



## DEAN'S MESSAGE: What's On My Mind

What's on my mind this month is the bright future of University of Maryland Medicine. The interim President and CEO of the University of Maryland Medical System, Robert Chrencik, MBA, CPA, and I recently drafted an "open letter" that outlines our shared vision for the future of the partnership between the University of Maryland Medical System and the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

This letter was sent to all key stakeholders in the University of Maryland family. It is reprinted here in its entirety.

### University of Maryland Medicine: A Shared Vision for the Future



Dear Colleagues, Students, Alumni and Friends,

As the interim President and CEO of University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS) and Vice President of Medical Affairs for the University of Maryland and the Dean of the School of Medicine (SOM), we are sending you this "open letter" to outline our shared vision for the future of Maryland Medicine.

Keeping UMMS and the SOM at the vanguard of quality clinical care while maintaining our economic vitality, culture of discovery and innovation, and producing the future physicians of Maryland is our highest priority. That is why we are highly committed to working collaboratively and in a spirit of partnership. Furthermore, we will strive to more fully maximize the resources and expertise of our entire healthcare system to better serve our patients while achieving economies of scale.

As you may know, UMMS consists of the flagship 705-bed University of Maryland Medical Center in downtown Baltimore and eight high-quality community and specialty service hospitals located throughout the state. These include the Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Maryland General Hospital, Kernan Hospital, University Specialty Hospital and Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital, located in the Baltimore region, and Shore Health System Hospitals and the Chester River Hospital Center, located on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

With its 11,500 employees, UMMS is the state's third largest private employer and provides a full range of health care services to more than 600,000 patients each year. Closely affiliated with this large enterprise is the SOM.

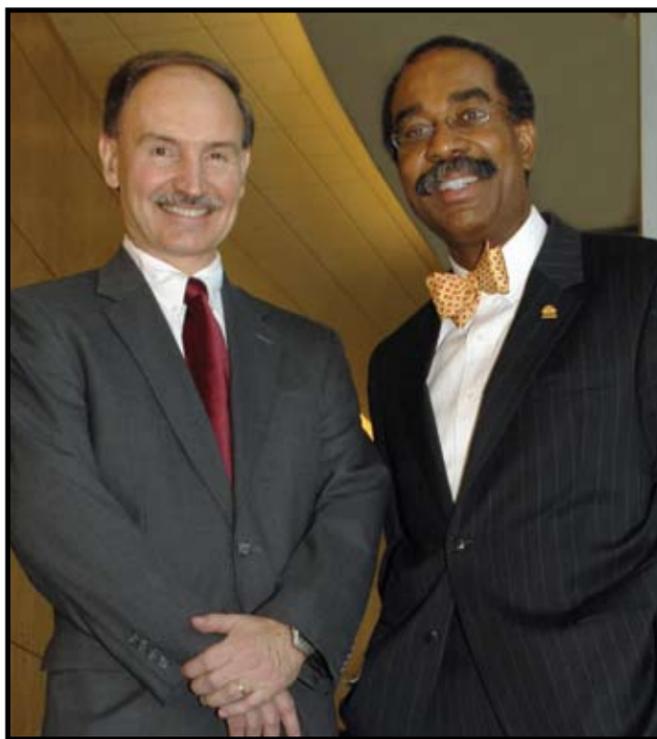
In the UMMS system, the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) has a special linkage with the SOM due to their close physical proximity and the fact that all of the physicians who practice at UMMC are employed by and are members of the SOM faculty. This linkage between UMMC and SOM forms what is known as an "academic medical center."

Our academic medical center benefits each of the UMMS member hospitals by providing them access to resources, capital and research-based innovations in patient care. It also benefits the state and surrounding mid-Atlantic region by training more than half of the physicians who practice in the state of Maryland and generating nearly \$5 billion in economic activity each year.

The prestigious Leapfrog Group, an independent patient advocacy organization, recently rated UMMC—and its SOM doctors—as one of the top-50 acute care hospitals in the nation for quality care and patient safety. The SOM ranks in the top 10 percent of the 76 public medical schools and in the top 15 percent among all 129 medical schools in the nation based upon the American Association of Medical College's ranking of research grant and contract expenditures.

Just recently, our Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Cancer Center was named as one of only 64 National Cancer Institute-designated cancer centers. This prestigious designation is bestowed upon only the nation's top cancer centers.

These are just a few examples of areas where we have achieved clinical excellence by investing heavily in technologies and expertise that have the greatest potential for preventing unnecessary deaths and illnesses. Some other areas in which we have become clinical leaders include transplant medicine, trauma and rehabilitative medicine, and cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer treatment and prevention. We intend to continue our investments in these disciplines in order to maintain our leadership position.



*Keeping UMMS and the SOM at the vanguard of quality clinical care while maintaining our economic vitality, culture of discovery and innovation, and producing the future physicians of Maryland is our highest priority.*

We also are making extensive investments to eliminate health disparities, particularly in the treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other pervasive and deadly infections. Such efforts extend beyond our borders to improving health globally, where the SOM is already internationally recognized for operating research programs and delivering life-saving care in 23 countries around the world. In the African nation of Malawi, for example, where an estimated 40 percent of the population is HIV positive and there are just two physicians per 9,000 patients, doctors and researchers from the SOM's Institute of Human Virology are providing technical assistance to their African counterparts in areas such as patient care, infection prevention and disease surveillance in the population.

In addition, we are investing in areas that extend life and improve the quality of life of our patients, including advancing our world-class expertise in areas such as minimally invasive surgery, genomic sciences, vaccine development and stem cell biology and therapy, to name just a few.

These latter types of investments are a significant step toward the development of personalized medicine, in which therapies are tailored to an individual patient rather than the one-size-fits-all approach. Recent advances in stem cell therapy, for example, will soon allow us to extract cells from a patient's own body, manipulate them, and then place them

back in the patient to affect a cure.

Achieving the above goals will require your continued support and our continued and significant investment in research and contemporary clinical programs throughout the medical system and the School of Medicine. Just as important, we believe our commitment to working collaboratively and in a spirit of partnership with each other and with our key stakeholders, including the faculty and staff, the excellent and visionary new UMMS board of directors, and our alumni and friends, will ensure our sustained success.

Through these efforts, we believe UMMS and the SOM will continue to serve as a nexus for ever-increasing quality healthcare, while greatly advancing the practice of medicine. Furthermore, they will allow us to continue to maintain an exceptional environment for training the next generation of outstanding physicians, scientists and allied health professionals and create economic opportunities for the state, the region, and the nation.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Chrencik, MBA, CPA  
Interim President and Chief Executive Officer  
University of Maryland Medical System

E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA  
Vice President for Medical Affairs, University of Maryland  
John Z. and Akiko K. Bowers Distinguished Professor  
Dean, University of Maryland School of Medicine



# Griffith to Be Named Hales Professor of Thoracic Transplants

Bartley P. Griffith, MD, will be named the first Thomas E. and Alice Marie Hales Distinguished Professor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. The professorship, to support research into thoracic transplant surgery, is being created with a generous \$2.5 million gift from the Hales Family Foundation, founded by New York resident Thomas E. Hales and his wife, Alice Marie.

Mr. Hales underwent a successful double lung transplant last November, with Dr. Griffith as his surgeon. Mr. Hales and his wife created the professorship out of gratitude to Dr. Griffith for his skill and compassion. Dr. Griffith, professor, Department of Surgery and chief of the Division of Cardiac Surgery, specializes in treating patients with the most severe heart and lung diseases.

"Dr. Griffith saved my life," said Mr. Hales, who suffered from pulmonary fibrosis before his double lung transplant. The disease, the cause of which is unknown, results in scarring of the

lung. As the lung tissue scars, it loses its ability to transfer oxygen into the bloodstream. Transplant is the only current treatment for the condition.

Mr. Hales says he has already sent one friend to Dr. Griffith for treatment since his surgery last year, and he hopes many other patients can find hope at the University of Maryland.

"I was really at the point where I was not going to make it," said Mr. Hales, the former Chairman and CEO of U.S.B. Holding Co. Inc., and its wholly owned subsidiary, Union State Bank. "My gift is intended to draw attention to the quality of care I received from Dr. Griffith and the entire medical and surgical team at the University of Maryland. This professorship at the School of Medicine will support research to advance the field of thoracic surgery to the benefit of future patients."

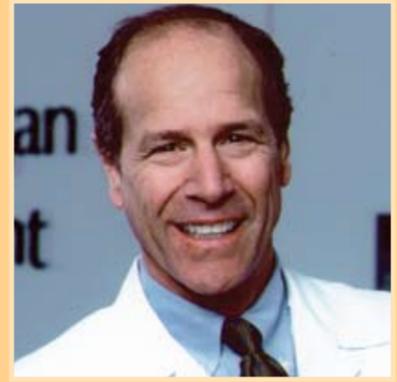
"The Hales' gift will help advance the field of heart and lung transplantation by supporting even more cutting-edge science at the University of Maryland

School of Medicine," said Dean E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA. "The School of Medicine is an established leader in cardiovascular research, and this gift will enhance that important scientific work."

"The Hales' gift places us a giant step closer to improving transplantation science to better assist patients with severe heart and lung conditions," said Dr. Griffith. "I am grateful to them for their generosity and for this honor."

Dr. Griffith's research focuses on heart and lung transplantation and advancing the use of artificial organs. His work has included the development of an artificial lung, a pediatric-size heart pump, and a study to reduce muscle scarring after heart attacks. He has been continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health as a principal research investigator since 1988.

As an endowment, the Hales' gift will support thoracic surgery research at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in perpetuity. The original



Bartley P. Griffith, MD

gift will remain untouched and will be invested. The proceeds from the investment will go toward the research of Dr. Griffith, and any faculty members chosen to serve in the professorship after him.

The Hales have left their gift open-ended. They hope other grateful patients, family members or interested donors will make additions to the fund to advance the School of Medicine's already cutting-edge transplant research. 



## The JACQUES Initiative HIV Awareness Musical Series

A program at the University of Maryland School of Medicine Institute of Human Virology, The JACQUES Initiative provides a supportive and structured environment where members of the Baltimore community are mobilized and engaged to address the HIV/AIDS crisis.

The JACQUES Initiative provides assistance to approximately 5,000 HIV positive patients in Baltimore.

725 W. Lombard Street—Courtyard

THE FIRST FOUR FRIDAYS IN OCTOBER:

October 3 • October 10 • October 17 • October 24

12:00 to 1:30 pm

Learn more about the  
Institute of Human Virology's HIV/AIDS Program!  
Live performances from local artists!  
HIV Testing Available

In case of rain on the day of the event(s),  
the event(s) will be canceled.

## Shulman Named Brin Professor of Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders

*Generous Gift from Google Co-Founder and Family Creates Professorship*

Lisa M. Shulman, MD, has been named the first recipient of the Eugenia Brin Professorship in Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. The professorship is the result of a generous \$1.5 million gift from Eugenia Brin, Michael Brin, PhD, and their son, Google co-founder Sergey Brin. Dr. Shulman, a professor in the Department of Neurology and a researcher in the University of Maryland Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Center, was invested in her new position in a ceremony Tuesday, September 16.

The Brins know first-hand the challenges Parkinson's patients face. Mrs. Brin is a Parkinson's patient herself, and for years she has been treated at the University of Maryland Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Center. "Parkinson's has touched me and my family very personally," said Mrs. Brin. "By supporting research into new treatments and diagnostic tools, we hope to help other patients, and possibly even find a cure. I have seen the research and the clinical work that goes on in the Movement Disorders Center. I decided to endow this professorship to help the faculty continue their extraordinary work."

The new endowed professorship will support Dr. Shulman's research at the University of Maryland Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Center. Dr. Shulman uses data collection and analysis to examine how to maximize the quality of life Parkinson's patients experience. As an endowment, the Brins' gift will support such research at the School of Medicine in perpetuity. The original amount of the gift will be invested, and the return on that investment will go to support Parkinson's research conducted by Dr. Shulman and, subsequently, other faculty members in this area of research.

"The Brins' gift will support groundbreaking discoveries at the University of Maryland Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Center long into the future, creating hope for patients like Mrs. Brin, and their families. Academic medicine relies on the generosity of donors such as the Brins in order to make scientific advances that can change and save lives," said Dean E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA.

Dr. Shulman will use the funds to sustain the infrastructure and personnel required to maintain and grow the comprehensive database the center has compiled, including information collected over the past five years on more than 1,000 Parkinson's patients. "We hope to begin the collection of genetic samples from our patients," Dr. Shulman said. "The combination of large comprehensive datasets and exciting new methods of genetic analysis is one of the most powerful new avenues of medical discovery. We're trying to learn how healthcare can adapt to a chronic condition, and help our patients feel confident and in control."

The gift was a natural step for the Brins. Mrs. Brin, an analyst at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, says she particularly respects Dr. Shulman as a fellow female scientist. The family feels loyalty toward the University of Maryland as well. Dr. Brin is a professor of mathematics at the University of Maryland, College Park, and both sons, Sergey and Sam, attended the University of Maryland, College Park. Sam Brin is a senior there now. "We have strong ties to the institution. That is one of the reasons we made this gift," Mrs. Brin said.

For more information or to make a gift to the Department of Neurology, contact Cheryl Armstrong, director of development, at 6.0419 or [carmstrong@som.umaryland.edu](mailto:carmstrong@som.umaryland.edu). 



(L-R, clockwise): Chancellor of the University System of Maryland William "Brit" Kirwan, PhD, Stephen Reich, MD, the Clair Zamoiski Segal and Thomas H. Segal Endowed Professor of Parkinson's Disease, William Weiner, MD, professor and chair, Department of Neurology, Dean Reece, Susan Bressman, MD, chair of the Department of Neurology at Beth Israel Medical Center, Lisa Shulman, MD, Eugenia Brin and Michael Brin, PhD, pose at the Brin Investiture ceremony.

## Ice Cream Social Highlights



Dean E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA, welcomed more than 400 faculty, staff and students to his third annual Back to School/Back to Work Ice Cream Social on September 10, 2008. This informal affair offered everyone affiliated with the School of Medicine the chance to get together in a casual atmosphere to share ice cream, complete with a sundae bar, Baltimore's famous Berger cookies, and good conversation with Dean Reece.

# Congressman Elijah Cummings Celebrates the University's Summer Research Program

On a visit to the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Maryland Congressman Elijah E. Cummings congratulated a select group of West Baltimore high school students for completing a special eight-week Summer Research Program. The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) program gives students from the nearby Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy the chance to work side-by-side with mentors in their fields of interest from any of the university's professional schools. Ten students successfully completed the program, now in its second year.

"I want to thank you for participating. You truly are special," a proud Congressman Cummings told the high-schoolers during his inspiring keynote speech at a luncheon in their honor. "This is about looking at your life at an early point and understanding with a keen sense of maturity that the things that you do now and in the next five to ten years will affect you until you die. Even if you live to be 110 years old, your choices now will affect every single aspect of your life. You are on a journey to success. And when I look at you, it just makes me feel so good."

The Summer Research Program was born from a conversation between Congressman Cummings and UMB president David J. Ramsay, DM, Phil, both of whom were seeking ways to inspire neighborhood students to pursue a college education. "Vivien T. Thomas students can apply for these research positions and then come here for the summer to work," explained Jordan Warnick, PhD, assistant dean for Student Education & Research and professor, Department of Pharmacology & Experimental Therapeutics, who also heads this program. "We find places for them based on the mentors we have and the students' interests, so they don't get just any job—we try to match the position with what they want to do."

Some of this year's students were placed in School of Medicine laboratories where they had the opportunity to study such diseases as cancer, HIV and asthma, while

others took advantage of opportunities at the Schools of Nursing and Social Work and at the Center for School Mental Health in the Department of Psychiatry at the School of Medicine. "The School of Medicine is always interested in students who want to do research," said Dr. Warnick. "But I'm well aware that not everyone wants to be a physician. I'm here to open these high school students' eyes to something, regardless of whether it's pharmacy or poetry or nursing or social work—whatever they have a glint in their eye about. I want them to flourish in this environment. We try to dispel some of



Friend of the School of Medicine and 7th District Congressman Elijah E. Cummings poses with the group of Baltimore City high school students who completed this year's Summer Research Program.

the things they've heard, that they have to be this or that to get into this school. All you have to do is complete the required prerequisite courses."

The Summer Research Program is funded by the Office of the President at UMB. For more information on student research opportunities at the university, visit the Office of Student Research's Web site at <http://medschool.umaryland.edu/OSR/>. 

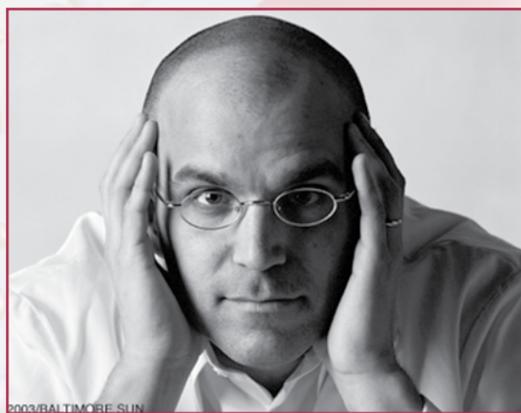
## Researcher Examines Biological Roots of Addiction

**W**hy do addicts relapse when they return to their old neighborhood? Why is it so hard to pass by McDonald's, even when you've sworn off their fast food fare? These are questions that have long puzzled physicians, as well as anyone who's ever cheated on a diet or struggled with substance abuse.

Just this past June, a study published in the journal *Nature* and authored by Geoffrey Schoenbaum, MD, PhD, professor, Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology, and his colleagues offered a possible neurobiological answer to the mystery.

The study explored the effects conditioned reinforcers have on human beings, using rats as a model. Conditioned reinforcers are tempting things like the Golden Arches, money or cues associated with drug use, such as being present in a certain neighborhoods. Dr. Schoenbaum and his fellow researchers examined how these conditioned reinforcers affect the brain and motivate behavior. Do these conditioned reinforcers motivate behavior by activating generalized pleasant emotions or feelings? Or do they act by evoking thoughts of the specific rewards they represent?

Dr. Schoenbaum and his colleagues found that rats would act on cues based on either mechanism. They also found that two different brain regions appeared



Geoffrey Schoenbaum, MD, PhD

**“Addicts are unable to stop their behavior just with a lack of desire for the drug. They are often prone to relapse when confronted with addiction-associated clues.”**

to be involved in the two different forms of control. Specifically, rats with damage to the orbitofrontal cortex—an area critical to judgment and adaptive decision-making and vulnerable to damage by addictive drugs—were unable to use information about consequences to guide their behavior.

Dr. Schoenbaum says his results imply that normal animals, maybe even humans, use their desires for

the ultimate outcomes to control their immediate responses to conditioned reinforcers. "Addicts are unable to stop their behavior just with a lack of desire for the drug," he said. "They are often prone to relapse when confronted with addiction-associated clues."

It's possible, he adds, that this study could help explain why people frequently act inappropriately in a variety of situations, including giving in to that drug of addiction even when they know better. Maybe this is due to a malfunction in those specific brain areas that mediate this ability to value ultimate outcomes over the conditioned reinforcers. Dysfunction to the brain circuits that help us control our behavior could explain all sorts of pathological human behavior, such as addiction, in which cues lead to more severe decisions.

The study is novel in that it suggests an explanation for why behavior driven by conditioned stimuli might become poorly controlled by desires for specific rewards or outcomes.

A lot more study is needed, but the results could have implications in all sorts of situations, according to Dr. Schoenbaum. Why do human beings so often thwart their own happiness, even when they know better?

"These conditioned reinforcers are something we all engage with every day," he said. "This gives us a better ability to understand our own behavior and helps us make sense of settings in which people behave abnormally. We're learning more about how the brain works." 

# Engaging the Next Generation of Scientists

As a member of the Student National Medical Association—the nation’s oldest and largest independent, student-run organization focused on the needs and concerns of medical students of color—Gerald Gantt, MSIII, was encouraged to pursue a project that would promote science in public schools. Mr. Gantt took up this challenge by establishing the Youth Science Engagement Program at George Washington Elementary School, located just blocks from the UMB campus.

“I set it up with one of George Washington’s teachers who has a fifth-grade science class,” explained Mr. Gantt, who was a second-year medical student at the time he established this program.

“I, along with some fellow medical students, would visit the class monthly. We coordinated what we would talk about with what they were studying, to try and give them a more interesting and more interactive way of learning.”

The students responded with unbridled enthusiasm. “It’s a change from their normal classroom routine so they always were excited to see us. Honestly, I think they have a little more fun when we’re there,” said Mr. Gantt. “But they responded very well—they were interested, they were engaged and I think they really learned a lot. We tried to challenge them, but we definitely made sure they understood the content. Outside of that, we emphasized getting the students to look at science in a different way as well as letting them see people who look like themselves doing these kind of things.”

He doesn’t have as much time to dedicate to the program this year because of all the clinical work he must do as a third-year student, so he has passed the baton. “Brandy Knight, who is a second-year medical student, now runs the program. She was with me last year, so she understands how to operate the program,” Mr. Gantt said. “Generally that’s the progression of it. First year you participate, second year you run it and third year you help out when you can. First- and second-year med students get out of class at noon, so it’s perfect timing since we usually go to the school around 1:00 p.m.”

Whenever he can find the time, though, Mr. Gantt turns his attention back to George Washington Elementary. “I feel like it’s my responsibility,” he said. “I’ve been blessed to have a lot of positive influences in my life, and it is my responsibility to give those same blessings to other people. For these kids, it’s not really a matter of whether they have the potential but whether they have the vision, whether they understand that things like going to medical school are possible for them. They don’t see these things on a daily basis, so they can’t even comprehend what they’re capable of. So I try to open the window a little bit and help them see that the world is a lot bigger than what they see every day. They can actually achieve big things if they know what to do and where to go.”



George Washington Elementary School students play a game to demonstrate population dynamics as part of the Youth Science Engagement Program in which they participate.

# BODY WORLDS 2 Works to Educate New Med Students

It was an anatomy lesson with a twist for the Class of 2012 which kicked off their medical school experience with a visit to Gunther von Hagens *BODY WORLDS 2* exhibit at the Maryland Science Center. Featuring real human bodies that have undergone a plastination process, *BODY WORLDS 2* hopes to educate the public about the inner-workings of the human body and show the effects both good and bad lifestyle choices can have on it. The medical school students attended the exhibit on August 12, 2008, just days before starting their lessons in the anatomy lab with human cadavers.

“The human body is an amazing machine, and they get to see that amazing machine in a unique way here,” said Executive Vice Dean Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS.

First-year student Nadia Mostovych appreciated the opportunity. “This is a great introduction for those who haven’t seen preserved bodies before,” she said.

“It will prepare us for anatomy class and it’s definitely been a bonding experience.”

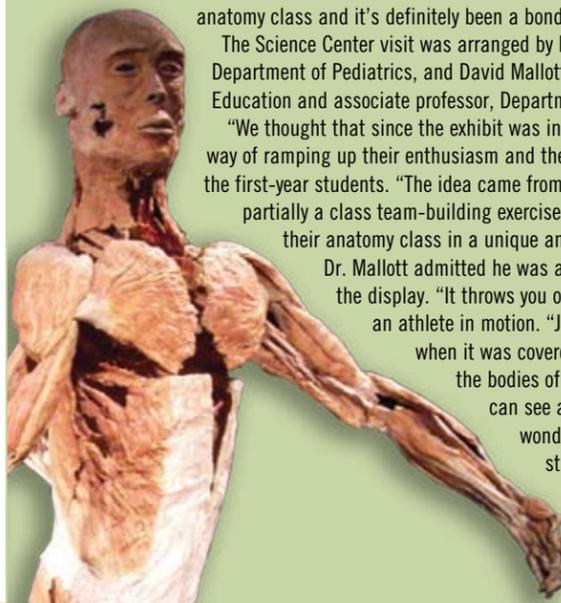
The Science Center visit was arranged by Mimi Blitzer, PhD, professor, Department of Pediatrics, and David Mallott, MD, associate dean of Medical Education and associate professor, Department of Psychiatry.

“We thought that since the exhibit was in town it would be a wonderful way of ramping up their enthusiasm and their curiosity,” Dr. Mallott said of the first-year students. “The idea came from the students themselves. It was partially a class team-building exercise and partially to prepare them for their anatomy class in a unique and novel way.”

Dr. Mallott admitted he was as entranced as the students by the display. “It throws you off,” he said, looking at a body of an athlete in motion. “Just imagine looking at that body when it was covered with skin, and then think of the bodies of the Olympics athletes where you can see all their muscles popping. It’s just wonderful. Anything that catches the students’ eyes, that makes them think about the human body in a different way, is great.”



Members of the Class of 2012 with Larry Anderson, PhD, professor, Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology, who accompanied them to the *BODY WORLDS 2* exhibit.



# SOMnews

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## Call for Vendors

Are you...crafty? Are you busily creating holiday decorations, jewelry, clothes, sweet treats or toys? Consider renting space to sell your wares at the UMB Handmade and Holiday Gift Fair. Line your pockets with holiday cash! Watch your homemade creations spread joy!

The fair will be held on Friday, November 14, 2008, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Westminster Hall. Table reservations are due by October 24; tables are \$25.00 each. Exhibit space is limited and will be assigned on a first-come basis. For more information, or to make a reservation, contact Nancy Gordon, senior director of University Events, at 6.2024.

