Tips for MGH bicycle commuters

THE CLOCKS have sprung forward; the crocuses are peeking out, and many MGHers are dusting off their bicycles to begin commuting to work.

Cycling to and from the workplace offers individuals not only health and fitness benefits but also reduces commuting costs by saving on gasoline, car maintenance and parking. Bicycling leaves virtually no carbon footprint, and the journey itself can help relieve stress before and after a busy work day.

To assist MGHers who commute to work by bicycle, MGH Police and Security offers the following basic security and safety information:

Bicycle Security

- Always lock the bicycle at a bike rack when not in use – even if unattended for just a few minutes – and ensure the lock is placed through both the frame and wheels.
- Do not lock the bike to a street light, sign or parking meter. There are a number of designated bike racks (Continued on page 2)

MGH Center for Faculty Development restructures

DEDICATED TO THE CAREER ADVANCEMENT of hospital faculty members, the MGH Center for Faculty Development (CFD) has been a vital resource for MGH faculty in support of their careers. Since its establishment in 2005, the CFD has offered a variety of seminars, programs and events – approximately 60 each academic year – aimed at enhancing the professional careers of clinical and research faculty. Over the past year, the CFD engaged in an extensive and thoughtful restructuring process and approved several new appointments to further enhance its comprehensive program.

Anne Klibanski, MD, chief of the Neuroendocrine Unit and director of the Neuroendocrine and Pituitary Tumor Clinical Center, has been appointed director of the CFD. Klibanski has long been dedicated to faculty development, as well as the mentoring of junior faculty. She begins her new role April 1, while continuing her current roles at the MGH and Harvard Medical School. Donna Lawton, MS, has been promoted to executive director of the center. As a committed CFD administrator, Lawton was a vital contributor to the CFD restructuring process.

Another significant change is the establishment of a new CFD component, the Office for Clinical Careers (OCC), created to facilitate the career advancement of MGH clinical faculty. Directed by Theodore Stern, MD, chief of the MGH Psychiatric Consultation Service, the OCC aims to enhance overall job satisfaction and increase the number of clinical faculty promoted by academic criteria as well as the retention of clinical faculty.

The Office for Women’s Careers (OWC), another office of the CFD, also undergoes a change with the appointment of Nancy Rigotti, MD, director of the MGH Tobacco Research and Treatment Center, as the director. Rigotti has a deep interest in women’s health and careers and in mentoring in general.

“The appointments of Drs. Rigotti and Stern as OWC and OCC directors will enable the center to support the career development of many talented clinical and women faculty members,” says Klibanski. “Dr. Tayyaba Hasan will continue as director of the Office of Research Careers, thereby allowing the CFD to provide comprehensive support for the diverse career faculty pathways at MGH.”

To learn more about the CFD, access www2.massgeneral.org/facultydevelopment.
Bringing shelter to Haiti

While more than two months have passed since the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti, the rebuilding process has only just begun. The nation’s infrastructure, particularly in Port-au-Prince, was completely destroyed and will take years to rebuild. At present, hundreds of thousands are homeless.

S. Allen Counter, DMSc, PhD, an MGH neurophysiologist and director of the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural Relations, is one of many MGHers who have stepped forward to offer assistance. On Feb. 12, Counter delivered more than 150 tents to Haiti. Each tent can house six to eight people.

The trip was Counter’s second. He first traveled to Haiti Jan. 17 to deliver tents and supplies and offer medical assistance with a team that included Michael Jenike, MD, of MGH Psychiatry; Bruce Price, MD, of MGH Neurology and chief of Neurology at McLean Hospital; and Timothy Benson, MD, of Psychiatry at McLean Hospital.

Medical supplies were donated by the MGH and Harvard University Health Services. The tents primarily were donated by actors Will and Jada Pinkett Smith through the Will and Jada Pinkett Smith Family Foundation. Actress Debbie Allen also contributed tents, as did the children of the Maria Baldwin School in Cambridge, who had heard of Counter’s efforts and collected money to purchase tents for homeless Haitian children.

“It was deeply moving to witness entire families who were previously sleeping on the streets of Port-au-Prince move into the privacy of their new tent,” says Counter. “I felt blessed to be able to offer this small contribution of temporary housing and medical assistance to displaced Haitian families in the aftermath of this tragic earthquake.”

Bicycle Safety

Always wear a bike helmet, use hand signals when turning and obey all traffic regulations.

Ensure that the bike is working properly by checking brakes and tires regularly.

Never ride against traffic, and never ride in between moving or parked cars.

Wear brightly colored clothes in the daylight and use headlights and red tail light reflectors at night.

Be aware of parked car doors that may open, and give pedestrians the right of way.

Do not pass cars on the right. Motorists may not look for or see a bicycle on the right. Pass on the left like vehicles do.

Make eye contact with drivers and assume that they don’t see you until you see that they do.

Keep an eye out for parallel-slat sewer grates, gravel, wet leaves, sand or pot holes.

For more information about bicycle safety and security, access www.cityofboston.gov/transportation/accessboston/pdfs/bicycle_plan.pdf. For information about parking a bicycle at the MGH, call Parking and Commuter Services at 617-726-8886.
MGH OR offers opportunities for PCWD graduates

THE MGH OPERATING ROOM (OR) is a hub of fast-paced, around-the-clock action. It’s also the place where approximately a dozen graduates of Partners Career and Workforce Development (PCWD), a job-readiness training program offered four times a year, have found the opportunity for a rewarding career in health care. During each of the four six-week program cycles, PCWD participants learn everything they need to know about the workplace environment. They take tours of various hospital areas and select a location for a brief internship, and many are ultimately hired full time.

“Of the more than 200 departments across Partners that participate in PCWD, the MGH OR has stood out in its involvement,” says Cynthia Briggs, PCWD program director. “Staff of the operating rooms have offered a tour for PCWD students each cycle since at least 2004. They also have taken one or two interns per cycle.”

Christi Ringland is one MGH OR employee who embodies PCWD success. She graduated from the program in 2004 and has worked in the OR ever since. “After I took a tour of the OR through PCWD, I knew I wanted to work there,” she says.

“There is always something to learn – there’s always something to do.”

As part of PCWD, Ringland interned in the OR for two and a half weeks. Because of her willingness to learn and quick adaptation to the fast-paced environment, she was hired immediately afterward as a nursing assistant. At present, she works as a level 2 equipment technician, supporting all robotics-assisted surgeries in the main OR. Considered an indispensable resource by her colleagues, on March 25, Ringland was one of the presenters at a robotics symposium at the MGH.

“Christi is an amazing employee – it’s hard to find people like her,” says Alan Goostray, RN, CNOR, clinical nurse manager for Perioperative Nursing and Ringland’s supervisor. “She has flourished here in the OR.”

Ringland is “paying it forward,” too. With five years of OR experience under her belt, she is now one of the OR staff members who offers tours to PCWD students each cycle.

“The PCWD students are a breath of fresh air for the OR’s Sterile Processing Department – we see them blossom day to day,” says Richard Ortiz, the department’s manager who supervises approximately 11 PCWD graduates. “It is very exciting to see them grow in such a positive way in a demanding environment.”

For more information about the PCWD program, access www.partners.org/pcwd/.

Summer Research Trainee Program promotes excellence and diversity

THE TERM, “UNDERREPRESENTED IN MEDICINE,” (URM) refers to racial and ethnic populations that are underrepresented in the medical profession relative to their numbers in the general population. Nationally, less than 7 percent of medical faculty are URM.

To help increase the number of URM individuals who enter academic medicine and perhaps eventually train at the MGH, the MGH Multicultural Affairs Office (MAO) offers bright and ambitious medical and college students an opportunity to immerse themselves in leading research and medicine through the Summer Research Trainee Program (SRTP).

Founded in 1992, the SRTP attracts URM applicants from around the country. Each year, 12 to 15 students are selected from a competitive national pool and assigned to an MGH laboratory, clinical or health policy research site for eight weeks. There the students conduct original research under the mentorship of an MGH investigator who has been matched to each student’s area of interest.

Cesar Castro, MD, a clinical fellow in Oncology at the MGH Cancer Center, is a 2001 SRTP alumnus. As a first-year medical student at the University of California at San Francisco, Castro had heard about SRTP and was immediately motivated to apply.

“Fully cognizant of MGH’s reputation, I knew I needed to capitalize on the opportunity,” he says. “I realized it would be a unique privilege to work alongside some true medical giants.”

Reviewing Castro’s application, MAO Executive Director Elena Olson noted his area of interest and matched him with MGH preceptors Richard Penson, MD, MRCP, clinical director of the Gillette Center for Gynecologic Oncology, and Bruce Chabner, MD, clinical director of the MGH Cancer Center.

“The program aligned me with the appropriate MGH mentors,” says Castro. “Elena was very responsive to what my interests were, and I readily integrated myself into ongoing cancer work. That summer, under the auspices of Drs. Penson and Chabner, I published original work relating to complementary medicine use in cancer patients.”

When it was time to select where he wanted to complete his oncology subspecialty training, Castro knew the MGH was the place for him. He currently is poised to remain on faculty at the MGH; and although he graduated from the program nearly 10 years ago, Castro maintains his connection to SRTP by serving as an ardent recruiter.

“The SRTP initiative promotes excellence hand in hand with diversity,” he says. “It’s evident at the MGH that embracing diversity is not simply a novelty but a vital part of the MGH fabric, backed by Dr. Slavin, hospital leadership and the research community.”

New SRTP students will arrive at the MGH June 14. MGH preceptors are needed to participate in the program. For information about becoming a preceptor, contact MAO at 617-724-3832 or access www2.massgeneral.org/mao/summer.html.
MGH Senior HealthWISE

MGH Senior HealthWISE is offering a free hypertension screening for seniors 60 years and older April 5 from 1:30 to 2:30 pm at the Hill House, 127 Mt. Vernon St. For more information, call 617-724-6756.

Town hall meeting about ORCD Career Day

The MGH Office for Research Career Development (ORCD) is hosting a town hall meeting about ORCD Career Day April 1 from noon to 1 pm in the Thier Conference Room. Instructors and research fellows are invited to attend to learn more about making the most of ORCD Career Day, which will take place in October and include the annual Research Fellows Poster Celebration. For more information, call orcd@partners.org.

Genetics seminar

The MGH Clinical Research Program is sponsoring a seminar, “A Primer on Complex Trait Genetics: Principles for the Clinical Investigator,” April 14 from 8 am to 4:30 pm in the Simches Research Center, Room 3110. The seminar is an opportunity to learn the essential elements of complex trait genetics and gain the latest insights from expert faculty of the MGH Center for Human Genetic Research and the Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT. To register, access http://hub.partners.org. For more information, call Suzanne Guerette at 617-724-2900.

Ethics forum

The MGH Ethics Taskforce is sponsoring a forum, “Improving the Quality of Care at the End of Life: The Case for Video Decision Aids,” April 9 from noon to 1 pm in the Sweet Conference Room, Gray/Bigelow 432. Angelo Volandes, MD, of the MGH Department of Medicine, will be the keynote speaker, and Alex FM. Cist, MD, of the MGH Pulmonary Care Unit, will moderate. For more information, e-mail Jennifer Hood at jphood@partners.org.

DSC/MAO/Schwartz Center film series

As part of its film series, the MGH Disparities Solutions Center (DSC), the Multicultural Affairs Office (MAO), and the Kenneth B. Schwartz Center will co-host a screening of “Out in the Rural: A Health Center in Mississippi” April 7 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm in the Walter Amphitheatre at Harvard Medical School, 260 Longwood Ave. The film features the Delta Health Center in Bolivar County, Miss. Jack Geiger, MD, MSc, Hyg, of New York Medical School, will discuss issues presented in the film. Geiger founded and directed the first two U.S. community health centers in the Mississippi Delta and in Columbia Point in Boston. Refreshments will be served. To register, e-mail disparitiesolutions@partners.org. For more information, visit www2.massgeneral.org/disparitiessolutions/.

Seven MGH nurses named Nursing Spectrum finalists

SEVEN MASS GENERAL NURSES have been named finalists in the 2010 Nursing Spectrum Excellence Awards for the New England region. The prestigious awards recognize nurses who have made extraordinary contributions to their field. Nurses are nominated in six different categories: Advancing and Leading the Profession, Clinical Care, Community Service, Management, Mentoring and Teaching. Finalists are selected by a panel of regional nursing leaders based on the contributions they make to patients and families, colleagues and the profession as a whole.

This year, the MGH finalists are: Gaurdia Banister, RN, PhD, of the Institute for Patient Care – Management; Deborah D’Avolio, APRN, BC, PhD, of the Yvonne L. Munn Center for Nursing Research and 65plus Program – Teaching; Vivian Donahue, RN, BC-CNS, CCRN, of the MGH Heart Center – Mentoring; Susan Morash, RN, MS, of the General Medical Unit – Management; Wally Moulaison, RN, MSN, MBA, of Anticoagulation Management Services – Management; Vilma Pacheco, RN, MSN Ed, of the Department of Surgery – Teaching; and Ellen Robinson, RN, PhD, of the Institute for Patient Care – Advancing and Leading the Profession.

All New England finalists will be honored and a regional winner announced for each category at a gala dinner on May 11 at the Marriott Hotel in Newton. Each of the regional winners will be eligible for the National Nurse of the Year Awards.