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MU-PLEVEN RECEIVES TWO PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

At a press conference on 9 December 2016 at MU-Pleven, the Rector, Prof. Slavcho Tomov, presented to the media the two prestigious awards received by the University. One was awarded on December 5th this year at a special ceremony under the auspices of President Rosen Plevneliev. The Medical University in Pleven received a prize from the sixth edition of the *Rating System of Universities in Bulgaria*. MU-Pleven earned first place in the *Health Care field of study* among 22 other universities, noted in the *Complex Assessment* standardized rating. The prestigious award was presented to the rector, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, by the publisher of 24 Hours newspaper, Venelina Gocheva.

The other prize - a prize for contribution in the field of education, the Medical University in Pleven received from the Rotary Club - Pleven. The Rector of the University announced that the award was received for the establishing of the Faculty of Pharmacy and the Institute of Research at the University. "For us this distinction is a sign of the high assessment that the local community gives to the achievements of the



Medical University," Prof. Tomov said. He reported as a great success the establishment of the fourth faculty in the higher school that will be positioned in the new modern building, designed and built specially for it, and the reception of the first

30 state-grand students. "It is all the more important to us that, with a decision of The Council of Ministers, we also established a Research Institute - Prof. Tomov pointed out - It is a very important unit that will allow for a qualitatively new stage in the development of research activity in the higher education institution because its emphasis will be focused on the development of valuable and significant scientific projects with the participation of The Academic Community of the University, as well as representatives of other universities, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and foreign scientists," Prof. Tomov explained.

The press conference was attended by the honorary rector of the University, Prof. Grigor Gorchev, Member of correspondence at BAS as well as Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marin Georgiev, Chair of the National Urological Association, who was in Pleven on the occasion of the *International Symposium on Laparoscopic and Robotic Surgery in Urology*, held on the same date at TELEC. They shared their views about the ongoing innovation in medical science.



MU-PLEVEN HOSTED THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON LAPAROSCOPIC AND ROBOTIC SURGERY IN UROLOGY



The *International Symposium on Laparoscopic and Robotic Surgery in Urology* was held for the first time at TELEC, Pleven on 9 December 2016. More than 50 urologists from around the world took part in the symposium, which was co-organized by MU-Pleven, the *International Association for Laparoscopic and Robotic Surgery*, the *Turkish Urological and Laparoscopic Society*, the *European Urologic Technology Association* and the *European Urology Society*.

Participants in the symposium were welcomed by the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov as well as the honorary rector of the University, Prof. Grigor Gorchev, Member of Correspondence at BAS and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marin Georgiev, Chair of the National Urological Association.

Before the official opening ceremony, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marin Georgiev, Chair of the National Urological Association noted before the press, that: "It was high time Urology took its place among the fields of medicine, influenced by the modern technologies. Pairing it with the field of Laparoscopic and Robotic surgery means that men in Bulgaria will finally enjoy the same level of advanced treatment women have had access to."

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marin Georgiev further elaborated that, unfortunately, the less-invasive laparoscopic prostatectomy is not widely used in Bulgaria and the procedure's application through means of Robotic surgery is only currently possible in the dedicated centers in Pleven and Sofia. He further added that TELEC can be considered a national treasure with its low-cost, high-performance quality of provided education and should be used as much as possible with the high influx of specialist from Turkey and around the world now attending courses.

Prof. Tomov and Prof. Gorchev did, indeed, confirm that the schedule of the Educational Center is already very saturated with events - some of which are educational modules for international urological surgeons and will be realized through the Bulgarian Urological Association. The aim of these courses is to show young surgeons the fine aspects of Minimally-invasive surgical procedures and enable them to perform less-invasive laparoscopic

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prostatectomy, which has less post-op pressure on the patient's body and generally yields better functional results. "The point of all our efforts here is provide access to innovative medical practices to the largest possible amount of patients," Prof. Tomov said.

Specialists in the field have commented that these surgical procedures are not covered under the National Health Insurance Fund, therefore making them expensive and limited. Prof. Gorchev adding that, "it is through the wish of patients for more innovative approach to health care and through the eagerness of the physicians that this field is even developing." He also noted that it was his firm belief that every patient covering their medical tax should be allowed access to more innovative treatments.



CHAIR OF THE FRENCH TELEMEDICINE ASSOCIATION VISITS MU-PLEVEN



On 17 January 2016, Jan-Jack Segara, Higher Education and Scientific Cooperation Attaché at the French embassy, Bulgaria as well as Michael Sholay - Chair of the French Telemedicine Association visited MU-Pleven. Their visit comes as an extension to an initiative of the French embassy and the French institute in Bulgaria as well as the Bulgarian National Radio, called "Meetings of the Future". In a similarly-themed debate on 16 January 2016, the honorary rector of the University, Prof. Grigor Gorchev, Member of Correspondence at BAS discussed the role of

science and innovation in society.

The official guests to the event on 17 January 2016 were welcomed by Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of MU-Pleven and other members of the academic leadership at TELEC, where a presentational video was prepared to familiarize them with the work of the University in the fields of Robotic surgery, telemedicine and education.

The Rector made a demonstration of a live connection to the operating room at the University Hospital "Dr. Georgi Stranski" - Pleven. Assoc. Professor Dobromir Dimitrov, Vice-dean of the Faculty of Medicine discussed and exhibited the uses of the 3D medical table for training and for cases of preoperative patient preparation. Guests were introduced to the telemedicine training and development facilities at the Telecommunication Center, visiting the experimental operating room and the virtual hall with the two training simulators.



MU-PLEVEN STUDENT CHOSEN AS VICE-CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STUDENT COUNCILS IN BULGARIA



On February 5, the Executive Council of the National Representation of Student Councils in the Republic of Bulgaria elected two Vice-Presidents. One of them is Zvezdina Goranova - a student of Medicine at the Medical University - Pleven. The other choice of the Executive Board of the NRSC is Vassil Silyanovski, a student at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". This way, the leadership of the NRSC completed its quota of three vice-presidents of the organization. The two newly elected, together with Gabriela Naskova from the University of National and World Economy, will be deputy chairpersons of Jana Vangelova and will be part of the leadership of the NSSR until the end of the mandate program 2016-2018.

Zvezdina Goranova is a former Chair of the Student Council at the Medical University - Pleven in the previous term of office, and at present - Deputy Chair and Chairwoman of the General Assembly of the Student Council. She is an alumnus of "Geo Milev" High School of Mathematics, Pleven and has been a member of the Executive Board of the NSSC since February 2016



ADMISSION CAMPAIGN AT MU-PLEVEN BEGINS WITH INTERESTING INITIATIVES AND PREPARATORY COURSES

For yet another year the Medical University - Pleven (MU-Pleven) launched its admission campaign by conducting weekend-only preparatory courses in biology and chemistry for those willing to apply for "Medicine" and "Pharmacy" fields of study. Preparatory courses began on January 7, 2017, and are held every Saturday and Sunday. University tutors in Biology Chemistry will be in charge of the 10-consecutive-week long course - until 19 March 2017 (excluding March 4 and 5 2017). Each course includes 60 academic hours on the course discipline and is at an unchanged price of 320 BGN. The schedules of the two courses are uploaded on the university site and correspond to the academic material, taught at high school classes as well as the content of the admission examinations. The Biology course includes solving and discussing sample tests on the material for grades 8, 9 and 10. During the preparatory course in chemistry guidance will be given for solving tasks that are included in the *Chemistry Handbook for Candidate-students* - issue of MU-Pleven.

In February, Candidate Student Campaign 2017 continued with the initiative "The University Visits the School", which focuses on high schools in the big cities of North Bulgaria - Pleven, Lovech, Troyan, Teteven, Vidin, Vratsa, Rousse, Gabrovo and Veliko Tarnovo and includes meetings between high-school students and representatives of MU-Pleven. The initiative was concluded on 28 February 2017 with a day of open doors at MU-Pleven. The parents and high school children who decided to attend the event were welcomed by Prof. M. Aleksandrova, Vice-rector of Education, who showed them the facilities at MU-Pleven and introduced them to the conditions for application, test and examination formats as well as the examination season schedule. The student-candidates were also given the opportunity to attend a demonstration by Assoc. Professor Dobromir Dimitrov, Vice-dean of the *Faculty of Medicine* of the 3D medical table for virtual dissections and to watch an introductory video about MU-Pleven.

Info: V. Dukova

MU-PLEVEN REPRESENTATIVES HELD MEETINGS AND TALKS WITH THE NEWLY-ADMITTED INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM GREAT BRITAIN

The newly-admitted international students from Britain started arriving at MU-Pleven late January, 2017. Their first year of studies in the *Medicine* field of study starts 13 February 2017, Monday with an official ceremony at *Magnum* hall. During the ceremony, the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov as well as the Mayor of Pleven, Mr. Georg Spartanski will address and congratulate the new students.

Before the start of the new academic year for the international students, members of the International Students Center will organize a two-week *adaptation program*, which aims to familiarize the students with MU-Pleven's facilities, set up meetings with real estate agencies, the Migration Bureau, insurance companies as well as a tour of Pleven's most well-known landmarks and locations.

The number of international students, admitted at MU-Pleven continues to grow this year as well with a total of 295 students from around the



world having chosen to study *Medicine* at the University. Most international students this year come from Britain(80) and India(86) with many other European and non-European countries worth mentioning: Italy(27), Germany(22), Sweden(12), Canada(7), Japan(6), Ireland(6), Spain, Portugal, etc. For the first time in MU-Pleven's history, some of the applicants hail from Australia, The Philippines, Malawi and Zimbabwe. The newly-admitted students at MU-Pleven this year represent a total of 35 countries.

On 14/15 January 2017, MU-Pleven representatives visited Britain to hold two major seminars/ meetings with the



newly-admitted students from the island country and their parents. During those meetings, the students had the opportunity to meet the International Students Center team and ask any pressing questions. International Students Center members had prepared presentations about the history and goals of MU-Pleven; about the structure, curriculum and methodology, characteristic of the *Medicine* field of study. The aim of these seminars and meetings is to familiarize the students with the educational and administrative processes at MU-Pleven and answer any questions that may arise, thus facilitating a steady and easy transition to a different social and academic environment.

Info: V. Dukova

MU-PLEVEN WELCOMED THE NEWLY-ADMITTED INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WITH THE ALREADY TRADITIONAL "WELCOME PARTY"



Medical University - Pleven and the representatives of the university in the UK welcomed the newly-registered international students with the already traditional "Welcome party". It took place on January 29, 2017 at 19:00 at the Rostov Hotel. Besides the freshmen, there were

also many parents who came to see the conditions under which their children will live and study for 6 years.

The students were welcomed by the Rector of the University, Prof. Slavcho Tomov. In his welcoming speech, he said: "This year, the trend for a record high intake of foreign students who wish to study Medicine in Pleven continues, which shows that even without the campaign we run, the name of the University is already known in Europe and elsewhere in the world. This year, we also broke on the Eastern market, and the group of Indian students already rivals our largest - that of UK Students.

Prof. Tomov also noted that for the first time in MU-Pleven's history, some of the applicants have come all the way from Australia, The Philippines, Malawi and Zimbabwe. The number of newly enrolled students from the United Kingdom and their interest in medical education in Bulgaria is impressive, the director of the British Council in Bulgaria, Lyubov Kostova explained, noting that "Bulgarian education is good enough to be recognized by British standards and, at the same time, British students are strongly encouraged and want to go around and get to know the world better."



WELCOMING CEREMONY MARKS THE START OF THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR FOR THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

13 February 2017 marks the start of the new academic year for the international students at MU-Pleven. 279 newly-admitted students from 35 countries joined the ranks of the international community at the University by attending the opening ceremony held at *Magnum* hall, Pleven. They join the impressive 900 students attending the English program of *Medicine* field of study at MU-Pleven. Since the start of the international program at the University, 13 years have passed and graduates have found success in many different continents - America, India, Europe and Australia.

The newly-admitted students



alongside the more seasoned veterans, years 2-6, were welcomed and congratulated on the beginning of yet another academic year by the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov. After the introduction of the University flags and having stood up to honor the University hymn, *Gaudeamus igitur*, the students were addressed by Prof. Tomov, who noted the ever-

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growing international community at MU-Pleven and attributed the success of MU-Pleven on the foreign market to the quality of education provided and the extensive emphasis on modern educational methods and sophisticated technological solutions in the academic and scientific processes.



INTERVENTION REMOVES 12-KG TUMOR FROM PATIENT AT SAINT MARINA HOSPITAL – PLEVEN

After an incredibly complex and long surgical intervention, on 11 January 2017, the team of surgeons, lead by Prof. Grigor Gorchev and Prof. Slavcho Tomov successfully removed a 12-kg tumor formation from a 58-year-old female patient from the city of Yambol.

The woman was admitted to hospital, describing pain, nausea, vomiting and other constitutional symptoms. She also noted a marked increase in body mass during the last year. After consulting a cardiologist, she is referred to a gynecologist. The specialist encounters the frightening 12-kg tumor formation after conducting a tomography of her abdominal region. It is further determined that the

formation is located in her right ovary and is 40cm in diameter.

Immediately after, the team of surgeons, lead by Prof. Grigor Gorchev and Prof. Slavcho Tomov prepares and successfully performs a surgical intervention, aiming to completely remove the formation. Patient's condition is further aggravated by obesity, three previous caesarian sections and an umbilical hernia. The patient is now in a good general condition is mobile post-op which is a true testament to the high level of professionalism, displayed by the surgical team.



PLEVEN MUNICIPALITY EXITS 2016 AND ENTERS 2017 WITH THE BIRTH OF TWO BABY BOYS

Pleven Municipality released an official address in which it marks the beginning of the new 2017 with the birth of a baby boy. Marin was born at exactly 01:10 on 1 January 2017 at University hospital "Dr. Georgi Stranski". His birth was after a planned surgical procedure and the baby boy was born weighing at 3880 grams with height of 50 cm. The lucky mother – T. Gornishka is 22, from the village of Kneja. Three more children were born on the same day – January 1st

according to staff members of the Obstetrics Clinic at "Dr. Georgi Stranski" University hospital.

The last baby, born in 2016 was also a boy – it was born at 12:15 PM on 31 December 2016, weighing 4110 grams and 52 cm high.

The total number of newborns in Pleven Municipality in 2016 is 2518, according to the Ministry of Health, taking the second place in natality in Northern Bulgaria – right after the city of Varna.



PHYSICIANS AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL – PLEVEN SAVED THE LEG OF A MAN HIT BY AN ELECTRIC SHOCK

Physicians at the Plastic-regenerative and Aesthetic Surgery Department at University hospital – Pleven saved the leg of a man, hit by a 2000W voltaic arc. The patient was admitted with severe burns due to the electric shock. During the next 10 days, Dr. I. Rachev and Dr. I. Bogeva, both surgeons at the Department, performed a series of restorative and regenerative surgical procedures, aiming to restore blood supply to

the limb. During the whole procedure and hospitalization, the patient was constantly monitored for fear of developing renal insufficiency due to his heavy burns. Fortunately, all surgical interventions were successful and the patient has since been discharged and is in a good overall condition.



ASSOC. PROF. YORDAN PANOV WAS NOMINATED FOR THE AWARDS FOR WORTHY PEOPLE INITIATIVE



One of the nominees for the latest edition of "24 Hours" newspaper's initiative *Awards for Worthy People* is the Head of Neurosurgery Clinic at University hospital – Pleven, Assoc. Prof. Yordan Panov. His team performed a unique operation, removing a 15cm bamboo rod, lodged into the cerebellum of a male patient, while managing to preserve his vision and cognitive function. Among the successful interventions are a woman who went into a state of apoplexy after giving birth to twins and a 13-year-old girl with an oversized tumor formation, who is now completely recovered and attending school.



BULGARIAN CHRISTMAS INITIATIVE GIFTED TWO MACHINES TO THE NEONATOLOGY DEPARTMENT AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL – PLEVEN

A donation from *Bulgarian Christmas* was received by Hospital "Dr. Georgi Stranski" – Pleven. The two donated high-tech machines will aid the physicians with the diagnostic tests and treatment of the Neonatology patients. One is an apparatus which maintains positive airways pressure so as to help with the breathing of premature babies. The other apparatus is used for ultrasound diagnostics with the additional Doppler function.

The Head of the Department of Neonatology, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Viktoria Atanasova expressed her gratitude towards the team and organizations behind the *Bulgarian Christmas* initiative: "These machines were sorely needed by our department and will dramatically improve the care we provide to our small patients."



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Pleven, 5800; Bulgaria
1 Kliment Ohridski Str.
Contract no. 064/884-260
e-mail: balashkova@abv.bg

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