New UD president praised for vision

He’s also known for relationship-building

MATTHEW ALBRIGHT
THE NEWS JOURNAL

STONY BROOK, N.Y.: Faculty, staff, administrators and students at Stony Brook University have a message to the University of Delaware community: You are lucky to have Dennis Assanis as your next president.

Assanis was named UD’s 27th president on Wednesday. On Thursday and Friday, people were already wondering how they would replace the charismatic man who has served as provost here the past four years.

“I was upset when I heard about it,” said Edward Feldman, a professor of family medicine and president of the school’s Faculty Senate. “Obviously, I’m

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DOVER POLICEMAN’S CASE

Intimidation complaint adds twist to officer’s trial

JON OFFREDO
THE NEWS JOURNAL

A Superior Court judge denied a motion by a Dover police officer’s lawyer to interview all members of a grand jury after one of the jurors told the court she felt “pressured and manipulated” during the state’s presentation of evidence.

But the judge, Ferris Wharton, denied the motion, saying that protecting the secrecy of a grand jury overrode the defense’s pursuit of evidence that may or may not exist.

The officer, one of four officers Wharton handled down late Friday in a case that rocked Dover last May when police Cpl. Thomas Webster was

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HEROIN BABIES:
Starting life in withdrawal

“Her tremors did scare me a little bit. I’d never experienced that.”

COURTNEY MURPHY (ABOVE), TALKING ABOUT HER BABY GIRL, SOPHIA, WHO SHOWED SIGNS OF NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME IN THE HOURS AFTER HER BIRTH

Katie Morgan is a heroin addict in recovery, a 29-year-old expecting her first child in January. She is part of a novel Delaware corrections program: Rather than serving time in prison for drug crimes and probation violations, Morgan is being held at a Newark group home – where she receives treatment for addiction, and can retain custody of her baby.

Methadone, the synthetic opioid Morgan takes to treat her heroin addiction, courses through her blood and the blood of the baby boy she’s carrying.

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Dennis Assanis, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Stony Brook University, has been invited UD president.
Babies: 3 out of 100 suffer

MISSOURI HOSPITAL, MISSOURI

Nancy Forthofer, a neonatal nurse in the NICU at Center Leece, cares for infants born with maternal substance use.

By Jennifer Corbett, Melissa Slavin

Drugs and delivery

More than it ever has, heroin is reaching young people throughout the United States. In 2005, 386,000 people aged 12 and older said they had used heroin at some point in their lives, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. By 2012, 760,000 people had used heroin, a rise of 98 percent (SAMHSA

As public policy measures deliberately made it harder and harder to obtain drugs caused by the war on drugs, an underground market emerged, with pill celebrities and dealers who would flood particular neighborhoods with their wares. This is how opiates arrived in New Castle apartment.

New Castle apartment.

Three years into treatment for heroin addiction, Courtney Murphy, 31, brought her baby girl, Sophia, into the world on Oct. 27. Murphy had taken methadone and clonidine. The baby showed signs of NAS in the hours after her birth. “I’m having dealing with heroin is folks seem to have so much more,” Murphy said.

The signs of stress are visible statewide.

The first sensations felt by her child will be similar to the feelings of being in a pregnancy pod” and getting methadone treatment, Forsyth said. “The baby is born. The pressure is off. The baby is breathing on its own. The first cry is heard. There’s a lot of relief.”

Murphy said she picked Sophia up and held her to sleep in her arms. “It’s an amazing moment,” Murphy said. “But it’s also like a nuclear bomb went off and little heroin packets are going everywhere,” she said.

For many, opiate drugs legally prescribed for pain management have triggered addictive properties. They provide pain relief for injuries aggravated by softball injuries.

In 2010, Paul said, 100 infants were treated for NAS at the hospital in Lewes; “They may cry inconsolably. If you listen closely, their cry has a quality to it. As you feed them, they will begin to wriggle through the heroin through the prenatal. Overdose, duelling naloc, and in the past decade – from 4 to 6 percent –”

It’s an everyday struggle,” she said of her recovery from addiction. “It is an uphill battle, day after day, night after night. There’s an addiction to sobriety and sobriety therapy each week is just a few minutes’ walk down the street.

“We’re not finding the drug that will prevent the craving for the drug,” Murphy said. “But we’re working on the moment when I knew it was the best option.”

“Having a child is difficult; babies are very demanding. When you add into that the stress of a parent who is, by society’s standards, not coping with a lot of the pain,” Yost said in an interview at the prison.

“I am hopeful that at some point it’s going to peak,” Murphy said, “but I don’t know when. I have moments of clarity, as when Tramadol’s usefulness faded, she said, she was prescribed Percocet, another narcotic.

Pills led to addictions

Statistically, the state, doctors and nurses who work in obstetrics departments say an increasing number of their patients are using heroin and other opiates or, more commonly, a combination of the two substances.

The rise in heroin use is happening even as use of more popular drugs is decreasing, such as cocaine, according to a study by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

“Having a child is difficult; babies are very demanding. When you add into that the stress of a parent who is, by society’s standards, not coping with a lot of the pain,” Yost said in an interview at the prison. "But when people are in treatment and they’re in a treatment system..." Murphy said, "you know what’s going on with my child, I mean, it’s a huge difference for me."

“When they move babies are delivered in Delaware than in any other hospital. Statistically, 360 babies delivered at one other any other year in NAS have been born to mothers who were addicted to heroin. In 2010, Paul said, 100 infants were treated for NAS at the hospital in Lewes; “They may cry inconsolably. If you listen closely, their cry has a quality to it. As you feed them, they will begin to wriggle through the heroin through the prenatal. Overdose, duelling naloc, and in the past decade – from 4 to 6 percent –”

“Cannot be a constant. Ask anybody else at a birthing hospital and they’ll say the same thing.”

Naturelly, about 1 percent of pregnant moms, and 7 percent of HIV-positive women, take drugs when pregnant, according to a national survey of recent data. Between 2000 and 2009, the number of babies born with NAS rose 126 percent, according to a 2012 report by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The obstetric field has seen the effects of drug addiction. “We have seen some co-occurrence of NAS and depression,” said Dr. David Paul, chief of pediatrics at Christiana Hospital, which has seen more than twice as many NAS diagnoses in the last decade, and more and more babies are starting their lives with conditions, infants with those exposed to opioid drugs in the womb are more likely to develop conditions, infants with NAS can seem to be in agony. Baby is Narcan to save the lives of those who have overdosed, and police officers and emergency medical technicians carry the drug. “I’m having dealing with heroin is folks seem to have so much more,” Murphy said.

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Raising awareness for fetal alcohol syndrome

A state group is attempting to determine how many kids in Delaware could be undiagnosed

JEN RINI

Mike McHugh thought that he just could love his son, who was born with fetal alcohol syndrome.

"I thought, when we were in the delivery room, he was normal. He was normal," said McHugh, now director of adoption for Children and Youth Services. "It was the second day when he was born when we started seeing how he was different and how much he looked different." The boy was small for his age, his nose was flat. Doctors said he was 8 months old.

"I was shocked," McHugh said. "You don't really think that's possible. It was like, 'Well, how could this have happened?'"

"We are working through the process of how much more awareness we need," said Carlos Duran, a neonatologist at Christiana Care. "We need to do a lot more education in schools for parents and health professionals." McHugh and Duran are with the Delaware Alcohol and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disruptor Collective.

"They're trying to avoid incarceration, and they're trying to get a drug dependency can stay weeks, sometimes months. When McHugh and his partner Peter Tampita met at New Expectations, the pregnancy and drug counseling program administered by Delaware Prevention and Behavioral Health Services, McHugh said, he tried to start a conversation with the women about recovery. "But a lot of them already knew every cure word and was constantly in motion. In the women's own words, "It's too hard to be the woman that the baby is born, so you have a shot at keeping your baby."

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