

# Health & Science

## Communities of color health leadership awards

HealthPartners and McFarlane Media Interests presented the first annual Communities of Color Health Leadership Awards at the Health Culture Recognition Luncheon held at the International Market Square in Minneapolis.

The leadership awards were presented to six health professionals for their achievements in their medical careers and serving communities of color.

**Recipients of the 1997 Communities of Color Health Leadership Awards were:**

— **Roberta Barnes**, Certified Medical Technician, lead medical technician at HealthPartners Riverside Medical Clinic, Minneapolis. Barnes was recognized for her efforts in serving patients at HealthPartners Riverside Medical Clinic. She is also recognized for her volunteer work with at-risk adolescent girls at the Martin Luther King Center, St. Paul.

— **Vidal Castaneda, Sr.**, Certified Medical Assistant, West Side Community Health Center, St. Paul. Castaneda was recognized for his

work with Latino youth and their community, including conducting research and providing street outreach on such issues as HIV/AIDS, drug use and abuse education. He was a key participant in the Health Care Finance Administration's committee to assist low-income clients access health care programs.

— **Mehmood Khan, M.D.**, division chief, Endocrinology, Metabolism and Nutrition, Hennepin County Medical Center and Hennepin Diabetes Center, Minneapolis. Dr. Khan was recognized as a leader in addressing diabetes health issues, especially within the Muslim community. He initiated the Al 'Shifa clinic at the Islamic Center of Minnesota and donates his time to education and direct patient care.

— **Geneva Lawrence, R.N., C.D.E.**, Hennepin County Medical Center staff nurse and certified diabetes educator, Minneapolis. In addition to her work at Hennepin County Medical Center, Lawrence was recognized for her work with the Native American Indian community which includes a special fo-

cus on diabetes. Colleagues cited her leadership in being an advocate for patients and families in attending their physical care, emotional, psycho-social and spiritual needs.

— **Sherry Pittman, R.N.**, Diversity coordinator, Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC), Minneapolis. She serves as liaison between HCMC and communities of color, serving on boards such as the Center for Cross Cultural Health and the Minnesota Cultural Diversity Center and develops diversity competency descriptions for training and evaluating HCMC staff.

— **Henry Smith, M.D.**, chief, Hennepin Faculty Associates, Internal Medicine Section, Department of Medicine, Hennepin County Medical Center, Minneapolis. Dr. Smith was recognized for his work in the African American and Native American Indian communities, especially in the prevention and treatment of hypertension. He serves with several organizations, including the Brother-to-Brother program and the Minnesota Medical Association Committee on Minority Af-

fairs and devoted a great amount of time to direct patient care, as well.

The Communities of Color Health Leadership Awards program, developed to celebrate the achievements of health care professionals who serve as role models for their communities recognize different health care professionals each year. The 1997 awards program recognized medical doctors, registered nurses and health technicians (laboratory, radiology, pharmacy, etc.). Award nominees were evaluated on their commitment to their community, leadership in the health care industry and profession, service to patients and/or leadership in health care research.

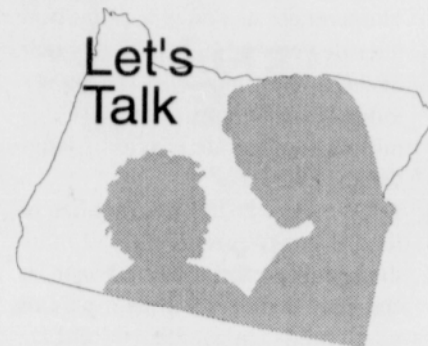
"Medical professionals can empower people and communities of color to manage health and lifestyle concerns," said George C. Halvorson, HealthPartners president and chief executive officer. "They also serve as role models for individuals who are considering career opportunities in the health care field. The Communities of Color Health Leadership Awards recognize the accomplishments and contributions

made by people of color in improving health and the quality of life throughout their communities. We hope these awards will inspire more people of color to consider health care careers."

HealthPartners is the parent company of a family of health care organizations that includes the HealthPartners medical and dental centers, the HealthPartners Medical Group and Group Health, Inc., Central Minnesota Group Health Plan, Midwest

Assurance Company and St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center. HealthPartners is one of Minnesota's leading health care organizations, providing health care coverage and services to more than 730,000 members.

McFarlane Media Interests is a media buying service, specializing in marketing to communities of color using ethnic media. Al McFarlane is publisher of Insight News and president of Minnesota Minority Media Coalition.



**The Future is Now**

While you read this, new products, and technologies are shaping the world in frequently silent, imperceptible increments. We know that the future is where our children will live. Are all of our teachers prepared to prepare them well?

The findings from the new Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) have implications for answering that question. TIMSS is a major research study of 41 international classrooms, including the U.S. It was sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, and the Canadian Government to assess school achievement in mathematics and science. One of the study's benefits is information to help us learn how we can improve.

The first report deals with the math and science achievement of eighth graders, revealing that Singapore, Korea, Japan, the Czech Republic, and Hungary outperform the U.S. in both math and science.

We did better, however, when lined up with many of our trading partners: Our math scores were not all that different than those of Germany and England, and our science scores not significantly different than those of Germany, England, Canada, and Russia. (Germany, however, had more older students than the study allowed.) Overall, we stand about in the middle of the 41 TIMSS countries. In math, U.S. eighth graders outperform their counterparts in seven nations; in science, they outperform their counterparts in 15 nations.

Math teachers themselves—through their professional organizations—have been leading the charge for reform, advocating that instruction must be more than mastery of facts and routine skills; it must also require students to under-

stand and apply math concepts. This suggests teachers may need to change how they teach.

But changing the way we do things is a tough task. Just as we have a hard time shedding unwanted pounds through proper diet and exercise, so changing how we think about math and science, and how we teach these subjects, is just as difficult. Maybe more so. The study showed that, while American teachers are beginning to implement reform techniques, when asked to pick out aspects of a videotape exemplifying current ideas on teaching and learning math, less than 20 percent mentioned a focus on mathematical thinking, which is the heart of mathematics reform.

There is a long-term job to be done to help teachers understand and use the reform techniques. The Japanese and Germans are ahead of us in providing opportunities for increased professional learning and instructional improvement. For example, new Japanese and German teachers have a long-term apprenticeship, and Japanese teachers have more opportunities to talk with each other about teaching.

The report points out that the percentage of new teachers in schools is small compared to the size of the existing teaching force in the United States. "Therefore," the report concludes, "many experts agree that, in the short run, the quickest way to improve students' learning opportunities is to improve the instruction provided by existing teachers." The future starts now.

*This column is provided as a public service by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, a nonprofit institution working with schools and communities in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.*

## Anti-smoking campaign unveiled

As the maker of Chesterfields conceded cigarettes are addictive, California unveiled a \$22 million anti-smoking campaign that parodies the Marlboro Man and features a woman who smokes through a hole in her throat.

Gov. Pete Wilson's administration Thursday released 16 radio, TV and billboard ads that highlight nicotine addiction and the dangers of secondhand smoke. The campaign begins Monday.

The announcement came the same time as the Liggett Group, the Durham, N.C.-based maker of Chesterfields, admitted that smoking is addictive and causes cancer. It agreed to settle 22 state lawsuits by putting warning labels on packs that say smoking is addictive and causes cancer.

California was not among the 22 states that filed the lawsuits against tobacco companies over health expenses. Attorney General Dan Lungren said he could not do so because of California's product liability laws.

The state decided to use advertising instead to fight tobacco, and especially to target teen-age smokers who aren't swayed by lectures or statistics about long-term health effects.

The most powerful of the TV ads features a 47-year-old woman who lost her larynx to throat cancer in 1992. Smoking through a hole in her throat, she tells the audience she began smoking when she was 13, tried to quit when she became aware of dangers to her health, but couldn't. In another commercial, cowboys

representing the tobacco industry herd children, instead of cattle, into a pen, slamming the gate shut and riding off in a cloud of dust with lassos twirling.

"They spend millions trying to grab your attention and push you into smoking," a voice says. "Because once they get you where they want you...they've got you for good."

A billboard parodying tobacco industry ads features two cowboys on horseback, with one confiding in the other: "Bob, I've got emphysema."

An industry group said it was too soon to respond to the ads. "Until we have a chance to see and review them it would be inappropriate for us to comment," said Tom Lauria, a spokesman for The Tobacco Institute.

The state's campaign is paid for by money raised under Proposition 99, a 1988 ballot measure which raised tobacco taxes to fund a variety of anti-smoking, health and environmental programs.

Health organizations have hammered the Republican governor for what they claimed was ineffective use of the Proposition 99 money.

On Thursday, they gave somewhat grudging approval to the ad campaign.

"It's definitely a step in the right direction," said Kirk Kleinschmidt, communications director for the American Heart Association.

"I also feel very strongly that if we hadn't been very vocal about our issues, we would not be seeing the type of ads we saw today," he added.

## Tipper Gore campaigns against SIDS

Tipper Gore on Thursday joined a public health drive to educate parents and caregivers that babies should sleep on their backs in order to lower the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

"Placing babies on their backs to sleep is one of the most important steps that caregivers can take to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, but too many people still don't know this important, simple

message," said the wife of Vice President Al Gore.

The American Academy of Pediatrics in 1992 recommended putting babies to sleep on their backs to avoid SIDS, sometimes called "crib death."

The U.S. death rate from SIDS dropped 30 percent from 1992-95, and declines have been reported in other countries who have been similarly educating parents and

caregivers.

Gore and Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala attended a SIDS education event at a Washington child development center. Gore is making public service announcements for radio about SIDS, and Shalala said Gerber baby foods would put the "Back to Sleep" message on its

cereal boxes.

The education campaign incorporates other recommendations of pediatricians, including putting babies to sleep on firm surfaces, with no fluffy bedding or soft toys and pillows. They also stress that women should get prenatal care and avoid cigarettes and alcohol during pregnancy.

## Easter pets can cause illness

Baby chicks and ducks, a popular Easter present for children, caused salmonella poisoning in three states in 1995 and 1996, the government said Thursday in warning again that people who handle fowl should wash their hands afterward.

Thirty-nine people, almost half of them 2 or younger, got sick with salmonella Montivideo in Idaho, Washington and Oregon, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said.

Salmonella, which sickens about two to four million people a year, is

more commonly linked to raw chicken. It is a potentially fatal illness that causes diarrhea and vomiting.

The cases occurred around Easter. Of the 23 people who got sick in Idaho and Washington, at least 17 had touched chicks. Seven of the 16 people in Oregon had held a chick, hen or rooster, the CDC said.

The CDC said people should avoid feces of fowl and should thoroughly wash their hands after touching them.

Researchers linked chicks and ducks to salmonella in 1992.

## Couch Potatoes should ease into exercise

Couch potatoes may trade the couch for "ouch" if they pursue and exercise program too aggressively.

"It's not uncommon at this time of year for patients to complain of chest-wall pain near the rib cage," said Dr. Wayne J. Riley, a general internist and an assistant professor of medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

"Often, they are sedentary people who have made a New Year's resolution to exercise. Instead of getting back into shape slowly, they try to achieve their athletic goals immediately by playing basketball for six hours or doing 50 stomach crunches on an abdominal-flexor machine," he said.

The chest-wall pain usually stems from a strained muscle or an inflammation of the rib cartilage.

"If your left side hurts when you

press on your ribs or take a deep breath or move your shoulder, that's a strong indication you have injured a chest muscle or rib cartilage," Riley said.

The injury can be treated with over-the-counter nonsteroidal drugs that decrease inflammation and pain. Riley also recommends applying an ice pack to the chest during the first two days after the injury.

If the intensity of the pain does not decrease within 48 to 72 hours, see your physician. X-rays may be needed to determine whether you have broken a rib or dislocated a shoulder.

Rest at least a week before exercising again to allow time for the muscle to recover.

"When you resume exercising, start at a lower level of intensity and

pace yourself to avoid re-injuring the muscle," Riley said.

**His recommendations:**  
• *Instead of doing 50 abdominal crunches at the start, begin with 10 and increase the number by five each day until you reach your goal.*  
• *Start weight-lifting routines with a moderate load and perform repetitions several times a week. Increase the volume by five to 10 percent as you become comfortable with the weight load.*

• *Limit tennis, basketball and other sports that require strenuous shoulder-arm movements to an hour of play the first few times, and build up to more strenuous workouts.*

"Those good intentions to improve your health by exercising can be salvaged if you expand your workout gradually and give your body time to adjust," Riley said.

## Cancer enzyme promising

California researchers said Thursday they had identified an enzyme that interacts with a crucial cancer-causing gene and may hold out promise for new ways of fighting cancer.

The research, reported in Friday's edition of the journal *Science*, has only been done so far on yeast and not tested on human cells, so it is far too soon to know whether it will be safe and effective in people.

Still, scientists say it is a key discovery because the enzyme inter-

acts with a protein made by the ras gene. That gene is believed to be the second-most-common cancer-causing gene in people and has been linked to colon, lung, pancreatic and liver cancers.

"Ras has been the focus of much scientific research because of its role in cancers which are difficult to treat," said Matthew Ashby, director of biology at the privately held Acacia Biosciences in Richmond, Calif.

## Women of PURPOSE



Join us for an evening of special dessert buffet, special music & a special message from Dr. O. Virginia Phillips the evening of April 3, 1997 at the Lloyd Center Red Lion 7:00PM - 9:00PM. \$8.50 at the door. If you have any questions, please call Zaria at 331-0330.

Women of Purpose is a non-denominational Christian group.

## Mature African-Americans With High Blood Pressure



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**To be considered for participation, you should:**

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- Have high blood pressure
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**Qualifying participants receive FREE high blood pressure medicine for up to 5 years.**

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