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**CHANGE IS IN THE AIR**, and the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience is in its midst! As we continue to implement our strategic plans, we continue to make changes and gain progress. Our research programs remain strong in the face of NIH budget cuts, our educational programs continue to attract great residents and provide outstanding opportunities for trainees, graduate students from throughout the university work in our labs, and the reputation of our clinical programs continues to grow—and they remain financially strong. During the past fiscal year, our department ran well ahead of budget due to the commitment of our faculty and staff toward high levels of quality and productivity and careful cost containment. With all the change, then, we have become stronger than we have been for many years.

**MISSION STATEMENT** To acquire and refine medical and scientific knowledge and then to apply it through education and clinical service toward high-quality, evidenced-based treatment of people suffering from mental illnesses.

Yet, we are not sitting on our accomplishments and change is still in the air. This summer we were saddened to lose Robert Anthenelli, who directed our Addictions Division, when he received a significant promotion to become associate chief of staff for mental health at the San Diego VA. While saddened, we are pleased for Robert and feel that this promotion is a positive reflection on our department.

Similarly we “lost” Aurora Bennett, our vice chair of education and residency training director, when she was promoted to associate dean for student affairs in the UC College of Medicine! Obviously, we were sorry to watch her move across the street, but pleased that Psychiatry is increasingly recognized as a place that fosters leadership and whose faculty can successfully move into higher level appointments. Indeed, in our Addictions Division Shannon Miller and Theresa Winhusen immediately stepped in to lead the group and already are improving the division through reorganization and

planning. Brian Evans was promoted from assistant residency training director to replace Aurora and the program has not even skipped a beat. Effective Sept. 1, Henry Nasrallah became our vice chair for education, and he already has plans to create an education council to promote and advance our educational missions.

Finally, I was named senior associate dean for research in the UC College of Medicine (in addition to previously being named vice president of research at UC Health), so have decreased my “Chair time” to 40 percent. However, Charles Collins has stepped in as senior vice chair to take up the slack and almost certainly improve on the work that I started, with help from our other excellent vice chairs (Melissa DelBello, Kati Elfers, Steve Woods and Paul Keck). So, yes, change is in the air; we continue to move forward and improve.

#### Propelling Our Hospital-based Services

The major changes we are facing this fall are to move our inpatient units and integrate with the Lindner Center of HOPE. As I mentioned in the last newsletter,

**On the cover:** Department Chair Stephen Strakowski's band, Some Assembly Required, provided the entertainment at an event celebrating the one-year anniversary of the UC Health Clinical Trials Office (see story, page 3). From left are singer Stacy Strakowski (Dr. Strakowski's wife) on keyboard, Dr. Strakowski on bass, Steve Elliott on drums, Steve Henriques on lead guitar and Randy Drosick, MD, on rhythm guitar.

**CONTACT:**  
Voice 513-558-4559  
Fax 513-558-2910  
Email [keith.herrell@uc.edu](mailto:keith.herrell@uc.edu)  
Associate Director of Development  
Kathy Nullmeier  
Voice 513-558-6769  
Editor  
Keith Herrell

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For address changes or to unsubscribe:  
513-558-4559 or [keith.herrell@uc.edu](mailto:keith.herrell@uc.edu)

[www.psychiatry.uc.edu](http://www.psychiatry.uc.edu)

#### AFFILIATES:



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*Resolving Life's Issues through In-depth Understanding*



these changes will propel our hospital-based programs to become unquestionably the strongest and highest quality in the region. Our inpatient units and Psychiatric Emergency Services will move to the Deaconess site (although remain part of University Hospital and UC Health) by mid-October. The integration of the Lindner Center practice with UCP Psychiatry will be completed by Jan. 1. We are also expanding our consult-liaison service throughout UC Health as we assist West Chester Hospital and the Drake Center in providing the highest quality clinical care. Yes, change is in the air, but the change is good.

### Follow Our Growth

Thank you for your continued support of our department. Please continue to follow our growth on our website and with these letters.

Best Wishes,



**Stephen M. Strakowski, MD**  
The Dr. Stanley and Mickey Kaplan  
Professor and Chair,  
Department of Psychiatry and  
Behavioral Neuroscience

Senior Associate Dean for Research,  
College of Medicine  
Vice President of Research, UC Health

### Strakowski Named Senior Associate Dean for Research

Stephen Strakowski, MD, the Dr. Stanley and Mickey Kaplan Professor and Chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience, has been named senior associate dean for research at the UC College of Medicine. The appointment was announced July 15, 2011, by College of Medicine Dean Thomas Boat, MD, who began his duties as dean and vice president for health affairs July 1.

With the appointment, Strakowski has overall responsibility for all research areas within the College of Medicine, including graduate education and research, the basic sciences and the Center for Clinical and Translational Science and Training. He also serves as director of clinical research at UC Physicians and vice president of research at UC Health.

Strakowski will continue in his role as department chair. ■

### Bennett Named Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions

Aurora Bennett, MD, professor of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience, was named associate dean for student affairs and admissions in the College of Medicine effective Aug. 1, 2011. She replaced Laura Wexler, MD, who stepped down after 10 years in the position.

Bennett is responsible for oversight of all activities related to the recruitment and selection of medical students and will provide support, advising and counseling services to medical students.

Bennett was formerly vice chair for education in the department of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience, as well as residency director. She will continue to teach residents and maintain a clinical

practice, but will focus most of her time on her role as associate dean. ■

### Krikorian Elected to Faculty Senate

Robert Krikorian, PhD, an associate professor of clinical psychiatry in the department of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience, has been elected to a two-year term as a College of Medicine representative to the UC Faculty Senate. Krikorian fills the seat previously held by Judith Feinberg, MD, department of internal medicine, who completed her term.

The College of Medicine has two senators who serve in the Faculty Senate, with Henry Nasrallah, MD, also of the department of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience, continuing to serve in addition to Krikorian. In addition, Brett Harnett, MD, of the department of surgery, serves as an at-large senator. ■

### Grants

**Stephen Benoit, PhD** \$56,057 (P2D, Inc.: P2D Subaward, Phase 2 SBIR): DAT inhibitor for the treatment of obesity.

**Julie Bunke** \$10,651 (Veterans Affairs): Topiramate to aid smoking cessation in recovering alcohol dependent men.

**James Herman, PhD** \$248,159 (National Institute of Mental Health): Stress regulation of non-coding RNAs in prefrontal cortex.

**Amanda Isom** \$25,453 (Veterans Affairs): Primary prevention in a schizophrenia animal model.

**Stephanie Nolting** \$26,268 (Veterans Affairs): Topiramate to aid smoking cessation in recovering alcohol-dependent men.

**Renu Sah, PhD** \$28,210 (Veterans Affairs): Central Neuropeptide Y (NPY): a novel target for PTSD pathophysiology.

**Eugene Somoza, MD, PhD** \$78,435 (National Institute on Drug Abuse): Multisite controlled trial of cocaine vaccine (two of six), Cincinnati treatment site. ■

*To advance the diagnosis and treatment of psychiatric disorders through education and clinical services, we are forming a community advisory board. If interested, please contact Kathy Nullmeier at 513-558-6769 or [kathy.nullmeier@uc.edu](mailto:kathy.nullmeier@uc.edu). ■*

# Adventure Meets Academics for CinARC's Somoza

If you come around the curve on Jefferson Avenue too quickly, you're likely to miss it: an anonymous building just beyond the fringe of the UC medical campus that is home to one of the most extensive and successful clinical trials research centers in the nation.

Presiding over it all is a professor in the department of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience who 50 years ago was spending the summer hitchhiking highways and hopping freight trains with his brother before settling down to launch a distinguished academic career that has been spent almost entirely at the UC College of Medicine and its affiliates.

"I was seriously considering joining the Marines," recalls Eugene "Gene" Somoza, MD, PhD, of the period following his graduation from the University of Chicago with a degree in physics. "But by the time I got back home, I figured I'd had as much adventure as I needed."

Nowadays, the sense of adventure comes from Somoza's involvement in

substance abuse clinical trials at the Cincinnati Addiction Research Center (CinARC), which he has directed since its founding in 1995. (Theresa Winhusen, PhD, serves as associate director.) With offices in a building known as the Ice House (one of its former uses), CinARC conducts clinical trials in the Cincinnati and Dayton areas—the majority of them pharmacological trials for cocaine dependence.

In addition, CinARC established the Ohio Valley Node of the National Institute on Drug Abuse's (NIDA) Clinical Trials Network (CTN), which was created in 1999 as a partnership between community treatment providers and academic research centers.

The Ohio Valley Node, one of 13 nodes in the CTN, began in 2000 with six substance abuse community treatment

programs in Ohio and three neighboring states. It now comprises 23 treatment programs in 15 states and is the largest CTN node.

"With our geographical, ethnic and cultural diversity—including three Native American tribes—we're almost the perfect site," Somoza says. "Take methamphetamine, for example. There is hardly any meth abuse in Cincinnati, but Iowa's full of it. So we can pick a treatment site there to work with."

All of this research, with Somoza as the principal investigator, adds up to some impressive funding numbers. Over the 10-year period from Jan. 1, 2001, to Dec. 31, 2010, Somoza received over \$36 million in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding. (NIDA is an arm of the NIH.) During the most recent year for which data are available, CinARC was in the top 3 percent of NIH finding.

The Ohio Valley Node has been continuously funded by the NIH since its inception and in September 2010 this CTN grant was renewed by NIDA for an additional five years. The grant is not funded for a fixed amount; instead, funding depends on the activities of the node during the granting period. However, past experience indicates that the Ohio Valley Node is likely to receive \$12 million to \$14 million for its CTN-related activities

## CINCINNATI ADDICTION RESEARCH CENTER (CINARC)

Eugene "Gene" Somoza, MD, PhD  
*director*

Theresa Winhusen, PhD  
*associate director*

- Founded in 1995, CinARC conducts clinical trials in the Cincinnati and Dayton areas—the majority of them pharmacological trials for cocaine dependence.
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Above: Winhusen (left) and Somoza; Below: CinARC staff



## CinARC, continued

during the five-year period of the current grant.

While Somoza modestly uses phrases like “largely luck” and “right place at the right time” when asked about his funding success, a more comprehensive explanation would give credit to the Ohio Valley Node’s experienced scientific leadership, its ability to provide a variety of treatment programs as candidates for studies, a large patient population from which to recruit participants, expertise in all aspects of clinical trial management and strong support from CinARC’s researchers for the site study staff—even when the site is located as far away as North Dakota.

“Dr. Somoza has been an international leader in the development of treatments

for addictions,” says Stephen Strakowski, MD, the Dr. Stanley and Mickey Kaplan Professor and Chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience and senior associate dean for research. “His outstanding work is widely recognized and puts the University of Cincinnati at the very top of this field.”

So who better to ask than Somoza: With all the resources pitted against it, will society ever conquer cocaine addiction?

“That’s a hard nut to crack,” he says. “You can say the same thing about high blood pressure, or diabetes. We know how to treat it, but we can’t cure it. And that’s what’s going on in substance abuse.

“We’re understanding it better every day. We’re certainly getting better treat-

ments now,” he adds, pointing to a current NIH-funded study on a cocaine vaccine and a recently completed phase-3 clinical trial with Titan Pharmaceuticals for implantable rods imbued with buprenorphine as treatment for opiate addiction. (The rods last six months, as opposed to methadone’s daily maintenance dose.)

“What I’m hoping for,” says Somoza, “is we can make the switchover from putting addicts in jail to putting them in treatment.

“As state governments try to balance their budgets, it’s a good time to point out that while putting someone in prison costs \$28,000 a year, it doesn’t cost nearly that much to treat them. Treatment would be a much better option for both the state and the individual.” ■

## Clinical Trials Office Event Combines Celebration, Education

The UC Health Clinical Trials Office didn’t have to look far when it needed entertainment for an event celebrating its one-year anniversary: Stephen Strakowski, MD, provided his own band.

Strakowski, the Dr. Stanley and Mickey Kaplan Professor and Chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience, has recently added significant research oversight duties as senior associate dean for research at the College of Medicine, director of clinical research at UC Physicians and vice president of research at UC Health.

When he wasn’t playing bass for the band, Some Assembly Required, Strakowski was helping Melinda Muenich, Clinical Trials Office director, spread the word about the office and its services to attendees who enjoyed hors d’oeuvres and cocktails Aug. 11 at the Kingsgate Marriott Conference Hotel on the UC medical campus.

“The centralized Clinical Trials Office was created to help coordinate operation of industry-sponsored clinical research throughout UC Physicians and more recently UC Health,” Strakowski said. “It is a critical component to provide the necessary support to advance our clinical research to the very best in the region and the nation.”

The office provides a number of services to help UC Health researchers perform clinical trials, an essential component of bringing research discoveries from the lab bench to the bedside.

Among those services are marketing and business development; study design and protocol development; study placement; contracts and budgets; and participant recruitment.

“We have made some tremendous accomplishments in the first year,” Muenich said. “Our primary goal was to get the contract process streamlined and make our existing services a bit more efficient. The upcoming year will be focused on getting out to the departments and finding out what services researchers need over and above what we currently have to offer.

“The bottom line is we’re a support office. We’re here to help facilitate research, so whatever researchers need to conduct their research we’re willing to see if we can offer that as a service.”

Clinical trials are an important research component in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience, whose Division of Clinical Research Management is directed by Amelia Nasrallah, MA. Departmental researchers have studied many novel treatments that have subsequently been approved for clinical use in geriatric, adult, adolescent and child populations diagnosed with a variety of psychiatric disorders.

To contact Nasrallah, call 513-558-2226 or email [amelia.nasrallah@uc.edu](mailto:amelia.nasrallah@uc.edu).

To contact the UC Health Clinical Trials Office, call 513-475-8035. Muenich can be reached via email at [melinda.muenich@ucphysicians.com](mailto:melinda.muenich@ucphysicians.com). ■



## Faculty Member Has Profitable ‘Millionaire’ Appearance

As a psychiatrist, Peirce Johnston, MD, says he won't be tormented the rest of his life by thoughts of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, the topic of the question that ended his run on "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire."

In fact, Johnston says, "I love Beethoven. And when I hear Beethoven's 5th, I'll smile."

Johnston, a UC College of Medicine alumnus and assistant professor in the department of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience, was a \$38,600 winner on the nationally syndicated TV game show that aired May 24. Hosted by Meredith Viera, the show was taped at ABC studios in New York (Johnston was a fourth-year resident at the time of the taping).

Johnston successfully fielded eight questions having to do with topics including music, movies, explorers and nuts but was stumped by the \$100,000 question, which gave him the names of the first three notes of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (all are G-naturals) and challenged him to identify the fourth.

"I think if I had to pick a question to walk away from, it would be a question like that because I've never studied music and I had no guilt about not knowing it," Johnston says. (The answer is E-flat.)

Johnston chose to walk away at that point, as an incorrect answer would have cost him \$13,000 by sending him back down to the \$25,000 level. (He used his three "lifelines" by "jumping" two questions—including one about the Osterizer blender that he knew but "talked myself



*Peirce Johnston has a background that makes him perfectly suited for game show success. Before starting medical school at age 35, he was an English professor who taught at Miami University, the University of Massachusetts Amherst and UC, specializing in creative writing and 19th- and 20th-century fiction.*

*"What I do in psychiatry is really just an extension of what I did in English," Johnston points out. "I loved teaching, but I was always sorry to see the students go at the end of the semester. In psychiatry, I can help a patient express himself or herself about something even more vital than in their writing, and for a much longer duration—perhaps for a lifetime."*

out of"—and getting help from the audience on a third.)

Johnston appeared calm and relaxed on the show, and has nothing but good things to say about the overall experience. He auditioned last fall at Newport on the Levee after first passing an online test. The

audition consisted of more testing plus an interview with show personnel.

"I thought I had failed," he says, "but two weeks later I got a phone call and a postcard inviting me on the show."

Johnston and his wife, Melissa, went to New York for the taping. (Expenses were not paid, but contestants were guaranteed \$1,000.) Their two daughters, 8 and 4, stayed home and did not know how he did until they actually saw the show. Show rules prohibited Johnston from giving away the results or talking about the content of the questions before the air date.

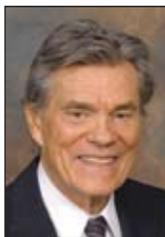
"It was a good experience, and fun," Johnston says. "I was thinking before the show, if I won \$30,000 or so I'd be pretty happy—not because of the money, but because it would mean I did pretty well. And as it turned out, that's about how much I won." ■

### Central Clinic Among Top Workplaces

The Central Clinic Group was honored in Enquirer Media's Top Workplaces 2011 with a ranking of ninth in the mid-sized companies (150-499 employees) category.

Central Clinic, an outpatient mental health agency for Hamilton and Butler counties and forensic center covering six counties, is the outpatient training arm for the department of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience. Walter Smitson, PhD, a professor in the department of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience, is president and CEO.

Information for the rankings was provided by the companies and selected employee surveys. Central Clinic, with 215 employees, ranked high in execution, careers, managers and conditions. ■



Smitson

## Addiction Sciences Division Making Strides

Addiction medicine is raising its profile, and so is the Addiction Sciences Division of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience.

The division was recently mentioned in a *New York Times* article as one of 10 at U.S. medical institutions that have introduced the first accredited residency programs in addiction medicine. The article, published July 11, 2011, noted that these programs will study the relationship between addiction and brain chemistry, as well as the role of heredity.

UC's Addiction Medicine/Research Fellowship, under the direction of Shannon Miller, MD, professor of clinical psychiatry, Center for Treatment, Research and Education in Addictive Disorders (CeTREAD), was accredited by the American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) Foundation, effective July 1, 2011. The accreditation is for three years.

In addition, *The Journal of Addiction Medicine (JAM)*, co-founded and co-edited by Miller, has received formal acceptance from the National Library of Medicine (NLM) for citation in MEDLINE. The acceptance is retroactive to Volume 1, Issue 1 (March 2007).

*JAM*, published quarterly, is the official journal of the American Society of Addiction Medicine. Journals are selected for indexing in MEDLINE after review by the NLM's Literature Selection Technical Review Committee, based on issues such as the journal's scope and coverage and quality of its scientific content and editorial work.

Miller notes that during a period when impact factors fell for many journals, *JAM* experienced a 25 percent increase in citations over the last two-year rating period.

A recent *JAM* research article on cannabis and youth was featured in the *New York Times* (March 10, 2011). ■

## Faculty Members Receive Promotions

*Congratulations to faculty members recently approved for promotion:*



**Charles Collins, MD**, from associate professor to professor. *Dr. Collins also serves as senior vice chair and director of clinical operations for the department and associate dean, Office of Community and Diversity Affairs, College of Medicine.*



**Shannon Miller, MD**, from associate professor to professor. *Dr. Miller, based at the Cincinnati Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, directs the Addiction Medicine/Research Fellowship.*



**Linda Bodie, PsyD**, from assistant professor to associate professor. *Dr. Bodie is program director of the Substance Dependence Program at the Cincinnati Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.* ■

## Welcome to New Faculty Joining Department

**Martha Aden, MD:** A former resident in the department of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience, she has outpatient duties at the Stetson Building, the Infectious Disease Center at the Holmes building and NECCO foster care agency. She is a member of the Psychiatry Consults team, helping develop a consult program for Cardiology's consults regarding left ventricular assist device and heart transplant program.



Aden



Cairns

**Bryan Cairns, MD:** A graduated fellow, working at Deaconess and Psychiatric Emergency Services.

**Deb Frankowski, MD:** A graduated addiction sciences fellow, she works part time with Thomas Nguyen, MD, at the Stetson Building and full time at the Cincinnati Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.



Frankowski



Stein

**Peirce Johnston, MD:** Outpatient duties at Stetson, Central Clinic and Psychiatry Emergency Services. Also director of Medical Student Clerkship.

**Amanda Stein, PhD:** Works with Robert Krikorian, PhD, in the Cognitive Aging Program and is involved with research activities there. Also does clinical work, including both neuropsychological assessment and treatment, within the Cognitive Disorders Center. ■

### WELCOME

#### Addiction Psychiatry Fellow ANITA KARNIK, MD

Texas A & M College of Medicine General and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Texas College of Medicine, Austin



### CONGRATULATIONS to graduated 2011 Addiction Medicine/Research Fellow DEBORAH FRANKOWSKI

Ohio State College of Medicine  
Port Clinton, Ohio

## Farewell to Fodor Includes Gift, Gratitude

Not many people can say they got an official Spiderman backpack fishing kit at their retirement party. But Joe Fodor was a special person at the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience and deserved a special sendoff.

Fodor, executive director, business and administration (EDBA), for the department for the past four years, received the gag gift at a goodbye/retirement party at the department's offices in the Stetson Building. He will focus on his duties as director of revenue cycle at University of Cincinnati Physicians, which he will handle on a part-time basis after Nov. 1, 2011.

Kati Elfers took over as EDBA for Fodor, who has devoted over 30 years of service to the UC Academic Health Center. She formerly supported the department in the Academic Health Center's Office of Finance and Administration, and previously was business manager for the UC College of Medicine Center for Imaging Research.

"Joe joined the department at a very difficult time and without his experience, wisdom and leadership, we would not have been able to successfully stabilize the business operations and finances, as well as the general function of our department," said Stephen Strakowski, MD, the Dr. Stanley and Mickey Kaplan Professor and Chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience. "His leadership has been invaluable, and I cannot overstate how much I appreciated the help that he provided."

Fodor received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Cincinnati and began his career at the Academic Health Center in 1978 as a radiology technologist at Cincinnati General Hospital, now known as UC Health University Hospital. He has held numerous positions at the Academic Health Center including vice president of operations for UC Physicians and vice president of administration at University Hospital.



*Fodor displays his gag retirement gift.*

"I will always remember my time in Psychiatry as one of my biggest challenges and greatest successes," said Fodor. "My success would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of Dr. Strakowski, the vice chairs, the faculty and the staff.

"I sincerely appreciate my parting gift and assure you I will put the fishing pole and reel to good use." ■

Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Neuroscience  
260 Stetson Street, Suite 3200  
University of Cincinnati Academic Health Center  
PO Box 670559  
Cincinnati, OH 45267-0559

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