

A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A

CANCER CENTER

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

December 23, 2003

Proposed to the University Council by

**Gordhan L. Patel
Vice President for Research
& Associate Provost**

I. Abstract

Developing a Cancer Center at the University of Georgia will create a means to intensify internal faculty involvement in cross-departmental, cancer-related research, and it will create an institutional profile and point of contact to improve external interactions with other institutions, funding agencies, and the wider medical community. The Center will serve as the UGA component of a Georgia Cancer Coalition “Cancer Center of Excellence” in conjunction with the Medical College of Georgia. The Center will report directly to the Vice President for Research.

Internally, the creation of the University of Georgia Cancer Center (UGACC) is a continuation of developments already underway to support interdisciplinary research in the biomedical sciences at UGA. The Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute (BHSI), authorized by the Faculty Council in April of 2001, has contributed significantly to the increase in extramural research funding at UGA from the NIH and other health-oriented sources. The creation of the Cancer Center adds a specialized focus in the University's overall biomedical research strategy. Key relationships between the BHSI and the UGACC are already clearly delineated: (1) the Director of the BHSI will serve as a member of the Board of Advisors of the UGACC and the director of UGACC will serve on the Biomedical Advisory Council of the BHSI; (2) while UGACC will offer no coursework, it will recruit graduate students and contribute instructional programs in collaboration with the BHSI-sponsored doctoral program in Biomedical Sciences; (3) support for UGACC initiatives will continue along the lines of the recent BHSI-administered Georgia Cancer Symposium, and (4) the UGACC and the BHSI will collaborate in the development of extramural grant proposals.

2. Background

Cancer will cause the deaths of about 550,000 Americans annually, 31,000 of those in Georgia, and impacts each of us. Programs aimed at reducing the cancer mortality rates are expanding nationally. The University of Georgia faculty have in place many cancer-related programs located in departments and schools that span the Athens campus, including the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, the College of Pharmacy, the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, the College of Education, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and the School of Social Work. The cancer-related research programs are governed by the Vice President for Research. In addition, many faculty participate in outreach programs governed by the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach. The formation of the Georgia Cancer Coalition (GCC) and the desire of the University to participate in this Coalition have illuminated these cancer-related programs and activities in Athens and revealed a need to form a Cancer Center to assist in coordinating these diverse programs.

As a statewide initiative, the GCC has established several key goals:

- Prevent cancer and detect existing cancers earlier;
- Improve access to quality care for all Georgians with cancer;
- Recruit distinguished scientists and clinicians to Georgia and assist in advancing the research infrastructure;
- Train future cancer researchers and caregivers;
- Realize economic benefits from controlling and/or eradicating cancer by building partnerships with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

Clearly, the University of Georgia has programs that relate directly to each of these objectives. Provost Karen Holbrook and Vice President of Research Gordhan Patel appointed Dr. David Puett as representative of the University to the GCC. Dr. Puett subsequently completed a survey of cancer-related activities on campus, at St. Mary's Hospital, Athens Regional Medical Center, and the Athens medical community dedicated to cancer detection and care. This survey was used as the basis for an application to the GCC as a Cancer Center of Excellence. The GCC mandated that the University and the Medical College of Georgia submit a joint application for designation as a Cancer Center of Excellence, and this application received top ranking among all those received. Moreover, University faculty and administrators organized and participated in the first annual GCC Cancer Symposium, held at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education on June 3, 2002. The Symposium, organized by Dr. James Michael Pierce (UGA Professor at the Complex Carbohydrate Research Center) was sponsored by the Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute as their first annual BHSI symposium. BHSI personnel coordinated and provided significant effort in organizing and administering the Symposium. Funds were also provided by the American Cancer Society and several vendors, including Applera, Amersham Biosciences, Bresagen, Inc., and Fisher Scientific. The Symposium accelerated interest in developing and expanding the cancer program at UGA and in Athens, and has led to this proposal to establish a Cancer Center at the University. In addition, GCC has already provided UGA and the Medical College of Georgia (MCG) a joint planning grant of \$300,000 over the past 18 months for the development of cancer research initiatives at the respective institutions. These planning funds in turn have enabled the two institutions to submit to GCC a Center of Excellence grant to facilitate progress toward designation as a National Cancer Institute Comprehensive Cancer Center.

At present, OVPR records indicate that UGA receives > \$1.7 M/yr in direct costs from sponsored research funded by the National Cancer Institute. In addition, grant support is received for cancer research from other agencies, notably the American Cancer Society, as well as from other Institutes within the National Institutes of Health. We currently have six GCC Cancer Scholars at the University and two Scholars who have been approved but not formally designated: Dr. Massimo Palmarini, Dr. Steve Dalton, Dr. Walter Schmidt, Dr.

Scott Dugan, Dr. Brian Cummings, Dr. Lance Wells, Dr. Nathan Bowen, and Dr. Ying Xu.

Interested faculty have been meeting over the past year to organize future cancer program expansion and provide a proposed budget to the GCC for the UGA portion of the Cancer Center of Excellence (CCE). A partial list of these faculty is included in the Appendix. We feel that there is indeed a timely need and interest in forming a Cancer Center at the University.

3. Objectives

The University of Georgia Cancer Center will consist of a centralized administrative core overseeing three interrelated missions.

A. GEORGIA CANCER COALITION CANCER CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

(CCE): It is anticipated that the Cancer Center will receive funds from the GCC administered by OVPR to maintain the University's component of the Cancer Center of Excellence. These funds will be used to support many of the activities of the Center, including the cancer-related research programs proposed by UGA faculty as part of the CCE application. The MCG-UGA CCE pre-proposal received the highest priority for submitting a full proposal. Funds have been requested for the administration of a seed grants program, graduate and postdoctoral fellowships, undergraduate research awards, a seminar program, as well as to promote several research initiatives and establish core facilities. The UGA Cancer Center seed grants program will operate separately from the MCG/UGA small grants program administered by the BHSI and focus on stimulating cancer-related research at UGA. The initial budget period is for three years, 2004-2007, with renewals anticipated at 3-year intervals.

B. COORDINATION: The Center will assist in bringing together researchers, physicians, and administrators from the University, the Medical College of Georgia, the Athens' Healthcare Community, and other members of the GCC to foster and initiate cancer-related programs. For example, the Center will assist researchers in obtaining tissue and serum samples for study from the GCC tissue bank at MCG and from physicians in Athens. In addition, several programs on campus wish to develop programs that can be utilized by the GCC and NCI. There is an interest by the Center for Gerontology, for example, in studying cancer in the aging population, and they have requested assistance in, "networking and learning more about individuals...who may be interested in trying to take advantage of grant opportunities from NIH in cancer in the aging population." In addition, a program headed by Dr. Dean Krugman, School of Journalism and Mass Communication that includes nine other faculty, will provide training and leadership to: 1) develop and assess health communication campaigns and interventions 2) enhance media coverage of key cancer issues, 3) foster better patient-provider interpersonal communication, and 4) assist in evaluating health communication proposals at the state and county level.

In addition, the Center will assist faculty in developing courses that relate to cancer programs. For example, an interdisciplinary course cross-listed in several departments will likely be developed in Cancer Biology. This course will cover signal transduction pathways, tumor suppressors, therapeutics, pathology, and will utilize both UGA and MCG faculty. The Center does not seek to offer formal degree programs or distinct courses; however, the Center is working with MCG to develop a Ph.D. program in Cancer Biology/Oncology. At UGA, this program will be administered by the Division of Molecular Medicine of the Biomedical and Health Science Institute as a specialty in Cancer Biology/Oncology. The Cancer Center will work closely with the BHSI in matters relating to instruction and curriculum development. Moreover, monthly meetings will be scheduled with the Division Director of Molecular Medicine (BHSI) to discuss potential interactions between the BHSI and the Cancer Center, facilitate integration of cancer-related research programs with the BHSI, and ensure communication between the BHSI and Cancer Center.

The biotechnology industry is growing, and there is increased interest in developing cancer therapeutics and diagnostics, as well as nutraceuticals that are palliatives for chemotherapy. Proxima Therapeutics of Atlanta, developers of novel radiation therapy treatments for breast and brain tumors, has utilized facilities at the College of Veterinary Medicine for testing prototypes of its drug delivery device. This and other opportunities for biotechnology companies on the campus will be promoted by the Cancer Center.

C. OUTREACH: Many faculty who will be members of the Center participate in seminar and speaker programs arranged by campus Outreach, as well as by the American Cancer Society and other organizations. The Cancer Center will help coordinate opportunities for speakers on cancer-related topics. Moreover, the Center will establish a cancer-related seminar program to assist speakers from other GCC institutions, as well as from outside Georgia.

Another focus of the outreach mission of the Center will be to foster collaborations and interactions between University faculty and administrators and the Healthcare community in Athens and other areas of the state. There are many opportunities to promote interaction with physicians and social workers, for example, by establishing joint programs or organizing seminar exchange programs.

4. Governance

The University of Georgia Cancer Center will report directly to the Vice President for Research and Associate Provost, in consultation with the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach. The governance structure of the Cancer Center includes the following participants: the Director, Staff Investigators, Affiliated Faculty, and the Advisory Board.

Center Director

The Director reports to and serves at the discretion of the Vice President for Research. A Cancer Center Advisory Board will provide advice to the Director about strategic directions and activities. The Director will preside over meetings of the Staff Investigators, Associated Faculty, and the Board of Advisors.

Staff Investigators

Cancer Center Staff Investigators will be UGA faculty actively involved in research/education/service in cancer-related fields and who participate in activities of the Cancer Center. The designation, Staff Investigator, was chosen because it is the standard term used by the National Cancer Institute for faculty who directly participate in its Cancer Centers. No FTE percentages will be administered by the Center. Any member of the UGA faculty may apply to become a Staff Investigator of the Center by submitting a current curriculum vitae and a letter describing what she or he hopes to gain from participating in the Center, as well as what she or he will contribute to the Center's programs. Staff Investigators will serve five-year terms, after which time they may again apply for appointment. Decisions for acceptance will be made by the Board of Advisors. It is expected that all Staff Investigators will be actively involved in cancer research/education/service in some manner and will serve in some capacity that benefits the Cancer Center as a whole.

Affiliated Faculty

Affiliated Faculty will be those UGA faculty members whose research/education/service interests relate less directly to cancer than those of the Staff Investigators, but who are interested in contributing to the Programs of the Cancer Center. Any member of the UGA faculty may apply to become an Affiliated Faculty by submitting a current curriculum vitae and a letter that describes what she or he hopes to gain from participating in the Center and what she or he will contribute to the Center's programs. Decisions for acceptance will be made by the Director, in consultation with the Board of Advisors.

Board of Advisors

The Board of Advisors will consist of a panel of individuals from both the University and the Athens healthcare community. These individuals will include a representative each from the Athens Area Cancer Coalition, St. Mary's Healthcare Corp., Athens Regional Medical Center, and the American Cancer Society. The Director of the Cancer Center at the Medical College of Georgia will be an *ex officio* member of the Board, as will the Director of the BHSI. The Board of Advisors will assist the Director in achieving the missions of the Cancer Center. Members of the

Board of Advisors will be appointed by the Director and will serve three-year terms.

5. Funding

Space and initial funding for the activities of the Cancer Center will be provided by the Vice President for Research. It is anticipated that increased research activity at the University will lead to an increase in cancer-related funding and establishment of an NCI-approved Cancer Center.

6. Comparable Programs

Many Cancer Centers exist in the United States, and achieving recognition by the National Cancer Institute as an NCI Cancer Center is an important goal of each of these Centers. Achieving this status allows associated faculty to develop common resources to further their research, to participate in cutting-edge trials of new technologies, and offers them additional mechanisms for research funding. Nearly all of these Centers are established at Medical Schools. There are a few NCI Cancer Research Centers, however, that are not associated *per se* with a medical school. A University with no medical school that has achieved Cancer Research Center designation is Purdue University, which has an advanced program in cancer toxicology and chemotherapy drug development. The partnership between MCG and UGA in the GCC Cancer Center of Excellence may allow a joint application to NCI. The long-term goal of the University of Georgia Cancer Center will be to achieve status as an NCI-designated Cancer Center.

Appendix

Partial List of Interested Faculty and their respective colleges/schools:

These faculty have attended planning meetings or cancer workshops on the UGA campus in the last year, or they have submitted a proposal for consideration for inclusion in the UGA/MCG Cancer Center submission to the Georgia Cancer Coalition:

College of Arts and Sciences:

Haini Cai
Deborah Mohnen
Scott Dugan
Jack Gaertig
Walter Schmidt
Claiborne Glover
Kelley Moremen
David Puett
Michael Pierce
Alan Darvill
Maor Bar-Peled
Vicki Freimuth
Ron Orlando
Edward Kipreos
Kojo Mensa-Wilmot
Jim Prestegard
John McDonald
Mike McEachern
Harry Dailey
Michael Terns
George Majetich
Lee Pratt
Marie-Michele Cordonnier-Pratt
Rex Forehand
Joe Crim
Lance Wells
Erin Dickerson
Celeste Condit
Don Rubin
Ying Xu
Michael Tiemeyer
Nathan Bowen

College of Journalism and Mass Communication

Dean Krugman
Jeffrey Springston

School of Social Work

Bonnie Yegidis

School of Health and Human Performance

Laura McCormick

College of Pharmacy

Opal Rebecca Bunce
Phil Greenspan
Diane Hartle
David Chu
Bill Spruill
Bob Galen
William Wade
Vasu Nair
Brian Cummings

College of Family and Consumer Sciences

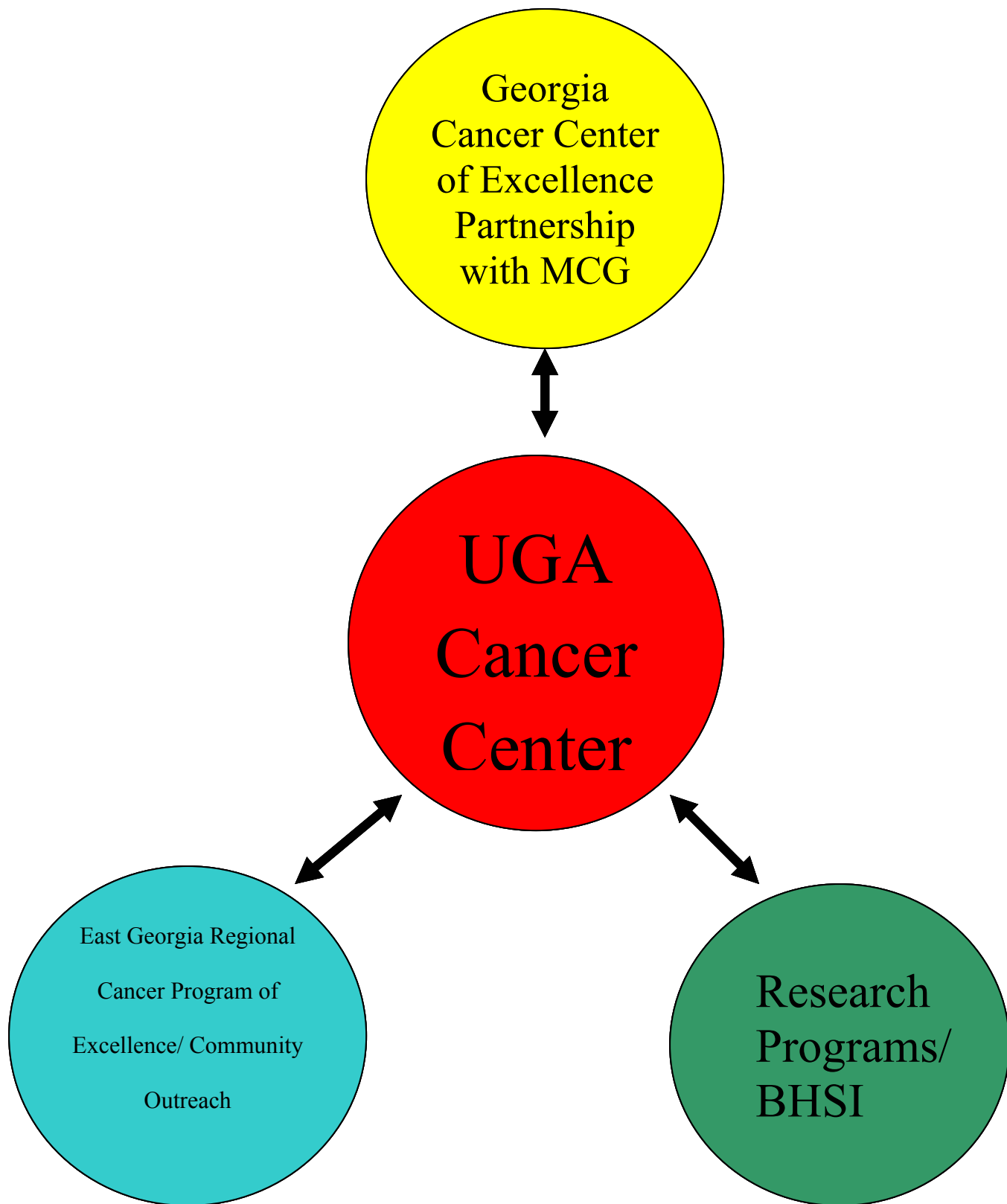
Joan Fischer
Arthur Grider
James Hargrove
Ruthann Swanson
Rebecca Mullis
Mary Ann Johnson

College of Agriculture and Environmental Science

Casimir Akoh
Roger Dean
Steve Dalton

College of Veterinary Medicine

Massimo Palmarini
Bruce LeRoy





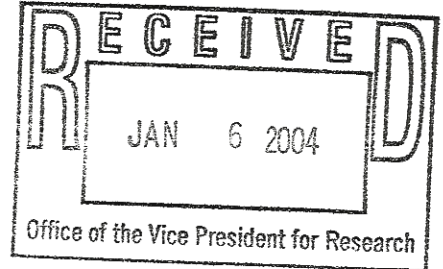
The University of Georgia

Office of the Dean

College of Veterinary Medicine

Athens, Georgia 30602-7371
Telephone (706) 542-3461
Fax (706) 542-8254

January 5, 2004



Dr. Gordhan L. Patel
Vice President for Research and Associate Provost
609 Boyd GSRC
CAMPUS

Dear Dr. Patel:

I have reviewed the proposal to establish a Cancer Center at the University of Georgia. I wholeheartedly endorse this proposal. Please let me know if the College of Veterinary Medicine can assist you with this initiative in any way.

Sincerely,

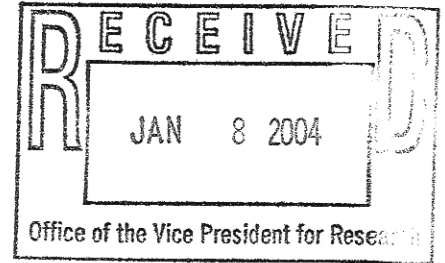
Keith W. Prasse, DVM, PhD
Dean

KWP/tce



The University of Georgia

College of Education
Office of the Dean



January 6, 2004

Gordhan L. Patel
Vice President for Research and Associate Provost
Vice President's Office for Research
609 Boyd Graduate Studies Center

Dear Gordhan,

I am delighted to support the proposal to establish a UGA Cancer Center. The proposal well describes the need for such a center and, more importantly, provides the university with a way to integrate the many university-wide cancer research efforts. In our college, for example, Dr. Laura McCormick has had 2 funded projects in cancer research from the National Cancer Institute/NIH for a project on "Adolescent Smoking Cessation" funded at \$363,185 and from the National Institute on Drug Abuse/NIH, for a project entitled "Smoking Cessation Intervention for College Students funded at \$54,000. These projects illustrate the interest of our faculty in cancer research, and this center provides the potential for stronger leadership and collaboration across the many interested faculty throughout the university in this field of research.

We in the College of Education strongly support this proposal and look forward to future joint efforts with other units of this campus in deepening our understanding of this critical area of research.

Sincerely,

Louis A. Castenell, Jr.
Dean



The University of Georgia

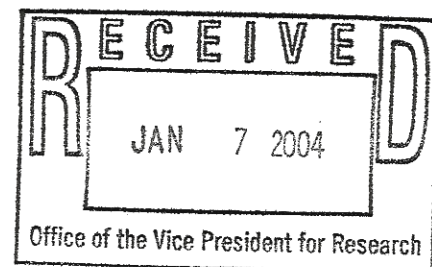
Sharon Y. Nickols
Dean

College of Family & Consumer Sciences
Office of the Dean

Dawson Hall
Athens, Georgia 30602-2622
Telephone (706) 542-4879
Fax (706) 542-4862

January 7, 2004

Dr. Gordhan L. Patel
Vice President for Research and Associate Provost
609 Boyd GSRC
University of Georgia



Dear Dr. Patel:

On behalf of the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, I am writing to endorse the development of a Cancer Center at the University of Georgia. The purpose of the center is to facilitate and focus faculty involvement in interdisciplinary cancer-related research and to serve as a point of contact with external organizations who wish to collaborate with UGA faculty. In effect, the Cancer Center will institutionalize the informal connections that already exist.

As illustrations of the broad perspective of the College of Family and Consumer Sciences in cancer research, I will point out three areas of current activity: Dr. Maureen Davey, Child and Family Development, is working in the area from a social-psychological perspective in her study of how adolescent daughters react to their mothers' breast cancer. Dr. Joan Fischer, Foods and Nutrition, working from a biological science perspective, is studying the relationship between diet and colon cancer. Dr. James Hargrove, and other Foods and Nutrition faculty, are involved with faculty from Pharmacy and the Department of Food Science and Technology in investigating the potential of nutraceuticals. The faculty in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences have a long tradition of working from an interdisciplinary perspective, and the Cancer Center would provide a venue in which they can continue this effort, as well as further facilitate their work, both with colleagues at UGA and external to the University.

The graduate programs of the College of Family and Consumer Sciences provide the context for excellent training of future cancer researchers, a stated goal of the Georgia Cancer Coalition. Furthermore, specific courses and some programs of study can contribute to the preparation of future care givers and practitioners, which is another goal of the GCC.

While the College of Family and Consumer Sciences has much that it can contribute to this effort, we also see potential benefits from participation in the Center. We look forward to being actively involved.

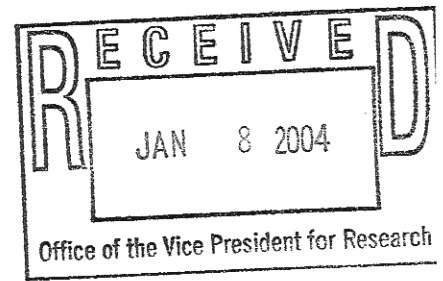
Sincerely,

Sharon Y. Nickols
Dean



The University of Georgia

College of Pharmacy



7 January 2004

Gordhan L. Patel,
Vice President for Research & Associate Provost
609 Boyd GSRC
CAMPUS 7411

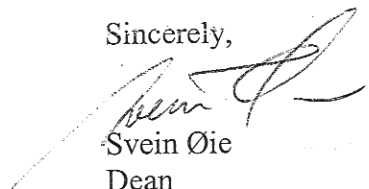
Dear Gordhan,

I am writing on behalf of the College of Pharmacy to extend my strong support for the proposed Cancer Center. The Proposal is both timely and exciting development on campus. With the high prevalence of cancer in Georgia and the establishment of the Georgia Cancer Coalition, the Cancer Center will be an important factor in establishing a coordinated approach among basic, social and clinical research at UGA. Moreover, it provides the framework to encourage important interaction and collaboration with other research institutions throughout Georgia.

The College views this development as being a significant step forward for the University and one that will complement and enhance our own goals of seeking to make the University of Georgia a pre-eminent place for education and research in areas of disease treatment and wellness. The College therefore, supports the program without reservations.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

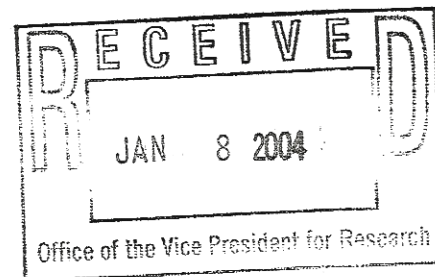


Svein Øie
Dean



The University of Georgia

School of Social Work
Office of the Dean



January 6, 2004

Gordhan L. Patel, PhD
Vice President for Research & Associate Provost
609 Boyd GSRC
The University of Georgia

Re: Cancer Center

Dear Dr. Patel,

It is with great pleasure that I write to state my vigorous support for the establishment of a Cancer Center here at The University of Georgia (UGA). I have reviewed the proposal and find the research activities and opportunities described therein as both innovative and exciting. As we all know, the presence of cancer in our lives and the lives of our family members is a devastating element. We as social work faculty, students, and staff recognize the merit of establishing a research center that will harness the resources of the university in the quest to overcome the harmful vestiges of cancer.

I am joined in my statement of support by the faculty of the School of Social Work and the graduates of our program who work in cancer related health care settings and, in particular, those who are members of the Georgia association of oncology social workers. I am indeed hopeful the proposal for the Cancer Center will receive a positive review, at every level. It is with pleasure that I commit the resources of the School of Social Work to making the Cancer Center at UGA a success.

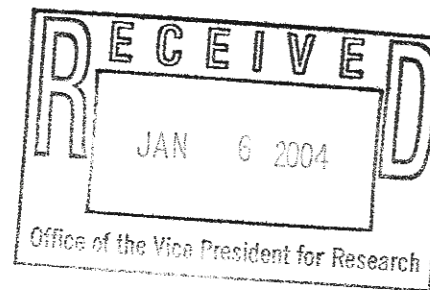
Respectfully,

Larry Nackerud, PhD
Interim Dean



The University of Georgia

Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication



January 5, 2004

Gordhan L. Patel
Vice President for Research
& Associate Provost
Office of the Vice President for Research
609 Boyd GSRC
Campus-7411

Dear Gordhan,

John Soloski is out of the country. Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Grady College for the proposed UGA Cancer Center (UGACC). We fully endorse the creation of the UGACC. As you know, the college has a strong commitment to health and risk communication. Much of the work involves strategies and interventions regarding healthy lifestyles and programs to reduce the onset of cancer.

Our experience is that some of the best work in this area is interdisciplinary and we are hopeful the UGACC can foster such relationships both on and off campus. As importantly, the center will establish a higher profile for UGA in this area and enhance research opportunities.

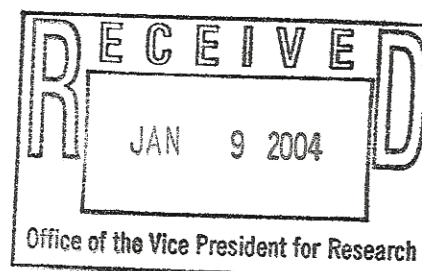
Sincerely,

Dean M. Krugman, Professor
& Associate Dean for Academic affairs



The University of Georgia

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
Office of the Dean



January 9, 2004

Dr. Gordhan L. Patel
Vice President for Research
Boyd Graduate Studies Building
Campus

Dear Gordhan:

The proposal you sent me in late December to establish a Cancer Center at the University of Georgia presents an exciting opportunity for building and coordinating research in units at UGA, and with the local medical community and the Medical College of Georgia. I am writing in strong support of this proposal, which involves a number of departments in biological, physical, and social sciences. Cancer is an extraordinarily important health issue that involves a broad range of research areas in the natural and social sciences. The proposed Cancer Center will fit within a broader state-wide effort and constitute an important element of the University's Biomedical and Health Sciences Initiative.

The objectives of establishing a Cancer Center of Excellence are well-planned, as is the coordination with the Athens healthcare community and with the Medical College of Georgia. Coordination with the growing biotechnology industry located near Athens, Atlanta, and Augusta is a very strong part of the program that will strengthen research and instruction at the University of Georgia. It will stimulate the further growth of the biotechnology industry in the state. Outreach to students and faculty at the University and with health researchers and practitioners across the state is an excellent third objective of the proposal. The proposed Cancer Center would have a very positive impact on instructional programs at the University and would provide students opportunities for coursework and research experience in a core area of biomedical science.

On behalf of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, I want to enthusiastically endorse the proposal. Faculty, undergraduate students, and graduate students in Arts and Sciences will want to participate in the activities of the proposed Cancer Center, and it will be a great stimulus to research and teaching across the University.

Sincerely,

Wyatt W. Anderson
Alumni Foundation Distinguished Professor of Genetics
and Dean

Subject: UGA Cancer Center Proposal

Date: Fri, 2 Jan 2004 16:16:42 -0500

From: "Gale Buchanan" <caesdean@arches.uga.edu>

To: glp@ovpr.uga.edu

This is to acknowledge your proposal for UGA Cancer Center. I think this is a Center that is long over due. I encourage and fully support your effort.

Gale A. Buchanan
Dean and Director
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
University of Georgia
101 Conner Hall
Athens, GA 30602
706-542-3924
fax: 706-542-0803