decision to coach.

At Washington College, Feldman helped guide the men’s team to a spot in the NCAA tournament and take the women’s doubles team to nationals. A year later, he left to join Oxford.

Feldman’s arrival allowed Oxford’s tennis season to extend into the fall. “That was the first thing that really kicked started everybody into thinking this was something serious,” he said. Oxford tennis is funded by an endowment from a community leader who gave tennis lessons, and was always a popular sport. Yet the program needed direction. “When they saw that tennis could do something on a varsity level in junior college, the athletic director, Edgar Flores, put the push in for getting a real coach,” Feldman explained.

As Oxford’s athletic coordinator, Feldman directs the school’s intramural programs, which range from flag football to ultimate frisbee. He also maintains the athletics home page on Oxford’s Web site, and performs other duties on campus as needed. Feldman’s typical week includes about 14 hours in practices and another six to eight in individual workouts with team members. Two assistant coaches offer support.

Unlike some of the faculty and staff, who commute to the college from elsewhere in metro Atlanta, Feldman has made Oxford his home. “I like being around so I can get with the players for whatever they need,” he said. Feldman and his wife are active in the community: he leading tennis clinics and lessons for local residents; she teaching jazz, tap and modern dance. Oxford has become “a big playground” for their infant daughter, Davina. “The baby knows everybody on campus,” Feldman said, and is never lacking for babysitters.

Currently, Feldman is concentrating on the Eagles’ fall season. The men’s and women’s teams have continued their strong performance, most recently at the Southeast Regional Inter-Collegiate Tennis Association Tournament. Feldman, who has always taken pride in being the “hardest working guy on the court,” hopes his Oxford players will exhibit the same attitude. “My ultimate aspiration,” he said, “is to show our players that they are capable of reaching deep down and achieving goals on the court, just as they hope to in the classroom and in life.”
W illiam Chace had a story to tell—in the form of a 368-page book entitled “100 Semesters: My Adventures as a Student, Professor, and University President, and What I Learned Along the Way,” published by Stanford University Press.

In his new book, the former Emory president chronicles his life as a restless graduate student at Berkeley to a professor at six universities throughout the country.

“Every chapter of this book can be called, ‘I was not ready,’” Chace said. But it seems that the less ready he was, the more he learned. The book is jam-packed with hard-earned lessons and valuable insight on teaching, learning, university administration, politics and poetry—all from his own perspective as student, professor and administrator for 50 years at six universities throughout the country.

Returning to Emory as a professor of English, Chace’s passion for teaching is clear in “100 Semesters.” He describes teaching as “the sudden acceleration of learning, the surprises of thought, the quiet mutual struggle against ignorance.”

As one might expect from a book—like children eagerly waiting for story time—to listen to a few Chace’s listeners absorbed every word he read from his chapter on spending time in an Alabama jail in 1964 for uttering slogans of “No More Racism” and “End Segregation” as the only white person in a gathering of 300 civil rights protesters.

“A tough-looking young truant came to my cell, stared at me for a long time, and said: ‘I’m just looking at you, because when you get out and when I get out, I’m going straight ahead kill you.’”

But despite such dangers, the tale had a comic element to it as well: “When asked by an officer if I wanted anything from home,” Chace read, “I instinctively and said I wanted the German book—Thomas Mann’s ‘Tonio Krüger’—I had been studying it to all my friends.”

For the German language exam back in Berkeley.

Though mesmerizing, such tales are only one component of “100 Semesters,” which Chace describes in part as memoir, part “how-to” manual for being a university president, and part analysis of higher education in the U.S.

Chace critiques the American university today, worrying about the plight of the humanities, rising tuition costs and growing consumer pressure on institutions. Colleges are “meant to be havens of thought, not pleasure resorts,” wrote Chace. At the same time, Chace hails the university as a “constant reminder of the promise of youth, the excitement of learning, and the sanctity of teaching” and gives “a plea for modern dash of modesty in how universities represent themselves to the public.”

President Jim Wagner opened the University Senate’s first meeting of 2006–07 of the President’s Commission on LGBT Concerns (PCORE) met Sept. 14 to “look for ways to be more proactive instead of reactive” this year, according to Alex Escobar, PCORE chair-elect.

The group also discussed ways to implement some of its initiatives. Among them was sponsoring multicultural music concerts that will bring together student groups with different ethnic backgrounds.

The performance initiative will be investigated more deeply at PCORE’s next meeting, which will feature presentations by Mike Li from China and Nagib Haque from Bangladesh.

October Meetings

• PCORE, Oct. 15, 3:30–5 p.m., Jones Room*

• PCORE, Oct. 24, 3:15–5 p.m., Jones Room*

*320 Woodruff Library

—Staff Reports

President’s Commission on LGBT Concerns

Co-Chairs Paige Parvin and Andy Wilson opened the first meeting of 2006–07 of the President’s Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Concerns (PCLGBT) on Sept. 19.

Wilson and Parvin presented updates on recommendations that the commission has made to the University community to make Emory a trans inclusive environment.

The commission discussed a recent feature in The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students, which listed the “Best of the Best Top 20 Campuses” for LGBT leaders in higher education. The commission discussed how the University can better serve the LGBT community on campus. Ratings were based on a variety of issues and services, such as having an active LGBT alumni group.

Among the action items for the group’s next meeting is to identify a topic for a brown-bag lunch program, a joint effort with the other commissions and councils.

President’s Commission on the Status of Women

The President’s Commission on the Status of Women (PSW) held its first meeting of the academic year on Sept. 20.

Nadine Kaslow, chair of the commission, opened the meeting with official business by initiating a vote for changes in the bylaws. Kaslow said these changes would be codifying the structures that the commission has been following for years.

The commission then discussed leadership at Emory, including the dynamics between male and female leadership styles as well as possible ways to enhance female leadership at the University.

Next, President Jim Wagner addressed the commission saying that Emory needs to move forward and be on the leading edge of women’s issues.

Take Back the Night and budget allocations are among the items on the agenda for PSW’s upcoming meeting.

October Meetings

• PCLGBT, Oct. 17, 3:15–5 p.m., 400 Admin. Bldg.

• Employee Council, Oct. 18, Noon–2 p.m., Jones Room*

• University Senate, Oct. 24, 3:15–5 p.m., Jones Room*

*320 Woodruff Library

—Staff Reports
**THEOLOGY SCHOOL**

Speakers challenge faithful to ‘move politics’

**BY ELAINE JUSTICE**

F rom a rantshattering ser- mon by the Rev. James Forbes to calls for action by religious leaders and activists such as Atlanta’s own Andrew Young, Candler School of Theology’s “Faith, Politics and Policy” conference Oct. 9-10 presented attendees with a host of alternatives for navigating the troubled waters of modern American politics.

Jim Wallis, executive director of the Christian ministry Sojourners and editor-in-chief of Sojourners Magazine, drew a capacity audience and several reporters with a talk marking the title of his recent book, “I had no idea 35 years ago, as the first African American faculty member of Emory College, that we would come to this historic moment,” said Dolo- res Aldridge, Goizueta Professor of Sociology and African American Studies, to her ASAlH colleagues. “I take personal pride in this exhibit as a life member of ASALH. Please know that Emory will take great care of the Carter G. Woodson Collection.”

One of Emory’s most distinguished holdings, the Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History collection contains rare volumes, many produced by African American authors. The collection also includes Woodson’s works published through Associated Publishers, which during his lifetime became the most important black-owned publishing house in the United States.

The opening of the Carter Woodson exhibit in Woodruff Library is being commemorated by the release of a printed catalog and the creation of two new fellowships in Woodson’s name. The exhibit, “The Mind of Carter G. Woodson as Reflected in the Books He Owned, Read and Published,” is on view in the Schatten Main Gallery through Dec. 20.

Several noted historians and authors, as well as more than 200 members of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History Library (ASALH), visited Emory for a special pre-opening of the exhibit on Sept. 29. Emory acquired the Woodson collection in collaboration with the organization, founded by Woodson in 1915 to foster the scholarship and forwarding of African American history.

When a questioner asked how to work with local church leaders who seem to be at odds on social and political issues, Carson reminded her to capitalize on Methodism’s strong connectional ties, which bring Methodists from around the world together to work for change.

In his sermon titled “No Time for Foolishness,” Forbes, the nationally known senior minister of the Riverside Church in New York, posed some questions—and he expected some answers.

“Do you believe that all Muslims are God’s children?” he asked as part of a series of questions singling out various racial, ethnic, religious and sexual ori- entation groups. When the audi- ence responded with a ringing “Yes!” Forbes, delighted, said, “I think we’ve got a consensus here that every child coming from the womb of a woman is God’s child!” The response was thunderous applause.

But Forbes wasn’t finished. “Maybe that’s why the tax struc- ture ought to be changed. How are you going to balance a budget on the backs of God’s children?” he asked. Forbes managed to get in several more exhortations, about being good stewards of what God has pro- vided, and taking care of every- thing from the environment to one’s own mental and physical health.

Audio recordings of conference plenary sessions are available by contacting Doug Sasser at dssasser@emory.edu or 404-727-0714.

Woodson “was surpassed by no other individual of the twentieth cen- tury in acting on his belief in the importance of the printed word. Emory University is honored to be the permanent repository of this distinguished collection,” wrote Randall Burkett, curator of African American collections, in the acknowledgments section of the catalog chronicling Emory’s Woodson holdings.

The printed catalog provides full bibliographical citation to each item in the collection, which features both antislavery and proslavery texts, as well as books on economics, literature, politics, art, culture and world history. The catalog indicates the presence of bookplates, dust jackets and other distinctive features. It also notes inscriptions to, and marginal comments by, Wood- son. The catalog is now available for a minimum contribution of $25, with all proceeds going to establish fellowships to encourage research in the Wood- son collection in Emory’s Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library. The funding will help cover the costs of travel and lodging while at Emory. “Our goal is to raise sufficient money to support a scholar to work in the Woodson collection and related African American collections,” Burkett said. An ad- ditional fellowship will target teachers, and support educational uses of the Woodson library and related collections.

The two fellowships honor Woodson’s dual interest in “teaching and the importance of introducing African American history not only to scholars, but to the general public and young adults and children,” Burkett said. Known as the “Father of Negro History,” Woodson’s many accomplishments include organizing the first Negro History Week, now celebrated each February as Black History Month.

“It is my hope that in reading this catalog and accessing this collection the reader comes away with a deeper appreciation of the multiple fronts on which blacks fought for their place as citizens,” wrote Provost Earl Lewis, an African American historian, in a foreword to the catalog.

Catalog order forms are available from Mayfred Nall at 404-727-2245.

—Kim Urquhart

**CLIFF NOTES**

Emory kicks off second Park-n-Ride shuttle service

Attention Emory commuters who travel past Northlake Mall or the LaVista Road exit of I-285—the free Park-n-Ride shuttle service is now open and ready for business! Emory’s second Park-n-Ride lot opened on Monday, Oct. 9 and approximately 25 commuters ventured on to the buses on its first day. Buses leave Northlake Mall at 5:45 a.m. and run approximately every half hour until 7:45 p.m., with reduced service midday. The 200- space section of the Northlake Mall parking lot near Macy’s is patrolled by security.

Emory’s first Park-n-Ride lot at North Dekalb Mall is already at two-thirds capacity after operating four months.

For more information on Emory’s Park-n-Ride service, visit www.ridedecliff.org.

**CLIFF NOTES**

Turman demolition postponed to 2008

The demolition of the Turman Center residence halls, originally scheduled to begin next summer, will now begin in the summer of 2008.

The new lease on life for the Turman Center is not expected to affect the overall timeline of the Clifton Road Redevelopment Project, which is still undergoing scenario planning and schematic work to ensure the project is planned efficiently and effectively.

Maintaining Turman’s housing stock for another year will alleviate a potential gradu- ate student housing crunch that was anticipated for the 2007–08 academic year. Other plans in the works should provide for first-year graduate student housing by the begin- ning of the 2008–09 academic year, according to Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration Mike Mandl.

—David Payne

**FOCUS ON FORBES**

“Young, Candler School of Theology’s ‘Faith, Politics and Policy’ conference Oct. 9–10 of Sojourners and editor-in-chief Jim Wallis, executive director of the Christian ministry Sojourners, drew a capacity audience and several reporters with a talk marking the title of his recent book, ‘Maybe that’s why the tax structure ought to be changed. How are you going to balance a budget on the backs of God’s children?’ he asked. Forbes managed to get in several more exhortations, about being good stewards of what God has provided, and taking care of everything from the environment to one’s own mental and physical health.

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—Kim Urquhart
Progestrone study shows promise for traumatic brain injury treatment

BY JANET CHRISTENBURY

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mory University researchers have found that giving progesterone to trauma victims shortly following brain injury appears to be safe and may reduce the risk of death and the degree of disability. The results of this study—the first clinical trial of its kind—are available in the October issue of Annals of Emergency Medicine. Researchers said the next step is to assess the promise of progesterone in laboratory animals and military personnel. Despite the enormity of the problem, no new medical therapies have been developed for traumatic brain injuries in more than 30 years.

A three-year pilot study to assess the promise of progesterone for treatment of TBI, called ProTECT (Progesterone for Traumatic Brain Injury—Experimental Clinical Treatment), enrolled 100 participants. The Phase II study was primarily designed to evaluate whether progesterone can be administered intravenously in a reliable way, and whether the treatment is safe to use in humans with TBI.

In an earlier paper, the researchers reported that progesterone can be reliably given intravenously and achieve predictable levels in the bloodstream. The new paper reports the team’s findings about drug safety and effectiveness.

Enrolled patients had an initial Glasgow Coma Scale score ranging between 4 and 12—an indication of the level of impairment from a TBI—and received either intravenous progesterone or placebo. Thirty days after injury, objective rating scales were used to assess each participant’s neurological function and level of disability.

“We found encouraging evidence that progesterone is safe in the setting of TBI, with no evidence of side effects or serious harmful events,” said David Wright, assistant professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine and lead author of the study. “In addition, we found a 50 percent reduction in the rate of death in the progesterone-treated group. Furthermore, we found a significant improve ment in the functional outcome and level of disability among patients who were enrolled with a moderate brain injury.”

The researchers found no significant differences in the rate of adverse events among patients who received progesterone compared to those who received placebo. About 30 percent of patients given placebo died within 30 days of head injury, compared to only 13 percent of those given progesterone. Most patients who died had a severe TBI. Because more severe TBI patients in the progesterone group survived, it is not surprising that they had a higher average level of disability at 30 days than survivors in the placebo group. One-year outcomes will be reported at a later date.

Donald Stein, Asa G. Candler Professor of Emergency Medicine and neurobiologist at Emory, said the research team is now planning a large, multi-center trial designed to test the treatment in laboratory animals and military personnel. Despite the high initial dose, patients were able to reduce their daily dose of prednisone to five milligrams after a year of treatment (compared to only 15 percent in the control group), avoiding the need for long-term steroids.

The results will be good news for the Emory Cardiovascular Clinic, the only center for inflammatory blood vessel diseases in the Southeast. “We can do better in treating this disease, and what we do at the beginning is very important for the long-term prognosis of patients,” Weyand said.

The research was funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Danna Foundation, the Mayo Foundation and the National Institutes of Health General Clinical Research Center.

Steroid treatment offers extended relief to giant cell arteritis patients

BY DANA GOLDMAN

A new study offers both hope and a practical treatment option for patients with giant cell arteritis (GCA). Researchers from Emory and the Mayo Clinic have found that by treating newly diagnosed GCA patients with just three days of a high-dose intrusive steroid, patients relapsed less in the following year and were able to significantly taper off use of an oral steroid. The study was published in the October issue of Arthritis & Rheumatism.

GCA is characterized by inflammation of arteries, primarily in the head, and affects 20 to 40 of every 100,000 people. GCA usually produces swelling and headaches, or, in some cases, vision loss, strokes and aortic aneurysms. While past research has shown a genetic link to the disease, which primarily affects Caucasian women over the age of 50, there is no known cause or cure.

For the last 40 years, physicians have been able to treat and reverse some symptoms of GCA by prescribing prednisone, to be taken daily over a year or more. “Patients improve promptly and reliably, within days of when we treat them,” said Cornelia Weyand, co-director of the Kathleen B. and Mason J. Lowance Center for Human Immunology at Emory and an author of the paper. “The problem is that patients have to take prednisone for a long time and in high doses and, they are at risk of developing side effects.” Common side effects include hypertension, diabetes and osteoporosis.

While scientists have attempted to develop new drugs that would be more effective and have fewer side effects, their results have been unsuccess ful. “We and others tried to look into other types of treatments that could help with this disease,” said Jorg Emory, senior author of the paper, and co-director of the Lowance Center.

In animal models, the researchers observed the effect of various steroids on implanted inflamed arteries. “We learned that the doses of steroids, although already high, really didn’t take away the disease,” said Weyand. “But if we increased the dose to very high levels, we could then eradicate the inflammation.” Equipped with those initial results, Weyand and Goronzy designed a double-blind human study to examine whether a brief period of pulsing with high-dose intravenous steroids soon after diagnosis could reduce the long-term need for prednisone and improve patient recovery.

The research showed positive long-term results. Those patients who had been given the initial high dosage had fewer relapses of the disease (21, as compared to 37 relapses). Seventy percent were also able to reduce their daily dose of prednisone to five milligrams after a year of treatment (compared to only 15 percent in the control group), avoiding the need for long-term steroids.

Emory Swoops in to celebrate reading

Emory mascot Swoop joined teachers and students to kick off the “25 Books” reading campaign at Benjamin S. Carson Honors Preparatory School on Sept. 29. Members of Emory’s Omega Epsilon chapter of the Mortar Board national honor society and Cynthia Shaw, Emory assistant dean and director of student development, presented Carson Prep Principal Patricia Wells with $7,000 worth of books collected during the chapter’s annual book drive in April.

Emory partners with Carson Prep through the Emory Northwest Atlanta Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC), established in 2004 by a $50,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. From its office at Carson Prep, which is part of Atlanta Public Schools, the COPC engages Emory faculty and students with Carson parents, teachers and students in a variety of activities to boost academic achievement and promote family well-being. The COPC also works to preserve affordable housing and to address issues that affect the quality of life in the neighborhoods around Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway, formerly Bankhead Highway.

—Sam Marie Engle
Croatian saxophone quartet enriches Emory culture

Although some might be hard pressed to find it on a map, Croatia not only has a rich geography—with a long, beautiful coastline on the Adriatic Sea, rolling hills and wooded mountains—it also has a vibrant culture with a long history of intellectual and artistic contributions. Two Nobel Prize winners came from Croatia, as did the necktie (and the word “cravat”) and the first fountain pens.

On Oct. 18–21, the Croatian Zagreb Saxophone Quartet brings its influential brand of saxophone music to the Emory campus, with two free performances in the Schwartz Center with the Emory Wind Ensemble (EWE), conducted by Scott Stewart, Emory director of wind studies. Another performance, “Sax and the City,” takes place Oct. 18 at 8 p.m. Compositions will include work by Frank Ticheli, and to celebrate his 100th birthday, work by Schostakovich will be played. On Oct. 21 at 8 p.m., Zagreb and the EWE celebrate Family Weekend with the Emory Concert Choir, led by Eric Nelson, and the Emory Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Richard Prior.

The quartet’s influence on saxophone music is global and spans many genres, said Stewart. “Zagreb is to the sax world what the Canadian Brass is to the brass world,” he said, adding that Emory is fortunate to have them.

Since Zagreb’s debut in 1989, the quartet has reached a growing audience in Eastern Europe and North America, with a repertoire ranging from Baroque pieces to premieres of new works by Croatian composers. Ensemble members, all graduates of the Zagreb Academy of Music in Croatia, include Dragam Sremec, soprano; Goran Merep, alto; Sala Nesterovi, tenor; and Matjaž Drevenšek, baritone.

For more information, call 404-727-5050 or visit www.arts.emory.edu.

—Nancy Condon

Emory’s first-ever resident string quartet at home in Atlanta

Orchestra, and will perform extensively, here and abroad. “This might come as a surprise,” said Wu, “but many Emory students are not aware of the Schwartz. Our goal is to introduce as many students as possible to this great venue and to classical music in general. Whatever their major, music can only enrich their educational experience.”

This season, there will be many opportunities to learn from the Vega String Quartet as they present in the Bach/Bartok Cycle, a six-concert series hosted by the Emory Chamber Music Society of Atlanta featuring Bach’s complete works for solo strings and Bartok’s complete string quartets. The quartet’s next concert—the second of the series—takes place on Oct. 20 at 8 p.m. They will perform Bach’s “Cello Suite no. 2 in D Minor” and Violin Partita no. 1 in B Minor” and Bartok’s “String Quartet no. 2.” Remaining concerts take place on Nov. 17, Jan. 16, Feb. 16, March 23.

Tickets are $20 general admission, $15 faculty and staff, and $5 students. For more information, call 404-727-5050 or visit www.arts.emory.edu.

BY NANCY CONDON

“W”

we love food, and Atlanta is a great place to eat. We also love the outdoors, and can do most everything here, from hiking to boating,” said violinist Jessica Shangou Wu, a founding member of the award-winning Vega String Quartet, Emory’s first-ever resident string quartet, on the ensemble’s affinity for this Southern city. The three other members include violinist Yunzi Kong, violinist Wei Wei Le and cellist Guang Wang. The quartet hails from Shanghai, China, and arrived at Emory this year by way of New York City.

For their residency, the quartet will teach throughout the University in the upcoming year, offering classes that explore music’s relationship to every field, from biology to law. They will also work with student chamber music ensembles and the Emory Symphony Orchestra, and will perform extensively, here and abroad: "This might come as a surprise," said Wu, "but many Emory students are not aware of the Schwartz. Our goal is to introduce as many students as possible to this great venue and to classical music in general. Whatever their major, music can only enrich their educational experience."

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Blue light special: Phones provide emergency assistance

Walking around the Emory campus after dark, one might wonder if intergalactic beings were beaming down in blue light. But these are not visitors from outer space: the blue lights are there to draw attention to the emergency phones that are scattered around campus.

There are 75 blue light emergency phones on both the Atlanta and Oxford campuses to help to provide safety to students, faculty, staff and visitors. For 20-plus years, Network Communications and the Emory Police Department (EPD) have worked together to identify locations where these phones would be the most useful.

Blue light phones can be used to report a crime, an accident or any suspicious activity. They can also be used for assistance, such as to request a jump-start for a vehicle. Blue light phones can be used to report a crime, an accident or any suspicious activity. They can also be used for assistance, such as to request a jump-start for a vehicle.

With the push of a button, the speakerphone goes directly to an EPD dispatcher and stays connected until the dispatcher decides it is appropriate to dispatch. There are similar phones in the parking decks that can directly to an EPD dispatcher and stays connected until the EPD dispatcher decides it is appropriate to dispatch.

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MONDAY, OCT. 16

Concert Atlanta Youth Wind Symphony, performing. 8 p.m. Emerson Concert Hall, Schwartz Center. Free. 404-727-5050.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 18

THURSDAY, OCT. 19
Music Lecture and Demonstration “Perspectives on Performance.” Zagreb Saxophone Quartet, performing. 2:30 p.m. Emerson Concert Hall, Schwartz Center. Free. 404-727-5050.


FRIDAY, OCT. 20
Concert Vega String Quartet, performing. 8 p.m. Emerson Concert Hall, Schwartz Center. $20, $15 for discount category members; free for students. 404-727-5050.

SATURDAY, OCT. 21