JOANN BODURTHA RECOGNIZED WITH OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Joann N. Bodurtha, MD, MPH professor of human and molecular genetics in the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine and director of the Virginia Leadership in Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities program, has been awarded the 2009 Outstanding Achievement Award by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities for excellence in teaching, scholarship and serving the community at-large. Bodurtha was recognized for her significant contributions to the association and the field of disabilities. Throughout her career, Bodurtha has worked to form communities more welcoming to persons and families with disabilities. In 1990 she helped launch the Masters in Genetic Counseling program at VCU, and in 1995, played a key role in establishing the Virginia Leadership in Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, or Va-LEND, program. For full article, visit: http://www.news.vcu.edu/news/VCU_School_of_Medicine_professor_recognized_with_Outstanding

JUDY BRADFORD RECEIVES HONOR

Dr. Judith Bradford, IWH Director of Community Engaged Research, will receive the "Chairs Award" (the highest honor) at the Mautner Project’s 20th Anniversary Gala at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. on March 20. The Mautner Project is the National Lesbian Health Organization, committed to improving the health of women who partner with women including lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals, through direct and support services, education and advocacy.

SUSAN KORNSTEIN WILL BE HONORED AT AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION MEETING

Eli Lilly Welcome Back Awards recognize outstanding achievements in the fight against depression and the stigma that accompanies it. Dr. Kornstein will be recognized in the area of Psychiatry, for a psychiatrist who transcends the profession through his or her work and makes a significant impact on the field. She will receive $10,000 to be donated to the non-profit organization of her choice. The award will be given at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in New Orleans in May.
VCU social work professor urges caution in providing humanitarian help to Haiti’s youngest earthquake survivors

Some of Haiti’s youngest earthquake survivors are at great risk for being permanently separated from their families, according to Karen Rotabi, Ph.D., assistant professor, VCU School of Social Work. Rotabi said a child originally thought to be orphaned by the earthquake may later be returned to family members after parents or relatives are located. But if the child is quickly removed from the country — for foster care or adoption — the chance of a reunion with family members is greatly reduced.

To read the complete story, visit http://www.news.vcu.edu/experts/ontopic/Haiti/VCU_social_work_professor_urges_cauti on_in_providing_humanitarian

Janett Forte and Dr Karen Rotabi presented on “Beyond Study Abroad: Human Rights Delegation for Service Learning” at the VCU Colonial Academic Alliance Global Education Conference. The conference aimed to improve learning outcomes in international education by increasing student engagement, encouraging cooperation among international educators and promoting awareness of the important contributions of international education both within and beyond the participating institutions. The Feb. 18 and 19 conference included sessions on education abroad, international student services, faculty development, international admissions and English as a second language instruction. To read complete story, visit http://www.news.vcu.edu/news/VCU_hosts_Colonial_Academic_Alliance_global_educatio n_conference

The 36th Annual Meeting of the North American Society for Psychosocial Obstetrics and Gynecology (NASPOG) was held on February 10-13, 2010 at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond, Virginia. Dr. Susan Kornstein, MD, serves as the current president of NASPOG. Presenters included nationally and internationally known Obstetricians, Gynecologists, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Behavioral Scientists, Nurses and Social Workers. The annual meeting of NASPOG provided a unique forum for interaction among leading Women’s Mental Health clinicians, researchers, and educators to discuss and present the latest advancements impacting the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of Women’s Mental Health Disorders and Healthcare. It was designed to inform participants of the latest developments and findings in psychosocial women’s health research. Topics focused on research in the areas of: Ethical Considerations for Pregnancy, Innovations in Perinatal Interventions, Screening for Perinatal Depression, Diversity Issues in Reproductive Health, Psychiatric Genetics, Substance Abuse, Intimate Partner Abuse, Female Sexual Dysfunction, and Pelvic Floor Disorders. In addition, research posters were presented from members all over the country and Canada.

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IWH Website Re-Design
The Institute for Women’s Health is launching a newly designed website soon. We added some pages, improved the navigation and streamlined content. Please visit the new site and let us know what you think. www.womenshealth.vcu.edu
The Institute for Women’s Health has compiled our **2008-09 Highlights Report**. For a copy, visit our website or contact us for a hard copy. [www.womenshealth.vcu.edu](http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu)

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**VCU COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**CARING TO ACT calendar**
The Caring to Act Calendar provides opportunities for the VCU community to participate in community service projects in the Richmond region in the spirit that through doing we grow as contributing citizens. Each year the Council of Community Engagement identifies projects that address a range of needs in our community. Each project is designed and led by VCU units and community partners and is open to students, staff, faculty, and alumni participation. In addition, educational opportunities are linked to the events to broaden our understanding of the related issues and to explore our roles as citizens in the Richmond region. Individuals and groups are encouraged to review the list of projects and to register. Projects can be nominated for inclusion on the Caring to Act Calendar by submitting a nomination form to the Division of Community Engagement. For more information visit: [www.community.vcu.edu/solutions/cce/caring.html](http://www.community.vcu.edu/solutions/cce/caring.html)

**RESEARCH IN WOMEN’S HEALTH**

**Community-Based Participatory Research Seed-Grant Program Progress**
Connecting researchers to the greater Richmond Community is an important aspect of the research that the Institute supports. This past year, our second round of Community-Based Participatory Research Issues explored included the connection between substance misuse/abuse and exercise, perceptions of the importance of cervical cancer screening, and the possible genetic determinants of dental caries (cavities) in minority children. We are excited about the work that these innovative researchers have been able to accomplish with the active participation of our community partners. Our Seed Grantees include:

**Aripita Aggarwal, MD.** Project: Perception of Cervical Cancer Screening Post HPV Vaccination—Impact of new guidelines. *Community Partner:* Rubicon, Inc

**Tegwyn Brickhouse, DSS.** Project: Perinatal Influences on the Incidence of Early Childhood Caries in Richmond Healthy Start Infants. *Community Partner:* Richmond Healthy Start

**Pamela Dillon, PhD.** Project: An Analysis of Exercise and Nutrition Profiles in a Community Sample of Women and Men with Substance Use Disorders. *Community Partner:* Substance Abuse & Addiction Recovery Alliance of Virginia

**Leila Islam.** Project: Motivational Incentives to Increase Exercise Compliance in Cocaine-Dependent Women. *Community Partner:* Rubicon, Inc

**Jo Robins, PhD, RN.** Project: Exploring the Feasibility and Acceptability of a Novel Tai Chi Program for Stress Management in Women. *Community Partner:* Neighborhood Resource Center in Fulton Hill
The Institute is in the process of assessing the impact of this 2009 round of seed grants along with the first round of seed grants funded in 2007. We hope to be able to report on these findings in the next newsletter.

Providing leadership in women’s health includes facilitating research that is linked to the needs, concerns, and questions of our community. The Institute is committed to encourage and support community-university research partnerships. For more information about creating these research partnerships, or if you have a research question for which you need a community or university partner, please contact Monica Leisey at Leiseymr@vcu.edu or call at 827-2241.

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**Women’s Health Research Day – April 7, 2010.** The **Sixth Annual VCU Women’s Health Research Day**, hosted by the VCU Institute for Women’s Health. A celebration and promotion of research activities in Women’s Health at VCU, the event is scheduled for Wednesday, **April 7, 2010** from **1:00 to 4:30** pm at the Medical Sciences Building on the MCV Campus. This year’s event will focus on the new era in NIH funding in multidisciplinary and collaborative women’s health research. The day includes current and up-to-date information from NIH, examples of interdisciplinary women’s health research currently being conducted at VCU, and information about resources available at VCU for investigators. In addition, we will have our annual poster session and the Elizabeth Ann Fries Young Investigator Award and our new Building Interdisciplinary Bridges in Women’s Health Research Award. All VCU faculty, students, staff, and community members with an interest in innovative research in women’s health are welcome and encouraged to attend. Come and meet colleagues and collaborators.

2010 Women’s Health Research Day Co-Chairs are:
**Elizabeth McGee,** MD, Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
**David A. Gewirtz,** PhD, Professor of Pharmacology and Toxicology

Additional information is posted at: [www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/research/whrd.html](http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/research/whrd.html)

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**Research Grant Development Groups**
Capitalizing on the interest of VCU researchers to work across disciplines in the area of women’s health, the Institute has been developing research grant development focused on areas of interest across the University. To date, there are 3 active groups:

- Research & Pregnancy
- HIV/AIDS & Mental Health
- Global Women’s Health

Three additional groups are in development. Pulling together researchers across the University interested in research on a particular topic will enable the Institute’s ability to facilitate what the National Institute of Health, the major federal funder of health research, refers to as translational research. **Translational research** is the active application of knowledge learned in controlled research projects to the ‘real world’ of women’s health. The linking of the laboratory ‘bench’ to the ‘bedside’ of real women is an exciting prospect for the Institute.
Lisa McGee joining IWH as the Director of Translational Research
The Institute is proud to announce that Dr. Elizabeth McGee has agreed to join the Institute as our Director of Translational Research. This new position was developed to enhance the Institute's ability to build and support translational women's health research, providing us with a valuable link to basic and clinical women's health researchers, and Dr. McGee is uniquely qualified to lead this effort. She is currently spearheading the research development group on pregnancy and is working on two interdisciplinary grant submissions with IWH.

Focus on BIRCWH- Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health was developed to promote the career development of independent researchers working on women's health issues by pairing scholars with senior investigators in a mentored, interdisciplinary scientific environment. For more information, visit the School of Medicine at http://www.medschool.vcu.edu/research/bircwh/index.html

Our current BIRCWH scholars:
Aylin Rizki, PhD - Department of Radiation Oncology
BIRCWH research project: exploring the interactions between extracellular matrix (ECM) signaling and maintenance of genome stability, as these relate to breast cancer progression and radiation therapy

Kazuaki Takabe, MD., PhD -Surgical Oncology, VCU Massey Cancer Center
BIRCWH research project: exploring the molecular and cellular mechanisms of the novel lipid mediator, sphingosine-1-phosphate in the regulation of cell growth, motility, prevention of apoptosis, angiogenesis and its role in breast cancer.

Amelia Grover, PhD – Division of Surgical Oncology
BIRCWH research project examines the modifications that can silence gene expression and ways to prevent these in order to prevent the development of cancer.

GLOBAL WOMEN’S HEALTH

Guatemalan Human Rights Advocate Speaks on Femicide. The Institute was a sponsor of the Spring 2010 Speakers Tour: Stop Femicide in Guatemala which featured Norma Cruz, cofounder and director of the Survivor’s Foundation in Guatemala City. Ms Cruz is an international recognized advocate and activist for women who are victims of domestic and sexual violence, human trafficking and illegal adoptions. She is one of eight women worldwide to receive the “Women of Courage” award from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2009. Her work was born out of her personal struggle and has grown to provide legal, psychosocial, physical and political support for women survivors in a country where violence against women is prevalent and tolerated. The VCU event took place on March 2, 2010 at the Pace Center.
**INTERNATIONAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT INTRODUCED** in the Senate and the House of Representatives. The bi-partisan bill, which also was introduced in the House and the Senate during the last Congress, has been reintroduced by Senators Kerry (D-MA), Boxer (D-CA), Snowe (R-ME) and Collins (R-ME), and by Representatives Delahunt (D-MA), Poe (R-TX), and Schakowsky (D-IL). We now have a new opportunity to build support for I-VAWA and make a difference in millions of women’s lives. Violence against women is a human rights violation and a worldwide pandemic - **approximately one out of every three women worldwide has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime.** I-VAWA supports innovative approaches to ending violence against women globally by promoting services for survivors, holding perpetrators accountable and challenging public attitudes that condone such violence. Show your support for Senators Kerry, Boxer, Snowe and Collins and Representatives Delahunt, Poe, and Schakowsky’s commitment to women’s rights by urging your Senator and/or Representative to co-sponsor the *International Violence Against Women Act.*

**TAKE A MOMENT AND TAKE ACTION ..... click on link or paste into your browser**

http://capwiz.com/fvpf/issues/alert/?alertid=14591456&PROCESS=Take+Action

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**VCU representatives brief White House on violence against women in Guatemala.** A delegation that included two faculty members, including Janett Forte, IWH program Director and Karen Rotabi, School of Social Work, a student and an alumna from Virginia Commonwealth University visited the White House to present a briefing on violence against women in Guatemala. The briefing featured testimony collected by the group during a visit to the country in August as delegates with the Guatemala Human Rights Commission. For complete article, visit: [http://www.news.vcu.edu/news/VCU_representatives_brief_White_House_on_violence_against_women](http://www.news.vcu.edu/news/VCU_representatives_brief_White_House_on_violence_against_women)

**Congo/Women: Portraits of War** - April 8-30, 2010 at the Virginia Holocaust Museum IWH is a sponsor of a program at the Virginia Holocaust Museum for **Genocide Prevention Month,** featuring speakers from the Enough Project, Save Darfur, Genocide Watch, and the United States Holocaust Museum’s Committee on Conscience. The Virginia Holocaust Museum was founded in 1997 to educate future generations on the dangers of intolerance. As part of that mission, the Museum is constantly working to bring new and innovative programs to the Richmond community. This year’s program will focus on the violence projected towards women and children in conflict areas. Congo/Women: Portraits of War is an international exhibit that raises awareness of the widespread violence facing citizens of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Visit the website, [www.congo/women.org](http://www.congo/women.org), to view the photographs and personal stories that will be on display. Co-directed by Art Works Project and Columbia University, the exhibit traveled to numerous locations including the James Cohen Gallery in New York City, The Russell Senate Office Building Rotunda in Washington DC, and early next spring will show at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva. The traveling exhibits will premier in Richmond in April 2010. The exhibit is free and open to the public. For more information contact: Laura Murphy at the Virginia Holocaust Museum, 2000 E. Cary Street, Richmond, VA 23223, 804.257.5400 x223 lmurphy@va-holocaust.com Or visit: [www.va-holocaust.com](http://www.va-holocaust.com)
**Style Weekly – Domestic Violence Insert**
Area domestic and sexual violence service providers and came together again to sponsor the annual Richmond Area *Style Weekly* – ‘Love Shouldn’t Hurt’ domestic violence awareness insert. It was in the February 10, 2010 issue. You can view the insert on our website under announcements:  [www.womenshealth.vcu.edu](http://www.womenshealth.vcu.edu)

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Forum on the Disaster in Haiti: Early Reflections on Humanitarian Assistance and Beyond.** Humanitarian relief and social workers will speak about the current situation in Haiti before and after the January 2010 earthquake. Special attention will be given to the issues of protection to vulnerable populations, particularly children, and planning for reconstruction in the midst of the emergency response. March 24, 2010, 3:30 PM, VCU School of Engineering, West Hall, Ethyl Auditorium, 601 West Main Street. For more information, contact Carmen Monico, monicocc@vcu.edu.

**Women’s Health 2010: The 18th Annual Congress - March 26-28, 2010**
**Washington, DC.** *We have outgrown our space in Williamsburg!* Under the leadership of the VCU Institute for Women’s Health, *Journal of Women’s Health*, and the National Cancer Institute, in collaboration with the American Medical Women’s Association, we are excited to announce that our 2010 meeting will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott. The Congress will be preceded by a half-day pre-meeting symposium on Thursday, March 25 on health policy followed by a visit to The Hill, under the leadership of The American Medical Women’s Association. Watch for further developments, or to register visit the website:  [www.bioconferences.com/wh](http://www.bioconferences.com/wh)

**Women’s Health Virginia (WHV)**
Attend the WHV Annual Conference *From TV to Twitter: Media’s Links to Healthy & Risky Behaviors* on Friday, June 11 in Charlottesville. National and Virginia experts will look at the media to which females are exposed from early childhood through young adulthood; the positive and negative impacts at the different stages, including effects on physical and mental health and development and on various health behaviors; and ways in which negative effects can be mitigated and positive behaviors encouraged (including using media for this purpose and media literacy.) You can register now at  [www.womenshealthvirginia.org/pages/education.htm](http://www.womenshealthvirginia.org/pages/education.htm). The cost is $75, $40 for students. Register before March 15 and save $10 off the regular full price registration!
UPCOMING CLASSES AT VCU

Nutrition Classes
Learn how to make informed food choices by developing sound eating and physical activity habits from our registered dietitian. Individual nutrition counseling is also available.

- Diabetic Dining Made Easy
- Lean 'N Easy
- Food & Fitness Weight Loss Seminars

To register for any of these classes, call 804-560-8955. If you have any questions, contact Mary-Jo Sawyer, RD, class instructor, call 327-8830 or email msawyer@mcvh-vcu.edu

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Family Life Education
Classes include Healthy Beginnings Tour, Breastfeeding Class, Car Seat Safety, Childbirth Preparation, Infant CPR, and Newborn Parenting. All classes are for adults only. To register or for more information, call 828-4409.

New Daddy Boot Camp (Men only) Workshop for men, taught by men, dealing with all the new experiences for first-time fathers, including care for the new baby, care for the new mom, finances, diapering and conflicting advice. 3 hour class. VCU Women’s Health Center 9000 Stony Pt. Parkway, $25 To register, call 804-288-3431

Centering Pregnancy Program: A Model for Prenatal Care
Centering Pregnancy groups are made up of 10 to 12 women who will all deliver babies around the same time. The groups include discussion about pregnancy and how to care for the new baby, and in each session, moms will have some private time with a midwife, nurse, or doctor. Groups are available at the Stony Point Women’s Health Center. Contact Ellen Coffin at 628-3042 for more information

WOMEN’S HEALTH CLINICAL TRIALS & STUDIES AT VCU

Clinical Trials at VCU
Virginia Commonwealth University conducts research studies and clinical trials in various divisions throughout the Medical Center.

Find clinical trials at VCU
Find out what clinical research is going on at VCU and VCU Medical Center. All studies on this site have been approved by the VCU Institutional Review Board. New studies are added often, so if you don’t find one that suits you or a loved one, check back again.

www.clinicaltrials.vcu.edu
STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

Volunteers Needed For NIH Study on Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder
Dr. Susan G. Kornstein is conducting a research study of an investigational medication for Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder or PMDD, a severe form of PMS. All research care is provided at no charge. For more information on of this study, please call the VCU Mood Disorders Institute at 804-828-5639, or e-mail mdi@vcu.edu. Or visit www.mood.vcu.edu

Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder.
Dr. Susan G. Kornstein is conducting a research study using an investigational medication vs. placebo for post-menopausal women who have Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder. For more information on of this study, please call the VCU Mood Disorders Institute at 804-828-5639, or e-mail mdi@vcu.edu. Or visit www.mood.vcu.edu

Women With Fibromyalgia Sought for Research Study
If you are female, age 18 or over, and have a confirmed diagnosis of fibromyalgia, you may be eligible to participate in a ten-week research study to evaluate the effects of guided imagery on stress, immunity and the management of symptoms associated with fibromyalgia. At each study visit (first visit; 6 week; 10 week), participants will be asked to complete sets of questionnaires and have one small tube of blood drawn. Participants assigned by chance (randomized) to the intervention group will be asked to use a guided imagery CD daily for 10 weeks. Free Parking or Bus Pass. $75 upon completion of study For more information contact: Victoria Menzies (804) 628-8262 Email: vsmenzies@vcu.edu

ABOUT US

The Institute for Women’s Health was established in 1999 to promote standards of excellence in women’s health care, advance cutting-edge research, foster community engagement and collaboration, enhance women’s leadership and provide professional education toward the goal of improving the health of women across the lifespan. For more information, please call (804) 827-1200 or visit www.womenshealth.vcu.edu

Susan G. Kornstein, MD, Executive Director * Janett Forte, MSW, Program Director
Monica Leisey, PhD, Coordinator for Research

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SHARE YOUR NEWS AND EVENTS – SUBMIT ITEMS TO IWH – E- NEWS
Contact: Janett Forte at 804-827-1200 or jforte@vcu.edu