

# UCNS Newsletter

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For more information about the UCNS, visit the UCNS website at [www.ucns.org](http://www.ucns.org).

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The mission of the United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties is to provide for accreditation and certification with the goal of enhancing the quality of training for physicians in neurological subspecialties and the quality of patient care.*

## First Diplomates Certified

The UCNS has issued certificates to its first set of diplomates. A total of 106 physicians took the certification examination in the subspecialty of Headache Medicine, and 105 received certification, for a pass rate of 99 percent. In the subspecialty of Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry, 61 physicians took the examination and 59 received certification, for a 96-percent pass rate.

"This is a significant milestone for the UCNS," said Chair Leslie A. Morrison, MD. "In just three years of operation, the UCNS implemented a credible and fair certification process that physicians are eager to take part in. I applaud our new diplomates, as well as those who helped develop the comprehensive, thoughtful examinations."



James U. Adelman, MD

"I believe that the exam was challenging, but fair," said James U. Adelman, MD, of Greensboro, NC, who received certification in Headache Medicine. "I took the exam because I believe in a high standard for those claiming to be specialists. An examination of this type demonstrates competence in the field. I would be uncomfortable claiming

myself as an expert if I were not successful on this examination.

"I doubt that many of my patients know or will know whether or not I have this subspecialty certificate. But I know, and that is indeed important. Hopefully, in the future, patients can select their Headache Medicine physician on the basis of such a certificate."



Jeff Victoroff, MA, MD, FAAN

Jeff Victoroff, MA, MD, FAAN, of the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, received certification in Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry. "It is crucial for the community of stakeholders—including the general public, other clinicians, and those in government or law seeking expert consultations—to know who is a well-trained authority and who is not. At last, after at least 15 years of discussion and effort, the medical community has a formal pathway to recognize expertise in neurobehavior.

"I was very pleased to take the UCNS examination. As a clinician and researcher, I wanted to test (and perhaps update) my knowledge. As an educator, I wanted to get a sense for what knowledge a consensus of

*Continued on Page 2*

## Important Dates

### April 15, 2007

Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine certification applications due to UCNS Executive Office [www.ucns.org/certification/applications](http://www.ucns.org/certification/applications)

### April 24, 2007

Accreditation Council meeting to review Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine accreditation applications for the 2007 academic year

### April 29–May 5, 2007

UCNS exhibits at AAN Annual Meeting in Boston, MA

### July 1, 2007

Accreditation applications due [www.ucns.org/accreditation/applications](http://www.ucns.org/accreditation/applications)

### July 15, 2007

Neurocritical Care and Neuroimaging certification applications due to UCNS Executive Office [www.ucns.org/certification/applications](http://www.ucns.org/certification/applications)

### October 8–12, 2007

Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine certification examinations

### December 10–14, 2007

Neurocritical Care and Neuroimaging certification examinations

## Letter from the Chair



Leslie A. Morrison, MD

With 164 diplomates certified, 19 fellowship programs accredited, and a total of six subspecialties as members, the UCNS is no longer in its infancy stage. While we continue to offer certification exams and develop new ones, review programs for accreditation, and work with new subspecialties, the UCNS and its parent organizations must now focus more resources on educating outside organizations such as hospitals, public and private payers on the value of UCNS certification

and accreditation, with the ultimate goal of formal recognition of the UCNS by these organizations.

In early March, we convened our Board, Accreditation Council, and Certification Council for a Leadership Planning Retreat in Washington, DC, to explore the most effective ways to convey the value of a UCNS certificate. We looked at the role of certification through the eyes of national leaders representing the federal government, state government and state medical boards, hospitals, the American Medical Association, and third-party payers.

Speakers included:

- William D. Rogers, MD, FACEP, of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service
- Robert L. Marier, MD, MHA, FACP, of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners
- Carole LaPine, MSA, CPMSM, CPCS, of Saint Joseph Mercy

Health System in Ann Arbor, MI, and President of the National Association of Staff Services

- Susan Montrimas of the American Medical Association
- David A. Stumpf, MD, PhD, of UnitedHealthCare

In some areas, we can make immediate inroads. For example, Ms. LaPine indicated that hospitals would greatly value information on UCNS certification and which physicians are certified by the UCNS as they review credentials. In other areas, our efforts may take longer to come to fruition. For example, while state medical boards may be interested in learning about the UCNS and its certification process, according to Dr. Marier, the boards currently do not review certification in determining licensure. Based on the feedback from the retreat, a specific plan incorporating education of the UCNS and pursuing formal recognition by liaising with other agencies is under development.

The foundation of the UCNS was built on the collaboration and coalition with other neurological groups. We hope to extend this coalition in other communities. We are extremely appreciative that our five parent organizations have agreed in principle to assist in these efforts, particularly in the area of advocacy. And we are requesting the help of all of you involved in the UCNS. Tell your colleagues about UCNS certification and what it means; encourage your peers to become certified. If you have suggestions on how to educate others about the value of UCNS certification, we want to hear from you.

Leslie A. Morrison, MD  
Chair, United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties

## First Diplomates Certified *(Continued)*

experts had judged to be critical to this field. In part, I wanted to express solidarity with those who had worked so long to provide the medical community with this program. And, of course, I think it is helpful to be recognized as an expert in the field that I love."

Victoroff noted that the test contained a variety of questions. "I found a mixture of very easy questions that any medical student would be comfortable with, medium questions that seemed well suited to identifying key knowledge, and hard questions, the answers to which one might know or not depending on one's subspecialty interests. There is a gratifying emphasis on treatment, and those treatment questions seemed up to the minute. In fact, the test sent me

hightailing to the Internet to better understand several new findings—perhaps one of the unintended virtues of any such exercise.

"I commend the UCNS for their painstaking work and very good result. I highly recommend that doctors who have solid knowledge and training in and who care deeply about neurobehavior take the test and join the community of recognized experts. The benefits, in my opinion, extend far beyond the personal adventure, gratification, and achievement. Society needs to know who they can turn to for help, now and in the future."

For a full list of the UCNS diplomates, visit the UCNS website at [www.ucns.org/certification/diplomates](http://www.ucns.org/certification/diplomates).

### **First Exams in Neurocritical Care and Neuroimaging**

The deadline for certification applications for the first examinations in the subspecialties of Neurocritical Care and Neuroimaging is July 15, 2007. Examinations will be given in December 2007.

## Board Member Highlight

David Charles, MD, joined the UCNS Board of Directors in March 2006 as the board representative from the Association of University Professors of Neurology. He has served on several committees and subcommittees of the American Academy of Neurology (AAN), including the Legislative Affairs Committee and the Public Relations and Non-member Communications Committee. He was the Neurology Public Policy Fellow in 1997-98, serving as a Health Policy Fellow in the U.S. Senate under the direction of Sen. Bill Frist, MD. The fellowship is sponsored by the AAN, the American Neurological Association, and the Child Neurology Society. He is associate professor and vice chair of neurology for education and development at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, TN. He is the director of the neurology residency program and the Movement Disorders Clinic.

**UCNS: Why did you choose to practice medicine and go into the field of neurology?**

**DC:** Neurology offers the most prospects for discovery. I am devoted to research and of all the fields of medicine, the greatest opportunities for discovery seemed to be in the study of the mind.

**UCNS: Where did you train?**

**DC:** I graduated from Vanderbilt University School of Engineering in 1986 with a B.S. cum laude in computer science and mathematics, and earned a medical degree from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in 1990. I did my internship in the department of medicine and my residency in the department of neurology at Vanderbilt. I did a fellowship in movement disorders and clinical neurophysiology at Vanderbilt. In 1995, I joined the faculty at Vanderbilt as an assistant professor of neurology and director of the Movement Disorders Clinic. In 1996, I completed a Health Care Management course at Vanderbilt's Owen Graduate School of Management, and in 1997, I completed the Harvard Macy Institute Program for Physician Educators at Harvard Medical School. After my Health Policy Fellowship, I studied deep brain stimulation for the treatment of movement disorders as a Fulbright Senior Scholar at the Universitaire de Grenoble in Grenoble, France. My research interests include the treatment of early stage Parkinson's disease with deep brain stimulation. I am currently leading clinical trials involving the treatment of spasticity and cervical dystonia.

**UCNS: What was your first reaction to the concept of neurologic subspecialty accreditation and certification?**

**DC:** My reaction was positive, as it would improve the quality of medicine by setting standards for training.

**UCNS: When did you become involved in the discussions regarding neurologic subspecialty accreditation and certification?**

**DC:** My first exposure was about 15 years ago as a resident considering my choices for specialization. Now as a program director, I am intimately involved.

**UCNS: Why did you become involved with the UCNS?**

**DC:** The mission of the UCNS has at its heart improving patient care.

**UCNS: What impact do you feel the UCNS will have on the future of neurology?**

**DC:** The impact will be significant because of neurological advances. The body of knowledge will expand greatly and UCNS standards will set the bar for training and recognition.

**UCNS: What would you like individuals in neurology and the public to know about the UCNS?**

**DC:** The UCNS is an organization dedicated to improving the quality of care to our patients by defining educational goals within the subspecialties of our field.



David Charles, MD

## Fellowship Directors: Apply for Accreditation by July 1, 2007

Program Information Forms for Headache Medicine and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry programs that wish to apply for UCNS accreditation must be submitted by July 1, 2007, for review in

the fall and accreditation for the 2008 academic year. Applications and information are available on the UCNS website at [www.ucns.org/accreditation/application](http://www.ucns.org/accreditation/application).

## UCNS Accredits First Headache Medicine Programs, Additional Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry Programs

Congratulations to the following Headache Medicine and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry programs that have received accreditation from the UCNS beginning July 2007.

Headache Medicine Program	Fellowship Director	Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry Program	Fellowship Director
Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center	Morris Levin, MD	University of Illinois at Chicago	Michael Schrift, DO
Jefferson Headache Center	Noah Rosen, MD	VA of Greater LA Healthcare System	Mario Mendez, MD, PhD
Cincinnati Children's Hospital	Andrew Hershey, MD, PhD		
Mayo Clinic, Arizona	David Dodick, MD		
Montefiore Headache Center	Richard Lipton, MD		
University of North Carolina	Alan Finkel, MD, FAAN, FAHS		

For a complete listing of UCNS-accredited programs, access the UCNS Fellowship Directory on the UCNS website at [www.ucns.org](http://www.ucns.org).

### Attention Fellowship Directors: Attend Informational Meetings At AAN Annual Meeting

To help fellowship directors become familiar with the UCNS training program requirements and accreditation process, the UCNS will hold informational meetings during the AAN Annual Meeting in Boston. Meetings will be held for Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry, Headache Medicine, and Neurocritical Care.

Several fellowship programs have already been accredited in the areas of Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine. Applications and payment are due by July 1, 2007, for review in the fall and accreditation for the 2008 academic year. Applications and information are available on the UCNS website at [www.ucns.org/accreditation/application](http://www.ucns.org/accreditation/application).

The Neurocritical Care accreditation process and application are under review.

#### Fellowship Director Informational Meetings

2007 AAN Annual Meeting, Boston

Headache Medicine Training Program Requirements  
Hynes Convention Center, Room 103  
Tuesday, May 1, 1:30 p.m.–2:00 p.m.

Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry  
Training Program Requirements  
Hynes Convention Center, Room 208  
Tuesday, May 1, 2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

### Visit UCNS Booth at AAN Annual Meeting

Meet UCNS leadership and staff at the AAN Annual Meeting in Boston at the UCNS booth in the Hynes Convention Center Exhibit Hall. Information on the accreditation and certification processes, certification and program accreditation applications, and updates on the subspecialties will be available.

#### UCNS booth #1263B hours:

Monday, April 30	5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, May 1	11:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, May 2	11:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Thursday, May 3	11:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

## UCNS

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The UCNS is sponsored by five parent organizations:

- American Academy of Neurology  
[www.aan.com](http://www.aan.com)
- Child Neurology Society  
[www.childneurologysociety.org](http://www.childneurologysociety.org)
- American Neurological Association  
[www.aneuroa.org](http://www.aneuroa.org)
- Professors of Child Neurology see also  
[www.childneurologysociety.org](http://www.childneurologysociety.org)
- Association of University Professors of Neurology  
[www.aupn.org](http://www.aupn.org)

[www.ucns.org](http://www.ucns.org)

#### SUBMIT STORY IDEAS

Any news or story ideas for UCNS readers? We would like to hear from you. Submit feedback regarding this issue and/or story ideas for future issues to the UCNS Executive Office.

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