The same technology that makes photos clearer and movies more realistic is helping cardiologists at LSU Health Shreveport get a better view of the vessels and chambers of the human heart. For patients with heart problems, that means faster, safer and more accurate treatment with far less radiation.

The state-of-the-art technology is the heart of a new Electrophysiology (EP) lab, which will be used for a wide range of procedures – including treatment of abnormal heart rate and rhythms. Patients with these kinds of arrhythmias are sometimes treated with a procedure called catheter ablation, where a series of thin, flexible wires are guided through a small incision in the groin, neck or arm to the blood vessels in the heart. Energy directed through one of the catheters destroys small areas of tissue that are causing the problem.

Along with ablations, the new lab is especially suited for installing devices like pacemakers and defibrillators, said Assistant Professor of Cardiology and Director of Cardiac Electrophysiology Lab Sai Konduru, MD, who noted there is a backlog of patients throughout the state needing these treatments.

Heart of the Matter

• Ultrasound capabilities let doctors see a live picture inside the heart
• GPS-technology fits on the tip of a small flexible catheter to go directly to the origin of the abnormal rhythm
• 3D mapping shows a real-life image of the heart and its chambers
• High resolution, digital imaging lets doctors work in the heart with more precision and safety
• Ceiling-mounted rotating X-ray provides 90-degree visualization
• Flat screen monitors provide clear, unimpeded views for the procedure team

Professors Honored by Alma Maters

Dr. John T. Wilson, Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the Children’s Clinical Research Center, and Dr. Lester Wayne Johnson, Chief of Surgery at EA Conway Medical Center, have both been honored by their medical schools of training.

Dr. Wilson received the Tulane Medical Alumni Association’s 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award at his class’ 50th reunion. Early in his career, Dr. Wilson’s research findings showed that 78% of drugs lacked sufficient information for use in children. His subsequent contribution to the field of public health, specifically with getting products and drugs studied for children, were lauded.

The School of Medicine at LSU Health Sciences Center has named Dr. Johnson one of three 2012 Medical Alumni of the Year. A member of the Class of 1971, Dr. Johnson was recognized for his leadership in establishing the statewide emergency response network, his tireless advocacy for LSU medical education programs, and support of the state’s medical institutions. The award is given to alumni who work to better the LSU/HSC New Orleans School of Medicine, improve the profession and participate in important civic activities.

Chancellor’s Corner

The current transition from public to private management isn’t the first transformation for the three hospitals under the umbrella of LSU Health Shreveport. Over their long histories, EA Conway, LSU and Huey P Long Medical Centers have undergone several major changes.

All three of the hospitals were established as part of the state’s charity hospital system. Shreveport Charity Hospital was the second in the system, opening in downtown Shreveport in 1876. Mid-State Charity Hospital in Pineville admitted its first patient on October 7, 1939 and Northeast Louisiana Charity Hospital opened two years later in Monroe.

Over time, there have been multiple changes in oversight, administration, names and locations. Among the major events was the opening of the medical school in Shreveport and its subsequent merger with the hospital, creating the state’s first university teaching hospital. In 1976 all of the charity hospitals were put under the control of LSU. Shortly thereafter, residency programs were established at EA Conway, expanding its role to include both patient care and medical education. Meanwhile, HP Long also expanded its services, purchasing the England Air Force Base hospital in 1994 and locating outpatient clinics there. In 2003 and 2007 respectively, oversight of EA Conway and HP Long was transferred to the Shreveport campus.

Of all the changes over the last 137 years, the most important to date occurred when the LSU Board of Supervisors voted to allow the LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport to have its own Chancellor with the three hospitals brought under one system. This led to the achievement of true academic medical center status. Like the current effort, this move was not an abandonment of the hospital’s safety-net mission to the poor and uninsured. Instead it was an expansion of services, giving these same patients and others from around the region and state access to primary care services, along with specialized surgeries, life-saving care and complex treatments for adults and children.

It is estimated that there have been as many as 40 million patient visits to our three hospitals and their associated clinics since they opened. What has remained constant amid all of the changes over the years, is our commitment to provide the best possible care to the citizens of north Louisiana and beyond.

Robert A. Barish, MD MBA, Chancellor

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Who could have guessed that a drug developed to treat prostate problems could prevent male pattern baldness? That a discontinued anti-nausea drug could be reborn as a treatment for dreadfully leprosy? Or an unsuccessful high blood pressure treatment could gain new life helping men with erectile dysfunction?

Each of these scenarios is a real-life result of what is termed drug repurposing, and the seven-year-old innovative North Louisiana Experimental Therapeutics (INLET) program at LSU Health Shreveport is playing a part in this growing drug-development industry. Researcher James Cardelli, PhD, is the director of the high-tech “recycling” program. He said the idea is to get treatments into clinical trials faster and less expensively. Currently, it can take as long as 10 years and $1.5 billion to get a new drug from the research bench to pharmacy shelves.

Repurposing refers to studying therapies approved to treat one type of disease or condition to see if they are safe and effective for treating other diseases. Because these drugs have already passed through several phases of approval to identify their metabolism, safety and tolerance, in theory these phases don’t have to be repeated. INLET currently has a “library” of about 2500 drugs available for research discovery.

“Normalizing, trying to find a new drug is like finding a needle in a haystack,” Cardelli said, but the success rate of repurposing is 26%.

The scientists at LSU Health Shreveport are focused on screening the drugs, developing tests to analyze biologic activity and providing cancer models to test the lead drugs that emerge. With robotic and automated screening systems, INLET staff can generate and assess a month’s worth of data in just a few days. They work with researchers at LSU and at partner institutions in the state, including University of Louisiana at Monroe, Louisiana Tech, LSUS and the LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans, who each bring unique skills to the process of drug development.

Already INLET has been involved in ten different drug discovery and development research projects. A major success has been the support of six grants of $3 million and five more pending and planned grants that will total over $7 million. One patent has been secured on an anti-cancer drug that inhibits cancer in lab experiments. Repurposing refers to studying therapies approved to treat one type of disease or condition to see if they are safe and effective for treating other diseases. Because these drugs have already passed through several phases of approval to identify their metabolism, safety and tolerance, in theory these phases don’t have to be repeated. INLET currently has a “library” of about 2500 drugs available for research discovery.

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INLET is also developing ties with business experts and pharmaceutical companies to aid in moving drugs from the discovery phase to the drugstore. The hope is that this will lead to a profitable enterprise, local economic development and help Louisiana scientists in their quest to find drugs that can quickly provide real-life benefits.
What’s in a Name?

What is the common thread that connects Shreveport Charity Hospital, Confederate Memorial Medical Center, LSU Medical Center in Shreveport, LSU Health Sciences Center at Shreveport, and LSU Health Shreveport? They are the names given to the same institution over a period of 137 years.

On March 2, 1876, the Louisiana Legislature established the Shreveport Charity Hospital “for the reception and medical and surgical treatment of indigent and destitute sick and wounded persons, without distinction of race and color...” The Shreveport Charity Hospital served the local population from several different locations in downtown Shreveport before the move to a twenty-three acre plot at the corner of Kings Highway and Linwood Avenue. The new location also resulted in a new name. On June 3, 1953, the Confederate Memorial Medical Center (CMMC) was dedicated to the memory of the Confederate soldiers of the Civil War and was financed in part through the issuance of bonds secured by surpluses from the Confederate veterans’ and widows’ pension fund, hence the new name. The dedication took place on Confederate Memorial Day.

On June 7, 1965, Act 2 of the Louisiana Legislature established a branch of the LSU School of Medicine in Shreveport. The first class of medical students was admitted in 1969 and would utilize the facilities and personnel of the Confederate Memorial Medical Center for their clinical activities.

In the latter part of 1972, State Representative Alphonse Jackson, Jr. questioned the appropriateness of the hospital’s name. Two new names suggested were Northwest Louisiana Medical Complex and University Hospital, but the hospital’s name would remain Confederate Memorial Medical Center for more than five years.

The next name change was on July 28, 1978, prompted by the 1976 merger of the Confederate Memorial Medical Center and the LSU School of Medicine in Shreveport. This merger also transferred control of the CMMC from the State Charity Hospital System to the Louisiana State Board of Trustees and made the School of Medicine in Shreveport the first medical school in the state to have its own teaching hospital. The complex created by merging these two institutions into a single entity, joined not only by bricks and mortar, but also by philosophy, was known as the LSU Medical Center in Shreveport.

It was more than twenty years before the diverse composition of the Shreveport campus prompted another name change. The institution was much more than a medical center - with a hospital, a medical school, a graduate school and a school of allied health professions. Act 802 of the Louisiana Legislature, signed into law on July 2, 1999, stipulates that the name of the Louisiana State University Medical Center in Shreveport would be changed to the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center at Shreveport (LSUHSC-S).

It took just over ten years for the next change to occur. In October 2010, the LSU System Office adopted the LSU Health identity for all of its health related entities. LSUHSC-S is now known as LSU Health Shreveport.

Now, in 2013, another name change for the hospital is on the horizon although the institution’s proven dedication to patient care, education and research will remain the same.

Dr. Nanda Named Director of the American Board of Neurological Surgery

Anil Nanda, MD MPH, Chairman and Professor in the Department of Neurosurgery, has been named to a six-year term as a director of the American Board of Neurological Surgery (ABNS). ABNS is the primary professional organization in the field of neurosurgery and is the agency that approves board-certification for neurosurgeons. ABNS also works to maintain and elevate professional standards in the field and encourages the study and improvement of the practice of neurosurgery.

Student Spotlight

WHO: Jeffrey Weissman, MD/PhD student through joint program with Louisiana Tech. From Chicago and was a patent attorney for a biotechnology company before coming to LSU Health Shreveport.

WHY MD/PhD PROGRAM? I want to be prepared both to work with patients and to help develop new technologies for treatments. I really like the extensive clinical experience I can get at LSU Health, and Louisiana Tech’s biomedical engineering department has several nanotechnology projects that interested me.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Students complete the basic medical science course work, conduct PhD research and then complete the hospital/clinic rotations. So far I have completed my first two years of medical school coursework at LSU Health and a year of research at Tech. It has been a lot of hard work, but I have really enjoyed every part of the program.

FUTURE PLANS: To pursue a career in academic medicine and provide great patient care.

LSU Health Shreveport also offers a joint program through the Schools of Graduate Studies and Medicine.

Albert G. Smith, MD, was First Pathology Department Head

It was erroneously reported in the last issue of On the Inside that Dr. William R. Mathews was the first chair of the Pathology Department. Dr. Mathews was chief of the clinical Pathology Department at the Confederate Memorial Medical Center, a position he held from 1929 until his retirement in 1971.

It was Albert Goodin Smith, MD, who was appointed as the founding head of the Pathology Department of the LSU School of Medicine in Shreveport in 1970. Dr. Smith came to Shreveport from the University of Tennessee School of Medicine, where he served as professor and deputy chairman of the Pathology Department. Dr. Smith is a native of Charleston, Missouri and received his medical degree from the Washington University School of Medicine. He interned at St. Luke’s Hospital in St. Louis and served residencies in pathology at the University of Arkansas School of Medicine, Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons, and Duke University.

Dr. Smith would go on to serve as chairman of the Pathology Department until his retirement in 1995. During Dr. Smith’s twenty-five years, he contributed to the growth and development of the department, the medical school and the medical center.
Board of Regents Approve Funding for Endowed Professorships

The Louisiana Board of Regents has approved funding for four $100,000 professorships at LSU Health Shreveport.

The new professorships are: the Edward and Freda Green endowed professorship in surgical oncology, the Scotty and Larene Woodard endowed professorship in neurosurgery, the Nancy Jane Sentell Seagle endowed professorship in forensic psychiatry, and the Mary Louise and Jack R. Cassingham endowed professorship in oncology.

These endowed professorships are intended to help recruit and retain superior faculty members at Louisiana institutions by pairing a 60% private-sector gift with a 40% Board of Regents award. All donors were motivated by a desire to improve health care in north Louisiana.

Edward and Freda Green included the surgical oncology professorship in their will with the intention that the money would help doctors, researchers and healthcare providers find cures for the diseases and ailments that plague others. Edward Green, an oil and gas engineer for Wood Operating and fifty-year resident of Shreveport, suffered from cancer. Drs. G.E. Ghali and Benjamin Li of LSU Health treated Mr. Green, giving him five more years of quality life.

Scotty and Larene Woodard decided to donate after a coiling operation at LSU Medical Center successfully repaired an aneurysm that saved Larene’s life. The funding has established an annual neurosurgery symposium focusing on newer medical approaches to treatment and scientific inquiries that are fostering improved outcomes.

The Robert Arthur Seale Foundation gave specially to the Feist-Weiller Cancer Center to support an end-of-life palliative care program. Named the Nancy Jane Sentell Seagle Professorship, the Seale family is interested in quality of life issues for cancer patients who have often been through arduous treatments.

Community members Dr. Scott Cauinshing and Dr. Pamela McPherson wanted to create a professorship to honor Dr. Cauinshing’s parents, and to further the field of forensic psychiatry.

The LSU Health Sciences Foundation raises donor funds in support of educational, patient care and research programs of LSU Health Shreveport. These include support for faculty positions, academic initiatives, basic and clinical research and new technology. To donate, or learn more, visit their website at lsuhsfoundation.org.
Auction Items Run the Gamut for Life Savers

Feist-Weiller Cancer Center’s annual Life Savers fundraiser will be held Saturday, Sept. 7 at Sam’s Town on the Shreveport Riverfront. The silent auction will include a New Orleans weekend at the Blake Hotel on St. Charles Avenue with gift certificate for the Acme Oyster House, Cafe du Monde and Mother’s along with tickets to Preservation Hall and Audubon Zoo. If the beach is your ideal trip, bid on a Destin house sleeping 24 for five nights. Other destinations include Natchez, MS, Jefferson, TX and the Deer Lake Cabins located in the piney woods of East Texas, on the 800 secluded acre Double S Ranch.

Have a party for 50 catered by Superior Bar and Grill, host a football watch party for the LSU-Alabama game in the media room at the renovated Remington Hotel, or enjoy a 4-course dinner for 8 paired with fine wines at Wine Country—there’s a limo included to get you home safe!

Follow us on Facebook at www.feistweiller.org/LifeSavers to stay up-to-date with new items.

Life Savers sponsorships are available beginning at $2,000 for a table of 10 and $200 for individual tickets. Call Anne Higdon at 318.813.1423 to reserve your seat because Life Savers is always sold out!

Otolaryngology Department Pioneers New Use for Diagnostic Technology

LSU Medical Center is currently the only center in North America and one of three worldwide using Cellvizio, a tiny laser microscope, for otolaryngology/head & neck surgical procedures.

Professor & Chair Cherie-Ann Nathan, MD, knew that the FDA approved the world’s smallest microscope for use in the GI tract. She figured that since the head and neck encompasses part of the upper aerodigestive tract, which also includes the GI and lung, “applying this technology to the head and neck was a natural extension of the current applications of Cellvizio.”

How much to laser? Which precancerous lesions need to be addressed? How aggressive can one be?

“Surgeons and scientists are making strides answering these questions, and Cellvizio may help detect individual cells that need to be surgically excised,” Dr. Nathan said.

She will present her findings on this novel application at the American Meeting of Otolaryngology this fall, along with Drs. Vikas Mehta, Timothy Lian, and Shubnum Chaudhery. Moving forward, Dr. Nathan and her team will study how Cellvizio can benefit patients in clinical trials involving curcumin.

Pulmonary specialists Dr. Adam Wellikoff and Dr. Bob Holladay first began using Cellvizio at LSU Health Shreveport in August of 2012.

New Leaders and Faculty

David S. Burkett, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, E&A Conway
Sherin H. Mercer, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Family Medicine
Charles J. Fox III, MD, Clinical Professor, Anesthesiology
John A. Saus, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor, Anesthesiology
Jennifer Y. Treadwell, MS, Instructor, Pediatrics

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LSU Health Shreveport now has a blog, LSUMed, at blog.lsuhscshreveport.edu. Managed by Communications & Public Affairs, the blog features the expertise of faculty and staff on health topics in an easy to understand way.

Coming Soon! Fall 2013

August 7 – Dance for Parkinson’s Disease, 11 am, Centenary College Kilpatrick Auditorium, Room 101
August 10 – School of Allied Health Professions Graduation, 10 am, Shreveport Convention Center
September 7 – Life Savers, 7 pm, Sam’s Town Hotel & Casino
October 26 – Great Pumpkin Run for Research, 8 am, Centenary College Gold Dome

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