

## Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Health Care

The growing debate over universal health care entered Hanover in April as Dr. C. Everett Koop delivered the inaugural speech in the series "The Right to Health Care: Has the Time Come?" DMS Dean John Baldwin created the lecture series to heighten national discourse on health care, with speakers from diverse economic, political and medical backgrounds, to provide a better framework to the electorate this presidential season.

After opening remarks from Baldwin, Koop, the 83-year-old former US Surgeon General and Elizabeth DeCamp McNerny Professor of Surgery at DMS, challenged the nation to make universal health care a fundamental American right. He emphasized the importance of taking responsibility for providing health care. "If we have the right to health care, then we also have the obligation to provide it."

Koop highlighted the principal problem with universal health care: people want it, but they don't want to pay for it. He noted, "The only place you can find money to pay for health care is through taxes. People don't want their income taxes raised by even \$100 or \$200." Thus, in the end, health care gets stalemated due to its limitless demand

and limited funds available.

Financial concerns aside, the bureaucratic problem of integrating such a large-scale health care initiative into our current system remains. Koop's easy solution: use the system of Medicare and delete the words "over 65." But Medicare provides no money for nursing home costs, and it does not cover many prescription drugs. Said Koop, "Medicare really only covers about 45 percent of the health care costs of the elderly."

So how much health care are we entitled to? Who determines who gets a "free ride"? The idea of "free" anything inevitably has abusive consequences. Koop used the example, "If I said you didn't have to pay for it, what kind of car would you drive?" An overwhelming demand for top quality health care could degrade the system as a whole. But, said Koop, the current state of health care is unacceptable, and we must take action to change it.

Koop concluded by reiterating his position as a physician. "I speak to you as a doctor, as a member of what I cherish, the profession of medicine. And a renewed professionalism is long overdue in medicine."

## Search and Rescue Deemed Heroic

Three DMS students received a hero's welcome on April 18 in Manchester, NH. The Upper Valley Wilderness Response Team (UVWRT), a Community Service Committee sponsored organization, accepted the "Hero's Award" given annually by the Union Leader.

Currently the UVWRT has 30 active volunteer members who are trained in search and rescue operations and are prepared to be self-sufficient in a wilderness environment for up to 24 hours without re-supply. Among the members are training officer Gillian Salton '01, medical officer Tim Burdick '02 and Lara Hanlon '01. The UVWRT receives

emergency calls ranging from first aid to dead body retrieval.

Salton recalled a personal rescue 18 months ago in Plymouth, NH: "An elderly man had wandered away from his house and spent the night out in the woods in below freezing temperatures. When we got to him, he was just barely conscious enough to open his eyes. He was very hypothermic, around 85 degrees. We checked him out for injuries, started the re-warming process, packaged him in a litter and carried him out to the ambulance. He did very well in the hospital, but he certainly wouldn't



Photo courtesy of Tim Burdick

UVWRT medical officer Tim Burdick '02 practicing a cliff rescue on "victim" third year Vermont Law Student Jeff Rupert. Burdick is being hauled up the mountain.

have survived another night out."

DMS students have the unique ability to execute on-site treatment, which provides lifesaving aid for the victims and learning experience for the students. According to Burdick, "The team gives students an opportunity to develop medical and leadership skills in a unique context while serving a valuable role in the community. I think the team is a great example of service learning happening at DMS through the Community Service Committee."

News of the award came as a welcome surprise for UVWRT members. "We obviously don't join SAR teams for the wealth of recognition, but it's nice to get pats on the back occasionally," said Salton. Burdick and Salton agree that the success of the UVWRT depends largely on the cooperation from members of the Upper Valley community. Continued Salton, "We couldn't just go out and do it without NH Fish and Game, local fire and ambulance departments, often New England Canine, and other agencies."

Taking their specialization in wilderness medicine a step further, several DMS students and alumni have joined forces to form Mountain Aid Training International (MATI), a wilderness medicine teaching corporation. Matt Sholl '97, Matthew Russell '98, Paul Morton '99, Salton and Burdick helped launch the non-profit, volunteer organization last year. MATI specializes in teaching wilderness medicine classes to search and rescue professionals or community members.

### Dartmouth Medical School Research Awards

The following new and competing research awards were awarded to DMS during February and March. Year-to-date awards total \$125,694,411, compared with \$82,639,338 during the same nine-month period last year.

#### BIOCHEMISTRY

C. Cole	National Science Foundation	Coordination of 3' mRNA Processing with Export to the Cytoplasm
A. Merz	Damon Runyon-Walter Winchell Cancer Research Fund	Regulation of Membrane Tethering and Docking in Homotypic Vacuole Fusion
K. Lee	National Institutes of Health	Biochemical Analysis of the Role of WC1 in Circadian Rhythm and Light Transduction in Neurospora

#### COMMUNITY & FAMILY MEDICINE

J. Birkmeyer	Agency for Health Care Policy and Research	Benefits of Regionalizing Surgery for Medicare Patients
T. Bubolz	University of Minnesota	Research Data Assistance Center (RESDAC)
P. Carney	National Cancer Institute	Hormone Replacement Therapy and Breast Cancer
J. Cravero	Health Resources & Services Admin.	Emergency Medical Services for Children
A. Dietrich	Brigham and Women's Hospital	Dissemination of Colorectal Cancer Screening
M. Karagas	Harvard University	Molecular Epidemiology of Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer

#### MEDICINE

M. Greenberg	Creare, Inc.	Lifeguard-A New Technique for Quantifying Atrial Fibrillation
P. Kaufman	Glaxo Wellcome, Inc.	Phase I Clinical and Pharmacological Study of Vinorelbine and Trastuzumab in HER-2/neu Positive Patients with Carcinoma of the Breast or Non-small Cell Lung Cancer and HER-2/neu Overexpression
J. O'Donnell	Brown University	Communication Skills for Male Cancer Screening
J. Rathmann	Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp.	A Prospective, Randomized, Trial of Sandostatin CSMS995 US05

#### MICROBIOLOGY

A. Cheung	National Institutes of Health	Characterization of SAR-AGR Interactions in S. aureus
L. Erickson	National Institutes of Health	Role of TNF Family Members in Memory B Cell Development
W. Wade	National Institutes of Health	Vibrio cholerae TCP and LPS Subunit Vaccine, Epitopes, and Efficacy

#### PATHOLOGY

G. Gerhard	Penn State University	QTL Analysis of Oxidative Stress Markers
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#### PEDIATRICS

W. Cooley	State of New Hampshire	Rural Medical Home Improvement Project
E. Frank	Dept. of Health and Human Services	Safe Home Project

#### PHARMACOLOGY & TOXICOLOGY

T. Ciardelli	Veterans Administration	Structural and Mutagenic Analysis of IL-2 Receptor Subunits
R. Craig	National Cancer Institute	Control of the Survival-regulator MCL1 and Tumorigenesis
K. Dragnev	American Society for Clinical Oncology	A Novel Retinoid Cancer Prevention Mechanism

#### PHYSIOLOGY

J. Leiter	Francis Families Foundation	Upper Airway Reflexes in the Pathogenesis of SIDS
W. St. John	National Institutes of Health	Neurogenesis of Automatic Ventilatory Activity

#### PSYCHIATRY

T. Ahles	Duke University	Spouse-Guided Pain Management Training for Cancer Pain
	U. Mass. Medical Center	Disclosure: Effects on Women with Metastatic Breast Cancer
K. Mueser	Laval University	The Role of Work in Recovery of Persons with SMI

#### SURGERY

P. Hoopes	Euclid Systems, Inc. Medivance, Inc.	Orthokeratology/Cornea Fixation Study Microwave Heating of the Hypothalamus
R. Powell	National Institutes of Health	Endothelial Cell Control of Smooth Muscle Cell Matrix

## Hope Ripples for CSC

Dartmouth Medical School's award-winning tradition in the realm of community service was celebrated recently at a luncheon honoring its student leaders. Community Service Committee (CSC) co-leaders Amy Vinther '02 and Michelle Conroy '02 presided at the meeting that included DMS Dean John Baldwin as well as various heads of the CSC's 12 different service programs.

Baldwin reiterated the importance of the CSC within the medical community. "This program exemplifies some of the best aspects of the uniqueness of our profession... I thank you for the honor you bring to DMS." Quoting from a 1966 speech by Robert F. Kennedy, Baldwin illustrated the powerful impact that even a small amount of goodwill can achieve. "Each time a man... acts to improve the lot for others he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest wall of oppression and resistance."

The CSC leaders each presented stories and updates about their respective groups. Vinther discussed her experiences with the Diverse Elderly Council program, which partners DMS students with senior citizens of the Upper Valley. "One woman, at the very end of the program, told me, 'This is one of the best things I have ever done in my entire life.'"

Vinther and Conroy announced that in 2001 there will be five CSC leaders. "We hope that the increased number of leaders will really spread the CSC's goals and ideas and increase the involvement in community service at DMS," said Vinther. The future leaders include first-year students Katie O'Donnell, Sharon Johnston, Amy Madden, Elizabeth Basset and Melissa Woo.

The CSC leaders discussed various strategies for encouraging increased student participation in spite of an intensive medical school schedule. They noted the far-reaching benefits of community service, which include not only raised spirits, but also good residency placement. Senior Advising Dean and Director of Community Programs Dr. Joseph O'Donnell said, "There's a whole curriculum out there—there's unbelievable learning—but it's not central. What's central is nose to the grindstone and not these peripheral things. The challenge is to get the stuff that's happening to be not peripheral, but more central."

Recently the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey granted \$3500 to DMS as part of their Humanism in Medicine Awards Program. For more information or to get involved with any of these groups contact Wendy Barbour Chapman in the DMS Student Affairs Office at 603/650-1509.

The stories in this issue were written by Sara Connolly, Dartmouth College '01, an intern in the DMS Communications Office.