

Mario Capecchi:

A Day in the Life of a Nobel Laureate

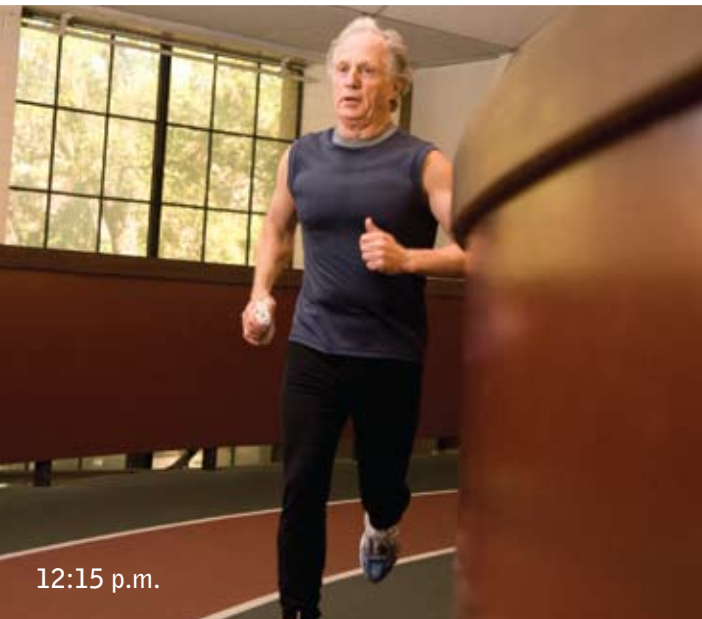
Photos by Sean Graff



5 a.m.



2 p.m.



12:15 p.m.



11:15 a.m.



10:25 a.m.

3 a.m. The phone rings—an unusual ringing pattern—and Laurie Fraser, Mario Capecchi's wife, answers it. A serious voice with a heavy Nordic accent says he's calling from Stockholm, Sweden. She hands the phone to her husband; Capecchi learns he has won the 2007 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine. "It was a fantastic surprise," said Capecchi. "Nobody ever expects a Nobel Prize."

5 a.m. After a shower, coffee and toast, Capecchi starts returning media calls from all over the world. "No, I don't speak Italian," he patiently explains to another Italian reporter. His first outgoing call, however, was a 3:30 a.m. wake-up call to his daughter, Misha, 23, who's finishing an art degree at a California University.

5:30 a.m. Local television crews begin interviewing Capecchi.

6:30 a.m. Fraser, who worked in Capecchi's lab for 13 years, leaves the house to feed the horses and chickens at the family's property in Draper. "The animals don't know you've won a Nobel," she jokes.

9 a.m. Capecchi arrives at his office and asks his assistant, Fran Orfino, to send e-mails to thank those instrumental in his career, including the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, NIH, and the Mathers Foundation. Orfino's official duties include typing Capecchi's handwritten scientific papers. The geneticist says his thought process is more in sync if he writes, rather than types, them.

9:10 a.m. Word spreads that Capecchi has arrived. Members of his lab, who have been pacing anxiously all morning, break into spontaneous applause. Nearly 20 grad students, post docs, fellows, and scientists from around the world work in Capecchi's lab. "His door is always open, and they are his first priority," says Kay Higgins, Capecchi's lab manager. "But he's not one to hover. He gives them a huge amount of freedom."

10 a.m. Capecchi graciously holds the door open for his colleagues before winding down the "DNA Steps" to the Eccles Institute of Human Genetics auditorium, where a news conference is being held. Hundreds of people pack into the room to hear Utah's first-ever Nobel Prize winner.

10:25 a.m. The standing ovation continues even as Capecchi motions to the crowd to be seated. "You'll embarrass me," he begins. "Please forgive my lack of eloquence; this is going to be completely ad-libbed. I've been up since three o'clock this morning, and probably not even coherent at this point. But I do want to take this opportunity mostly, like I had an Oscar, to thank people. And there are many, many people to thank." Capecchi thanks the University and each of his many lab members, past and present. "This is a marvelous tribute not to just my own doggedness but also to their perseverance and to their skill and dedication . . . Most of all, I want to thank my family: Laurie, and also, my daughter, Misha."

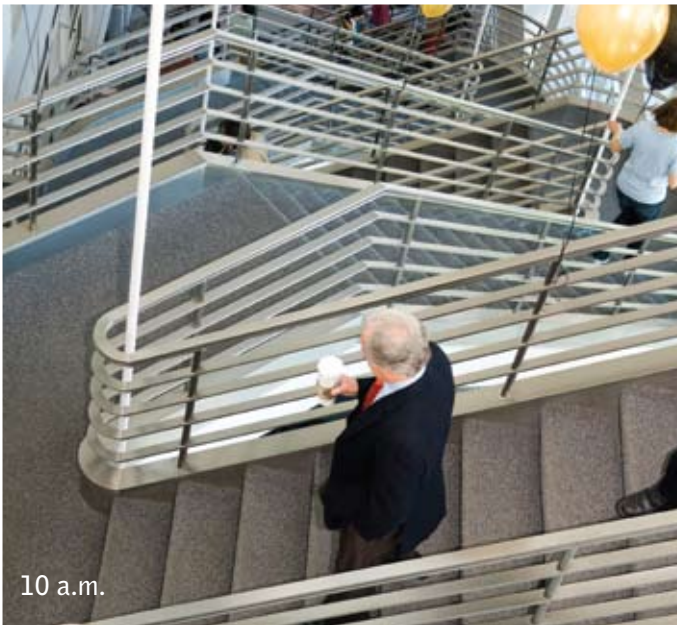
11:15 a.m. Capecchi returns to his office and continues to receive congratulatory calls, e-mails, and cables including one from his mentor and fellow Nobel laureate James Watson, and another from the Italian Ambassador to the United States. The view from his office overlooks the entire valley. "Utah provided wide open space and an entirely new canvas upon which I could create a new career. I love looking across long distances. I think it sort of opens up my mind."

12:15 p.m. As disciplined with his daily exercise as he is with his science, Capecchi heads to the University's fieldhouse. His regular lunchtime routine includes running for five to 10 miles, lifting weights, and often visiting his colleagues in the nearby Department of Biology. Today he makes a concession and cuts his routine short.

2 p.m. The Department of Human Genetics hosts a party to honor their Nobel-prize winning co-chair, Ray Gesteland, Capecchi's longtime colleague, ruffles Capecchi's hair after someone shared that her son thinks he looks like Einstein.

3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Capecchi goes to KUED, where he's interviewed by several national television programs.

7 p.m. Capecchi arrives home, after a long day that included nearly 50 interviews. "He was a little dazed," said Fraser. "He's a quiet man, and that was a lot of talking for him."



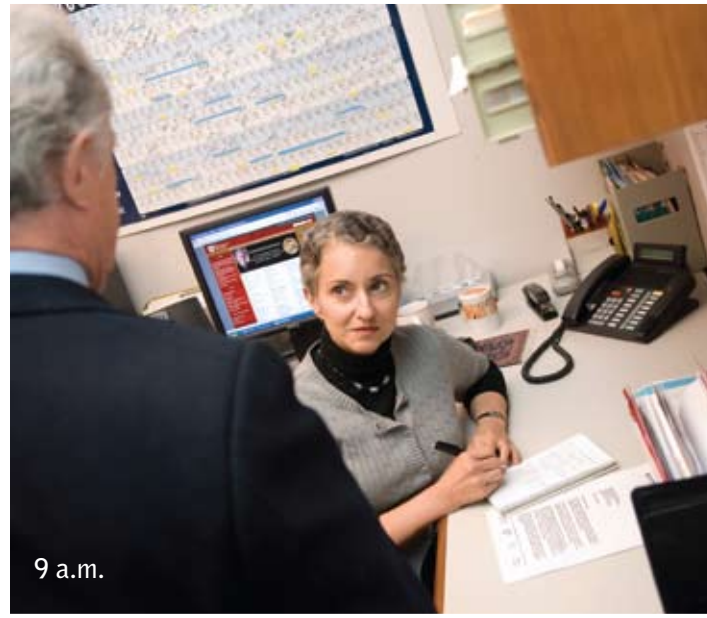
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9:10 a.m.

November 2007

FOR STAFF AND FRIENDS OF UNIVERSITY HEALTH CARE



AirMed, Flight Program of the Year, Lands a New Home

AirMed was named International Program of the Year by the Association of Air Medical Services. With a fleet of four helicopters and two fixed-wing aircraft, AirMed's adult/pediatric and high-risk OB teams fly more than 2,500 missions a year. The 110-member crew includes flight nurses, paramedics, respiratory therapists, pilots, mechanics, flight coordinators, and administrative staff.

U recognizes AirMed achievements at dedication ceremony for new helipad

With their sleek aircraft, black flight suits, and heroic, life-saving missions, it's no surprise that AirMed crew members enjoy a sort of rock-star status around the hospital. Now they have the international reputation to boot.

The Association of Air Medical Services (AAMS), which represents nearly 500 medical transport programs worldwide, voted AirMed the 2006 International Program of the Year for its "superior level of patient care, quality leadership, safety, and commitment to the community."

Now when **David Entwistle**, CEO of University Hospitals & Clinics, claims AirMed is the best air medical transport program in the country, he can add that peers from around the world agree with him.

"The recognition from AAMS is a pretty big badge of honor to wear," says **Brian Simpson**, R.N., AirMed's program manager. "It took a lot of work and our entire team—past and present—to get it."

AirMed was also honored locally by *Utah Business Magazine* as one of the publication's "Health Care Heroes for 2007." The magazine cited the program's commitment to providing exceptional service and patient care as well as its commitment to ongoing research, something that makes the U's flight service unique in the field of air medical transport.

On Sept. 28, **A. Lorris Betz**, M.D., Ph.D., senior vice president for health sciences, **David Entwistle**, and **Margaret Pearce**, R.N., chief nursing officer, joined with hospital employees, donors, and friends atop the new helipad to congratulate the crew on its recent recognition and to welcome AirMed back home. For the past 11 months, AirMed had been working from a temporary home about a quarter mile from University Hospital. Simpson estimates that the team clocked 100,000 miles in the van transporting patients and equipment.

During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Entwistle unveiled a plaque commemorating AirMed's designation as International Program of the Year and a plaque honoring the memory of four crew members who died while rescuing others: pilot **Louis Merz**, nurse **Shayne Carnahan**, R.N., paramedic **Tim Hynes**, and pilot **Stan Berg**.

A Life-Saving Mission in the Cedar Mountains

It was a warm and sunny day in October 2003, when Vaughn and Jennifer Kinder set off on a scenic flight in their single-engine, four-seater plane.

The Kinders, who are both pilots, and two friends were flying over the rugged terrain of the Cedar Mountains, about 50 miles west of Salt Lake City, when the plane crashed into the hillside.

Vaughn Kinder remembers fighting to stay conscious, unaware of how seriously he was injured. His entire focus was on his wife and two passengers.

With equipment badly damaged, he turned to an old cell phone to call 911. "I was able to talk to dispatch by holding the phone two feet above my head," he recalled. A search-and-rescue effort began.

Waiting for help to arrive, the Kinders were surrounded by an eerie stillness, exchanging only occasional words as Jennifer went in and out of consciousness. An F-16 fighter pilot who happened to be training in the area honed in on the plane's emergency locator transmitter and dropped a flare identifying the crash site. AirMed soon landed nearby.

"It is hard to express how joyous I felt at the sound of those helicopter blades," Kinder says. "The greatest guys in the world were soon jumping all over the hill." He recalls a flight nurse telling him he had just minutes to live. Tragically,



STEVEN LETCH

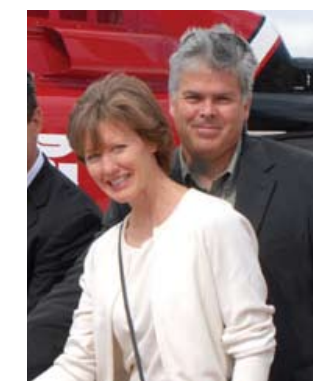
Pediatrician Mandy Allison, M.D., takes a break from her day to talk to patient Grace Galea and her mother, Katy, at the South Main Public Health Center. Underserved women and children receive health care at South Main through a partnership between the U and the Salt Lake Valley Health Department.

Community Outreach U Collaboration improves health care for underserved women and children

When Katy Galea and her 4-year-old daughter, Grace, visit the Salt Lake Valley Health Department's South Main Public Health Center, it's not unusual for employees to stop them to say hello.

Katy and Grace know the South Main staff well. Grace was born with a chromosome 7q deletion syndrome, which requires extensive medical care—usually a couple of doctor visits a month. When Grace's pediatrician, **Carrie L. Byington**, M.D., professor of pediatrics, is not in, Katy is comfortable working with the other physicians and staff. "I like all of the doctors, residents, and nurses at South Main," she says. "They are so good to get me the information and help I need."

See COMMUNITY on reverse



STEVEN LETCH
Jennifer and Vaughn Kinder, who were rescued by AirMed four years ago, attended the dedication ceremony for the new helipad. "For many people, [this program] means they will have the opportunity to continue with their lives," said Jennifer Kinder.

See RESCUE on reverse

Patient Care

Reach Out And Read *Making Literacy Part of a Healthy Checkup*

When 2½ year-old **José** comes for his well-child visit, he gets measured and weighed, his heart checked, several immunization shots, and a book about trucks. “We use the books as a tool to see how the child is developing and how they interact with the book and their parents,” explains **Cindy Gellner, M.D.**, who sees a diverse population at the Westridge Health Center.

The clinic’s cupboards are lined with books for all developmental stages: books full of baby faces for infants; board books with easy-to-turn pages for toddlers; as well as books in nine different languages. “I’ve had parents say this is the first book their child has ever received,” says Gellner. For parents who can’t read, she encourages them to make up a story to go along with the picture.

A “checkup” on literacy is now part of the well-child visits at three University Health Care clinics—Redwood, Stansbury, and Westridge—and at the University of Utah Pediatric Clinic in the hospital. With grant money, these clinics have implemented the Reach Out and Read Program

(www.reachoutandread.org), which advocates for literacy promotion to be a standard part of pediatric care. The American Academy of Pediatrics has approved it and more than 46,000 health professionals nationwide have put it to work.

“We don’t just look at the child’s physical well being at well-child checks,” says **Elizabeth Smith, M.D.**, a pediatrician at the Stansbury Health Center. “We also check where the child is developmentally, and language skills are part of that.” She cites several studies have shown that children who are introduced to reading earlier, have improved language and cognitive development.

“Most of my parents don’t have a lot of time and resources, so it makes this program especially important,” says **Margaret Solomon, M.D.**, at the Redwood Health Center, where more than half her patients are on Medicaid. “It helps prepare these children for preschool and kindergarten by introducing them to colors, numbers, and most importantly a love of books.”

To donate gently used books or funds to help clinics continue providing books to children, call 587-5947.



Cindy Gellner, M.D., a pediatrician at the U’s Westridge Health Center, shares a book with Joshua and Bella Ramirez. Through the Reach Out and Read program, a literary checkup is now a standard part of their pediatric care.

Six-month-old Joshua Ramirez receives a book at his well-child visit at the Westridge Health Center.

COMMUNITY *continued from cover*

Like the majority of patients at South Main, Galea, 34, who is from Nicaragua, speaks Spanish. She has learned to speak English, but since most of the physicians and staff are bilingual, Galea has never had any difficulty communicating with them.

Nearly 20 years ago the University joined forces with the Salt Lake Valley Health Department to offer high-quality prenatal and pediatric care to the uninsured and low-income women and children in our community. The Health Department provided the location and support staff, and the University provided the physicians and clinicians.

The collaboration, which originally focused on providing prenatal care through the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, has grown to include the Department of Pediatrics and nurse midwives from the College of Nursing. Pediatrics began with four residents and one faculty member working at South Main. Today, there are 21 residents—representing one-third of all pediatric residents at the U—who complete their entire three-year outpatient care requirement at South Main. Residents also conduct clinical studies to improve medical care.

“Our association with the health department has been a successful one, helping the University bring its expertise and services into the community while also furthering two important missions of the University: education and research,” said **A. Lorris Betz, M.D., Ph.D.**, senior vice president for health sciences.

“South Main is a beautiful example of how the community can be better served when agencies work together,” said **Karen F. Buchi, M.D.**, professor of pediatrics and South Main’s pediatric medical director.



On Oct. 1 officials from the Salt Lake Valley Health Department and the University of Utah joined with Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Corron for the dedication ceremony of the new South Main Public Health Center at 3690 South Main. Each year, South Main receives nearly 42,000 patient visits.

Green Space

U Steps Up Recycling

8.6 tons: That’s how much garbage the hospital’s Environmental Services staff handles every day. It’s a monumental job: and one that would be easier if they threw it all into one big bin. But the department is committed to recycling as much garbage as possible.

Rick Lee, Environmental Services director, says there has been an outpouring of concern from employees regarding the recycling program. “We are not where we want to be,” says Lee. “But we are moving in that direction and appreciate their interest and support.”

The department’s goal this year is to raise the percentage of recycled waste from 18 percent to 24 percent of the total garbage collected from the hospital and medical school. The strategy is to expand the program to include mixed paper, such as color paper, magazines, news

paper and phone books. Most nursing units and offices should already have a Shred-it box and bins for recycling white and mixed paper.

Environmental Services soon will be distributing recycling containers that accept both aluminum cans and plastic water bottles. These containers will be placed in the cafeteria and near vending machines in many of the larger break areas. Lee also has expanded the recycling program to Huntsman Cancer Hospital, University Orthopaedic Center, University Neuropsychiatric Institute, Moran Eye Center, and community clinics.

“The number one reason we make these efforts is to save the environment,” explains Lee. But there’s also an economic incentive. By not sending this recycled waste to the landfill, the hospital saves more than \$55,000 annually.

If you would like your work area to participate in recycling or have questions, contact Environmental Services Manager **Connie Becerri** at 585-2214.

U Hospital’s Annual Recycling Report Card:

- 312 tons (40%) of cardboard
- 113 tons (22%) of white paper
- 129 tons (98%) of shredded documents
- 30 tons (85%) of rag linen



STEVEN LEITCH

a note from david entwistle

Dear Colleagues:

I’m pleased to report that University Hospital employees, find more satisfaction in their jobs than many of their peers nationwide.

In its 2007 survey, the Morehead consulting and opinion firm found job satisfaction declined among hospital workers across the country—but not at University Hospital. The majority of our employees rated their job satisfaction above the national average in just about every major category.

Those findings are reassuring, because they suggest that we’ve created an environment in which we have a sense of accomplishment and pride in what we do and where we work. They’re also significant for another reason: I believe employees who feel valued and respected provide better patient care, and that, as you know, is our top priority.

The Morehead survey tells us:

- You like your jobs and are proud to work at University Hospital.
- You receive the training to do your jobs well.
- You like your co-workers and your supervisors treat you with respect.
- You would recommend University Hospital as a good place to work.
- You believe we offer high-quality health care.

The survey also tells us you’re concerned about the following:

- University Hospital’s commitment to environmental responsibility
- Opportunities for career development
- Salary levels
- Questions about whether your suggestions to improve the workplace are seriously considered

I assure you we do take these concerns seriously. We have developed a plan to address those areas where we can improve your job satisfaction—and employee input and participation from every level will be vital to our success. Supervisors will work with employees to develop plans to improve satisfaction in their areas. We encourage your honest and open participation. By openly communicating with each other, we can make this an even better place to work.

While we strive to make University Hospital the best working environment, each of us must do everything we can to ensure our patients have the best possible experience. More than 80 percent of University Hospital patients report they are happy with their stay. But we can do even better. Our goal should be 100 percent patient satisfaction. If you think of it in academic terms, it’s the difference between a B- and an A+.

Whether it’s job satisfaction or patient satisfaction, we can not afford to settle for anything less than our very best. If each of us does everything we can to make a patient’s stay as good as it can be, we can make University Hospital an even better place for health care.

Sincerely,

David Entwistle



David Entwistle, CEO, University Hospitals & Clinics

Health Sciences Transitions



E. Dale Abel, M.D., Ph.D., has been appointed chief of the Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes. Abel is also an associate professor of internal medicine and biochemistry and an investigator in the Program in Human Molecular Biology and Genetics at the University of Utah School of Medicine. Abel’s pioneering work in glucose transport in the heart helped foster his current research interests, which include the molecular mechanisms that are responsible for cardiac dysfunction in diabetes.

Joyce Mitchell, Ph.D., has been appointed associate vice president for health sciences information technology. In this role, Mitchell is responsible for coordinating and directing the



information technology resources for the health sciences academic mission in collaboration with the clinical and University IT services. She will continue to serve as professor and chair of the medical school’s Department of Biomedical Informatics.



Susan J. Roberts, M.Div., the hospital’s new chaplain, comes to the U from the Alta Bates Summit Medical Center in Berkeley, Calif. Roberts has a background in church lay ministry and child care, along with a master’s in divinity and a bachelor’s degree in infant/toddler development and child life. Roberts said she looks forward to making contact with every inpatient at University Hospital as well as supporting hospital staff.

grants & studies

Jody Rosenblatt, Ph.D., assistant professor of oncological sciences and an investigator with the University’s Huntsman Cancer Institute, received a New Innovator Award given by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Rosenblatt will receive a five-year, \$1.5 million grant. Her research focuses on identifying signals that govern how dying cells are squeezed out of tissues by surrounding cells in both normal cellular function and tumor formation.

The NIH established the New Innovator Awards to provide funding for researchers as part of an NIH Roadmap for Medical Research initiative that tests new approaches to supporting research. Rosenblatt is in the first group of scientists to receive the New Innovator Awards.

Gang Liu, Ph.D., research assistant professor of radiology and University of Utah Brain Institute investigator, received a \$240,000 grant to study why Alzheimer’s patients have higher levels of metal ions in their brains. Funded by the Alzheimer’s Association, Liu’s research could lead to new treatments that use nanotechnology and help slow the progression of the disease.

Ronald M. Harris, M.D., MBA, associate professor of dermatology and adjunct assistant professor of pathology, received a 2007 College of American Pathologists (CAP) Foundation Humanitarian Grant Award to help with his work to develop HIV/AIDS testing in Nakuru, Kenya. Harris, also associate vice president for health sciences diversity, will use the grant to buy medical equipment and supplies to improve the quality of HIV/AIDS screenings in the region.

Department of Anesthesiology researchers are looking for people with fibromyalgia to take part in the clinical trial of new treatments and rehabilitation programs for the condition. Those interested in joining the study can call the Pain Research Center at (801) 585-7697 or visit <http://hwuwww.painresearch.utah.edu/clinical/IPPTF.htm>.

The Department of Andrology is looking for healthy males between the ages of 18-40 for an IRB-approved infertility research study. Compensation will be provided for time and travel. For more information, call 587-3777.



STEVEN LEITCH

A Global U

Milka Visnjic, Croatia

Every Friday, the staff on 2 East at the U Hospital wears red scrubs. Not because they’re all die-hard Ute fans, but because they’re fans of **Milka Visnjic**, one of 2 East’s housekeepers, whose work uniform is red scrubs. “We do this to show all of our housekeepers that we appreciate them, but it started because of Milka,” says Health Unit Coordinator **Kim Wilhelm**, who recalls when Visnjic was relocated to a different area of the hospital. “We made a lot of noise and fought like crazy to get her back,” says Wilhelm.

Ten years ago Visnjic arrived in the United States as a refugee from her war-torn homeland, former Yugoslavia. Working hard was part of her upbringing, doing chores on her family’s farm in Croatia and then working in a bakery in her village. Transferring this work ethic to the two jobs she works here came naturally to her—especially since it meant a better life for her two children.

“I know America gives me chance for new life so it make me want to work hard,” says Visnjic, who spoke no English when she arrived. As a stranger in a strange land—new language, culture, food—Visnjic

absorbed the culture shock and set her sights on learning something new everyday. “My mom likes learning the English language because it means more opportunities and it makes things easier for her,” explains her 26-year-old son Mile. “Every day she tries to learn some new words.”

Wilhelm has noticed Visnjic’s constant drive to learn. “She is always moving, cleaning, working hard to make our floor look the best it can. At the same time she is asking questions and pushing herself to learn more.”

About every three years, Visnjic visits her elderly parents who live in Karlovac, Croatia. But she has no intention of ever moving back to her native land. “I’m happy I’m here,” says Visnjic. “People are good in this country and everybody likes you.”



PHOTO BY STEVEN LEITCH