

Molecular Testing Achieves National Levels at MCVH's New Diagnostics Laboratory

This month, after putting the finishing touches on its brand-new, high-tech Molecular Diagnostics Clinical Laboratory, the VCU Health System will put itself on par with the United States' top testing facilities. With its 6,000 square feet of space, the lab also stakes claim as Virginia's largest medical center-based molecular testing facility, and one of the largest of its kind in the country.

"This laboratory is at the cutting edge of diagnostic pathology," says Dr. Carleton T. Garrett, VCUHS professor of pathology who, along with Dr. Andrea Ferreira-Gonzalez, was a leading force in bringing the project to fruition. "With this laboratory, the VCU Health System has positioned itself at the forefront of molecular testing on the national level."

The \$1.7-million investment in the lab includes newly renovated space, plus the addition of personnel and equipment to handle increasing volumes of HIV and Hepatitis C-related testing. To learn more about the lab, please call 828-9564.

VCU's Massey Cancer Center Offers Free Evening Seminar Focusing on Colon Cancer

Basketball legend Julius "Dr. J" Irving is doing it. So is popular fashion designer Vera Wang. They're both talking about colorectal cancer in the American Cancer Society's new campaign to promote National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. This Tuesday, March 27, VCU's Massey Cancer Center also invites *you* to talk about the disease—the third most common cancer among men and women.

Fear and embarrassment about the subject often prevent people from asking questions about colorectal screenings. Therefore, only about a third of all cases are detected early, when five-year survival rates can be as high as 90 percent with treatment. Although colorectal cancer is second only to lung cancer in terms of the lives it claims, new cases are declining. Research suggests the decline is due to increased screening and polyp removal.

During the free seminar, the Massey Cancer Center will host healthcare experts and colon cancer survivors who will discuss early detection and diagnosis strategies, risk factors, and

advances in treatment—like clinical trials. The event, co-sponsored by the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service and the American Cancer Society, will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center, 5403 Monument Avenue. For details, call the Massey Cancer Center's Patient Resource Libraries at 828-8709.

Doctor's Day Honors Physicians in a New Way Thanks to Local Group Effort

On March 30, the Richmond Academy of Medicine Alliance (RAMA) will honor Richmond physicians on National Doctor's Day with a new twist. RAMA, whose membership is made up of spouses of Richmond Academy of Medicine doctors—including many from the VCUHS—opted to utilize its time and resources for community service rather than for a party for doctors to celebrate the importance of their work. To honor Richmond physicians and support its own mission to promote community health and education, RAMA will provide dinner for about 200 homeless guests at the 302 Center downtown—in what hopefully will be a long-standing Doctor's Day tradition.