



NIGHT CAP: Dr. Da-Shih Hu, a DMS psychiatrist, hopped into his pj's right after work this summer. But not because he was tired. Well, maybe he was—he capped off his workdays by playing the lead in North Country Community Theatre's production of *The Pajama Game!*

Two students get to spend a year in "mecca"

No, not the Mecca of Islam, but the mecca of biomedical research—the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Its sprawling Bethesda, Md., campus represents the cutting edge of laboratory science in the U.S. Thanks to fellowships from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI), two Dartmouth medical students are spending a year there.

Andrea Russo '08 and Abigail Rao '09 joined 40 other medical and dental students—selected in a highly competitive national process—as 2007 HHMI-NIH Research Scholars. The purpose of the fellowships is to encourage future physician-scientists to make research a part of their careers and to help bridge the gap between scientific discoveries and clinical care.

Tumor: Neither student is a stranger to research. Russo, a Massachusetts native, majored in molecular biology and biochemistry and minored in Spanish at Middlebury. She spent a year in a molecular genetics lab at Boston University working out the methylation status of various tumor suppressor genes and their role in lung cancer.

Rao had spent her entire life in Madison, Wis., before coming to DMS. She was accepted to the University of Wisconsin Medical School straight out of high school, on the condition that she attend UW-Madison as an undergraduate. As a neurobiology major there, she studied neural

stem cells and adult neurogenesis. But as graduation neared, she decided to go someplace new for medical school.

Both are following up on their early interests, they explained by e-mail from Bethesda.

"I want to continue asking those questions through research."

Wrote Russo: "I have always been interested in cancer, both

the science behind it and its clinical implications. In oncology, where many of your patients cannot be cured, I feel that research is a rewarding way to give back to those . . . you can no longer help. I wanted to get involved . . . now, before the de-



Russo, top, and Rao, bottom, are spending this year in Bethesda, Md.

mands of residency. . . . And where better to do it than the NIH, where you have nearly limitless resources and world-renowned scientists?"

And Rao wanted to "prepare . . . for doing basic neuroscience research as a practicing neurosurgeon. During college, I began thinking about some of the exciting questions underlying neuroscience research, many of which ask what makes the brain so unique in comparison with the rest of the body? I want to continue asking those questions through research."

Year: As to what they are doing this year, Russo is studying "the various effects of new drugs on radio-sensitivity by targeting the molecular pathways that are involved in radiation-induced cell damage. The NIH is the ideal institution in which to carry out such studies because the lab work can easily be translated into clinical trials, which is the hope [for the] molecule that I'll be working on."

Rao is injecting mice with a virus that targets a potassium channel in their hippocampal neurons. "With a certain amount of patience, optimism, and luck, I will then record the electrical signals from these neurons whose potassium channels and patterns of synaptic signaling we have disrupted. We hope this will elucidate the molecular and electrical components underlying synaptic plasticity in neurons."

Lure: Who knows—it's possible the lure of mecca may draw one or both back to Bethesda for an eventual career there.

ROGER P. SMITH, Ph.D.

Worthy of note: Honors, awards, appointments, etc.

Charles Barlowe, Ph.D., a professor of biochemistry (top photo), and **Ronald Taylor**, Ph.D., a professor of microbiology and immunology (bottom photo), both received MERIT awards from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). MERIT stands



for Method to Extend Research in Time. The awards, based on "superior competence and outstanding productivity," are designed to spur scientific creativity with long-term, stable funding. Barlowe studies intracellular transport and Taylor the bacterium *V. cholerae*.

Robert Gougelet, M.D., an assistant professor of medicine, was appointed to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Advisory Council.

Lori Alvord, M.D., an assistant professor of surgery and associate dean of student and multicultural affairs, was appointed to the National Advisory Council of the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, a compo-



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nent of the National Institutes of Health.

Dale Collins, M.D., an associate professor of surgery, was named a fellow of the Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine program.

Yolanda Sanchez, Ph.D., an associate professor of pharmacology and toxicology, was appointed a member of the Molecular Genetics Study Section of the National Institutes of Health's Center for Scientific Review.

Elaine Frank, director of the Injury Prevention Program at the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth, was named New Hampshire Public Citizen of the Year by the New Hampshire Pediatric Society, for her leadership in such initiatives as the Buckle Up New Hampshire Coalition, the New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition, and the Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly.



Heidi Keup and **Kandice Nielson**, DMS Year 4s, received John Gibbons Medical Student Awards to attend the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists District I Annual Meeting.

Karen Liby, Ph.D., a research fellow in pharmacology, was presented with the Wilson S. Stone Memorial Award by M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Texas.

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center was included among the nation's top hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report*. The magazine evaluated 5,462 hospitals, and only 173—just over 3%—made the top 50. DHMC was among the top 50 in three of 16 specialties—cancer care, digestive disorders, and gynecology.

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center received a Governor's Council Outstanding Achievement Award for Physical Activity and Health and the Distinguished Corporate Citizen Award from the Daniel Webster Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

DHMC Media Services received a bronze medal in the 27th Annual Telly Awards, for a video about DHMC's fertility medicine program.

Erratum: An article in the Summer issue of DARTMOUTH MEDICINE on student-initiated electives stated that an elective on medical anthropology included a lecture by a Tibetan physician; the class was listed on the syllabus but did not actually happen. We apologize for . . . well, not doing our homework. ■

PARTNERS FOR LIFE



Loren

Shortly after his wife Renetta's death, Loren began searching for the perfect way to honor her memory. It was at this time that, in what he calls "a wonderful case of serendipity," he received a charitable gift annuity brochure in the mail from DHMC's Office of Gift Planning. "It seemed like a perfect opportunity to memorialize her," notes the Dartmouth College alumnus.

By establishing a charitable gift annuity, Loren created a loving memorial to Renetta

that will ultimately benefit research at DHMC. He will also receive a generous income tax deduction and a fixed, guaranteed income for life. "Because of my advanced age," the octogenarian observes, "this is my opportunity for giving with vision."

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY FEATURES

- guaranteed fixed income for life
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SAMPLE RATES

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70	6.5%
75	7.1%
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85	9.5%
89+	11.0%

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