Dr. William Crist Appointed UA Vice President for Health Affairs

William M. Crist, MD, dean of the University of Missouri (MU) School of Medicine and a nationally noted pediatric cancer investigator, has been appointed vice president for health affairs at The University of Arizona.

Dr. Crist, who is scheduled to begin his new duties Oct. 31, will be responsible to UA President Robert N. Shelton for the coordination and administration of overall academic and medical services in the UA Colleges of Medicine (in Tucson and at the UA College of Medicine – Phoenix in partnership with ASU), Nursing and Pharmacy and the UA Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health. He also will oversee all UA agreements with UMC, UPH and UPH Hospital. He will work in partnership with Meredith Hay, UA executive vice president and provost, in the development and execution of strategic academic priorities for the health sciences academic units.

A 1969 graduate of the MU School of Medicine, Dr. Crist became its dean in September 2000; in October 2004, he was named MU’s first Hugh E. and Sarah D. Stephenson Dean. During his tenure, he contributed greatly to the recruitment of renowned physicians, a tripling of the school’s endowment, significant increases in grant support for research, extensive construction of new labs and an ongoing effort to integrate continuous quality improvement into the curriculum and patient care.

Also a professor in the MU Department of Child Health, Dr. Crist is among the scientists credited with dramatically improving our understanding of childhood leukemias and their treatments.

Dr. Crist completed an internship in pediatrics at the University of Michigan Medical School, Mott Children’s Hospital, Ann Arbor, Mich. He was a resident fellow in pediatrics and pediatric hematology at Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis Children’s Hospital, St. Louis, Mo., and a fellow in pediatric hematology at St. Louis Children’s Hospital.

He served as director of pediatric hematology and oncology at the University of Alabama, Birmingham; then as director of pediatric hematology and oncology at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine in Memphis; as chair of hematology and oncology at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, Memphis; and as chair of pediatric and adolescent medicine at the Mayo Medical Center in Rochester, Minn.

Dr. Crist has published extensively in the medical literature, has received a wide range of honors and awards and has served on numerous editorial boards and professional societies. He led the merger effort that formed the Children’s Oncology Group, which designs and directs clinical trials for children with cancer throughout North America and beyond.

President Shelton said, “As our vice president for health affairs, we believe Bill Crist will take the UA’s Arizona Health Sciences Center to the next level in terms of growth and success. His excellent track record as a medical school dean and successful fundraiser, as well as his noted work as a physician-scientist, provide the exact background we were seeking for this important new position.”

Dr. Crist said, “I’m extremely excited to have the opportunity to lead the fast-emerging Arizona Health Sciences Center. I truly believe the ‘sky is the limit’ for the UA’s health colleges and its clinical enterprise if we work together, plan appropriately and are successful in gaining additional resources.”
News and Notes

First ‘HeartMate II’ used at UMC

The HeartMate II, a relatively new bridge-to-transplant device, recently was used for the first time at UMC. Unlike other assist devices, which require heart patients to stay at the hospital until receiving a donor match, the small size of the HeartMate II and its streamlined support system allow patients to leave the hospital while they wait for a transplant. UMC’s first HeartMate II recipient, a patient in severe heart failure, was in good spirits, able to take walks and planning to leave the hospital just days after his surgery. The surgery was performed by Jack G. Copeland, MD, chief of cardiothoracic surgery at UMC and co-director of the UA Sarver Heart Center, and his team.

Medical residency programs begin at UPH Hospital

Gov. Janet Napolitano joined new resident-physicians and community leaders at the launch of the Graduate Medical Education (GME) program at UPH Hospital July 21. Residencies in internal medicine and psychiatry began in July with 16 resident-physicians. By 2011, it is expected that up to 118 residents will be participating in a total of seven residencies at UPH, including neurology, radiology, emergency medicine, family medicine and ophthalmology.

Abdominal organ transplants increase at UMC

The successful revitalization of the UMC Abdominal Transplantation Program has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of patients who have received new organs this past fiscal year, with the number of kidney and pancreas procedures reaching all-time highs. The total number of transplants overall – heart, lung, kidney, liver and pancreas – has passed the 140 mark for 2007-08. The highest number since the program began in 1979 was 114 in 2006.

$1 million gift establishes new fellowship at Steele Center

The Dorrance Family Foundation, based in Scottsdale, has donated $1 million to establish the Dorrance Endowed Fellowship in Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition at the UA’s Steele Children’s Research Center. The fellowship will provide funding to train promising young researchers in pediatric gastroenterology and nutrition. The first Dorrance Fellow is Rajalakshmy Ramalingam (“Raji”), a doctoral student in immunobiology whose research will focus on the development of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Grant Seeks Solutions to Health-Care Disparities

Can the Internet help treat depression? The UA Department of Psychiatry is one of 10 organizations to receive funding from the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation’s program, “Disparities Research for Change,” for a study to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of providing treatment for depression via the Internet. The UA study, “Telepsychiatry Treatment for Depression in Underserved Hispanics,” will compare webcam treatment with standard face-to-face treatment provided by a primary care provider.

www.medicine.arizona.edu/news/story.cfm?ID=1337

Measuring Bone Mineral Density May Help Predict Breast Cancer Risk

A UA study suggests that measuring a woman’s bone mineral density can provide additional information that may help to determine more accurately her risk of developing breast cancer.

www.medicine.arizona.edu/news/story.cfm?ID=1342

Ceremony Pays Tribute to Willed Body Program Donors

Second-year medical students gathered near the AHS Library with Albert Sombrero of the Dine Nation and others from the College of Medicine for a Native American blessing ceremony and tree-planting Aug. 14. The ceremony followed a memorial service recognizing donors to the Willed Body Program.

“Without these donations our medical school would not be able to provide the same excellent education in anatomy to our next generation of physicians,” says T. Philip Malan Jr., MD, PhD, vice dean for academic affairs. “This education will benefit their future patients.”

Clinical Scholars Named

The UA Arizona Clinical and Translational Research and Education Consortium (ACTREC) has announced the 2008 Clinical Scholars Circle award recipients. They are: Clara Curiel-Lewandrowski, MD, UA Department of Medicine and Arizona Cancer Center; Betsy Dokken, PhD, NP, UA Department of Medicine Section of Endocrinology, Diabetes & Hypertension; Leona Downey, MD, Arizona Cancer Center; Jaswinder Ghuman, MD, UA Departments of Psychiatry and Pediatrics; Kurt Griffin, MD, PhD, UA Department of Pediatrics; and Eric Snyder, PhD, UA College of Pharmacy, Pharmacy Practice and Science.

Developed in 2007 to address a growing shortage of clinical researchers, the UA Clinical Scholars Circle fosters and supports new and established translational-science faculty across multiple specialties at AHSC. The Clinical Scholars Circle program is supported by the Technology and Research Initiative Fund.
Profiles in Philanthropy

Ver Steeg Family Endows Scholarship for Rural Care

Medical students committed to serving in a rural community will benefit from an endowed scholarship recently established in memory of John W. Ver Steeg, MD. “John was never able to fulfill his dream of serving in a small rural community. My daughter, Ann, and I want this scholarship to help someone else attain that dream,” said Pat Ver Steeg, John’s widow.

The son of a Presbyterian minister, John grew up in small towns throughout the Midwest. He attained the rank of Eagle Scout and loved canoeing and camping in the Boundary Waters of Minnesota and Canada. After graduating from high school in Russell, Iowa, he attended the University of Iowa, where he received his bachelor’s degree in chemistry in 1966. He earned his MD from Northwestern University in Chicago four years later.

While in medical school, John married his first wife and they had two sons – Joe, who lives in Eagle River, Alaska, and Jake, who lives in Scottsdale, Ariz. In 1980 John met Pat, and the two were married in Kansas City, Mo. There, John did an internship in family practice at Truman Medical Center-East, and Pat taught school for the Blue Springs School District. After a year, they moved to a small town in Minnesota, where their daughter, Ann, was born. Suffering from a bipolar illness, John had difficulty maintaining a practice, and after a year, he retired and the family moved to Tucson.

Ann grew up in Tucson and attended The University of Arizona, as did her fiancé, Jonathan. Ann says, “This memorial is especially meaningful for me because my dad loved helping people as a doctor. He would be happy to know that this scholarship is assisting others who are willing to aid all those he was unable to serve.”

His family describes John as someone who enjoyed life and had a great sense of humor. He painted abstract images, and many of his works adorn the homes of family and friends. “John could figure anything out. He was bright and resourceful and could make something out of nothing, and he analyzed everything. He believed in paying attention to the one you are with at the moment, and he lived that belief every day,” says Pat.

Ver Steeg Family Endows Scholarship for Rural Care

David G. Armstrong, DPM, PhD, and Joseph L. Mills, MD, UA professors of surgery, have written a guide to help physicians prevent amputation and manage foot-related complications in patients with diabetes. “Comprehensive Foot Examination and Risk Assessment,” published in the online August 2008 edition of Diabetes Care, identifies key components of the diabetic foot exam and provides a simple protocol for physicians to use for their patients with diabetes.

Anne Cress, PhD, professor of cell biology and anatomy and associate dean for research at the UA College of Medicine, recently was appointed chairperson of the Tumor Progression and Metastasis Study Section by the Center for Scientific Review (CSR). CSR is the portal for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant applications and their review for scientific merit. Study sections evaluate the majority of the research grant applications sent to NIH, which is responsible for 28 percent of the total biomedical research funding spent annually in the United States.

Rainer G. Gruessner, MD, professor and chairman of the UA Department of Surgery, co-authored the recently published book, Living Donor Organ Transplantation, which received an excellent review in the New England Journal of Medicine. A comprehensive guide to abdominal transplantation, the book addresses the use of living donors in the transplantation of the kidney, pancreas, islets, liver and intestine.

Donna M. Wolk, PhD, D(ABMM), AHSC division chief of clinical microbiology, recently was elected to the Association for Molecular Pathology’s Infectious Disease Clinical Practice Committee. The committee acts as a national resource to improve and standardize clinical laboratory practice via method standardization and quality improvement, as well as evidence-based testing algorithms and reporting practices in molecular microbiology. Its members are chosen for their expertise in molecular diagnostics. Dr. Wolk is a research associate in the Bio5 Institute and a clinical research scholar in the Health Research Alliance Arizona.
Four Surgeons Join UA Department of Surgery, UMC Trauma Center

Four new trauma surgeons have joined the UA Department of Surgery, Section of Trauma, Critical Care and Emergency Surgery, and the UMC Trauma Center.

Randall S. Friese, MD, FACS, UA associate professor of surgery, earned his MD from the University of Maryland School of Medicine and completed residency training at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. He completed a fellowship in trauma critical care and a master's degree in clinical science at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, where he joined the faculty as a trauma surgeon for six years. Dr. Friese also served as a staff general surgeon in the U.S. Navy. His research interests include the effects of sleep deprivation during recovery from critical illness and injury and the benefits of sleep promotion during recovery.

Terence O’Keeffe, MB, ChB, MSPH, UA assistant professor of surgery, comes to the UA from University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. Dr. O’Keeffe underwent his undergraduate training at Edinburgh University, Scotland. Following an internship in the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, he went to Oregon Health and Sciences University in Portland for his surgical residency and a fellowship in laparoscopic surgery. He completed a surgical critical care and trauma fellowship at the Ryder Trauma Center at the University of Miami while studying for a master’s degree in public health. His research interests include injury prevention and massive transfusion practices, motorcycle trauma and damage control surgery.

Julie L. Wynne, MD, MPH, FACS, UA assistant professor of surgery, completed her MD degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She received a master’s degree in public health from Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health. Following her residency training in surgery at the University of South Alabama, she completed a fellowship in surgical critical care and trauma at the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore. Dr. Wynne served as a trauma surgeon at Mercer University School of Medicine. Her current interests are in the areas of chronic wound healing, surgical critical care and volunteer work with such humanitarian organizations as “Doctors without Borders.”

Craig A. Hurst, MD, MSc, FRCSC, UA assistant professor of surgery, is a graduate of Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he obtained both an MD and a master’s degree in science. He completed residency in general surgery at the University of Ottawa and complemented this with a plastic surgery residency at the University of Utah. Dr. Hurst went to Indiana University as the vonDeilen-Curtis fellow in craniofacial and pediatric plastic surgery. For the past two years, he has been an assistant professor of plastic and reconstructive surgery with the Dalhousie University Faculty of Medicine. Dr. Hurst specializes in congenital conditions affecting the craniofacial skeleton of children and adults, cleft lip and palate surgery and the treatment of facial trauma.

Events
For more events at the College of Medicine, visit http://events.medicine.arizona.edu

Sept. 2
Unveiling: Who We Are Now
Photo installation capturing the spirit of AHSC
Noon-1 pm
Lobby, College of Medicine Administrative Offices
Becky Anderson, (520) 626-6177

Sept. 23
Building Partnerships: Is It Worth It?
Faculty fundraiser Soyeon Shim, PhD
11:30 am-1 pm
DuVal Auditorium
RSVP: health@email.arizona.edu