General Update

Continue using UA Healthcare. We are all very excited to get the word out about our new integrated enterprise and our new name. However, we are still working with our University of Arizona partners on an agreement that will allow us to do that. We hope to complete that step soon and formally announce our new name and brand. Until then, we must continue to use our present name of UA Healthcare.

Power Point Available - A number of you may receive requests to speak at a conference and or event regarding the shooting events that took place on January 8, 2011. A Power Point presentation covering the course of the events is now available for your use. If you would like someone to attend an event to speak on this tragedy, there are several individuals available to you. It is important that we deliver a consistent message regarding the course of the events. Please contact Carmen Martinez if you would like a copy of the presentation or need a speaker 694-4806.

University Medical Center was named the Tucson area’s top hospital in a new U.S. News & World Report ranking for metropolitan areas. The U.S. News Media Group expanded its Best Hospitals rankings, released today, with the introduction of rankings in 52 U.S. metropolitan areas, which are available online at www.usnews.com/hospitals. The new metro area rankings are aimed mostly at consumers whose care may not demand the special expertise found only at a nationally ranked Best Hospital, the magazine says. The new rankings recognize 622 hospitals in or near major cities with a record of high performance in key medical specialties, including 132 of the 152 hospitals already identified as the best in the nation. There are nearly 5,000 hospitals nationwide. Ranking after UMC were Northwest Medical Center and Tucson Medical Center in a tie for the number two spot. Carondelet St. Mary’s and Sierra Tucson, which is both a drug treatment center and psychiatric hospital, tied for fourth. Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center topped the Phoenix metropolitan area rankings.

Theodore Price, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacology at the UA College of Medicine, has been named the 2011 recipient of the John C. Liebeskind Early Career Scholar Award from the American Pain Society. The award recognizes early career achievements that have made outstanding contributions to pain scholarship. Dr. Price’s focus is on chronic pain, in particular on understanding how the peripheral and central nervous systems are sensitized in chronic pain conditions. His laboratory is investigating how pain becomes chronic and is identifying opportunities for treating or reversing chronic pain through a better understanding of the molecular mechanisms that maintain chronic pain.

Donata Vercelli, MD, has been awarded $1.9 million over four years by the National Institutes of Health to identify new targets for therapeutic intervention in allergic diseases. Dr. Vercelli is associate director of the Arizona Respiratory Center and a professor of cell biology and anatomy at the University of Arizona College of Medicine; director of the Arizona Center for the Biology of Complex Diseases, a division of the UA’s Arizona Research Laboratory; and a member of the BIOS Institute. Dr. Vercelli’s research takes a genetic approach to disease. “We are flooded with information that associates certain types of variants in genes to certain characteristics of diseases,” she says. “Our research goes beyond the associations and seeks to identify the mechanisms that link genetic variants to disease.”

Alan D. Marmorstein, PhD, has been awarded $1.7 million over three years by the National Eye Institute of the National Institutes of Health to identify new targets for therapeutic intervention in BEST disease, an early-onset, inherited form of macular degeneration. Dr. Marmorstein is a professor at the University of Arizona College of Medicine Department of Ophthalmology and Vision Science and in the UA College of Optical Sciences. Since he arrived at the UA in 2003, his research has focused on finding a cure for age-related macular degeneration by understanding the basis of inherited macular degeneration and developing tools for early diagnosis.