A MULTI-UNIVERSITY TEAM LED by speakers that included Jim Beddows of the Palo Alto Heart Walk and Nikki Anand, who flew in for the reception and discussions, launched a gala to celebrate an economic self-sufficiency and social justice on both of economic self-sufficiency and social justice on both of 2011 N Soto Street - SST-2830
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Global study of Type 1 diabetes receives funds

T he new research program studies gut bacteria related to human disease

USC has funded a new intercampus research program to study the human microbiome and its impact on disease, the first such program at the university. The pale body contains more than 100 trillion microbes known collectively as the microbiome. While the microbiome’s importance in health has not been noted — think probiotics and soil transplants — the role that these bacteria play in disease is still not well understood. Led by William DePaolo, PhD, associate director of USC’s Programs in Biomedical and Biological Sciences (IPBBS), the Committee on Microbiome-Host Interactions in Disease (CMHID) aims to leverage existing tissue in USC to drive bench-to-bedside research on the microbiome.

The focus is on diseases such as inflammatory bowel disease, vaginal and gastrointestinal cancers, and metabolic disease. In recent years, more than 25 faculty from the Keck School of Medicine, the Roski School of Fine Arts and the School of Cinematic Arts, the committee was established by a three-year USC Research Collaboration Fund.

Before Ronnie Lippin developed a rare form of breast cancer, the couple had high-flying careers in the entertainment industry. Ronnie Lippin represented top names such as Eric Clapton, Prince, Brian Wilson and the Bee Gees. Dick Lippin represented Hollywood companies as clients of his public relations firm, Lippin Communications.

Despite their success in business, dealing with Ronnie’s illness made Dick Lippin feel “like a baby in the woods.” “I was so sure of decisions I made in business, but when it came to complex medical information, I felt like I didn’t know what I was doing,” Dick Lippin said. “I remember talking to my wife. I was going through all this, I couldn’t imagine what people who couldn’t afford great care were going through.”

After Ronnie’s death, Dick Lippin partnered with Tower Cancer Research Foundation. He explained the type of program he envisioned to honor his wife’s memory and they steered him toward a $300,000 donation to establish the program at USC Norris. Linda David, executive director of Tower Cancer Research Foundation, explained that the organization works with its donors to find the right institution in Southern California for the kind of donation they want to make.

“He is passionate about getting help for people who don’t have access to the best care or the understanding of the system to get help they need,” David said.

Lippin came to her unsure how much money he would have to spend. She knew that Keck Medicine physicians do free cancer screenings in the communities around the campus, where there are high instances of late-stage cancer diagnoses, and she saw a fit. “A lot of those people who get a cancer diagnosis will benefit from someone stepping in to help them navigate their next steps,” she said.

Zul Surani, executive director of HSC Community Partnerships, explained that USC Norris had identified a need to bridge the gap between the free cancer screenings in the neighborhoods and ensuring those people get the help they need.

“We don’t want the people we screen and who need follow-up services to fall through the cracks,” Surani said. “We are so grateful for this gift because over and over again it is will help us fulfill our mission of promoting better health in the community we serve.”

White House honors IG M Gallery

Members of the advisory council for the USC Institute for Genetic Medicine Arts Gallery were joined by members of the UN Association, Beverly Hills chapter, and community leaders recently to celebrate a gala to celebrate an award for volunteerism presented by the White House to IG M Gallery Director Lynn Crandall. The letter of recognition was signed by President Barack Obama honors the mission of promoting better health in the community we serve.

Research shows teens who use e-cigarettes may go on to tobacco

A MULTI-UNIVERSITY TEAM led by Keck Medicine of USC researchers has found, for the first time, that using electronic cigarettes, or “vaping,” is associated with a propensity to start smoking cigarettes or use other tobacco products. Based on a survey of 2,530 14-year-olds at 10 public high schools in Los Angeles, the team found that teens who use e-cigarettes were more likely to transition to smokeable tobacco products. The findings were published Aug. 25, 2011, in the journal Journal of Adolescent Health.

E-cigarettes may be drawing new generations of teens into recreational nicotine use because they are high-tech, cool, portable and somewhat easy to come in existence flavors and have a perception that they’re not harmful,” said Adam Leventhal, PhD, associate professor and director of the USC Health, Emotion and Addiction Laboratory at the Keck School of Medicine. The research is among the first to be released under an NIH-funded program established in 2011 as the Department of Preventive Medicine.

Cancer program at USC Norris honors Ronnie Lippin

I t’s experience with the diagnosis and treatment of his wife’s breast cancer that inspired Dick Lippin to establish the Ronnie Lippin Cancer Care and Navigation Program at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Beginning this fall, the program will help people living with diabetes with Sciences Campus to maxime their chances of surviving cancer and to help them to the right doctors. It will also help in understanding treatment options, clarifying insurance benefits and find ing additional resources.

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Global study of Type 1 diabetes receives funds

Two USC research leads recently received funding to partake in a global effort to find new ways to prevent the onset of Type 1 diabetes (T1D). David Agus, MD, professor of medicine, and Dan Ruderman, PhD, assistant professor of research medicine, were awarded $190,806 by the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. The project, dubbed the T1D Prevention Initiative, involves ongoing and new research at five institutions — Helmsley Zurich Muenchen in Germany, the University of Cambridge in Great Britain, JDRF in Australia, and the Keck School of Medicine of USC and the University of South Florida in the United States.

The foundation’s total investment of over $87.5 million will help these institutions continue observation of hundreds of thousands of newborns and children across the U.S., Europe, and Australia, as well as funding analysis of the data to chart the history and progression of Type 1 diabetes. Clinical trials seeking to help delay the development of T1D are also expected.

In Type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin. It is usually diagnosed in children and young adults, according to the American Diabetes Association. Agus and his team are researching the functionality and quality of existing clinical data from T1D trials and from two other autoimmune immune diseases. Their research will determine whether sufficient data exists to design an interventional prevention trial and to use data analytic techniques to better understand T1D and