



# Heads Up

## Citizenship in Medicine: What Can We Do As Otolaryngologists?

by Harold C. Pillsbury, MD

A few years ago I gave a talk about citizenship in medicine. I asked the question: What is citizenship? I believe it is the volunteering of one's time and resources for the betterment of the community. True citizenship involves doing what is *needed* in a situation, not what is *required*. It's about looking for opportunities to stabilize societal programs in jeopardy. Communication is essential. It also involves giving of oneself to those who can probably *not* do anything to pay you back.

How does this relate to Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery? We are a small specialty that touches a diverse group of patients needing both medical and surgical intervention. We are blessed with a vibrant group of individuals who aspire to do what we do. *We must lead by example.*

How is this done? There are several ways. Become involved in at least one societal activity in your community, such as charity clinics, Habitat for Humanity (a family effort), civic organizations (Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis), and church activities. You can offer to give a seminar at local schools. Young people need to hear about the hazards of smoking and smokeless tobacco, as well as the hazards of excessive noise exposure. There are certainly high school students who would be interested to hear a talk on what it's like to be a doctor, specifically an otolaryngologist.



One of the most gratifying aspects of a career in academic medicine is time spent talking to medical students about their clinical and research interests and guiding them along their career paths. Above, Dr. Pillsbury encourages and inspires some second-year medical students on John B. Graham Student Research Day. Left to right: Elizabeth Rabold, Paul Swaney, Dr. Pillsbury, and Scott Owens.

Certainly the challenges of healthcare reform are hard upon us. Our capacity to respond to these challenges in ways that promote the best of interests of our patients instead of protecting our interests will be the benchmarks against which we will be judged by society. Young people continue to seek out role models and mentors for their careers. Each of us should endeavor to spend some time each week reaching out to the next generation to help guide them along a path that will create optimism about our wonderful profession.

No matter how healthcare reform turns out, I cannot imagine anything that I would like to do any more than what I do now. I suspect that most of you feel that way, and it would be refreshing for that message to come across to the next generation!

We must continue to place the needs of others above our own. Nobody will ever feel sorry for such a privileged group as we are. Don't ever forget this. Think of what *you* can do and *do* it.

# Forget Basketball...

## UNC OHNS Residency Program Wins National Competition



Michael E. Stadler, MD, and Trinitia Y. Cannon, MD, at the Academic Bowl in San Diego, California.

Competing alongside UNC in the 3rd Annual AAO-HNS Resident Academic Bowl were teams of residents from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Wake Forest University Medical School, and The Ohio State University Medical Center. Teams were selected on the basis of AAO-HNS Home Study Course exam scores that were collected over the previous year. As Dr. Osguthorpe put it, “These teams represent the top residency programs in the country.”

Teams were presented with 34 clinical questions written by Academy educational faculty and approved by the AAO-HNS Education Steering Committee. These questions covered broad areas of otolaryngology and each team was given between 10-20 seconds to select an answer from multiple-choice options. At the same time, answers from the audience were also recorded with an audience response system. These were then displayed and compared with each residency team’s response.

The Ohio State University Medical Center team tied UNC for first place and will share a prize that includes future travel grants to attend the annual meeting, as well as subscriptions to the Home Study Course for the entire residency program.

With his introduction to the competition, as roughly 300 people in the auditorium listened attentively, the 2009 Academic Bowl coordinator, Dr. J. David Osguthorpe, predicted that the winning residency team would answer roughly 85 percent of the questions correctly. Trinitia Cannon, MD (PGY5) and Michael Stadler, MD (PGY4) looked at each other and chuckled, as both simply hoped to not make fools of themselves or their beloved program.

The University of North Carolina Department of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery resident team for the 2009 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual AAO-HNS Academic Bowl was already at a bit of a disadvantage. To start, they were missing one member of the team and had to compete with only two, while the other teams each competed with three participants. Both of them were also a bit under the weather. Michael was still feeling the effects of his previous night’s NyQuil and Trinitia, just hours before, was busy relinquishing her prior evening’s dinner. Not exactly the “A team” that Dr. Pillsbury had been planning to assemble for the competition!

Yet, when the dust settled and the Academic Bowl came to a close, two of the teams succeeded in answering 95% of the questions correctly, tying for first place. Who would have thought that UNC’s defunct team was one of those teams!

## Chair’s Corner



Harold C. Pillsbury, MD  
Department Chair

The highlight of this issue of *Heads Up* is our cancer hospital and its programs. We owe a great debt to the people of North Carolina for helping us construct this hospital so that we may provide first-rate care to North Carolinians who are afflicted by cancer. We have seen an incredible increase in referrals of head and neck malignancies to UNC over the last three years, increasing from 350 in 2007, to 520 in 2008, and to 733 in 2009. We are grateful to the physicians of North Carolina to have faith in us to take care of their patients. Our Head and Neck Oncology team does a wonderful job of managing patients from all over North Carolina as well as working in concert with the physicians around the state to optimize the care of the patient, whether it is here at UNC or in the community. If you would like to visit our cancer hospital, we would be glad to offer you a tour. Please feel welcome to visit us!



# 5 Questions for Laura Rosenthal, MD



Dr. Rose Eapen (left) assists Dr. Rosenthal with a microtia reconstruction.

more common congenital problems such as branchial cleft and thyroglossal duct cysts. I have also had opportunities to work with oral and plastic surgeons to better understand the surgical management of craniofacial patients.

## 4 Have you found any fun things to do in Chapel Hill in your spare time?

Chapel Hill is great! In addition to golfing here in Chapel Hill with Dr. Pillsbury, I made it down to Pinehurst. The weather has also been great for biking and running. The Carrboro 10K was fun. I have had a great time finding new coffee shops and restaurants, like Caffe Triade, Guglhupf, and Miel Bon Bons. Attending a UNC football game was awesome. I'm looking forward to going to a basketball game or two.

## 5 What are your plans after completing your fellowship?

I am very excited to be joining the faculty at Loyola University Medical Center in Chicago, my hometown. I plan to build a strong pediatric otolaryngology practice. I hope to revive their multidisciplinary craniofacial center and will also be serving on their hospital ethics committee.

## 1 How does it feel to be the first Pediatric Otolaryngology Fellow at UNC?

It is an honor to be the first fellow and to be a part of the UNC otolaryngology team. I could not have asked for more supportive faculty, including Dr. Rose, Dr. Zdanski, and Dr. Drake. It has been fun working with Dr. Rose to help shape the fellowship. I am grateful for the incredible educational opportunity and to be the first in what I'm sure will be a long line of great pediatric head and neck surgeons.

## 2 Why did you choose to specialize in Pediatric Otolaryngology?

I truly enjoy so many aspects of otolaryngology, from laryngology and otology to sinus and facial plastic surgery. Pediatric otolaryngology, while a unique specialty of its own, gives me the opportunity to continue to perform surgery in all of these areas. I have a background in bioethics and have always been interested in the unique ethical issues faced in genetic, perinatal, and pediatric medicine. Pediatric otolaryngology is the perfect combination of all of these interests. Treating children is also one of the most rewarding privileges.

## 3 How do you feel about your operative experience so far?

The operative experience entails every aspect of pediatric otolaryngology. I participated in 375 procedures for 235 patients in my first five months. Cases have included rare but important congenital problems such as laryngeal clefts and complete tracheal rings in addition to



Drs. Carlton Zdanski, Austin Rose, and Amelia Drake, out for a holiday dinner with Dr. Laura Rosenthal and her husband Michael Rosenthal. Dr. Rose is the Director of the Pediatric Otolaryngology Fellowship Program. He says, "We could not have been more fortunate than to have had Laura as our first Pediatric Otolaryngology fellow here at UNC. Having someone so talented and highly capable has contributed tremendously to the initial success of our fellowship program. She is certain to be a great success on the faculty at Loyola University in Chicago next year."

# The New Face of Head & Neck Cancer Care



The North Carolina Cancer Hospital

**T**he North Carolina Cancer Hospital, the state's only public cancer hospital, opened for business in September of 2009. It is conveniently located immediately adjacent to the Neurosciences Hospital and the Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery clinic. The lobbies of the two buildings are joined and will house a two-story Starbucks coffee shop. The hospital was truly designed and built with cancer patients and their families in mind. The natural light, gardens, courtyard, and artwork contribute to the healing atmosphere.

The new hospital represents the new face of cancer care at UNC Hospitals, and members of the Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Oncology Program are excited about what this means for their patients. Those requiring radiation and/or chemotherapy will receive their treatments in this beautiful new hospital, which is the new home of Radiation Oncology as well as the clinical home of the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The hospital contains 101 rooms for examination, treatment, consultation, and procedures, 50 inpatient oncology beds, and a new infusion center with 72 stations. It features state-of-the-art diagnostic imaging equipment, and three Linear

Accelerators for Radiation Therapy. This includes Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT), which results in better shaping the radiation dose to the shape of the cancer, and Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) to better aim the beam at the cancer. There is also a High Dose Rate Radiation Therapy room for treating localized tumors with radioactive implants.

The Multidisciplinary Head & Neck Tumor Board now meets on Friday mornings in the NC Cancer Hospital. The new conference facilities have the ability to teleconference with various sites throughout North Carolina. This capability allows the team to collaborate in real time with physicians across the state so that they can develop the best course of treatment



The weekly Multidisciplinary Head & Neck Tumor Board meeting, held in the state-of-the-art conference facility of the new NC Cancer Hospital. (Photo by Will Owens)

for each individual patient. In general, 25 to 30 patients are discussed each week, including patients from Wake Med.

The Head and Neck Surgery faculty consists of Mark Weissler, MD, FACS, Division Chief; William Shockley, MD, FACS; Carol Shores, MD, PhD, FACS, (at Wake Med); Marion Couch, MD, PhD, FACS; Adam Zanation, MD; and Trevor Hackman, MD. Dr. Hackman was hired this year. He completed his residency at the University of Pittsburgh and a fellowship in minimally invasive transoral micro surgery for cancers of the upper aerodigestive tract at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Julian Rosenman, MD, PhD, and Bhisham Chera, MD, are the radiation oncologists primarily involved in the H&N group. Dr. Chera joined us this year after completing his training at the University of Florida. David Neil Hayes, MD, MPH, and Stephen Bernard, MD, are the primary head and neck medical oncologists. Arif Sheikh, MD, and Amir Khandani, MD, provide nuclear medicine support for our patients requiring special diagnostic and therapeutic nuclear medicine studies. Janet Southerland, DDS, PhD, MPH, serves as the chief dental consultant for head and neck cancer patients requiring irradiation.

Sean Gallagher, RN, BSN MA, and Susan Hayden, RN, BSN, serve as our Nurse Navigators for head and neck cancer patients. They assist patients as they navigate through their complex treatment protocols. They work closely with patients and their families to insure that they are well informed about the multiple treatment modalities utilized in modern cancer treatment.





Members of the Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Oncology Team present at the Tumor Board meeting on December 4th: Left to right: Sue Hayden, Aimee Shea, Sean Gallagher, Adam Zanation, Neil Hayes (seated), Dale Flowers, Laura Miller, Carol Shores, Julian Rosenman, William Shockley (seated), Mark Weissler, Trevor Hackman, Mary Fleming, Ben Huang, Cynthia Smith (seated), and Bisham Chera. (Photo by Will Owens)

Laura Miller and Cynthia Smith serve as the Head and Neck Oncology Program Coordinators. They arrange for initial consultations at UNC from referring physicians and help us gather all the outside medical information on these often complex patients.

Elizabeth Sherwood, RN, MS, ANP-C, assists with psychological support through the trying period of treatment and follow-up. She is the Coordinator of Survivorship Programs and helps our patients by providing support during and after treatment as they transition from active treatment to surveillance. We offer a range of services through the Comprehensive Cancer Support Program, including a Symptom Management Clinic, which assists with follow-up of medications (i.e., anti-depressant, anti-anxiety) and emotional/mental health issues, as well as the whole range of side effects folks deal with related to surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation.

Dale Flowers, RN, MA, OCN, serves as the Clinical Trials Nurse and works with Dr. Neil Hayes and others in medical oncology to assist patients to navigate through the complexities of treatment on the wide variety of experimental protocols available. Mary Fleming, Nurse Practitioner, works primarily with Drs. Hayes and Chera to monitor patients

undergoing chemoradiation as part of their head and neck cancer therapy.

Aimee Shea, MPH, RD, CSO, LDN, our outpatient oncology dietitian, provides nutritional therapy and counseling for head and neck cancer patients who often have difficulty eating before, during, and after cancer therapy. Brian Kanapkey and Byron Kubik provide speech pathology support to

assist with speech and swallowing issues that often arise in this patient population.

For more information about this team of experts and all that the new cancer hospital has to offer, go to <http://nccancerhospital.org>. Appointments for new patients can be made by contacting Laura Miller at 919-966-9717.



The hospital's main lobby displays a "Gallery of Faces" with personal stories told by patients who are fighting cancer with hope, courage, and strength.

# What Ever Happened to.... Dr. Shu Das?

After finishing my residency in 2006, Aneesa, Justin (now 5), and I moved to Augusta, Georgia, where I completed a rhinology fellowship with Stil Kountakis at the Medical College of Georgia. Afterwards, Drs. David Terris and Kountakis invited me to join the faculty, and Aneesa and I had our second son, Alexander. We really enjoyed living in Augusta, where one of my highlights was my first visit to the National, and seeing Zach Johnson claim his first Green Jacket by outdueling Tiger. Speaking of golf, my main job as the associate residency program director was to develop our 7th competency, which was to successfully compete in the Pillsbury Classic at the Southern Section. Unfortunately, Mississippi has recently been dominant, though I suspect there may be some recruiting violations at that program...

In 2008, I was offered a “dream job” when Dr. Brad Welling informed me that The Ohio State University was developing a new Sinus and Allergy Division, and invited me to interview there to help start it. While I was reluctant to leave my friends and mentors at MCG, I felt fortunate to join a department that reminded me a lot of UNC. Drs. William Saunders and David Schuller had developed the program into one of the premier departments in the country, and Dr. Welling is a visionary chairman committed to bringing our department “from excellence to eminence.” Under Welling’s leadership, we have recently opened a 134,000 square foot free standing state-of-the-art building with a new outpatient surgery center, integrated teaching, research, and clinical space, and our faculty has grown to 32 members.

Dr. Welling paired me up with Lauren Bakaletz, one of the top bacterial researchers in respiratory epithelial disease, and I was lucky to land my first two tries at NIH funding and received a K award and an R01 supplement to try to develop a new molecular test to serve as an objective marker for a subset of chronic bacterial rhinosinusitis. The preliminary data and mentorship for my research came from my great experiences with Dr. Buchman and Dr. Senior. Dr. P was also very instrumental in my receipt of these awards and to all of them I will always be grateful. Advancing a research and clinical program has kept me busy, though recently I was fortunate



Aneesa and I enjoying a hike at Hocking Hills State Park.

to recruit Dr. Anice Sabag-Daigle, an outstanding post-doctoral fellow with a background in high-throughput genomics and proteomics to join me in the lab, and Dr. Karen Calhoun has joined us from Missouri to build a world-class allergy program. Dr. Brad Otto, a former resident at OSU who completed a two-year fellowship with BJ Ferguson at the University of Pittsburgh, has also joined us and is developing a top-notch skull base program.

Aneesa also is very happy as the Assistant Director of Sleep Medicine at OSU, despite having to admit to her fellow Wolverines that she lives in Columbus. While we both are busy as full-time academic physicians, we have followed the example of the faculty at UNC and made our family the most important priority in our lives. This summer, I received a lesson in patience as the coach of Justin’s T-ball team. Unbelievably, we ended up in a six-way tie for first place in my Division despite going winless with a record of 0-0-5. Miraculously, every game ended in a 24-24 tie, despite our huge emphasis that “Defense wins championships!”

Justin enjoys his Transformers, and Stars Wars toys, which makes me happy, but I am working on convincing him that watching NFL football fantasy stats are more important than watching Diego. Alex (age 2) now likes doing anything that his brother likes doing, and is hopefully developing a left-handed fastball.

I think the best part of my job is the chance to work with outstanding residents and outstanding faculty. Just like UNC, we are lucky to get some of the best residents available and we have a stellar program

director in Dr. Rick Forrest. It is very rewarding watching one of your residents successfully complete a challenging operation. I remember vividly Dr. P telling me how he still gets a kick out of seeing a junior resident put in their first set of tubes. I wholeheartedly agree. It is also very challenging to be a great teacher and a great clinician. I often think of Dr. Shockley’s example to guide me, and remember fondly lessons from Dr. Drake on how to inspire a family dealing with a difficult operation in their loved one, and the unending kindness that Drs. Senior, Buchman, Couch, Zdanski, and Weissler would show to their patients. In the same vein, Dr. Welling is the standard-bearer of a moral and compassionate physician, and has amassed the same type of faculty here. Several of my colleagues and friends regularly do great things for humanity both locally and throughout the world.

It is also great to see my colleagues from UNC from time to time. I enjoyed having dinner with Dr. Weissler and Brian Downs recently lamenting the direction that health care reform is taking, and as a result of Dr. Weissler’s encouragement, getting more involved in our somewhat depressing health care debate. On a happier note, I’m looking forward to hopefully playing poker again with Austin, Carlos, and the gang at our next COSM.

Overall, I can’t begin to describe how lucky and grateful I am to have received my training at Chapel Hill. It is truly a wonderful collection of some of the greatest teachers and role models in our field. I look forward to visiting often and watching the continued great success of my colleagues.



Typical Alex (2) and Justin (5) - up to no good!



# Announcements

(Just a few of the many exciting things happening in our Department)

The 2009 Best Doctors in America® database has been published. More than 200 UNC School of Medicine physicians are included. Many of these are also included in the list of Best Doctors in North Carolina in the November 2009 issue of Business North Carolina magazine. Only 3 to 5 percent of physicians in each country where Best Doctors is present are included in its database. The Best Doctors database contains the names and professional affiliations of approximately 45,000 doctors in the United States, all chosen through an exhaustive peer-review survey that asks: "If you or a loved one needed a doctor in your specialty, to whom would you refer them?" The peer review process as well as additional research conducted by Best Doctors determines selections for each list. The Best Doctors in the specialty of Otolaryngology includes Drs. Craig Buchman, Harold Pillsbury, Brent Senior, William Shockley, Mark Weissler, and Carlton Zdanski. That's 5 of the 13 Otolaryngologists listed in the Triangle area. Two of the three Pediatric Otolaryngologists in the Triangle who are on this list are here at UNC: Drs. Amelia Drake and Carlton Zdanski. Congratulations!

Three of our faculty were invited to present at the American College of Surgeons Meeting in Chicago, Illinois, on October 13, 2009. Dr. Adam Zanation gave a lecture entitled "Endoscopic Reconstruction of Large Dural Defects for Skull Base Surgery." Dr. Harold Pillsbury discussed "Workforce Issues in Otolaryngology" during a Meet the Experts Luncheon. Dr. Mark Weissler participated in a panel on "Evaluation and Management of Neck Masses: Management Pearls in the OR."

Dr. Adam Zanation was invited faculty at the North American Skull Base Society Meeting in New Orleans, October 15-18, 2009. He gave two lectures: "Open Approaches to the Anterior Cranial Fossa" and "Expanding Options for Skull Base Reconstruction."

Third year residents Drs. Maher Younes, Rupali Shah, Joshua Surowitz, and Joseph Roche attended the first Carolinas Pediatric Airway Course organized by co-directors Drs. Carlton Zdanski and David White (former UNC OHNS resident), October 15-16, 2009. Drs. Amelia Drake, Robert Buckmire, and Laura Rosenthal served as Course Instructors as well. The two-day course, hosted by the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, focused on endoscopic and open airway surgical techniques. Residents were able to utilize a live animal model, human Cadaveric specimens, and a simulation model of airway management. The hands-on surgical experience and the development of airway management skills have already proven beneficial to their training. The Course will come to Chapel Hill in the fall of 2010.



Dr. Rosenthal (right) shows MUSC resident Dr. Charlie Coffee (UNC SOM '04) some of the scarier pediatric airway problems in the controlled confines of the lab of the First Carolinas Pediatric Airway Course.

The Department has established two new awards in honor of William W. Shockley, MD, and Mark C. Weissler, MD, to be given annually to residents in Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery. The Shockley Silver Owl Award for Excellence in Teaching will be awarded to that resident who displays a sincere aptitude and excellence in teaching. The Weissler Extra Effort Award will be awarded to that resident who is noted to put forth extra effort every day. We will announce the winners in the summer issue of *Heads Up!*



Dr. Roush and her patient Mark, undergoing testing in the sound booth.

Patricia A. Roush, AuD, was promoted to Associate Professor on October 14, 2009. Dr. Roush has been the Director of Pediatric Audiology at UNC Hospitals since 2000 and faculty in the Department since 2003. She has made tremendous contributions to the field, as she continues to strive for excellence in patient services, education of AuD students, and research. Dr. Roush is frequently invited to speak at meetings at the national and international level.



Drs. Buchman, Adunka, and Fitzpatrick at the Hearing Preservation III meeting in Vienna, Austria.

Drs. Oliver Adunka, Craig Buchman, and Doug Fitzpatrick attended the Hearing Preservation III meeting in Vienna, Austria, October 15-18, 2009. The meeting was a workshop on hearing preservation during cochlear implantation and was sponsored by Med-EL, Inc. They presented a paper entitled, "Electrophysiologic Parameters Indicating Imminent Cochlear Damage: An Animal Model for Intraoperative Monitoring of Residual Hearing in EAS Surgery."

Questions, comments, or suggestions about Heads Up? Contact Elizabeth Perry, [eaperry@med.unc.edu](mailto:eaperry@med.unc.edu), or 919-260-9002.

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