Dear MFA members

This hurricane season has really posed challenges to us as we have had to cope with prolonged lack of basic services. Now that we have tested our survival skills, may we take a collective sigh of relief that storm season is behind us.

I want to thank Susana Raij for hosting the Fall Brunch at her home. The simple elegant setting was just right for the presentation of the MFA Best Research Awards. This event is one of the strongest affirmations of the mission of MFA. Dr. Richard Bookman reminded us that we are one of the only organization that supports the Medical Graduate students. The presentation of the students work was interesting as always. This year we were particularly enchanted by Dr. Esther Blong, the first woman to receive an MFA Best Research Award. Any Muench did a great job of coordinating the menu. Thanks to everyone who contributed to make it such a nice day.

By now you should have received your copy of the 2005-2006 Yearbook. Every year Eileen Hoffman takes on the task of producing this valuable directory single handed. Eileen, we are all so grateful. Many thanks also to Nettie Belle Robinson for her vibrant cover design.

I hope you will join us on Wednesday, November 16 at Any Muench’s home for our General Meeting and Stephanie Anderson’s talk on Bioethics. Despite the serious flooding Any and Karl Muench’s home suffered from the storm, Any is still enthusiastic about hosting the meeting.

Camillo and I are looking forward to having you all at our home on November 19th for the Pot Luck Dinner. Our landscaping has been ravaged but we will be happy to see you all and have a chance to be together.

Mary Frances Irvin will be hosting the Holiday Party and Chinese Auction on December 8. Thank you to Dean John Clarkson who is sponsoring this event as a parting gift to MFA. We wish Diana and John all the best.

Because of the added strain the storms have placed on all of us, the Thanksgiving Dessert Sale has been postponed. More information will be forthcoming.

Don’t forget to set aside March 24 for our annual Spring Party.

The autumn winds have brought some changes to the Ricordi family. I have returned to the same job I held 8 years ago as Manager of Public Relations for the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami. I hope you will join me for a tour in February. All the best— Valerie
All MFA members are cordially invited to our Annual Pot-Luck Dinner

Saturday, November 19th, 7:00p.m.

Dr. & Mrs. Camillo Ricordi’s Home
3734 Matheson Avenue
Coconut Grove, FL 33133
(305)740-0955
(between Douglas Rd, (37th Ave), and Ingraham Hwy)

RSVP to Any Muench (305)856-8308, food coordinator, by Wed. Nov.16.

We are looking forward to a delicious evening with everyone’s homemade specialties at our President Valerie’s home. Tom LeBlanc, our new Provost for the Miller School of Medicine at the University of Miami will be attending this years dinner. Mixers and coffee will be provided, but please BYOB, a bottle of wine or any other alcoholic beverage that you like.

Directions to the Ricordi Home: From the south: Take LeJeune South to Ingraham Highway. Matheson is the 7th street on your right. From the north: Take US 1 to Douglas Road/37th Avenue. Turn left on Douglas Road. One third mile past Douglas Road/Main Highway intersection, Douglas Road forks. Bear left. Turn right at the first stop sign onto Matheson. Parking is a challenge!

SPRING PARTY PLANS ARE TAKING SHAPE

Spring Party Committee met on October 13th at Martha Twiggs home to discuss plans for our 2006 fundraiser.

MFA member and professional artist Nettie Belle Robinson has graciously agreed to provide an original art work for the invitation and program cover for MFA’s Spring Party which will be held March 24, 2006 at Shake-A-Leg Miami in Coconut Grove. The image will capture the beautiful view of Sailboat Bay from the third floor pavilion where the dinner will be held.

Susana Raij is negotiating the final menu with the caterer. The evening will be orchestrated to celebrate the beautiful tropical waterfront paradise in which we live — Miami. She promises an excellent meal of fine Caribbean fare for us all to enjoy. The bar will be open and wine provided.

We are also planning our much enjoyed silent auction. If you have any ideas for some special silent auction items please contact Nadia Maudsley at 305 854-2527 or Nadia_J_M@comcast.net.

Due to the open air setting, dress will be casual – jackets and ties not allowed. The evening already has the air of a relaxed and enjoyable occasion as we come together to raise needed funds for our Endowment.

If you would like to participate in the planning of this event, please contact Valerie Ricordi at 305 740-0955 or 305 804-9705 or by email at ricordi@hotmail.com. We need help with decorations, invitations, programs, setup and the auction.

Please set aside the evening of March 24 for the MFA.
gene, a gene that is required for muscle development but needs to be down-regulated just before mature muscle is created, is regulated by a specific microRNA. MicroRNAs belong to a recently discovered new species of RNA that appears to be involved in differentiation and development. His study is one of the first examples describing the molecular mechanism of how a microRNA regulates the expression of a gene. Curtis is an MD-PhD student who finished the PhD part of his education within the record time of three years. He is now completing his medical education but still comes to my lab almost every day conducting some experiments. I was very fortunate to have such an outstanding student join my lab three years ago.

Dr. Esther Obeng – First Runner Up
Laboratory of Dr. Larry Boise – Department of Microbiology and Immunology

Esther Obeng began her studies at the University of Miami where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology in May 1999, cum laude. Continuing her education at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine she entered the combined MD/PhD degree program in Fall 1998. After completing two years of Medical School, Esther began her graduate training in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology and joined the laboratory of Dr. Larry Boise in September 2000. Esther's dissertation research tested the hypothesis that the recently FDA approved drug, Velcade (bortezomib) in-
Esther demonstrated that the UPR was activated when cells were treated with Velcade or similar acting drugs and that sensitivity of these cells correlated with how well protein folding occurred in different myeloma cell lines. She also demonstrated that the induction of apoptosis (programmed cell death) following activation of the UPR was not as others have previously described, suggesting a more complex process. She has published a paper in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* and has submitted a second manuscript from her dissertation research. Esther will finish two years of Medical School and following graduation currently plans on pursuing a residency in Pediatrics. In addition to receiving 2nd place for the MFA Best Research project, Esther has been recognized for outstanding work through receipt of a number of awards including: Howard Hughes Medical Institute Predoctoral Fellowship (2001-2006); AACR Minority Scholar in Cancer Research (2004, 2005); MD/PhD Diversity Travel Award (2004) and a MFA Travel Award (March 2005). Esther has presented her work at numerous national and international scientific meetings including AACR Annual Meeting, Regulation of Cell Death in Oncogenesis in Hawaii, Miami Nature Biotechnology Winter Symposium, and the 10th International Conference on Multiple Myeloma in Sydney, Australia.

Mr. Anthony Smith – Second Runner Up
Laboratory of Dr. Walter Scott - Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

A variety of drugs are now available to treat patients that are infected with HIV, and these drugs have dramatically improved the lives of these patients and made their disease more manageable. However, HIV presents a continuing challenge because the virus has the ability to become resistant to antiviral drugs very rapidly. A few years ago, the Scott lab discovered that the mutant forms of HIV that most often appear during therapy give the virus the ability to use a biochemical trick to avoid the effects of several widely used antiviral drugs including AZT (also called azidothymidine or zidovudine). The effects of AZT on the viral replication enzyme are reversed if certain phosphate-containing compounds are present during viral DNA synthesis. Work carried out by Anthony J. Smith in the laboratory has evaluated the ability of different human blood cell populations to support escape from AZT inhibition. In work published recently in the journal *Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy*, he has shown that escape of mutant viruses from AZT inhibition is dependent on phosphate-containing compounds that are present in different amounts in specific blood cell populations. The goal of his research is to determine how drug resistant mutants are selected in an infected patient and how changes in the design and use of antiviral drugs might lead to therapies that are less easily circumvented by the virus. The research is supported by the National Institutes of Health.

Anthony Smith is recipient of a predoctoral fellowship from the American Heart Association.

Thank you to Susana Raij, our hostess for a wonderful afternoon.
A group of MFA members gathered in mid October to bid a fond farewell to Margaret and David Howell. The Howells, long time MFA supporters and friends have moved to Bossier City, Louisiana, so they will be closer to their children who live in the area. The Howells came to Miami in 1955 when David joined the Department of Medicine. Margaret has been an active member of MFA for 50 years. We will miss her gentle wit and kindness.

If you would like to write to Margaret, her new address is listed in the 2005-06 yearbook.

You are cordially invited to join the MFA on Wednesday, December 8th, for our annual holiday luncheon followed by a Chinese auction. The festivities will begin at 11:00 a.m. at the lovely home of Mary Frances and George Irvin at 535 Solano Prado in Coral Gables. Diana and John Clarkson are catering the luncheon for MFA members in a show of gratitude as he nears the end of his term as Dean.

All that is left is for you is to bring a wonderful gift valued at no less than $25.00. Wrap it deceptively and attractively and enjoy the competitive bidding for each gift. Proceeds from the Auction will be used for our Awards Programs.

This is always a fun event and a nice way to get into the holiday spirit.
Kindly R.S.V.P. to Mary Frances Irvin at 305-665-5557 by December 1st. We encourage you to car pool. We look forward to seeing you on December 8th.

Directions to the Irvin Home —
From the LeJeune traffic circle, go south on Old Cutler Road and pass N. Kendall Drive/Arvida Parkway. Solano Prado is the next left. Drive till you pass Balada Street and go to 535 Solano Prado. If you pass Gallardo Street, you have gone too far.
2005-2006 CALENDAR

General Meeting  November 16, 2005
Topic  “Bioethics at UM”
Home of Any and Karl Muench
10:00 a.m.

Pot Luck Dinner  November 19, 2005
Home of Valerie and Camillo Ricordi
7:30 p.m.

Holiday Lunch & Auction December 8, 2005
Home of Mary Frances and George Irvin
11:30 a.m.

Board Meeting  January 18, 2006
Home of Linda and Darwin Eton
10:00 a.m.

Dessert Sale  February TBA, 2006
11:00 a.m- 2:00 p.m.

General Meeting  February 23, 2006
“The Transplant Experience”
Home of Jean and Jose Jannach
10:00 a.m.

Spring Party  March 24, 2006
Shake-A-Leg Miami  Coconut Grove
7:00 p.m.

General Meeting  April 26, 2006
Tour of Nursing and Health Sciences Bldg
10:00 a.m.

May Installation Luncheon  May 24, 2006
Location to be Announced

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

The next General Meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. on November 16th at the home of Any and Karl Muench — 1699 S. Bayshore Lane in Coconut Grove. Bayshore Lane is off Bayshore Drive between Mercy Hospital and 17th Ave.
We are having a series of speakers at our general meetings this year. This months meeting will feature a talk on Bioethics by MFA member Dr. Stephanie Anderson.

THANKSGIVING DESSERT SALE FUNDRAISER POSTPONED

Due to the disruptions of Hurricane Wilma the Dessert Sale has been postponed. This will be rescheduled for the Spring.

NEW MEMBERS

Debra Durant  Community Relations, Assistant VP
Miller School of Medicine  e-ddurant@miami.edu
(John J. Schoendorf)

Leslie Herz  305-868-6286
(Marvin Herz, Psychiatry)

Dyaeli Meneghini  305-740-9850
Dyaeli@gmail.com
(Luigi Meneghini, Diabetes Research Institute)

Margaret Nolan  305-669-0635
(Bruce Nolan, Neurology)  mknolan@gmail.com
(Richard Parrish, Ophthalmology)

Marianne Pantin-Parrish (rejoining)  305-666-1722
mapantin@bellsouth.net

Bette Rubini  305-266-4934
(Joseph Rubini, Medicine, Hematology, Retired)

2005-2006 YEARBOOKS ARE HERE

Many thanks to the yearbook committee for all the hard work getting it edited, printed and distributed. This year’s cover was graced with a particularly beautiful original design by Nettie Bell Robinson. If you have not received your yearbook or if there is a correction or addition the the information listed, please contact: Eileen Hoffman 305 665-0221 or eileen_hoffman@bellsouth.net. She will be happy to send you one.