

Two New Faces at the WHCOE

WHCOE introduces two exciting new additions to its leadership: Dr. Cheryl Bushnell as Associate Director, and Dr. April Ronca as Research Program Director. Please help us welcome them!

Cheryl Bushnell, MD, MHS, is Associate

Professor of Neurology. She received her MD from Medical College of Wisconsin, then completed neurology residency training, a stroke research fellowship, and graduate degree at Duke University. She has extensively

studied stroke severity and outcomes in women, including thrombosis and fibrinolysis biomarkers. She was awarded an NIH K02 Independent Scientist Award in February 2008 that will focus on sex differences in subclinical vascular disease during mid-life, as well as the impact of endogenous sex hormones and thrombosis markers. She is co-PI and PI of several innovative grants.

Dr. Bushnell hopes that her passion for research will someday "improve the quality of stroke prevention for women and under-represented minorities." She also enjoys mentoring. She feels that she has been "very fortunate" to have good mentoring and support, and hopes to "give back by sharing my experiences with others."

One of Dr. Bushnell's first goals in her new role in the WHCOE is to develop ways for researchers across disciplines to more easily collaborate, and to increase awareness of the benefits of research participation for community women.



Cheryl Bushnell, MD, MHS

April E. Ronca, PhD, is Associate Professor of Ob/Gyn and (jointly) Neurobiology & Anatomy. Dr. Ronca received her BS in Psychology and her PhD in Neuroscience from the Ohio State University as a Presidential Fellow. Dr.

Ronca's research is focused on mammalian pregnancy, birth and the transition from prenatal to postnatal life with an emphasis on prenatal origins of neurodevelopmental disorders. From 1994-96, she was an Investigator

on 2 space shuttle experiments, the first in which NASA launched pregnant mammals into orbit. In December 2008 she was featured on the History Channel series, *The Universe*, on a *Sex in Space* segment.

Dr. Ronca claims that the collegial atmosphere and breadth of scientific talent feed her enthusiasm at WFUHS. They combine to "set the stage for unprecedented exciting new opportunities for collaboration and growth."

In her new role in the WHCOE, she hopes to grow the directions of the research program initiated under the expert guidance of the program's former director, Dr. Mark Cline. Additionally, she hopes to: 1) promote involvement of WFUSM scientists working on women's health issues and gender differences throughout the lifespan, beginning prenatally, 2) establish new venues for fostering translational research in women's health, and 3) expand inclusion of women's health research from under-represented groups.



April Ronca, PhD

Who We Are:

Mary Lou Voytko, PhD
Director
Cheryl Bushnell, MD, MHS
Associate Director
April Ronca, PhD
Research Program Director
Sonia Crandall, PhD, MS
Leadership Program Director
Shannon Golden, MA
Associate Project Manager
Diana Cornelison
Administrative Assistant
Natalie Barrett
Administrative Secretary

Vision:

To improve the health of women and their families by: developing excellence and innovation in women's health research, disseminating best practices in women's health to all constituencies and promoting women's professional development.

Donations:

To find out more about making a donation to the Center, please visit wfubmc.edu/whcoe/Make+a+Donation.

Inside this issue:

Celebrating Achievements of WFUSM Women Faculty & 2008	2
4th Annual Women's Health Research Day: Hormones & Hormone	2
Achievements & 2008 Mentoring Award Cont.	3
Great Things Can Happen When a Community Gets Together!	3
Women's Forum Update	3
Lunch with Wonderful Women Series	4
Nutrition Journal Club	4
Research Seminar Series	4
Research Strategies	4

Celebrating Achievements of WFUSM Women Faculty & the 2008 Mentoring Awardee

On November 13, 2008 the WHCOE Leadership & Mentoring Program sponsored its Annual Promotion, Achievement and Mentoring Award Social. All Faculty and WFUHS Leaders were invited to celebrate the accomplishments of the Women Faculty.

To document and recognize these numerous and outstanding achievements, the WHCOE compiled a booklet for academic year 2007-2008. Women faculty self-reported their accomplishments and a detailed list of funded projects was also provided by the Office of Research. We were very pleased to note that the total funding that these projects brought to the institution was \$32, 247, 079. \$2,

866, 139 above last year.

The booklet is available at www.wfubmc.edu/whcoe. We hope that you, too, will be impressed by the outstanding accomplishments!

Congratulations!

The Leadership and Mentoring Program would like to congratulate Dr. Mary Lou Voytko on being selected as the 2008 Mentor of the Year. This award is presented to the senior faculty member who participates as a mentor in the WHCoE Men-



Top left & bottom: Dr. Voytko's Mentees read excerpts from their nomination letters. Right: Dr. Sonia Crandall presents the award to Dr. Voytko,

toring Program and embodies exemplary skills and devotion to the development and promotion of the women junior faculty in the program.

[Continued on page 3.](#)

4th Annual Women's Health Research Day Hormones & Hormone Therapy Revisited

Our 4th Annual Women's Health Research Day (WHRD) entitled, "Hormones and Hormone Therapy Revisited," will be held on March 20, 2009. This exciting event helps the WHCOE achieve its mission by showcasing the achievements of investigators who contribute to the advancement of women's health. The day will emphasize new data in hormone therapy research, with areas of focus on cancer risk and prevention, urinary/pelvic floor disorders, selective estrogens, and clinical perspectives on hormonal and alternative approaches. The event is designed for physicians, researchers, fellows, students and allied health professionals, and will promote interdisciplinary interactions on a topic of common interest that is crucial to

quality health care.

We are proud to announce our keynote speaker, Dr. JoAnn Manson. Dr. Manson is a Professor at Harvard Medical School, and Chief of Preventive Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. Her research interests include women's health and chronic disease epidemiology, particularly the role of lifestyle factors, micronutrient supplementation, and hormone replacement therapy as determinants of heart disease and stroke in women; prevention of type 2 diabetes mellitus and its cardiovascular complications; and assessment of lifestyle and endocrinologic determinants of breast

cancer. She has served as a lead investigator on several women's health studies, including the Women's Health Initiative, the Nurses' Health Study, the Women's Antioxidant and Cardiovascular Study, and the Women's Health Study. Other featured speakers include Drs. Nancy Avis, Brigitte Miller, Michelle Naughton, Oona O'Neill, Scott Washburn, and Charles Wood.

Please consider presenting a poster on any women's health topic. Two \$100 prizes will be awarded. Nursing contact hours will be offered. **Registration for the event is required by March 13th.** For more information including the full agenda, go to www1.wfubmc.edu/whcoe/Research/WHRD.htm.



Celebrating Achievements of WFUSM Women Faculty & the 2008 Mentoring Awardee (cont.)

Mary Lou Voytko, Ph.D., is a professor of Neurobiology and Anatomy and the Director of the WHCoE. Dr. Voytko's area of study is determining the neural basis of age-related cognitive changes and identifying therapeutic interventions to overcome these dysfunctions.

Dr. Voytko's mentees have this to say about working with her:

- "“She is excellent at imparting a vision both by her words/ knowledge and by her actions/ demeanor of how women faculty can be successful.”"
- "...she focuses on whatever my next level of questions or development is at the time and provides her experience and wisdom as it relates to me."
- "...selflessly given of her time to

meet with me in person, took my phone calls, read and edited my grant, helped me with planning out institutional promotion...went the extra mile to seek out professionals I could collaborate with on my research."

- "Dr. Voytko's concern and support for my success and career path is a priceless gift to me..."

Congratulations again to this wonderful role model!

Great Things Happen When A Community Works Together!

This was the theme for the WHCoE throughout the end of 2008. Thanks to the many groups that worked with the WHCoE, the residents of the Family Shelter were the happy recipients of donations from several special drives.

"Be Safe" Cell Phone Drive

During the month of September, 54 used cell phones were collected in departments throughout the institution. The students in the PA Program collected about half of the donated amount. The local chapter of the Junior League also donated another 14 phones .

"Project Night Night"

Project Night Night is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to

"helping homeless children have sweeter dreams". Special tote bags with a stuffed animal, a book and a blanket in each are assembled. Working with the Domestic Violence Advocacy Center of the WFU School of Law, the Forsyth County Women Attorney's Association & Krankie's Coffee, enough donations were collected to assemble almost 100 bags for the children who come through the Family Shelter.

"A Beary Happy Holiday Tree"

A festive tree in the WHCoE reception area was decorated with donated Beanie Babies, which were up for "adoption". All resulting donations and the remaining Beanies were given to the Shel-



Partners in the Project Night Night and Cell Phone Drive for the Family Services Shelter – Representatives from Family Services, WHCOE, Forsyth County Women Attorney's Association, and the WFUHS PA Program

ter.

All of these donations were presented at the annual Holiday Open House at the Shelter. We would like to thank everyone in the institution that participated and donated for their support of our projects. Thanks to you many displaced and traumatized children and their families had a cheerier holiday.

WFU Women's Forum Update

The following events will sponsored by the Women's Forum this spring:

BIANNUAL SPRING EVENT

At the Home of Dr. Patty Adams
April 8, 2009, 5:30pm – 7:30pm

Join Women Faculty and key Adminis-

trators as we come together to continue the discussion of creating and promoting a supportive community at WFU.

SELF-CARE LUNCHEON

May 11, 2009, 12-2. Hawthorne Inn

Organized by the Women's Forum Work/Life Balance Task Force, this event will discuss the benefits of and techniques for prioritizing self care in our busy lives.



Events on the Horizon

2009 Lunch with Wonderful Women Series

Co-sponsored with ActionHealth, this series is open to everyone. The brown bag sessions will take place at the WFUBMC Cancer Center, Room 2 A&B, from 12-1. Water and snacks will be provided.

February 9: "A Matter of the Heart", Susan Butler, RN, MSN, Heart Center

March 9: "Why Do Migraines Prefer Women?", Cheryl Bushnell, MD, MHS, Neurology

April 13: "Healthy Connections: Relationships 101", DeWanna Hamlin, Family Services, Inc.

May 11: "What is HPV & Should My Daughter be Vaccinated?", Brigitte

Miller, MD, OB/GYN

Sessions open to first 40 who RSVP to ActionHealth at 713-8001.

For the full schedule visit our [education page](#).

Nutrition Journal Club 2008-2009

Meets 9-10 am at the WHCOE [[location](#)], unless otherwise noted.

February 13: "Chalk Talk: Physical Activity & Nutrition", Capri Foy, PhD, MS, PHS, SSHP

March 13: "Reducing Diabetes Risk among Older African American Women: Project DREAM (Diabetes Risk

- Educating African American Matriarchs)", Carinthia Cherry, Doctoral Candidate, Nutrition, UNC-G
April 24, 11-1: [Book Discussion: The Omnivore's Dilemma](#), by Michael Pollan. Co-sponsored by Twin City Dietetic Association. Lunch provided. Registration required, by 4/17.

May 8: "Exploring Long-Term Dietary Supplementation", Eleanor Russell, MA, Biology, High Point University

Contact sgolden@wfubmc.edu for the articles or details. For the full schedule visit our [education page](#).

Research Seminar Series 2008-2009

Co-sponsored with the [WFU Translational Science Institute](#), the Seminar Series serves to facilitate interaction and collaboration between investigators in women's health by providing a forum for sharing the findings of recent research in a broad range of disciplines. Each seminar will be held from 12-1 in the Sticht Center's Auditorium.

February 6: *Older Women and Breast Cancer: Undertreatment and Poor Outcomes?* - Ann Geiger, MPH, PhD, PHS, SSHP

March 6: *Genetic Basis of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome* - Tamer Yalcinkaya, MD, OB/GYN.

March 20, 8:30-3: *Women's Health Research Day, Hormones & Hormone Therapy Revisited*. Registra-

tion required. For more information see the article on the [page 2](#).

May 1: *Preventing Adolescent Risk Behaviors: Results from a Pilot Study* - Elizabeth Arnold, PhD, Psychiatry

RSVP not required. Lunch provided on first come, first served basis.

For the full schedule, visit the [research page](#).

Women's Health Funding & Educational Opportunities:

Don't forget to keep checking our funding opportunities web page at wfubmc.edu/whcoe/Research/funding_ops.htm.

Research Strategies Workshop

February 19, 11:30-1: *Managing Research Conflict: Sabotage, Power Struggles, and Difficult People* - Carol Shively, PhD, Pathology and David Roberts, PhD, Physiology & Pharmacology

Dealing with collaborators, colleagues, staff and students can be tricky when problems arise.

April 23: 11:30-1: *Managing Grant Money: Practical Tips for Success* - Meredith Rentz, Controller's Office

Once your grant has been awarded, how do you manage all that money?

Lunch is courtesy of Jazzercise (www.winstonsalemjazz.com/).

RSVP Required. Contact whcoe@wfubmc.edu. For the full schedule, visit the [research page](#).

Subscriptions:

To receive this quarterly newsletter electronically, please visit wfubmc.edu/whcoe or email whcoe@wfubmc.edu.