

## SPECIAL EDITION

# VPHA Williams Tapped as GW's New Provost

### *Return of Provost Position Key to Strategic Re-Organization*

GW President Stephen Joel Trachtenberg has announced the appointment of John F. Williams, MD, EdD, vice president for Health Affairs (VPHA) and dean of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), to the position of University Provost. In this new capacity, Dr. Williams will be a spokesman for the University and will



*"I have a senior staff that is as good as any, if not better than any in the United States, and that's what makes the time available for me to go ahead and do some other things for the University."*

president for Communications and the vice president for Governmental, International and Corporate Affairs.

"It's wonderful to have you as a colleague and friend," said President Trachtenberg in a letter notifying Dr. Williams of the appointment. "I believe this new title and responsibility will help GW and will help me as I mature as President."

President Trachtenberg has said his activities, including meeting with the District of Columbia and with alumni, are requiring more and more time away from campus. The time is right, he said in his letter to Dr. Williams, for a provost to come on board.

"I really look at this as a kind of fine tuning of the organizational structure," said Dr. Williams of his appointment. "My goal is to optimize the resources we already have, which is a campus full



*"Steve Trachtenberg has been a mentor to hundreds of people throughout his career. He sees his vice presidents who have been working with him for a number of years increasing the number of responsibilities in their portfolios."*



*"We have a lot of great people on all sides of I Street with a vast array of resources."*

stand in for President Trachtenberg in his absence.

Dr. Williams will continue to serve as vice president for Health Affairs and SMHS dean, and his office will remain on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of Ross Hall.

"I am honored to take on these new responsibilities," said Dr. Williams in an interview. "I look forward to the challenges ahead and to continuing to do my part in taking GW to the next level."

Although GW has had provosts in the past, the position had not been active for years. Dr. Williams will begin by serving a three-year term. His new portfolio will include oversight of the offices of the vice



*"When the president is not in town, the day-to-day running of the administrative apparatus of the University will move forward."*

of accomplished and dedicated professionals."

The step comes as part of a strategic reorganization at the highest levels of University leadership. In addition to Dr. Williams's appointment as provost, President Trachtenberg announced that Vice President for Academic Affairs Donald R. Lehman and Vice President and Treasurer Louis H. Katz will each gain the title of Executive

### *Inside this issue*

- A Passage Through Time .... 2
- Lessons in Bioterror's *Clear and Present Dangers* ..... 3
- Puchalski Appointed to National Panel ..... 3
- Goldstein Honored ..... 4

*A passage through time ...***John F. Williams, MD, EdD**

Professor of anesthesiology and of health services management and policy

2003-Appointed University Provost

2002-The Republic of Panama bestows the Order of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa on Dr. Williams, making him a Knight Commander

2002-Received a commendation from The United States Public Health Service Commissioned Officers Foundation "For Lifelong Commitment to Health in the United States"

2001-2002-Received commendation from GW students for "Continued Dedication"

1999-Appointed Dean of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences

1997-Appointed as vice president for Health Affairs (VPHA) and executive dean

1996-Received a doctorate of education from The George Washington University

1996-Named to the Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars

1996-97-Served as medical director of George Washington University Hospital

1993-97-Served as associate vice president for graduate medical education at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Served as associate dean for admissions and assistant dean for admissions at the medical school

1990-Received the Distinguished Alumni Award for Outstanding Contributions to Community and Profession from Boston University

1990-Received the People's Medal from the People's Republic of China for "Medical Contributions to the People of China"

1988-Named the Outstanding Clinical Teacher of the Year by the American Medical Student Association

1979-Earned a doctorate of medicine from The George Washington University

1975-Received a master's of public health from Yale University

1973-Earned a master of science at the London School of Economics and Political Science

1970-Earned a Bachelor of Arts in education at Boston University

**Williams Named Provost***Continued from page 1*

Vice President. And Vice President for Student and Academic Support Services Robert A. Chernak will become Senior Vice President.

Dr. Williams has served as vice president for Health Affairs since November 1997. He received his academic appointment as Dean of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences in August of 1999 after serving as executive dean.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Following are excerpts from an interview with Dr. Williams about his new appointment as University Provost.*

"A key dynamic of the Medical Center is that I have a first-rate team of colleagues. Jim Scott does a phenomenal job with the School of Medicine, Richard Southby in the School of Public Health. I have a senior staff that is as good as any, if not better than any in the United States, and that's what makes the time available for me to go ahead and do some other things for the University."

\*\*\*\*\*

"There are two kinds of provosts. There's the academic provost—who I will not be—who is responsible for all of the academics in the University, and there are administrative provosts and there are models like this all over the country. In fact, there are some deans of schools of medicine who carry the titles dean and provost or dean and chancellor. This is an administrative title. When the president is not in town, the

day-to-day running of the administrative apparatus of the University will move forward. Now that the president can rely on one person to work with the other executive vice presidents, vice presidents, to continue to keep the University moving forward as if he were here."

\*\*\*\*\*

"We have a lot of great people on all sides of I Street with a vast array of resources—this announcement is one way of maximizing those resources to continue the progress of our university."

\*\*\*\*\*

"Steve Trachtenberg has been a mentor to hundreds of people throughout his career. He sees his vice presidents who have been working with him for a number of years increasing the number of responsibilities in their portfolios, putting them in a position that, s h o u l d they want to move on to b e c o m e presidents of universities, or if they want to take other functions in industry or foundations, he's putting everyone in the position where they will get the experience that's necessary to move into other positions. And, also have the authority to operate independently when he's out of town."

**PROGRESS** is a publication of

The George Washington University Medical Center Communications & Marketing Department  
313 Ross Hall • 2300 Eye Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20037

Linda Dent, editor, [mcmladb@gwumc.edu](mailto:mcmladb@gwumc.edu)  
Phone: 202-994-8110 • Fax: 202-994-8052  
Contributors: Debbie Goldstein, Linda Dent, Barbara Porter and Richard Sheehe.  
Photos: Staff

## Puchalski Tapped for National Panel

Dr. Christina Puchalski, founder and director of The George Washington Institute for Spirituality and Health (GWish) and assistant professor, Department of Medicine and Health Sciences, was tapped to serve on an advisory panel for the Rosalynn Carter Institute (RCI) for Human Development. The advisory council of national experts is charged with addressing caregiving challenges as part of the newly established Johnson & Johnson/Rosalynn Carter Institute Caregivers Program.

Dr. Puchalski was asked to join the “Caregiving for Individuals with Cancer” panel that convened at The Carter Presidential Center in Atlanta. Dr. Puchalski was one of 13 experts representing cancer caregiving issues—including dealing with emotional challenges, the economics of caregiving and national and state caregiving initiatives—who shared insights.

GWish is a center that develops educational, clinical and research programs for physicians and other healthcare professionals regarding the role of spirituality and health in medicine. “Most of healthcare is now delivered in outpatient settings, increasing the role of caregivers for their ill loved ones,” Dr. Puchalski notes, “As a result, caregivers face enormous stress. Spiritual and religious beliefs may be very important in how caregivers cope with that stress.”

Additional panels are convening to address a range of other caregiving issues. A new caregiving book series will be developed by the RCI following the panels.

The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Human Development was formed in honor of the former First Lady in 1987 at Georgia Southwestern State University. Through research, education and training, the RCI promotes the mental health and well-being of individuals, families and professional caregivers; encourages effective caregiving practices; builds public awareness of caregiving needs; and advances public and social policies that enhance caring communities.



Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, left, and Dr. Alan Wasserman, field questions regarding smallpox vaccinations.

## Bioterror's Clear and Present Dangers Revealed

Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health, in December, chose GW Medical Center for a grand rounds lecture on bioterrorism, telling the more than 300 people packed into Ross Hall Room 101 that medical professionals would find themselves on the front lines of any such attack.

His talk, “Bioterrorism: A Clear and Present Danger,” was partly a primer on the most common chemical and biological threats and the kinds of symptoms physicians would encounter in patients during an attack. But he also provided an overview of current government policy and recommendations, including guidance on who should get vaccinated against smallpox.

The good news, he said, is that there are now 400 million vaccine doses available, if needed. “If we had an attack tomorrow, we could vac-

inate everyone in this country,” he said.

The bad news is that the vaccine itself can be dangerous, causing complications in some and killing one or two people for every million vaccinated. To prove his point, Dr. Fauci showed graphic photos of patients covered with sores and lesions—not from smallpox, but from bad reactions to the vaccine itself. “I think this is what people need to see before they rush in and say ‘I want to be vaccinated.’”

Dr. Fauci serves as one of the key advisers helping to guide Department of Health and Human Services initiatives to bolster medical and public health preparedness against possible future bioterrorist attacks. He is well known in the medical community, enough so that one student lugged his Physician’s Desk Reference to the lecture, hoping for an autograph.

“Sure, why not?” said Dr. Fauci as he took the pen.

## Panama Honors *Commander* Goldstein

In a further cementing of the close ties between the Republic of Panama and GW Medical Center, Panamanian President Mireya Moscoso has honored Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology Chair Dr. Allan Goldstein with the Order of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa.

The honor, which confers the title of “Commander” to Dr. Goldstein, is named after the Spanish explorer who crossed what is now Panama to discover the eastern shore of the Pacific Ocean in 1513. It was given to Dr. Goldstein for what President Moscoso called “his valuable contributions and personal dedication” to world health, including his

involvement in creating the International Center for Tropical Diseases and Genomic Studies, a joint project underway between GW and the Panamanian government to conduct research and provide training programs in tropical medicine. Vice President for Health Affairs Dr. John F. Williams also received the Order of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa in May of last year.

Dr. Goldstein accepted his medal at the inaugural scientific meeting in Santiago, Panama of another institution he helped get off the ground: President Moscoso’s Center for Geographic Medicine and Emerging Tropical Diseases, a collaborative project of Panamanian and U.S. institutions. The Center is directed by Dr. Peter Hotez, chair of GW Medical Center’s Department of Microbiology and Tropical Medicine.

“I am honored and truly humbled to receive this award,” said Dr. Goldstein as he was flanked by Minister



At the ceremony honoring Dr. Allan L. Goldstein are, from left, Dr. Fernando Gracias, Minister of Health, Panama; Dr. Goldstein; and Dr. José Miquel Alemán, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Panama.

of Foreign Affairs Dr. José Miguel Alemán and Minister of Health Dr. Fernando Gracias at a December 6 ceremony. “I would like to accept this award on behalf of the thousands of young students in both of our countries who are dedicating their lives to research—whose names you may never know, but whose deeds will surely make a difference to the health of both our peoples.”

As for the title “Commander” under the Order of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, Dr. Goldstein said this is an intriguing part of the honor and reflects the rich traditions of Panama. But he also joked in an interview that he has to be careful where he uses it.

“I went home and told my wife she’s going to have to call me ‘Commander’ from now on,” he said. “That didn’t go over too well.”

### GWUMC Mission

As a leader in education and research, The George Washington University Medical Center strives to set standards of excellence by:

- Valuing a diverse and dynamic community that encourages life-long learning
- Striving for, refining, and defining quality in all endeavors

- Providing exemplary and innovative teaching programs that produce astute, highly competent, and compassionate health professionals and scientists trained and prepared for the future

- Generating and expanding health knowledge through superior research programs
- Enhancing the delivery of compassionate and high quality health care through our education and research activities

- Improving the health and well-being of our local, national, and international communities

THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY  
MEDICAL CENTER  
WASHINGTON DC

Office of Medical Center  
Communications and Marketing  
2300 Eye Street, N.W., Room 313  
Washington, DC 20037  
[www.CreatingaNewTradition.org](http://www.CreatingaNewTradition.org)

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
WASHINGTON, DC  
PERMIT NO. 593