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IUSM faculty testify before Congress

Ora Pescovitz, MD, and William M. Tierney, MD, recently presented testimony to Congressional subcommittees in Washington, D.C., concerning their research efforts in the areas of pediatric research and patient care research.

Dr. Pescovitz, professor of pediatrics and director of pediatric endocrinology/diabetology, testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services and Education on Jan. 28 as a representative of the Public Policy Council, the public affairs coordinating body for the three major pediatric academic and research societies. She cited areas in which pediatric research has led to healthier children, and therefore, healthier adults, as well as areas in which more research is needed.

Dr. Pescovitz supported increased funding through the National Institutes of Health for the general clinical research centers. She said that the pediatric academic societies endorse the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding to double the NIH budget in five years. In addition, she endorsed the Friends of the NICHD Coalition's recommendations for \$776 million in funding for the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the overall Public Health Service finding recommendations of the Coalition for Health Funding.

"There is a growing concern among our academic colleagues that there is a looming crisis for pediatric research," Dr. Pescovitz said. "As the focus of academic health centers shifts away from the traditional roles of research, teaching and patient care, to one focused predominately on patient care, we are concerned that the quality of training of future generations of pediatric medical scientists will be impaired."

Because of this, she commended the committee for helping to make "pediatric research a priority at the highest level of the NIH by establishing a new pediatric research initiative that was funded at \$38.5 million." However, she suggested that additional support should be provided to secure the

training of future pediatric investigators.

Dr. Tierney, professor of medicine, senior research scientist at the Regenstrief Institute for Health Care and researcher at the Roudebush VA Medical Center, testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources on Feb. 11 in support of the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research. Dr. Tierney supports health care funding focusing on quality of life issues, as well as the scientific foundation of medicine.

Dr. Tierney cited specific examples in which this patient centered attitude toward medicine has provided higher quality care at a lower cost. AHCPR is the only federal funding agency that supports the science of creating and perfecting quality improvement processes, methods for implementing changes and the tools needed (such as measures of patient satisfaction, functional status, and quality of life) to assess whether these efforts are successful.

He reviewed the results of a few AHCPR-funded studies that show how the agency can save the federal government far more than it costs.

"No other research agency promises to reduce health care costs while improving health care. Only AHCPR has this fundamental mission as part of its charter," said Dr. Tierney.

In his testimony, Dr. Tierney also pointed to the NIH as an example of the great improvements that could be accomplished when researchers receive career development awards early in their careers.

Endowed chair

Thomas Broadie, MD, PhD, has been named the first Frederic W. Taylor Professor of Surgery. Dr. Broadie has been a professor of surgery at IUSM since 1992 and chief of surgery at Wishard Memorial Hospital since 1984.

The Frederic W. Taylor Professorship was established in 1997 by Anne Ayres Taylor in memory of her late husband. Dr. Taylor was first appointed to the faculty in 1931 and served as a colleague and a mentor to hundreds of physicians in addition to treating thousands of patients. During his 65-year association with IUSM, Dr. Taylor was considered a pioneer in his field for being one of the first surgeons in Indiana to build and operate an artificial kidney.

Dr. Taylor was chief of surgery at Marion County General Hospital, now William N. Wishard Hospital. He also served on the admissions committee of IUSM from the late 1950's to the early 1980's.

Program leaders

The IU Cancer Center has appointed program leaders to direct the five research areas within the center.

The program leaders are charged with overseeing outstanding research programs that further the IUCC's commitment to excellence in cancer research.

The program leaders are George Sledge, MD, adult oncology; Len Erickson, PhD, experimental therapeutics; Hal Broxmeyer, PhD, hematopoiesis; Philip Breitfeld, PhD, and David Williams, MD, co-leaders of pediatric oncology; and Robert Hromas, MD, regulation of cell growth.

Refractive surgery now available

Refractive surgery to correct myopia (near-sightedness) and astigmatism is being offered for the first time at IUSM. Shailaja Valluri, MD, assistant professor of ophthalmology, will perform this outpatient surgery.

The cost of the procedure is approximately \$2,200 per eye and is generally not covered by insurance. However, payment plans are available and special allowances will be made for IU faculty and staff. For further information, please contact the Department of Ophthalmology at 274-8051.

Dr. Valluri's other research interests include a new device for refractive surgery, inflammatory and infectious diseases of the cornea and sclera, and corneal changes during pregnancy.

Eight scholarship winners named

Eight IUSM students are the recent recipients of scholarships.

The Hazel and Tommy Thompson Cardiac Research Scholarship has been awarded to:

- - John Bauman, MSII, at the Indianapolis campus**
- - Dennis Myers, MSII, at the Bloomington Medical Sciences Program**

The Marvella Bayh Memorial Scholarship has been awarded to:

- - Avonelle Josiah-Dorant, MSII, at the Indianapolis campus
- - Priya Kulkarni, MSII, at the Indianapolis campus

The Clause Smith Black, MD, Research Scholarship has been awarded to:

- - John Boe, MSII, at the Lafayette Center for Medical Education

The William and Fern Groves Hardiman Research Scholarship has been awarded to:

- - Craig E. Herrman, MSII, at the Bloomington Medical Sciences Program
 - - Jeffery L. Nielson, MSII, at the Indianapolis campus
- - Chris Wu, MSII, at the Bloomington Medical Sciences Program

SCOPE tidbits

There are three easy ways to submit story ideas or information to SCOPE:

-- fax the information to 278-3502;

-- e-mail the information to mhardin@iupui.edu;

-- or mail the information to Mary Hardin, LO 401, IUPUI.

The deadline for copy is 8:30 a.m. Mondays, the week prior to publication.

IUSM faculty who are not receiving SCOPE at their current office address should contact the Public and Media Relations office at 274-7722 or e-mail their correct address to mhardin@iupui.edu.

Lecture topic, time announced by society

“The Flowering of Medicine in 19th Century Ireland” will be the topic of Lincoln Ford, MD, professor of medicine, at the March 16 John Shaw Billings History of Medicine Society Inc. lecture.

The lecture will be in room 301 of the Ruth Lilly Medical Library. Refreshments will be served at 3:30 p.m. and the lecture begins at 4 p.m.

The focus of Dr. Ford’s lecture will be the Dublin School, a group of physicians and surgeons who

practiced in Ireland during the first half of the 19th century.

Meetings with Brand available

IUPUI faculty, staff or students who have an issue or concern to discuss with IU President Myles Brand will have an opportunity later this month. The president is taking individual appointments on the IUPUI campus March 30 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The meetings will be held at the President's Office in the University Place Conference Center, Room 243. Call 274-3571 to schedule an appointment.

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