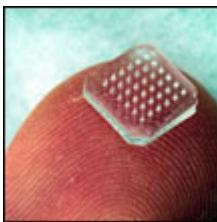


EMORY
UNIVERSITYWoodruff Health
Sciences Center

UPDATE

News and views from Emory's Woodruff Health Sciences Center

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Intersectional**Feb. 24:** 2nd
address, f**Janua****Contents:**Free clinic for
employees\$10 million to advance
Emory-Tech flu patchClearing research
obstacles**Top WHSC blogs
of 2010:
what caught their
eyes and ears**Two new doctoral
programs

An unseen risk in space travel

**From the
Interim EVP&L**

Wright Caughman

Watch the video above
transcript below.*A new blueprint for*



The wonders of space travel captivate many astronauts. They see the stars, the moon, and the Earth, but what they don't see is the radiation they are exposed to in space.

One type of radiation exposure in space is from high-energy charged (HZE) particles, which are known to cause complex damage in DNA and to elicit a broader stress response by affected cells and tissues. Now Emory and Medical College of Georgia (MCG) researchers will study how this radiation type may induce lung cancer.

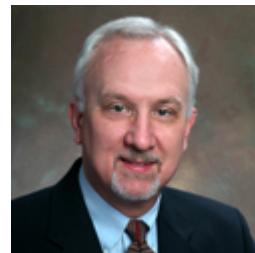
The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) awarded researchers from Winship Cancer Institute and MCG \$7.6 million to establish a NASA Specialized Center of Research (NSCOR). **Ya Wang** and **Paul Doetsch** (both at Winship Cancer Institute) are director and associate director, respectively, of the NSCOR at Emory.

No epidemiologic data for human exposure to HZE particles exists, but some estimates have been made studying uranium miners and Japanese atomic bomb survivors, Wang says. Animal experiments show that HZE particles induce more tumors than other forms of radiation. Since lung cancer is a leading form of cancer, astronauts are expected to be at greater risk than the general public. Emory's NSCOR will study how the body's stress response to HZE particles increases the risk of cancer.

[Read more](#) about this research, NASA's space radiation program, and NASA's description of Wang's research.



Ya Wang



Paul Doetsch

Hello and happy new year! I am optimistic about the coming year. I believe the Woodruff Sciences Center will save more lives, pioneer more, and nurture more future medical breakthroughs in 2011 than ever before. We can enhance the already successful delivery of our missions with a new blueprint in place.

This past November, our Board of Regents approved a new strategic plan document designed to guide our continued growth and success. We determined that, in order to become an internationally recognized health sciences center and academic health sciences institution, several key components must be in place:

- First, we must have a strong basic research program.
- Second, we must continue to develop innovative health education programs.
- Third, we must attract the brightest faculty, staff, and students.
- Fourth, we must develop facilities and technology to support innovation.
- Fifth, we must continue to seek institutional partners.
- Sixth, we must raise funds for our missions.
- And finally, we must have a world-class care system.

When these elements come together synergistically, interdependence in one area enhances success in others—leading to opportunities for discovery and enhanced delivery of care. The positioning document and set of evaluation criteria will determine the viability of these opportunities:

- First, does the opportunity require essential investments in facilities and programs?
- Second, does it expand our education, research, and care training initiatives?

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New express clinic offers free care for employees

As announced last month in Emory's HR newsletter, Emory now has a free express clinic for all employees. The clinic is staffed by four nurse practitioners, including director **Paula DesRoches**, and two physical therapists and is located at both Emory University Hospital (EUH) and EUH Midtown, with a third location for physical therapy at the Houston Building at Wesley Woods. Physicians Donald Davis (primary care) and Bruce Ribner (infectious disease) serve as medical and assistant medical director, respectively.

How did the Emory Express Care Clinic get started? It was piloted two years ago to a limited group of users for feasibility testing and then brought online to successively larger units of employees as time went on, says DesRoches.

In addition to her relatively new role as head of the clinic, she directs occupational injury management, the office that handles medical and case management for occupational accidents for all Emory employees. "We already had nurse practitioners and physical therapists in place for treating employees with workplace-related injury, so we thought we'd start something small with existing staff and see how it went."

DesRoches was part of a committee led by Theresa Milazzo in Human Resources that included representatives from both university and health care leadership. "The committee's goal was to make employee health at Emory more comprehensive," says DesRoches. An express clinic was one way to do that.

Locations

Emory University Hospital
Sub-basement level, room HB53
M-F, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. by appt. only
404-686-8587

Emory University Hospital Midtown
Orr Building, 6th floor
M-F, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. by appt. only
404-686-2352

In addition to obvious benefits to users, such as geographic convenience, enhanced access to care, and earlier intervention in illness, workplace clinics can have other pluses, increasing employee retention and decreasing both absenteeism and "presenteeism," a term describing the concept of working while sick, which has negative consequences for workers and co-workers alike.

The clinic offers free care for common illnesses (colds, flu, sinus problems, eye infections, ear pain, acute muscle pain, and the like) and does not include care for chronic illnesses like diabetes or hypertension. "We write prescriptions and offer limited physical therapy services," says DesRoches.

To use the clinic's services, employees should schedule an appointment. Acute occupational accidents and exposures remain a

- Third, does it advance and culture?
- Fourth, does it generate sustainability?
- Fifth, does the opportunity competitive position?
- Sixth, does it offer opportunities faculty, staff, and students?
- Finally, does it provide to the uncertain external face?



Paula DesRoches

We applied these criteria in examination of several sites and determined that investing in campus health care facilities on Clifton Road and in Midtown is the most effective way to enhance the robustness of our health system. Recent investments in education and research have helped us to make strides, and our evaluation indicates that it is time now to invest in our core health care delivery.

In addition, we will continue to explore partnerships and collaborations for providing better health care, research, and enhancement in strategic regions of the country.

Of course, this is just the beginning of a comprehensive and detailed document which many of the trustees had a hand in developing forward to sharing more information during my state of the Union address to the Emory Sciences Center audience.

Throughout our history, we have developed better models of patient care, better outcomes, safety, and quality. We've pioneered research into better care and new treatments for formerly ill patients. And we've prepared future health care providers to provide care and healing. With our new focus, we will expand upon this work in the future. Thank you.

Please let me know your suggestions at evphafeedback@emory.edu

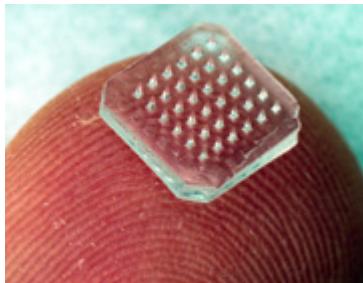
priority for DesRoches and her staff and take precedence over express care appointments, which may have to be rescheduled.

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NIH awards \$10 million to advance flu vaccine patch

The NIH recently awarded \$10 million to Emory, Georgia Tech, and PATH (a Seattle-based nonprofit) to further develop a flu vaccine patch containing tiny microneedles that dissolve into the skin.



The five-year grant will be used to address technical issues and advance the patch through a phase 1 clinical trial. It also will be used to compare the patch's effectiveness with that of traditional intramuscular injection of flu vaccine. In animals, vaccination with dissolving microneedles has been shown to provide better immune protection than vaccination with hypodermic needles.

"We have seen evidence that the vaccine works better when administered to the skin because of the plethora of antigen-presenting cells that reside there," says **Ioanna Skountzou** (microbiology and immunology), co-principal investigator for the project. "This study will allow us to determine how we can optimize the vaccine to take advantage of those cells that are important in generating the body's immune response."

The microneedles on the patches penetrate only the outer layers of skin. Their small size would allow vaccines to be administered without pain—and could allow people to apply the patches themselves. "Our goal is to make these patches suitable for self-administration, so that anybody could take a patch out of an envelope, put it on, and have it work with high reliability," says **Mark Prausnitz** (biomedical engineering), the project's PI. [Read more.](#)

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Clearing obstacles to research

If there's an assignment in the medical school that calls for clearing obstacles to keep research moving forward, **Trish Haugaard** is likely to be involved. A behind-the-scenes facilitator, the school's assistant dean for research administration is a go-to person for researchers and research administrators. She takes strategic ideas of the school's three research deans (Ray Dingledine, Carolyn Meltzer, and Jeff Lennox) and helps put them into practice. She serves to "keep noise off the deans'



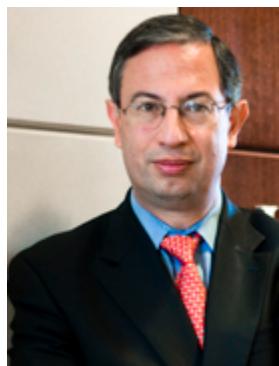
Mark Prausnitz



Ioanna Skountzou

In brief

Emory joins clinical network for treatment of hepatitis C

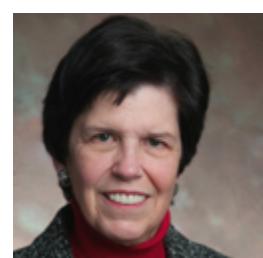


Carlos del Rio is principal investigator of the NIDA CTN.

Emory researchers received a \$1.2 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to expand the Clinical Trials Network (CTN) to improve substance abuse treatment. Through partnerships between researchers and treatment providers

Emory was selected because of its investigators' experience in working with HIV-infected crack cocaine users. Researchers' first study at Emory will test an intervention to reduce the amount of HIV-infected substance abusers who use crack cocaine with the goal of decreasing transmission of both crack cocaine and HIV as well as HIV transmission.

No more styrofoam



Lynne Ometer

taken very seriously by the hospital. The operation still uses styrofoam containers. Emory Health Sciences

radar," fixing small problems before they turn into big ones. And for big problems that do materialize, she's an on-call consultant, jumping part-time into trouble spots as the need arises to help "sort things out" and then "disappear" once her work is done.

Haugaard has a team of three (associate director Darryl Barr, financial analyst Sherie West, and project coordinator Kelly Shaw) and a varied roster of current projects. These include working with faculty researchers at the Atlanta VA Medical Center to smooth the process for obtaining and carrying out research grants. "VA rules and Emory rules often collide, with the result that the researchers run into one brick wall after another," she says. "We're determining which speed bumps are inherent to working with a federal institution and which are ones we put there and thus can change."

- Woodruff Leadership Academy alumna
- Assistant Dean for Research Admin, Emory School of Medicine
- Several management positions, including Senior Clinical Administrator and Vice Chair for Admin, Dept of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Emory
- Moved to Atlanta when her husband was accepted into Emory Law School
- Payroll Account Clerk, University of Iowa
- BA, Wayne State College, Wayne, Nebraska

place to help ensure compliance.

Like the research landscape itself, Haugaard's duties are never routine and remain continually in flux. She likes it that way. "My job is hard to describe," she says, "but that's not a bad thing. The more proactive we can be and address issues behind the scenes, the more we make it possible for researchers to focus on their research."

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Top of the blog to ya

Since 2009 [Emory Health Now](#), the Woodruff Health Sciences Center's blog, has been pumping out stories of discovery, education, and clinical care. Last year the blog had more than 20,000 hits. So what did people find interesting? Here are the top five most-viewed blog posts for 2010:

Trish Haugaard

substituted compostable its styrofoam in its cafet sugarcane, the new con break down into a soil c landscaping and garder styrofoam, are microwa

Notable



Bassel El-Rayes



Ira Horowitz

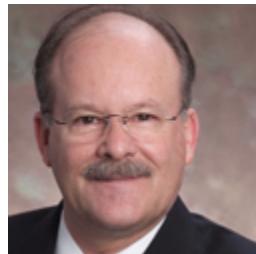


Thomas Lawley



Joe Quimby

1. [Shedding light on the vitamin D-Parkinson's connection—Neurologist Marian Evatt's clinical trial on the effects of vitamin D supplementation on patients with Parkinson's disease.](#)
2. [Two birds with one stone in treatment of Alzheimer's—Neurologists Allan Levey and Jim Lah's idea for a drug to treat Alzheimer's disease as well neurodegeneration.](#)
3. [A new class of brain-protecting drugs—Pathologist Keqiang Ye's investigations of substances that can mimic growth factor BDNF.](#)
4. [Reassuring news on viral immunity + HIV vaccine—A platform for an HIV vaccine developed by Yerkes scientists may be able to avoid problems encountered with another HIV vaccine.](#)
5. [NIH director visits Emory—Francis Collins paid a daylong visit to Emory's WHSC.](#)

**Winfield Sale**

Intersection Conference
Emory Hotel & Conferenc
info.

Feb. 4: Georgia Nursing
IOM's report on the futu
a.m. at Loudermilk Cent

Feb. 24: 2011 State-of-t
address. 4:30 p.m. WHS
Simulcast to Emory Joh
University Orthopaedics
and VA Medical Center.
follow. Separate presen
University Hospital Midt
and at Grady on **March**

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Two new doctoral programs to be offered next fall

Emory will offer two new doctoral programs in fall 2011, one in cancer biology and the other in biomedical informatics.

The interdisciplinary cancer biology program will allow students to tailor their training, addressing basic science areas in cancer or clinical aspects of cancer therapy and drug discovery, says the program's founding director, **Erwin Van Meir** in the Winship Cancer Institute. [Read more.](#)

The biomedical informatics program will address use of information systems to improve care of patients, improve performance of health care systems, and accelerate progress of biomedical research, says **Joel Saltz**, director of the Emory Center for Comprehensive Informatics. Emory also is planning a new biomedical informatics department. [Read more.](#)

**Erwin Van Meir****Joel Saltz**[Top](#)

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