



# PULSE

PHILANTHROPY in ACTION at the  
UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA HEALTH SYSTEM



**The Contemplative Sciences Center—made possible with the extraordinary generosity of Sonia and Paul Jones—will support UVA’s efforts to research new ideas that may complement traditional forms of study and practice.**

## UVA Set to Launch New Contemplative Sciences Center

### Partners to include Schools of Nursing and Medicine

Can meditation, yoga, or mindfulness training help nurses and physicians be more effective and resilient in stressful situations? Can such contemplative practices be part of a more effective treatment regimen for major depression, or for alcoholics in recovery? These are just a few examples of the research that will be fostered by UVA’s new Contemplative Sciences Center. The center is being created by a \$15 million gift from Sonia and Paul Jones (A&S ’76) of Greenwich, CT.

At its heart, the center will be a series of collaborations among the College of Arts and Sciences, the Schools of Nursing and Medicine, the School of Architecture, and the Curry School of Education. Its purpose will be to foster partnerships among medical and nursing practitioners, humanities scholars, and contemplative practitioners, among others. Going forward, plans call for evolving partnerships with other schools as well.

For School of Nursing Dean Dorrie Fontaine, RN, PhD, FAAN, the center will be a way to further the work of the Compassionate Care Initiative, part of every UVA nurses’ training. The school is advancing interdisciplinary working groups in areas such as pediatrics, cancer, or emergency medicine to teach students and healthcare professionals how to

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Strong community support and a dedicated group of volunteers have turned The Main Event into UVA Children's Hospital's signature event.

## Keep Calm and Support Children's Health

### UVA Children's Hospital Main Event is a Royal Success

**Contributors got on board en masse** in 2012 to make a difference for children and their families at this year's sold-out UVA Children's Hospital annual "Main Event." The highly anticipated signature gala raised \$217,000, an \$87,000 increase over the previous year's event.

In addition to ticket sales and proceeds from the silent auction, donations from four primary sponsors—BMW of Charlottesville, Castle Hill Asset Management, Joe and Lee Mullen, and PBM Capital Group— played a pivotal role in the gala's favorable outcome.

The Main Event also owes its success to a dedicated core of community volunteers, contributors who donate countless hours to make the important fundraiser such a tremendous success. "It was a record year," says Liz Ratcliffe, a Main Event volunteer and Charlottesville resident. Ratcliffe has helped organize and run the gala for more than five years and co-chaired the event with fellow volunteer, Maddy Deal.

"Most of the proceeds from this year's Main Event will be directed to the UVA Children's Hospital Annual Fund," says R. Edward Howell, vice president and CEO of UVA Medical Center, "a critical fund that provides

the immediate resources our staff and physicians need to offer the most comprehensive quality care to our patients." Funds will also support the upcoming Battle Building at UVA Children's Hospital.

Held at the elegant Keswick Hall, the Main Event set a luxurious and exciting tone with a "British Invasion" theme. The gala highlighted powerful, personal stories of children and their families who have received health services at UVA Children's Hospital, among them, 14-month-old Savanna. Born prematurely, Savanna required stomach surgery followed by open heart surgery for a congenital heart defect. Thanks to the doctors at UVA, Savanna is now a healthy, curious, and well-loved toddler.

"Donations from the Main Event have an immediate impact and stay right here in our own backyard," adds Howell, "with proceeds directed to quality pediatric healthcare. That means everything from new medicine for a pediatric heart transplant to a specialized giraffe NICU bed. We are deeply grateful for the support our community shows to our smallest patients and UVA Children's Hospital."



Diane and Paul Manning



Molly and Robert Hardy



Kelley MacDougall and Mike Pausic

# Artificial Pancreas:

## “Smart” Technology Redefines Day-to-Day Life for Type 1 Diabetics

**For the first time ever, patients with type 1 diabetes** have controlled their disease in a real-life setting using an artificial pancreas system developed by University of Virginia researchers. This milestone means researchers are closer to revolutionizing diabetes care for millions of people with type 1 diabetes.

At the heart of the system is a hand-held device developed by a UVA research team led by Boris Kovatchev, PhD, and Patrick Keith-Hynes, PhD. The device uses a “smart” algorithm to automatically deliver insulin and regulate a person's blood sugar levels—taking much of the burden of constant monitoring off the patient. Thanks to a number of benefactors, the program is poised to make another significant leap: the miniaturization of the artificial pancreas device, eventually leading to the development of a wireless Android cell phone application.

This first outpatient study marks the latest milestone in the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation’s (JDRF) Artificial Pancreas Project, which involves an international research consortium including teams from UVA, the University of California in Santa Barbara, Montpellier University Hospital (France), and the Universities of Padova and Pavia (Italy).

“Today, there are no fully automated insulin delivery systems available on the market, and that’s why JDRF has made accelerating the development and delivery of these technologies a priority,” says Aaron Kowalski, MD, assistant vice president of treatment therapies at JDRF. “This latest research milestone is incredibly exciting and shows us that the first generation of an artificial pancreas is no longer a dream.” JDRF has earmarked \$2.5 million for UVA’s Artificial Pancreas Program.



**Boris Kovatchev leads an international diabetes research team.**

### Philanthropy plays key role in research

In addition to JDRF, the Frederick Banting Foundation of Richmond has also generously supported the artificial pancreas project. Named for the 1923 Nobel Prize winner Dr. Frederick Banting for his discovery of insulin, the Banting Foundation is the brainchild of philanthropists Fred Russell and Hunter Goodwin.

In fact, several areas of UVA’s pioneering diabetes research program have attracted leadership-level support. UVA’s LaunchPad initiative—founded by Paul and Diane Manning—provides seed funding for high-impact, collaborative projects that have the potential for revolutionizing the care and treatment of diabetes. For the Mannings, this fight is personal: the couple has two children with diabetes. Their extraordinary support across UVA’s diabetes program—including the islet cell transplantation program—has dramatically accelerated UVA’s progress.

“The Artificial Pancreas Project is one inspiring, real-life story of how philanthropic support plays a pivotal role accelerating the development and availability of life-changing therapies,” says Steven T. DeKosky, MD, FAAN (Neurology), FACP, vice president and dean, UVA School of Medicine.

“The partnership between our investigators and philanthropists speeds our research. For the millions of patients who live daily with the dangers and difficulties of diabetes, this process can’t move fast enough,” adds DeKosky.



## New Pledges Push McLeod Campaign Over the Top

**In March, the School of Nursing received a very special pledge—** one that signaled the completion of the McLeod renovation campaign. In a flurry of spring giving, McLeod renovation gifts and pledges reached a grand total of \$1,012,700 to conclude the second and final phase of the campaign. When complete, the renovation will create more effective space for teaching and research.

Challenge gifts played a pivotal role in the campaign's success. Last year, Teresa DiMarco (BSN '77), Becky (BSN '73) and Pete Ruegger, and Pat (BSN '69) and Keith Woodard made a \$450,000 commitment to the renovation and challenged other alumni and friends to join them. Soon after, the Charlottesville-based Perry Foundation awarded the school a \$50,000 grant, requiring a 2:1 match. Teresa DiMarco, Becky Ruegger, and Keith Woodard are all trustees of the UVA Health Foundation. In addition to their gifts, several other board members stepped forward to support the effort.

"I have been inspired by how these challenges have motivated so many others to give," says Amy Karr, assistant vice president for nursing development. "Our alumni and friends rallied with strong support for this critical School of Nursing need."

The pledge that put the renovation campaign over the top was made in honor of Jim Roberts, a long-time friend and supporter of the school. Several of Roberts' family members also made gifts to McLeod in his honor.

"I cannot imagine a better way to conclude our campaign than by honoring Jim Roberts," says Dean Dorrie Fontaine, RN, PhD, FAAN. "Jim has worked tirelessly to create a network of support that helped the school to realize its dream of a new building and to move this renovation forward. Thanks to Jim's efforts, our ability to educate students and to bring innovations to nursing research will be greatly enhanced."

Renovation on the third floor of McLeod began in May. A special display on the first floor will recognize the partnership between the school and the Roberts family.



Several gifts to the McLeod renovation project were made in honor of School of Nursing benefactor Jim Roberts.



Becky Silver

## Celebrating a Life: Concert Supports Clinical Trials & Patient Amenities

**Becky Silver was a consummate giver**—she donated untold hours to many causes important to her, was always ready to help a friend or stranger, and was a devoted daughter, wife and mother of two. After she was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia (ALL), she turned much of her attention toward promoting bone marrow registration and blood giving. Last spring, after two unsuccessful bone marrow transplants and countless rounds of chemotherapy, Becky lost her struggle with leukemia. Becky’s spirit of giving continues through the efforts of her husband Lee and the friends who love her.

The Becky Silver Fund at UVA Cancer Center was established in 2011 from the proceeds of a private concert featuring Grammy award winning musician Delbert McClinton. The event, a celebration of Becky’s life, was a major success and raised more than \$100,000 thanks to an anonymous matching gift. The fund supports innovative clinical trials for leukemia and amenities for patients receiving infusions at UVA Cancer Center.

“Throughout Becky’s treatment, we were blessed with an incredible community of support, from our friends and neighbors to our top-notch team at UVA, which included Dr. John Densmore and nurse Devon Blossom, among so many others,” says Lee Silver.

Dramatic advances have been made for many adult hematological cancers. Some are even considered chronic diseases that can be managed for decades. But for adults the prognosis for ALL is almost always poor.

Clinical trials are the last proving ground for new therapies, yet trials are often underfunded and have far too few patients participating in them. Without robust clinical trials, new therapies will be slow to emerge.

“One quality Becky and I shared was impatience, and it was hard for us to see options being exhausted and not having new ones around the corner,” Silver says. “These funds will help expedite the next generation of treatments for ALL.”

In addition to advancing clinical trials, a small portion of the fund supports special amenities that can make a day at the infusion center a little more comfortable for a cancer patient and their family.

“Becky and I spent so much time in infusion centers. She wanted to provide comfort to other people receiving treatment—little things that, at the end of the day, would make them say ‘that wasn’t as bad as I thought it would be,’” Silver explains. The fund will help purchase items such as ergonomic pillows, special heated scarves and hand warmers, as well as coffee and tea makers, to help make patients’ long stays in the infusion center more comfortable.

“My wife believed in ‘paying forward,’” says Silver, “and through this fund I believe that’s just what we are doing—offering the same hope and comfort to others in their time of need that we received in ours.”

***To learn more about how you can support The Becky Silver Fund at UVA Cancer Center, please contact Scott Karr at 434-982-6314 or [skarr@virginia.edu](mailto:skarr@virginia.edu).***



Country and blues great Delbert McClinton played to a packed house to support The Becky Silver Fund at UVA Cancer Center.

remain resilient under stress, and deal with grief, death, and dying. These contemplative practices improve the experience of patients and their families during their most challenging times.

“A lot of what a nurse navigates in a day could flatten someone’s psyche,” says Fontaine. “It could change their professional direction. But by talking about how to be around people who are ill or dying, or whose loved ones are, we hope to change not the impact it creates—because there’s no way to not be changed by an experience of that magnitude—but how it lives inside the nurse.”

In the School of Medicine, meanwhile, Mindfulness Center Director John Schorling, MD, teaches medical students, physicians, and other healthcare providers how to focus their attention on their inner experiences of the moment. The Contemplative Sciences Center will further advance the integration of mindfulness-based practices into the clinical, educational, and research programs of the UVA Health System and the Central Virginia community.

### Mindfulness across disciplines

Advancing contemplative practice is the heart of the extraordinary gift. “UVA has had, for a number of years, remarkable expertise in different sectors,” benefactor Paul Jones says. “What we need now are threads to tie them together and weave them into a greater whole. Our goal with this gift is to enable the Contemplative Sciences Center to function as an integrative force that pulls together disparate parts of the University.”

Like the practice of top athletes using visualization or breathing exercises to empty the mind of distractions and enhance performance, the center aims to distill key kernels of contemplative practice traditions that have



Dorrie Fontaine, dean, School of Nursing; David Germano, professor of religious studies; and Kim Penberthy, associate professor, School of Medicine, represent some of the key school partnerships involved in UVA’s new Contemplative Sciences Center.

demonstrated benefits, and teach those kernels as portable and modular life skills, explains David Germano, PhD, a professor of religious studies in the College of Arts & Sciences who took the lead in developing plans for the new center. Building on existing meditation, yoga, and mindfulness classes at UVA, “the center will try to increase mainstream awareness about the potential benefits of training your mind and body,” Germano says.

“At this juncture,” explains Sonia Jones, “our educational system needs to consider new ideas and practices for the mind and body that can complement its traditional valuation of critical thought and debate. We think contemplative and yogic traditions offer transformative possibilities in this regard, and hope that our gift will enable UVA to engage in an extraordinary experiment aimed at reassessing learning and well-being in relationship to these traditions.”

For the School of Nursing, the center’s programs will help give students the necessary life skills to face the challenges of the profession.

“Ultimately,” Fontaine explains, “the idea is not to teach people how to harden to sad things. It’s to learn how to manage dealing with them.”

The center is expected to officially open in October 2012.





## Gifts of Thanks:

### Honoring Health System Employees Who Make a Difference

Each year, UVA Health System receives gifts made in honor of faculty and staff members who have touched the lives of others while in the service of their jobs. This list includes faculty and staff members who had gifts made in their honor in 2011. Whether the gift came from a patient honoring a physician or nurse, from an alumna commemorating National Nurses Week, or from a colleague supporting the Emily Couric Clinical Cancer Center “brick campaign,” the message is the same: thank you. Those being honored touched someone else’s life. They made a difference. This list recognizes those individuals and their contributions to our community.

For information on how you can make a 2012 gift in honor of a Health System faculty or staff member, please call UVA Health Foundation at (434) 924-8432.

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Note: Every attempt has been made to create a complete, comprehensive list of 2011 Health System honorees. If we missed anyone, or listed any name in error, we apologize and ask that you please notify the UVA Health Foundation at (434) 924-8432.



# PULSE

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## In the News

### Hartwell Biomedical Research Awards Announced

#### Assistant professor of biomedical engineering

Silvia Salinas Blemker, PhD, has been named a recipient of the 2011 Hartwell Individual Biomedical Research Awards, receiving \$100,000 in annual research support for three years. Blemker will use her award to improve the outcomes of cleft palate repair surgery using advanced physics-based computer simulation.

Cleft palate deformities are one of the most common birth defects, and for more than a century, plastic surgeons have been attempting by trial-and-error to improve cleft palate repair. Blemker proposes, through the use of advanced imaging and computer modeling, to create a modeling and simulation framework for predicting palate muscle function during speech, before and after cleft palate repair surgery.

“The idea of using such muscle models as a platform for surgical prototyping is unprecedented,” said Fred Dombrose, president of The Hartwell Foundation. “If Silvia is successful, this new approach for cleft palate repair will lead to optimized clinical outcomes that will improve the physical and mental health of children born with this defect.”

In addition, neuroscientist Noël C. Derecki, PhD, was named a 2011 Hartwell Fellow. Derecki is studying Rett Syndrome, a disorder of the nervous system that leads to dramatic developmental reversals almost exclusively

among girls. To date, no therapies have been devised that can be translated to the clinical setting. Derecki’s lab recently showed that bone marrow transplantation yielded stunning positive results in a mouse model of Rett Syndrome. They are now pursuing immunological strategies to better understand the effects of the immune system in Rett, and ways to treat the disease using immune-based therapies.



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