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## **Indianapolis/Ibadan 10-year dementia incidence study in JAMA**

A 10-year study conducted in Indianapolis and Ibadan, Nigeria, has shown that African-Americans are twice as likely as Africans to develop dementia and Alzheimer disease.

This is the first report of incidence rate differences for Alzheimer disease and other dementias, contrasting populations from industrialized and non-industrialized countries, using the same group of investigators and identical methodologies. The study was conducted by researchers from IUSM and the University of Ibadan and published in the Feb.14 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

"Since evaluation of dementia is subject to different interpretations, we felt it was crucial to have the same investigators evaluate both the American and Nigerian study subjects using the same clinical assessment instruments, which we designed specifically for this study," says Hugh Hendrie, MB, ChB, principal author of the paper.

"These findings will allow us to pursue the elusive risk factors for Alzheimer disease in these two disparate populations," adds Dr. Hendrie, who, with IUSM and University of Ibadan colleagues, has been studying the two groups since 1991.

Starting with the non-demented subjects from an earlier prevalence study, the researchers conducted the newly published incidence study which for five years followed 2,147 African-Americans in Indianapolis and 2,459 Yoruba in Ibadan, age 65 and older, to see if they developed dementia and Alzheimer disease.

In the African-American group studied, 3.24 percent per year developed dementia, including 2.52 percent per year who developed Alzheimer disease. In the African group, 1.35 percent per year developed dementia, including 1.15 percent per year who developed Alzheimer disease. The majority of those who developed a dementing disorder in both countries developed Alzheimer disease. In both communities two-thirds of the study subjects were female in both communities.

This study was funded by the National Institute on Aging, which also is supporting the next phase of the research, already underway. The new

study will attempt to pinpoint the cause or causes of the significant disparity in rates of dementia and Alzheimer disease between the African-Americans and the Africans. Among the areas under consideration are factors that increase the risk of vascular diseases such as heart disease and stroke. Examples of these factors are hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol levels. All are less prevalent in the African group than in the African-American one.

The researchers will further explore molecular genetic disparities between the two groups by building upon their previous work that showed a weak association between Alzheimer disease and a molecular variant of the ApoE gene in the Indianapolis group. This work revealed an even weaker association between the disease and ApoE in the Yoruba. ApoE has been linked to Alzheimer disease in other populations.

Additionally, the researchers plan to explore the impact of lifestyle and environmental factors, significantly different in the industrialized group and the non-industrialized group.

IUSM authors of the JAMA study include Dr. Hendrie; Kathleen Hall, PhD; Frederick Unverzagt, PhD; Sujuan Gao, PhD; Rebecca Evans, MD; Beverly Musick, MS; and Sui Hui, PhD.

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## **Wilson named to state's top medical post**

Gregory Wilson, MD, was named commissioner of the Indiana State Department of Health by Gov. Frank O'Bannon. The appointment was made Jan. 31.

Dr. Wilson is a clinical associate professor and a member of the Section of Developmental Pediatrics at Riley Hospital for Children. He intends to maintain minimal clinical responsibilities at Riley Hospital.

As state health commissioner, Dr. Wilson will oversee an agency of more than 1,100 employees. The department is responsible for overseeing public health and education programs in Indiana, as well as having regulatory oversight of health-care facilities and nursing homes.

His association with IUSM began in 1979 with his appointment as assistant professor of pediatrics. At the time of his appointment by the governor, he served as director of the Pediatric Intensive Case Management Program at Wishard Memorial Hospital, medical director of Riley Infant South, director of the Comprehensive High Risk Follow-Up Clinic at Wishard, and senior medical student adviser. He also was a member of the School's nutrition support and drug review committees.

A 1975 graduate of IUSM, Dr. Wilson is the founder and past medical director of the Indiana Poison Center of Clarian Health. He has served in various leadership roles, including current president of the Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, medical consultant to Indiana's Children's Specialist Health Care Services, and positions with the Indiana State Medicaid Advisory Committee.

Dr. Wilson, who attended Purdue University and received his undergraduate degree at Ball State University, did residencies at IU and Riley hospitals. In his 25-year medical career, he has participated in clinical and community service in Afghanistan, Appalachia (Eastern Kentucky) and helped spearhead legislation for vehicle passenger safety for children. He has received several awards from the Indiana Chapter of the AAP and the Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities.

Dr. Wilson succeeds Richard Feldman, MD, as state health commission. Dr. Feldman also is an IUSM graduate.

## High school students to explore the world of DNA

A special group of Hoosier high school students will soon get the unique opportunity to work side-by-side with leading genetic researchers and physicians at IUSM.

Forty-eight students will participate in the second annual Molecular Medicine in Action program, March 11-12. The students, who were nominated by their science teachers, were selected from a pool of nearly 200 nominees from around the state.

Under the supervision of IUSM scientists, the students will rotate through workstations and laboratory sites. They will learn how DNA is isolated and analyzed, how modified genes are inserted into cells and how gene therapy is used to treat certain diseases. Students also will hear from patients with genetic-related maladies and how they deal with their conditions.

Other supporters of the Molecular Medicine in Action program include: Riley Memorial Association, Clarian Health, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Indiana Department of Education, Indiana Association of Biology Teachers and the Hoosier Association of Science Teachers. David A. Williams, MD, and Lilith Reeves, MS, co-direct the Molecular Medicine in Action program.

For more information about the Molecular Medicine in Action program, visit its Web site at <http://www.iupui.edu/~wellsctr/MMIA/>.

## **HPNAP Symposium: Collapsing time and space**

High performance digital networks and distributed software systems have the potential to change our whole social fabric and to significantly influence and expand the way we work, communicate, learn, retrieve and store information, and conduct research.

Plan now to attend "Collapsing Time and Space: A High Performance Network Applications Symposium," Friday, April 6, in the Lilly Auditorium on the IUPUI campus. The symposium will bring together researchers in disciplines across the sciences, the arts, and education to showcase the innovative applications in research and teaching being developed at IU under the High Performance Network Applications Program (HPNAP), an initiative of the Office of the Vice President for Information Technology.

The symposium will feature presentations and poster sessions by IU researchers who are developing a new generation of applications that effectively use the capabilities of high performance networks, such as the Internet2 Abilene network and the TransPAC international research network, as well as other emerging high performance network connection technologies.

The symposium is free, but registration is limited. For details, see <http://www.indiana.edu/~uits/hpnap/>.

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## **Minority faculty development fellowship applications**

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Minority Medical Faculty

Development Program offers four-year postdoctoral research fellowships to minority physicians who have demonstrated superior academic and clinical skills and who are committed to careers in academic medicine.

The program seeks to increase the number of minority faculty who can achieve senior rank in academic medicine and who will encourage and foster the development of succeeding classes of minority physicians.

The National Advisory Committee will recommend up to 12 fellows to the Foundation for support.

March 5 is the deadline for request of application materials. March 30 is the deadline for receipt of completed applications. Interviews with National Advisory Committee will occur in July and official notification of fellows will be done in December.

Send inquiries and applications to:

Nina Ardery  
Deputy Director  
301-565-4080 Phone  
301-565-4088 Fax  
E-Mail: [mmfdp@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu](mailto:mmfdp@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu)  
Web site: [www.mmfdp.org](http://www.mmfdp.org)

Completed applications with supporting documents should be sent to:

James R. Gavin III, MD, PhD  
Program Director  
Minority Medical Faculty Development Program  
8701 Georgia Avenue, Suite 411  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3713

## **AAMC seeking nominations for major awards**

Each year at its annual meeting the Association of American Medical Colleges presents its major awards honoring individuals and programs making significant contributions to our community. Nominations now are being accepted for individuals and programs and those making the nominations may submit names from within their institution or from other academic programs.

Information is available on the AAMC web site at <http://www.aamc.org/about/awards/start.htm>. For additional information on all awards, contact the number listed beneath each award.

--The **Abraham Flexner Award For Distinguished Service To Medical Education** is the highest honor that academic medicine presents for sustained contributions to American medical education. The award is a medal and a cash prize of \$10,000. 202-828-0472

--The **Award For Distinguished Research In The Biomedical Sciences** recognizes exceptional research discoveries, and consists of a medal and a cash award of \$5,000. 202-828-0472

--The **David E. Rogers Award** is granted annually to an individual who has made major contributions to improving the health and health care of the American people. The Rogers Award is a prize of \$10,000 and a crystal presentation piece, and is supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. 202-828-0472

--The **Alpha Omega Alpha Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teaching Award** recognizes the significant contributions to medical education made by gifted teachers. Each winner receives \$10,000; the awardee's institution receives \$5,000; and the awardee's chapter receives \$1,000. 202-828-0250

--The **Outstanding Community Service Award** is presented in recognition of longstanding, major institutional commitment to addressing community needs. The winner receives an engraved crystal presentation piece. 202-828-0472

-- The **Humanism In Medicine Award** recognizes a physician faculty member who exemplifies the qualities of a caring and compassionate mentor in the teaching and advising of medical students. The annual award is \$5,000, with an additional \$1,000 for support of OSR activities at the recipient's institution. 202-828-0681

-- The **Herbert W. Nickens Award** is granted annually to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to promoting justice in medical education and health care. The recipient will receive a \$10,000 award and will give the Nickens Memorial Lecture at the AAMC annual meeting. 202-828-0572

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## **Medical Humanities Student Essay Award Competition -- deadline March 9**

The Medical Humanities Student Essay Award will be presented to an IUPUI student whose writing is judged to be the best on a topic in the medical humanities. This \$500 award recognizes the work of students in understanding health and medicine from the broader perspective of the humanities.

Guidelines for the essay are:

1. The paper must be written by an undergraduate or graduate student (including professional schools) at IUPUI on a subject that utilizes the perspective of the humanities (i.e., ethical, legal, social, historical, etc.) to gain a broader understanding of medicine and healthcare.

2. The paper must be at least 2,500 words in length, and submitted in a clean, typed or printed copy.
  3. The paper must have a separate title page with the student's name, address and telephone number. The remaining pages should not have any identifying information other than the paper title.
  4. Papers will be judged by the Medical Humanities Planning Committee, and the award will be announced at April 2001 Honors ceremonies.
  5. Papers must be returned to the Medical Humanities Office (CA-530) by 4 p.m., Friday, March 9.
  6. In the event of a tie, the award will be divided between winners. For questions or more information, please call 274-4740 or check the Medical Humanities website at:  
<http://www.medlib.iupui.edu/ethics/mhhome.html>
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## **Forum to focus on women's heart health**

February is the month for valentines. It's also National Heart Month, a time when women can give themselves the best valentine of all: better cardiovascular health.

That's why the IUSM National Center of Excellence in Women's Health and Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield are teaming with several local groups to promote health and wellness programs available to women in the Indianapolis and central Indiana area.

"A New Year, A New You" will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.,

Monday, Feb. 26, at the Indianapolis Artsgarden at Circle Center Mall in downtown Indianapolis. Health screenings for bone density, blood pressure, carbon monoxide, nicotine dependence and diabetes will be available, in addition to instructions for breast self-exams and chair massages.

Joining the Center and Anthem as sponsors for the one-day event are Wyeth-Ayerst Pharmaceuticals, Simon Properties and Indianapolis radio stations WZPL and WTPI.

For more information about the health forum, contact Tina Darling at 630-2243.

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## **Research scholarships awarded for summer program**

The following 2000 Summer Research Participants were selected to receive a research scholarship based on the quality of their oral presentation, which represents 70 percent of their total score, and the quality of their research abstract, which represents 30 percent of their total score.

The Summer Research in Academic Medicine Committee and its chairman Rodney Rhoades, PhD, offers congratulations to the scholars.

A total of 18 participants presented their work at the Jan. 18 IUSM Student Research Forum in Indianapolis. The top prize awarded was \$14,000, which went to the top rated research in the scholarship competition, and all others received \$3,000.

Recipients of William H. W. and Fern L. Groves Hardiman Research Scholarships: Arman Abdalkhani, BL; Daniel Branam, BL; Jonathon

Dillman, BL; Ryan McCarthy, IN; Adam Spaetti, BL; David Stark, TH; Robert Strother, BL; William Walsh, BL.

Recipient of the Claude Smith Black, MD, Research Award: Stephen Kralik, IN.

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## **Breast cancer program expands**

The Indiana University Cancer Center has a new tool at its disposal for high risk breast cancer patients.

The procedure, ductal lavage, involves collecting cell samples from the lining of milk ducts in a minimally invasive, outpatient procedure. Laboratory tests then can determine if the cells are normal, irregular or malignant. The procedure also allows physicians to "bookmark" suspicious milk ducts and retest those sites at a later date.

Patients using the procedure will be seen at the new High-Risk Breast Cancer Screening Program, which opened in February, as part of the Breast Care and Research Program. Anna Maria Storniolo, MD, a new hematology/oncology faculty member, is the medical oncology director of the screening program. The multidisciplinary program will allow women to receive information on risk assessment, preventive treatments, medical and surgical options, and counseling.

For additional information, call 278-7576.

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## **Muncie Center has new digs for academic year**

The fall semester of 2000-01 brought an exciting change to the Muncie Center for Medical Education. After 25 years of being housed in Maria

Bingham Hall, the Center moved to the \$12 million, state-of-the-art Edmund F. Ball Medical Education Building.

Inaugural classes began in August of 2000.

Pictures of both the interior and exterior of the new building can be viewed at the Muncie Center's website, <http://www.bsu.edu/web/mcme>

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## **Library adds over 30 online textbooks**

The Ruth Lilly Medical Library, in cooperation with the Clarian Library, is providing a trial period of access to MD Consult.

MDCConsult is an important vendor of online medical textbooks and adds over 30 online textbooks to those already available to the School of Medicine. There is a link to the service on the library's books page, <http://www.medlib.iupui.edu/ref/texts.html> and a link to information on how to register for an ID and password during the trial period, which will last until October 2001.

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## **Submissions to Scope**

*Scope* wants your news items.

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

- faxing the information to 278-3502;
- e-mailing the information to [mhardin@iupui.edu](mailto:mhardin@iupui.edu);
- mailing the information to Mary Hardin, LO 401, IUPUI.

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