

ALUMNI PROFILE: DR. JOSEPH KEITH MELANCON

Five patients receive kidneys in simultaneous transplants

A UL LAFAYETTE GRAD is one of a dozen surgeons at The Johns Hopkins Hospital who made medical history in November by performing the first quintuple kidney transplant.

Dr. Joseph Keith Melancon, '82, is director of kidney and pancreas transplantation and clinical transplantation research at the renowned Baltimore facility. He earned a bachelor's degree from USL. He received his medical education and surgical training from Tulane University, which was followed by a multi-organ transplantation fellowship at the University of Minnesota.

Melancon's work may be familiar to viewers of the Discovery Health Channel. He was a member of a team of surgeons featured on a recent episode of its "Surgery Saved My Life" series that documented a successful triple kidney transplant. Three patients who had what Discovery Health described as "unusual cocktails of antibodies in their bloodstreams" each received a kidney from live donors.

The quintuple kidney transplants were 10-hour surgeries that occupied six operating rooms and required 11 anesthesiologists and 18 nurses, in addition to the 12 surgeons. A total of about 100 medical personnel were involved in the trans-



Dr. Joseph Keith Melancon

plants, including immunogeneticists, nursing coordinators and pharmacists.

Kidneys were removed from five unrelated female donors and given to three males and two females whose ages ranged from 40 to 77.

"Four transplant candidates had come to Johns Hopkins separately for evaluation, each with a willing donor whose blood and tissue types were incompatible with the intended recipient and who therefore could not donate to their loved one," a Johns Hopkins Medicine spokesman stated in an announcement of the historic quintuple transplants.

"Using a previously developed living donor matching system, the Hopkins transplant team included a so-called altruistic donor in the mix and were able to arrange a five-way swap,

in which all four original candidates received compatible kidneys from someone they had never met, and the remaining kidney went to a patient who was next on the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) organ recipient list. An altruistic donor is a person who, for personal reasons, has a generous desire to donate a kidney to no particular recipient."

The Hopkins transplant team is a pioneer in the exchange of kidneys between incompatible donor-recipient pairs, he added. ■



Louisiana Air National Guard's 159th Fighter Wing, which is at the Naval Air Station-Joint Reserve Base

in New Orleans. The 159th Fighter Wing operates the F-15A/C "Eagle" and has more than 1,500 personnel. Lopinto is an F-15 instructor and a veteran of more than 25 combat sorties over Iraq in support of Operation Provide Comfort and Northern Watch. He was one of the first Air Guardsmen to open the naval air station in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina and assisted with relief and recovery in Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He received a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from USL. Lopinto and his wife, Anne Lopinto, have a daughter, Francesca.

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DONNA A. ARMENTOR, senior manager-promotions at Sony Computer Entertainment America, helped lead marketing efforts that introduced the Sony PlayStation 3 gaming system in November. She has been employed by Sony for 12 years and has assisted with every PlayStation launch. Armentor was featured in the November/December 2006 issue of *Event Marketer* as a member of the publication's "Dream Team," which it described as "10 marketers we would hire if we were starting our own brand." Armentor earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from USL. She has served as a volunteer in Nicaragua and Guatemala. She is also a volunteer with the Autism Speaks Foundation. Armentor lives in San Francisco.

JEFFREY COURTRIGHT was promoted to associate professor, with tenure, in the School of Communication at Illinois State University recently. He teaches public relations and coordinates public relations internships. A book he co-edited, *Power and Public Relations*, was published in 2006. Courtright is a member of the ISU Civic Chorale and of Cantus Novus, a semiprofessional singing group. He also is leader of the a capella worship team at Northside Church of Christ in Bloomington, Ill. Courtright holds a bachelor's degree in communication from USL.

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MONIQUE GUILBEAU COSSICH received a master's degree in human sciences from Stephen F. Austin State University in December. As executive director of enrollment management at SFA, she is responsible for

recruitment and retention activities. Cossich holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from USL. She and her husband, **MARC COSSICH, '88**, live in Nacogdoches, Texas.

TROY M. NAQUIN works for Dynamac Corporation of Scott, La., as a government contractor for U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region

6. He is a registered professional geologist and a certified hazardous material manager. Naquin conducts assessments and cleanups at sites of releases of hazardous materials or oil that are covered under Superfund or the Oil Pollution Act. After Hurricane Katrina struck south Louisiana in 2005, Naquin assisted with urban search and rescue