A Message From Our Chairs:
The Survival of Excellence in a Sea of Change

We don’t have to tell anybody that the financial contraction facing our department, the state and nation requires change. Change comes in many forms and should only be made if it promotes both survival and excellence.

The world we live in is changing and we have to adapt. This axiom of evolution cannot be avoided, and we all need to attend closely to our activities and take responsibility for shaping our tomorrow. As your departmental leaders, we have the privilege of your trust in guiding departmental excellence, and we are asking for your help.

There is not a department at MUSC more psychologically prepared than ours to face the financial challenges that continue to emerge. With your help, over the last 5 years, we created a new department where research and clinical activities have an equal voice in guiding our future. This is a new paradigm for MUSC and we have all had to be inventive and adaptable to new and changing circumstances in order to realize this vision. As was outlined in our last letter, through all of our extraordinary effort and patience, we have achieved undeniable success across the board in education, patient care and research.

Unfortunately, success is not a vaccine against change. In fact, success is sustained by change. So, we come to you again, and ask you to help us through another period of robust change. This time the engine for change is coming less from within, and more from outside forces. Accordingly, we must internalize these outside forces as our own, and embrace the changes necessary not just to survive, but to excel. Thus, we cannot act simply from a Darwinian sense of ‘survival of the fittest’, but our decisions must embody a more complex vision incorporating quality and distinction. This is a group effort, and we need to hear your insights, and ask for your patience and hard work in helping fashion a future marked by achievement beyond expectation.
Welcome New Employees!!!

Our new additions to Research:
- Post Doc: Noushin Abadi
- Research Specialist I: Ashley Gantt
- Research Specialist II: Thressa Smith
- Student Employee: Savannah Bandurraga
- Lab Specialist: Greg Hogate
- Administrative Assistant: Ashlee Brown

Neurosurgery:
- Our new additions to Neurosurgery:
  - Catherine Kelso, PA — working with Dr. Ellegala
  - Sarah Gay, APRN — working in the NSICU

Pediatric Neurology Staff:
- Jennifer Teeters, NP — worked in Pediatric Neurology under Dr. Kinsman

Research Staff:
- Warchal Faison -- Geriatric Fellow
- Mohammad Khan -- Postdoc
- Roberto Melendez -- Research Assistant Professor

Goodbye and Good Luck!!!

Neurosurgery Staff
- Dr. Byron Bailey — We are saddened to bid farewell to Dr. Byron Bailey, M.D. Dr. Bailey has been on staff with Neurosurgery at MUSC since the completion of his residency in 1990. He has been a superb mentor for many residents in Neurosurgery and maintained an unwavering standard in the OR. We wish him the best in all of his future endeavors.
- Treva Simpson, Administrative Coordinator — Treva worked for Neurosurgery for 11 years and prior to working for Dr. Patel, she worked for the former Chairman, Dr. Stephen Haines. We thank Treva for all her hard work and commitment. She will be missed!

Pediatric Neurology Staff
- Jennifer Teeters, NP — worked in Pediatric Neurology under Dr. Kinsman

Research Staff
- Warchal Faison -- Geriatric Fellow
- Mohammad Khan -- Postdoc
- Roberto Melendez -- Research Assistant Professor

What’s Happening?!

They Got Married!!!
Congratulations to Lourdes Nogueira, a Lab Specialist for Dr. Lavin. She married William Rowland on October 24th, 2008.

It’s A Girl!!!
Congratulations to Prakasam Annamalai, our Research Assistant Professor, and his wife Kalaivani on the birth of their daughter! She was born on October 29, 2008.
The Neurosciences Holiday Party of 2008!!!

It is safe to say that those of us who missed this year’s Holiday Party missed out! After a brief scare of almost having to cancel this year’s Holiday Party due to MUSC’s financial crunch, Dr. Patel managed to find a way to throw a low budget yet amazingly rockin’ Holiday Party! With the help of monetary donations from our physicians and holiday dessert donations from our administrative staff, employee morale and Holiday spirit were definitely lifted on December 7, 2008! This year’s party was held in the Carriage House at Magnolia Plantation, where delicious pastas, soups, dips and desserts were served alongside the oyster roast on the back patio. In between enjoying the delicious food and company, most of us spent our time on the dance floor, thanks to the tunes provided by the band, ‘The Fabulous Kays.’ Our amazingly resilient department took this challenge as an opportunity to remind us of what can be accomplished when we all band together!

*Special Thanks: To Amanda Reasoner for planning and organizing this year’s Holiday Party!

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[Images of people and scenes from the party]
2008 Foster Children’s Holiday Drive!!!

This past holiday season, the Department of Neurosciences participated in the 2008 Annual Foster Children’s Holiday Drive. The entire Department was asked to participate and we received enough donations to sponsor a total of six foster children. In addition to donations from within the department, we also received a donation from an outside James Island family!

We were given a “wish list” of eight items for each child and each received most everything requested, in addition to three outfits of clothing per child. We would like to thank Treva Simpson, who coordinated the effort for Neurology and Neurosurgery and Stephanie Willingham, who coordinated the effort in Physiology.

Special thanks to those of you who contributed donations and to those who helped with the shopping and the wrapping of the items. This was such a big, but rewarding project that it will likely become a yearly tradition!

*Note: To the right is a thank you note to our department from a very grateful foster parent. What a great reminder to us all of what the Holiday season is all about!!!

Charleston Area Foster Children
Charleston County Department of Social Services
3346 Rivers Avenue
Charleston, SC 29405

December 30, 2008

Dear Treva and our Wonderful Friends in Neurosurgery,

I would like to personally thank you and your coworkers for sponsoring foster children this Christmas. As a foster parent I can tell you that these special children are so happy and grateful for everything. I am sure that on Christmas morning the children who received your gifts were thrilled with the generous and thoughtful presents from “Santa.”

During the holidays it is easy to get caught up in the festivities, so it is kind of you to remember to help others, especially these children who have been through so much already. I know this year has been difficult financially for most people, and to have you and your coworkers take into consideration the needs of others is so renewing to the Christmas Spirit.

Thank you again for all your hard work in providing these children with a Merry Christmas and may you have a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Sincerely,
Marian “Mellie” Klinger
Foster Parent
Congratulations!!

*John England, M.D. - MUSC Neurology residency, Class of 1984:*
After his residency in neurology at MUSC, Dr. England completed a fellowship in neuromuscular disease at the University of Pennsylvania.

*We would like to congratulate him on being appointed Chair in the Department of Neurology at LSU Health Sciences Center, New Orleans in July 2008.

*Daniel Truong, M.D. - MUSC Neurology residency Class of 1985:*
Dr. Truong completed fellowships in movement disorders at the Neurological Institute, Columbia University in 1987 and at National Hospital for Neurological Disease (Queen's Square), London in 1988. Dr. Truong is currently director of the Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorder Institute in Long Beach, CA.

*Dr. Truong is also the editor of the soon to be published book:*
*The book is expected to be published in March 2009.*

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**Grant Awards Received!!!**

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**Employee of the Quarter is.... Yolanda Elbert!!!**

We congratulate Yolanda and thank her for setting such an outstanding example of MUSC Excellence! She will receive $200 in recognition of her exceptional skills in problem solving and customer service.

Here is the nomination for Yolanda Elbert, entered by a grateful Dr. Stickler:

Yolanda has done a tremendous job assisting in the creation and management of templates for the neuromuscular service. She is always quick to assist when problems occur and has helped accommodate patient and physician requests for sooner or changes in appointments. I have had many patients comment on how helpful she has been. Yolanda always demonstrates the greatest level of respect for the needs of our patients and is the ultimate team player.

*Reminder: Now is the time to nominate your co-workers for the next Employee of the Quarter!!!

The last day to nominate will be April 8, 2009. [http://neurosciences.musc.edu/demo/]