Selected Coverage July 2008

Philadelphia Inquirer (July 18)

Believing you are healthy may make it so

“It is not clear whether we should seek to disabuse people of optimistic ‘misperceptions’ in pursuit of changing behavior,” the lead author, University of Rochester Medical Center researcher Robert Gramling, said in a statement. “Perhaps we should work on changing behaviors by instilling more confidence in the capacity to prevent having a heart attack, rather than raising fears about having one.” (Also Reported in: Washington Post, Forbes, UPI, News-Medical.net Australia, NewKerala.com India, PhysOrg.com Virginia, BusinessWeek, Medical News Today, Times of India)

LA Times (July 24)

Should some banks go under?

Doug Henwood says some lenders are too big to fail but ought to be more aggressively regulated. Steven E. Landsburg says full market exposure is the best oversight. Today’s question: Why shouldn’t Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (and other large lenders) be allowed to fail? Previously, Henwood and Landsburg discussed the mortgage crisis, how much speculators are to blame for high oil prices and Phil Gramm’s comments about a “mental” recession. Steven E. Landsburg is a professor of economics at the University of Rochester, a columnist for Slate and the author, most recently, of “More Sex Is Safer Sex: The Unconventional Wisdom of Economics.”

Christian Science Monitor (July 22)

Why your happiness matters to the planet

Scientists say this need for community may be a result of humanity’s long evolution in groups. Living together conferred an advantage. In the hunter-gatherer world, relatedness, autonomy, curiosity, and competence – the very things that psychologists find make people happy – “had payoffs that were pretty clear,” says Richard Ryan, a professor of psychology at the University of Rochester in New York. “Aspiring for a lot of material goods is actually unhappiness-producing,” he says. “People who value material good and wealth also are people who are treading more heavily on the earth – and not getting happier.”

Washington Post (July 28)

When Play Becomes Work

More than three decades ago, Edward Deci, a social and personality psychologist at the University of Rochester, found the first experimental evidence of a phenomenon with wide relevance to the way most Americans conduct their personal, professional and social lives. Deci tracked a bunch of college students who were solving puzzles for fun. He divided them into two groups. One group was allowed to keep solving puzzles as before. People in the other were offered a small financial reward for each puzzle they solved.
Protein Gives Doctors New Tool to Detect Melanoma
Melanoma produces high levels of a protein called IMP-3, which is not over-expressed in harmless moles, University of Rochester Medical Center researchers report. “We are very excited about our finding that IMP-3 is an important progression marker in malignant melanoma,” study author Dr. Jennifer G. Pryor, a third-year resident in the department of pathology and laboratory medicine, said in a university news release. (Also Reported in: Forbes, Washington Post, BusinessWeek, Science Daily)

Whispering With Intent
By announcing that the S.E.C. would be looking aggressively at rumors and the intent of their peddlers, said Joel Seligman, president of the University of Rochester and a historian of the S.E.C., the commission “was essentially saying, we can’t afford to wait that long.”

Breast-Fed Babies Have Fewer GI Infections
The study results apply much more to women in underdeveloped countries than those in the United States, because fewer American women have low iron levels, said Dr. Ruth Lawrence, chairwoman of the section on breast-feeding at the American Academy of Pediatrics, and professor of pediatrics and obstetrics/gynecology at the University of Rochester School of Medicine, in New York. Other studies have found that formula-fed babies have more gastrointestinal infections, she said. Researchers have found that “breast-fed babies don’t become anemic if their cords are not cut too soon,” Lawrence said. Delaying the cut for as little as two minutes can help improve the baby’s iron status and confer other benefits, she added. (Also Reported in: Washington Post, Forbes, BusinessWeek, Atlanta Journal Constitution, Austin American Statesman)

UR names dean of engineering
Robert L. Clark, former dean of Duke University’s Pratt School of Engineering, has been named dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at the University of Rochester, effective Sept. 1. Clark succeeds Kevin Parker, who has served as dean of the school since 1998. (Also reported by WHAM TV13)
hospital to receive any level of American Heart Association recognition for its coronary artery disease and heart failure care, hospital officials said. Highland Hospital, an affiliate of the URMC, is recognized with the Silver Performance Achievement Award for 12-month compliance of its stroke initiatives.

Democrat and Chronicle (July 16)
Rochester book about preventing suicide is part memoir
DeQuincy A. Lezine nearly ended his own life as a teenager. But he received great psychiatric care and went on to found the first campus-based chapter of the Suicide Prevention Action Network USA, to help others. Now, Lezine is sharing his story and suicide prevention research in a book for teens and young adults called Eight Stories Up: An Adolescent Chooses Hope Over Suicide (Oxford University Press, $30). Lezine, who just completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Rochester doing research at its Center for the Study and Prevention of Suicide, co-wrote the memoir/guide with Dr. David Brent, a professor of child psychiatry, pediatrics and epidemiology at University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, where he holds the endowed chair in suicide studies.

BusinessWeek (July 13)
Business Schools Mull Scandal Options
Greg MacDonald, admissions director at University of Rochester's Simon Graduate School of Business, says: “Of course, every B-school enrollment manager hopes they don't see any names of their students on that list. … If we find students enrolled here with names on that list, we have to find out what that means. We'll follow up, and investigate further. I don't know what the outcomes will be, but we have to go through it deliberately and carefully.” (Also Reported in: WRCB-TV, Tennessee, KREN CW 27 TV Nevada)

ArtDaily.org (July 7)
Memorial Art Gallery Receives Piece of Rochester History
As the city of Rochester moves ahead with plans to raze Midtown Plaza, the property's former owner has donated a commemorative painting of the historic mall to the Memorial Art Gallery. Edith Lunt Small's Midtown Plaza 1962–1987 is a virtual Who's Who of Rochester during the era. The 4-by 6-foot work, a gift of Midtown Rochester Properties, LLC, went on public view on July 2.

Washington Post (July 29)
Lawmakers agree to ban toxins in kids’ items
The first study involving human babies in 2005 raised questions about those arguments. Federally funded research by the Center for Reproductive Epidemiology at the University of Rochester Medical School, found that male babies born to women with high levels of phthalates in their blood exhibited changes related to low sperm count, undescended testicles and other reproductive problems. In that study, the infants were exposed to phthalate levels way below the doses administered in rat experiments. Other studies have connected some phthalates to liver and kidney cancer. (Also Reported in: MSNBC, Houston Chronicle, Arizona Republic)

Bloomberg.com (July 22)
Plosser Says Fed Should Raise Rates Sooner, Not Later
Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia’s Charles Plosser said the central bank should raise interest rates “sooner rather than later” to lower inflation and prevent price expectations from getting out of control. Plosser, 59, a former professor and business-school dean at the University of Rochester in New York, has taken one of the toughest anti-inflation stances on the Fed since joining the central bank in 2006. (Also Reported in: Asbury Park Press New Jersey)

Rochester Business Journal (July 7)
URMC doctor receives lymphoma grant
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society has awarded a University of Rochester Medical Center doctor a $550,000 grant to support his work on a targeted treatment for lymphoma patients. Jonathan Friedberg M.D., associate professor of medicine and director of hematological malignancies clinical research at the Wilmot Cancer Center, plans to lead a number of clinical studies of new agents for lymphoma patients.

Chicago Tribune (July 27)
Nicole Cabell
Success has begotten success for Nicole Cabell. No sooner had the lissome California beauty completed her three-year term at Lyric Opera’s Ryan Opera Center artist-development program in 2005 when she took top honors in the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition in Wales. She immediately landed a recording contract with Decca. She studied flute, sang in her high school choir and began private vocal
study at 16, earning a bachelor's degree at the Eastman School of Music.

Scientific American (July 11)
Will This Vaccine Prevent or Reverse Alzheimer's Disease?
Scientists say the key may be in the way the vaccine is designed. This vaccine uses an inactive herpes virus (stripped of its viral genes) to transport a small amount of AB as well as another protein called interleukin-4 that may help prevent brain inflammation. As hoped, this vaccine triggered the immune system to produce antibodies to clear out AB accumulations, but thanks to interleukin-4 did not cause swelling. This “is believed to be the safest way to derive an Aß-specific immune response in someone with Alzheimer's,” says William Bowers, a University of Rochester neurologist who helped develop the vaccine.

Rochester Business Journal (July 23)
UR grant to aid urban teaching program
The University of Rochester's Warner School of Education has received a $52,448 grant from the New York State Education Department Teacher Opportunity Corps to fund initiatives to serve the needs of teachers and improve the academic outcomes of students in the Rochester City School District.

Rochester Business Journal (July 14)
UR, FDA to collaborate on heart study
The University of Rochester Medical Center has inked an agreement with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to collaborate and develop a national repository of data to aid researchers studying the electrical activity of the heart, officials said Monday. (Also Reported in: Democrat and Chronicle)

CNNMoney.com (July 24)
Momenta Pharmaceuticals Appoints Bruce A. Leicher as General Counsel
Momenta Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq:MNTA), a biotechnology company specializing in the characterization and engineering of complex drugs, today announced that Bruce A. Leicher, J.D., has been appointed as the Company's Senior Vice President and General Counsel. Mr. Leicher received his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center and his B.A. from the University of Rochester.

Democrat and Chronicle (July 27)
New doctor works to end malaria half a world away
Nothing disturbs a young doctor more than the loss of millions of lives each year to perfectly preventable diseases. And as a Peace Corps volunteer in the west African nation of Senegal seven years ago, Andrew Sherman saw the devastating effects of malaria, diarrheal diseases, AIDS and inadequate pre-natal care. He also saw a chance to make a difference. Sherman is a first-year resident in pediatrics at the University of Rochester's Strong Memorial Hospital.

Democrat and Chronicle (July 20)
MAG showcases extremes at Rochester Biennial
Iconic images of loss and vitality make the third “Rochester Biennial” a fascinating showcase of extremes. The Memorial Art Gallery has invited six staunch individualists to exhibit at this regional exhibit. Their works share little in style or media — but show surprising kinships in mood and theme. (Also Reported in: Canandaigua Daily Messenger)

Science Daily (July 24)
Key Mechanism Of Cellular Damage In Aging And Disease Discovered
“Our study provides a better glimpse of why a cell under assault by disease makes 10 times as many reactive oxygen species as the same cell when healthy,” said Shey-Shing Sheu, Ph.D., professor of Pharmacology and Physiology at the University of Rochester Medical Center, and a study author. “We have discovered a chemical tool for investigating how diseases cause damage, mitochondrion by mitochondrion, which should represent a tremendous advance as both a disease biomarker and for drug discovery.” (Also Reported in: News-Medical.net Australia, PhysOrg.com Virginia)