

Guerren Solbach Health Care Facilitator Aids Retirees with Benefits Issues

Guerren Solbach loves his job—and the retirees he meets.

He is the Health Care Facilitator at UC Davis—a position he almost didn't apply for, but he is so glad that he did.

Each UC campus and laboratory has a health care facilitator (HCF). The HCFs, who work out of the Benefits Offices, are knowledgeable counselors who provide employees, retirees, survivors, and their family members with free, confidential one-on-one assistance in resolving health plan issues.

As one might imagine, Solbach receives a variety of inquiries from retirees, but the most common

questions he receives are about Medicare coordination questions and issues related to medical plan services when traveling or relocating.

When retirees who are approaching age 65 call or meet with Solbach, he explains how Medicare will save them money and that UC requires them to enroll in Medicare. He also helps them fill out their paperwork, either over the phone or in person. "I try to make it as easy as possible by walking them through the process," says Solbach.

Questions from retirees who are planning trips or planning to relocate also keep Solbach busy. "Retirees are more mobile than employees," he says. "They travel more, hop in their RV, or cash out their California real estate and move out of state. All these actions have consequences, mainly for those in HMO plans." He realizes why it's not always easy to understand how UC's plans work. "Our plans are complicated."

Solbach enjoys problem-solving and troubleshooting, and isn't afraid to go to bat for his retirees. "I like to take all these complicated things—Social Security, Medicare, pension income, medical plans—and

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Medical Plan Bid Explores Possible Changes

In its ongoing efforts to preserve quality retiree and employee medical benefits and services while managing rising costs, UC recognizes the impact that increasing costs can have on retirees, many of whom have fixed incomes or who experience limited annual income growth. As part of these efforts, UC in February asked medical insurance vendors to submit competitive bids for most of its medical plans. As health care costs continue to rise everywhere, many employers are having to pass those costs on to retirees and employees and/or reduce or even eliminate benefits. The goal of UC's 2007 bid process is to explore potential adjustments to the number of medical plan vendors while maintaining meaningful choices and high-quality, comprehensive medical care while keeping costs to retirees affordable.

While the bid process may lead to some changes in the number of medical plans offered,

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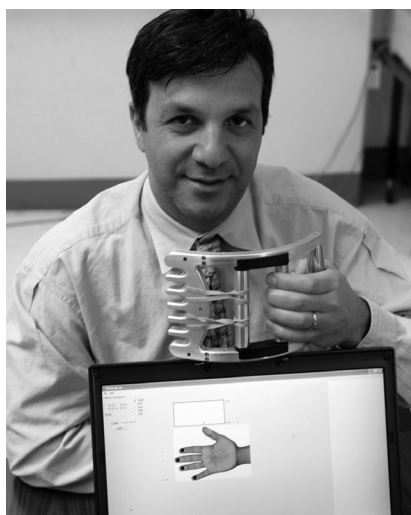


UC Davis Health Care Facilitator Guerren Solbach (right) enjoys helping retirees with their health insurance questions.

UC Research of Interest

New Research Offers Baby Boomers Round-the-Clock Care, With a 'Cyber' Twist

As an estimated 8.2 million baby boomers nationwide reach their later years, researchers are continually looking for ways to improve their quality of life. A professor at the UCLA Henry Samueli School



of Engineering and Applied Science hopes his recent research—using a small wireless computer and tiny sensors connected to the Internet—will help older patients with mobility issues or loss of sensation avoid unnecessary and costly trips to the doctor or therapist while improving their ailments in record time.

The new CustoMed medical monitoring device, developed by UCLA engineering professor Majid Sarrafzadeh and UCLA neuroscientist Reggie Edgerton, promises patients the ease and affordability of substantially shortened therapy and recovery times and the ability to complete their therapy at home while still under the watchful supervision of their doctor.

Using a CustoMed portable handgrip device containing tiny wireless sensors, patients who need restorative therapy for their wrists or hands, for example, can practice their doctor-prescribed exercises at home each day rather than visiting a physical therapist.

The data from each of these home therapy sessions is monitored, stored and transmitted to the patient's doctor wirelessly through the Internet. The doctor can see how the patient is progressing and, if need be, change the course of therapy or even schedule an immediate follow-up appointment.

The CustoMed devices, which are currently being tested in human trials, may be available to consumers as early as next year. Sarrafzadeh and his colleagues anticipate that the durable device will retail at around \$200 to \$300, depending on the customization needs.

For more information, see: newsroom.ucla.edu/page.asp?RelNum=7713

With Fragrant Cleaning Products, Air Purifiers that Emit Ozone Can Dirty the Air

Indoor air purifiers that produce even small quantities of ozone may actually make the air dirtier when used at the same time as household cleaning products, scientists at UC Irvine have discovered.

Ozone emitted by purifiers reacts in the air with unsaturated volatile organic compounds such as



limonene—a chemical added to cleaning supplies that gives them a lemon fragrance—to create additional microscopic particles, scientists found.

“The public needs to be aware that every air purification approach has its limitation, and ionization air purifiers are no exception,” said Sergey Nizkorodov, assistant professor of chemistry at UCI and co-author of the study. “These air purifiers can not only elevate the level of ozone, a formidable air pollutant in itself, but also increase the amount of harmful particulate matter in indoor air.”

For more information, see: today.uci.edu/news/release_detail.asp?key=1575

NIH Funds Innovative Alzheimer's Research

A completely new approach to the study of Alzheimer's disease, initiated by a professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, may solve a critical piece in the puzzle of the disease.



Michael Bowers, a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, developed this project, which is being funded by the National Institutes of Health. Bowers is using specialized chemical research methods and applying them to biology. His research will depend upon the study of rare peptides, or strings of amino acids, that are difficult to produce. These will be provided by co-investigator David

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Benefits Audit Can Lead to Coverage Loss

In May, UC/HR Benefits will conduct its annual random audit of family members enrolled in UC-sponsored health and welfare plans.

Randomly selected retirees will receive a letter asking them to submit documentation to verify that their family members are eligible for health and welfare benefits.

The result of a retiree enrolling an ineligible individual is the permanent de-enrollment (cancellation of coverage) of the ineligible individual. Failing to respond to the University's eligibility verification or failing to provide the required documentation when requested will also result in de-enrollment of the ineligible individual. In addition, the retiree and all family members will be de-enrolled for 12 months from any plan in which an ineligible person was enrolled.

This yearly audit fulfills health contract obligations and helps ensure that those enrolled in UC health and welfare plans are fully eligible for coverage.

If you have ineligible family members enrolled, such as a child who recently married or an ex-spouse you forgot to de-enroll, complete a *Retiree Continuation, Enrollment, or Change—Medical, Dental and/or Legal Plan* form (UBEN 100) and submit the form as soon as possible.



Regents Authorize UCRP Asset Transfer to LANS Defined Benefit Plan

As part of the closeout of the University of California's contract with the Department of Energy (DOE) to manage Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), the UC Board of Regents, at their March meeting in Los Angeles, authorized UC to enter into two agreements with the Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA). The agreements address (1) the transfer of UCRP assets and liabilities associated with LANL service to the Los Alamos National Security, LLC Defined Benefit Pension Plan (LANS Pension Plan) and (2) DOE/NNSA's ongoing obligation to reimburse UC if a funding shortfall occurs in UCRP assets allocated to the benefits of LANL employees who became inactive, disabled, or retired members prior to June 1, 2006.

Under the agreement, those LANL employees who became retired or vested inactive members prior to June 1, 2006, or their beneficiaries will remain within UCRP, provided DOE/ NNSA satisfies its obligations under the funding formula described in the agreement. This agreement clarifies DOE/NNSA's ongoing obligation to reimburse UC for any shortfall and provides a high degree of protection for UCRP. In addition, based on the terms of the management contract between DOE/NNSA and UC, the transfer agreement outlines the amount of assets to be transferred to the LANS Pension Plan to provide funding for the prior-service pension benefits of former University employees who elected to participate in the LANS Pension Plan.

The transfer of assets and liabilities under these agreements will have no adverse effect on UCRP and are not related to The Regents' current plan to restart employer and employee contributions to UCRP (subject to funding, the budget process and collective bargaining). The UCRP assets and liabilities associated with the LANL Retained Segment will be carefully tracked and accounted for, and underfunding will be addressed by the funding formula under the agreement with the DOE. The Regents' decision to restart contributions will not affect any UCRP retired and inactive members, including LANL retired or inactive members retained in UCRP.

For more information about the agreements, see the At Your Service website (atyourservice.ucop.edu). 🐾

This form is available online or from the UC Customer Service Center. Changes made during the audit will be subject to the penalties of the audit.

Continuation of coverage will be made available to the retiree and eligible family members if they choose to continue health coverage at their own expense. UC will not make any

contributions for the expense during the continuation period.

For additional information on eligibility, refer to UC's *Group Insurance Eligibility Factsheet*. If you have any additional questions about the audit, please contact the UC Customer Service Center at 1-800-888-8267 from 8:30 to 4:30 pm (PT), Monday through Friday. 🐾

Share Your Stories



Meaningful Work After Retirement

In the January issue of New Dimensions, we asked readers to tell us about the issues they find most difficult to deal with as a retiree. Finding meaningful part-time work was one of the issues retirees raised. Barbara Wesser, a UCSD retiree from San Diego, wrote:

“For me, the biggest difficulty in retirement is missing work and my colleagues. There don’t seem to be many (or any) opportunities to do meaningful work with a decent salary on a part-time basis. I would love to keep using my skills and experience gained over the past 22 years in working as a career counselor to college students, but [I] haven’t found a way to do that. There are plenty of minimum-wage jobs at restaurants and retail stores for part-timers but that is not what I want to do. I need to supplement my retirement income and want to stay engaged in the world of work. That is a tough issue. I would be interested in hearing others’ stories and how they may

have solved that dilemma.”

She’s right; it is a tough issue, so we asked our retiree/emeriti center directors and how they would advise Ms. Wesser.

Eddie Murphy, executive director of the UCLA retirement center, says she often hears comments similar to Ms. Wesser’s from the UCLA retirees she meets. “Social interaction is very important in retirement, and engagement in a meaningful activity, whether leisure, volunteer or work for pay, is key to a successful retirement.” She suggests starting with your home institution or another educational institution.

Shelley Glazer, executive director of Berkeley’s UCLA Retirement Center Director, agrees and notes that her center has developed the Retiree Work Opportunities (RWO) website (thecenter.berkeley.edu/rwo.html) to meet the needs of retirees like Ms. Wesser as well as the university. In an article in *The Berkeleyan*, Glazer described the website as “a way for hiring managers to take advantage of an additional source of part-time, temporary workers who already know the culture, probably know the

processes that are necessary to complete a project, and can hit the ground running with very little training.” The RWO website is free to retirees from Berkeley, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the UC Office of the President.

Both Murphy and Glazer suggested other websites or agencies that might assist retirees in finding a “second career,” whether it builds on their recent employment or is completely new. Among their suggestions are ThirdAge.com, Seniors 4Hire.com, and your local county Office of Aging. 🐾

Share Your Stories

For our next issue of *New Dimensions*: What is the biggest/most difficult issue you face as a retiree? We’d like to hear from you. Please respond by email (NewDimensions-L@ucop.edu) or regular mail (UC HR/Benefits, New Dimensions editor, 300 Lakeside Drive, 12th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612). We would appreciate hearing from you by June 1, 2007.

NIH Funds Research continued from page 2

Teplow, a professor at UCLA’s David Geffen School of Medicine, who has been involved in Alzheimer’s research for over 10 years.

“Until about five or six years ago, everyone assumed that the large amyloid plaques, or neurofibrillary tangles, that were found in the brains of Alzheimer’s victims were the cause of the disease,” said

Bowers. “However, recent scientific discoveries indicate that these large, insoluble aggregates might merely be markers of the disease—they do not cause the disease.”

He explained that now the hunt is on for the “small stuff.” Because of their expertise in certain chemical methodologies, Bowers and his research group are able to track down

the molecular level changes that lead to development of the disease.

For more information, see: www.ia.ucsb.edu/pa/display.aspx?pkey=1557 🐾

Guerren Solbach continued from page 1

smooth out all the curves so it's a nice straight line for people." Solbach says the retirees he deals with are very grateful for his help because they can't get it anywhere else.

He also really likes UC's retirees. "I can't begin to tell you all the stories... These peoples are *fascinating*," Solbach says enthusiastically. "They have done fascinating research, and can tell you the most wonderful stories about the history of UC or of California."

Solbach has a long history at UC Davis. He has been the health care facilitator for the past five years. Before that, he was a Davis Benefits Representative for six years. And before *that*, he was a UC Davis student!

After earning his degree in psychology with an emphasis in biology, Guerren worked in the campus temp pool while his fiancée completed her degree. One of his first assignments was working at the front desk of the Human Resources office. Later he was hired as a full-time benefits representative, and so began his benefits career.

When the HCF position was announced in 2002, Guerren was at first reluctant to apply. Although he knew the job change would be a promotion for him, he was afraid the job would be mostly negative, since it dealt mainly with problems and complaints. But it has turned out to be a very positive experience.

"I'm the luckiest guy you know," said Guerren. 🍀

UC's Health Care Facilitators

Guerren Solbach believes having Health Care Facilitators (HCFs) at each location is very beneficial for employees and retirees. Through educational programs and individual consultation, HCFs help retirees better understand and obtain the full benefits and services available from the UC-sponsored health plans. "The HCFs know what medical groups are available locally, and they have contacts and information that other people don't have," Guerren says. "In the HMO world, you can get things resolved if you know who to call."

Berkeley

Deborah Lloyd
dbllloyd@berkeley.edu
510-643-7547

Davis

Guerren Solbach
gpsolbach@ucdavis.edu
530-752-4264 (campus)
916-734-8880 (UCD Medical Center)

Irvine

Joe Walsh
jwalsh@uci.edu
949-824-8921 (campus)
714-456-7289 (UCI Medical Center)

Los Angeles

Bridget Sheehan-Watanabe
bsheehan@chr.ucla.edu
310-794-3057 (Campus and UCLA Medical Center)

Riverside

Mary Johnson
mary.johnson@ucr.edu
951-827-1425

Santa Barbara

Laura Morgan
laura.morgan@hr.ucsb.edu
805-893-4201

Santa Cruz

Frank Trueba
ftrueba@ucsc.edu
831-459-3573

San Diego

Wilma Westmoreland
wwestmoreland@ucsd.edu
858-822-2192 (Campus and UCSD Medical Center)

San Francisco

Susan Forstat
sforstat@hr.ucsf.edu
415-514-3324 (Campus and UCSF Medical Center)

Office of the President

Asha Shareem
asha.shareem@ucop.edu
510-987-9324 (M/T/W)
510-987-0756 (Th/F)

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Loida Bartolome-Mingao
hcf@lbl.gov
510-486-6997

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

Johnetta Jones
jones173@llnl.gov
925-422-9955

Los Alamos National Laboratory

Maria Stephenson
mstephen@lanl.gov
505-665-2062

the current array of benefits available to retirees will not change.

UC's group HMO plans—Kaiser Permanente and Western Health Advantage—will remain among the choices for 2008. And, UC will continue to base retiree monthly premiums on the established second pay band (currently \$43,001–\$86,000) to help moderate rising costs.

Meaningful choices

“Providing affordable medical benefits that provide quality and choice to our retirees, faculty, and staff is a key objective of this process,” said Randy Scott, UC's executive director of Human Resources and Benefits Policy and Program Design. “Our aim is to maintain, and in some cases improve, retirees' choice and access to medical benefits that best fit their needs while continuing to control the effects of rising costs.”

“Meaningful choice” could mean that the number of UC medical plan vendors are fewer and the choices are aligned more closely with retirees' needs for medical care and

their financial resources. For example, those who rarely see a doctor or who are willing to take active control of their health may be able to choose a less costly plan, while those who require greater levels of medical care may be able to choose a higher-cost plan with lower out-of-pocket expense.

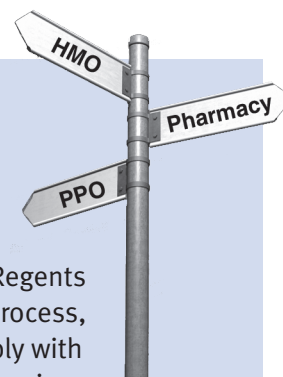
In addition, UC is examining the possibility of retaining specialty vendors to provide certain benefits and services, such as prescription drug benefits, mental health services, or chronic disease management, across all basic non-Medicare medical plans. Specialty providers may be able to offer higher quality and better value when compared to providing those benefits separately within each plan. With this approach, UC is attempting to better leverage the power of its size—nearly 113,000 employees and 37,000 retirees—to negotiate the best premium rates it can.

The bid process and vendor selection will continue through the summer. Any changes will be announced prior to Open Enrollment. UC will continue to consult

with retiree groups, as well as with faculty and staff groups, unions, administrators, and the Regents throughout the process, and UC will comply with any collective bargaining requirements for represented employees as appropriate.

“We are very enthusiastic about this approach to our medical plan offerings. We think it positions us well for the future, given all that is happening in the health care industry,” said Scott. “We know that our retirees will have many questions, and we will be doing all we can to keep them up to date as the bid process goes on. Most important, if changes are to occur, we will give retirees all the tools and information they need to make informed Open Enrollment decisions, as early as possible.”

More information about the bid process is available on the At Your Service website (atyourservice.ucop.edu/briefing). ➤



Redesigned At Your Service Debuts

At Your Service has a fresh look. The redesigned systemwide website for UC employee and retiree information about human resources and benefits launched in late January with improved navigation and several new features including:

- A Current News section specifically for retirees
- A listing of emeriti and retiree association contacts for each UC location, including links to association

or Emeriti/Retiree centers.

- Quick links to the most-requested tools, publications and other web pages.

The redesigned site continues to provide access to your personal UC account and benefits information as well as all the information you need about the benefits of belonging as a UC retiree. An online tour of the redesigned site is also available. ➤

New Dimensions

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Editor: Anne Wolf
anne.wolf@ucop.edu

Contributors: Norm Cheever, Susan Nelson, Steven Ong

Design: Kathy Kirkpatrick

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
HUMAN RESOURCES AND BENEFITS
P.O. Box 24570
Oakland, CA 94623-1570

Associate Vice President:
Judith W. Boyette

Executive Director, Client Relations and Diversity: Kay Miller

Director, Communications and Multimedia Services: Andy Evangelista

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Retiree Association Contacts

Use this listing if you are interested in joining an association or to inform your association of an address change. If you have moved away from your home campus emeriti/retiree association, you are welcome to join the association where you live.

If you have questions about your UCRS retirement benefits, call the UC Customer Service Center at 1-800-888-8267 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. PT)

Berkeley Retirement Center

510-642-5461, ucbrcc@berkeley.edu
Fax: 510-643-1460

UC Davis Retiree Center

Doreen Barcellona Strnad, Coordinator
530-752-5182, dastrnad@ucdavis.edu

UC Irvine Emeritae/i Association

949-824-6204, emeriti@uci.edu

UCI Retiree Relations Center

949-824-7769

LANL Retiree Association

Mary Mariner
505-672-1950
Chuck Mansfield
505-662-2115

LBNL Retiree Association

Bud Larsh
510-724-1202, almonlarsh2@juno.com

LLNL Employee Services Association

925-422-9402

UCLA Emeriti/Retirees Relations Center

310-825-7456, emeriti@errc.ucla.edu

President's and Regents' Retiree Association

Patricia Pelfrey
510-528-4490, ppelfrey@berkeley.edu

Note to associations: To update a listing, write to Anne Wolf at *New Dimensions* (email: anne.wolf@ucop.edu).

UC Riverside

Dericksen Brinkerhoff
951-682-329
dericksen.brinkerhoff@ucr.edu
Retirees: Sal Martino
714-854-0220, sal.m@adelphia.net

UCSD Retirement Resource Center

Suzan Cioffi, Director
858-534-4724, RetireeLinks@ucsd.edu
or Emeriti@ucsd.edu

UC San Francisco

Emeriti: Dr. Dorothy Rice
415-476-2771
Retirees: Frances Larragueta
415-776-7220

UC Santa Barbara Emeriti/Retiree Relations Center

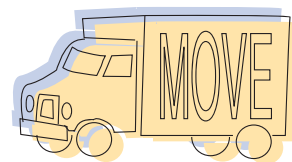
Carly Cutler
805-893-2168, carly.cutler@hr.ucsb.edu

UC Santa Cruz

Emeriti: Stanley D. Stevens
831-475-9172, sstevens@library.ucsc.edu
Retirees: Jerry Walters
831-475-0381, jwalters@cruzio.com

Are you moving?

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Comments or questions?

Write *New Dimensions* at:

University of California, Human Resources and Benefits
P.O. Box 24570, Oakland, CA 94623-1570

Email: NewDimensions-L@ucop.edu

For benefits questions:

UC Customer Service Center: 1-800-888-8267

Website address: atyourservice.ucop.edu

Retiree Newsletter on Audio Cassette

This newsletter is available on audio cassette tape for visually impaired and disabled retirees. If you are interested, call *New Dimensions* at 1-800-239-4002, extension 79836, and leave your name, address, and phone number. Please indicate that you want to receive *New Dimensions* on tape and future *New Dimensions* recordings will be sent to you. Please note that audio cassette tapes are generally mailed four weeks after each *New Dimensions* mailing.

