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Spring 2021

Sidney Kimmel Medical College
Thomas Jefferson University



Gender Equity

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One the cover: A photomontage of the milestones,
achievements, and influence of women in medicine

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30

Alumni Profile

Dr. Lorraine King

Table of Contents

- 6** Dean's Column
Leveling the Field, Paving the Way to Success
- 8** Time Capsule
Milestones and Influencers: Women in Medicine at Jefferson
- 14** On Campus
- 19** A Message from Elizabeth A. Dale
Building a New Legend
- 20** Discovery
Predicting Heart Disease from the Skin
- 22** Gender Equality in Medicine Still a Work in Progress
- 28** Faculty Profile
Diane Merry
- 34** Student Profile
Matt Rohn and Mark Shapses
- 38** Class Notes
2020 Virtual Alumni Weekend
- 40** Love Story
Physician-Researchers Found Life's Work—and Each Other—at Jefferson
- 46** Class Agent
- 48** In Memoriam
- 52** Bookshelf



Leveling the Field, Paving the Way to Success

In 2011, Jefferson celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first women accepted to our medical college. We commemorated the milestone with a year's worth of special programming and, in the process, highlighted eight women trailblazers of that inaugural Class of 1965. Yet, amidst all the showcasing, we did not sugar-coat some countervailing realities. Our medical college was late in admitting women, and by all accounts, it was not a walk in the park for our female medical students in those early years. Yet, those pioneers persevered, and realized their dream of becoming doctors, thereby ushering Jefferson into the modern era.

Fast forward to 2021. Half of each class at our medical college, and sometimes more, are women. And they stand out across all dimensions, including the curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular realms.

Back in 2011, I took steps to ensure we were cultivating future medical leaders by establishing the dean's Student Leadership Forum (SLF). I meet with each incoming cohort early in their second year—at first monthly and then periodically across the remainder of their time with us—delving into a range of topics tied to leadership. The students also meet with other Jefferson leaders, and participate in special programming. The selection process is rigorous; applicants are carefully vetted and whittled from about 80 to the final 18. Remarkably, year-after-year, there is a gender imbalance in those making it through the gauntlet, with women students predominating

each SLF cohort. This is a testament to the caliber of women training in medicine at our medical college these days.

Our women students stand out in so many arenas: residency match; Medicine+ co-curricular venues such as JeffDesign; community outreach programs such as JeffHope; musical forums within our new Medicine + Music framework; and many more. And it is not just our medical students. Women figure prominently in the ranks of our medical college deans, in those driving our highly successful JeffMD undergraduate medical education curriculum as track and course leaders, and our biomedical research braintrust, to name a few.

Over the intervening decade since the semi-centenary year, we have addressed certain gender inequities and disconnects. Perhaps most visibly has been in the area of faculty compensation. Under the leadership of Karen Novielli, MD, SKMC's vice dean for Faculty Affairs and Professional Development, we rolled out a comprehensive clinical faculty compensation program, a productivity-and-incentive-based plan that is formulaic to maximize fairness and transparency. There has also been a push over this past decade to recruit even more women faculty, to provide proper mentoring, and to bring women into leadership roles at departmental and divisional levels.

Yet, despite these efforts, significant challenges persist for women in medicine in general, and here at Jefferson as well. In 2011, early into my deanship, I stated that "the situation requires more than a bandage; it requires systemic change." Interestingly, in my column of the Bulletin that year, I wrote

that medical schools need to start asking the hard questions: Can we add flexibility; how can we diversify training experiences; why do we put deadlines on tenure tracks? How can we be better at attracting the best and brightest women into the field of medicine, and ensuring roadblocks to success have been removed?

Career progression, and placing women in top leadership roles, remains a challenge. In 2019, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges, women physicians across the country held approximately 25 percent of full professorships, and about 16 percent of clinical sciences department chairs, numbers that track at Jefferson. Although our decade-long push to cultivate women medical leaders through programming such as SLF and faculty mentoring has set us in the right direction, real change demands systemic re-engineering. While some remedies can be local, real change demands changes at the national level.

In 2011, I stated that "we can work to devise a system in the future that allows both men and women to pursue academic medicine without sacrificing their personal lives." We have clearly taken steps in that direction. But we must do more. We have to continue to find ways of making the path for women to becoming physicians as clear as it is for men.

At invited talks to other institutions, I have spoken of reimagining the 21st century physician. One way to do that is through diversification of career paths enabled by a medical training. In the face of inevitable disruption by machine intelligence and robotics, as well as the expansion of clinical practice by non-physician providers, the

role of the physician will per force morph—in many ways for the better. Physician roles will diversify and proliferate, and in so doing, make room for more diverse entrants to the medical realm. This diversification of paths and opportunities, and celebration of diversity, will undoubtedly benefit women physicians.

Back in 2011, I shared that two of my daughters were medical school students themselves. One went on to train in pediatric rheumatology and integrative medicine. The other has leveraged her medical training in the realm of high finance—exemplifying the very career diversification I just spoke of. Should any of my granddaughters choose a medical career, they will be standing on the shoulders of parental role models, and the pioneering women physicians who came before them. We must ensure an open pathway to their success. ▣

MARK L. TYKOCINSKI, MD

Provost and EVP for Academic Affairs
Thomas Jefferson University
Anthony F. and Gertrude M. DePalma Dean
Sidney Kimmel Medical College

Milestones and Influencers

Women in Medicine at Jefferson

BY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

In 1847, English-born Elizabeth Blackwell broke the barrier in medicine for women. Rejected by the nation's elite medical schools in New York City and Philadelphia, she applied to Geneva Medical College in New York, where disbelieving administrators allowed students to vote on her application. They approved it, reportedly under the assumption it was a joke. Two years later, Blackwell became the first woman to earn a medical degree from a U.S. college.

At the turn of the 20th century, many older medical colleges began admitting women, albeit under low quotas and often after hostile takeovers of local women's schools, a process that continued through World War II.

By 1960, only two single-sex medical schools remained: Jefferson and Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP).

There was irony: instead of becoming the last to admit women, Jefferson had almost been one of the first to go co-ed by attempting to merge with WMCP in 1916. WMCP declined the merger. A second attempt was made during the 1940s, but failed in the face of intense opposition from WMCP's alumnae.

Finally, after repeated proposals offered by William Goodner, MD, chair of Microbiology, on June 6, 1960, the Board of Trustees voted without fanfare or argument to admit women.

The first woman accepted was 21-year-old Nancy Szwec, who also won a scholarship. She and eight other women attended their first class at Jefferson on September 11, 1961. Szwec married in her junior year and took her husband's name, Czarnecki, moving toward the front of the alphabet to also become, in 1965, the first woman to accept a Jefferson diploma.



1870

"JMC Catalog" publishes a repudiation of "a mean and malicious falsehood" of an item in Southern newspapers, saying "Jefferson... will make no distinction of sex or color, among applications for admission."

1894

JMC Hospital's Board of Lady Managers is established. Its first project raises funds for a maternity clinic. The organization's name changes to the Women's Board in 1921.

1918

Jefferson faculty approves a resolution to open the school to women. Discussion between Jefferson and Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP) results in a 1919 report proposing to share teachers and facilities in an affiliation "without the loss of identity." No further action takes place for years.

1891

JMC Hospital establishes the School of Nursing; 13 students enroll in the first class.

1824

Jefferson Medical College (now Sidney Kimmel Medical College) is founded; Philadelphia becomes the only city in the world with two medical schools. (University of Pennsylvania's medical department was established in 1765.)



Time Capsule



1960

The Board of Trustees approves the recommendation of the Faculty Executive Committee to admit women.

1961

Nine female Jefferson students arrive on campus in September.

Jefferson Medical College Class of 1965



1950

The first non-medical graduate degree granted to a woman from Jefferson College of Graduate Studies, a master of science in bacteriology, goes to Sonia Schorr.

1946

An attempt to merge Jefferson and WMCP is rejected by the WMCP Alumnae Association.

1952

JMC Hospital welcomes its first female resident, Elizabeth M. Bogardus, MD, radiology. She went on sick leave in February 1953 and never returned.



1953

JMC Hospital welcomes two women residents who go on to finish a year of training: Vera (Easling) Dettweiler, MD, pediatrics, and Evelyn D. Schmidt, MD, pediatrics.

1959

JMC Hospital welcomes its first female intern, Ann M. Dimitroff, MD.

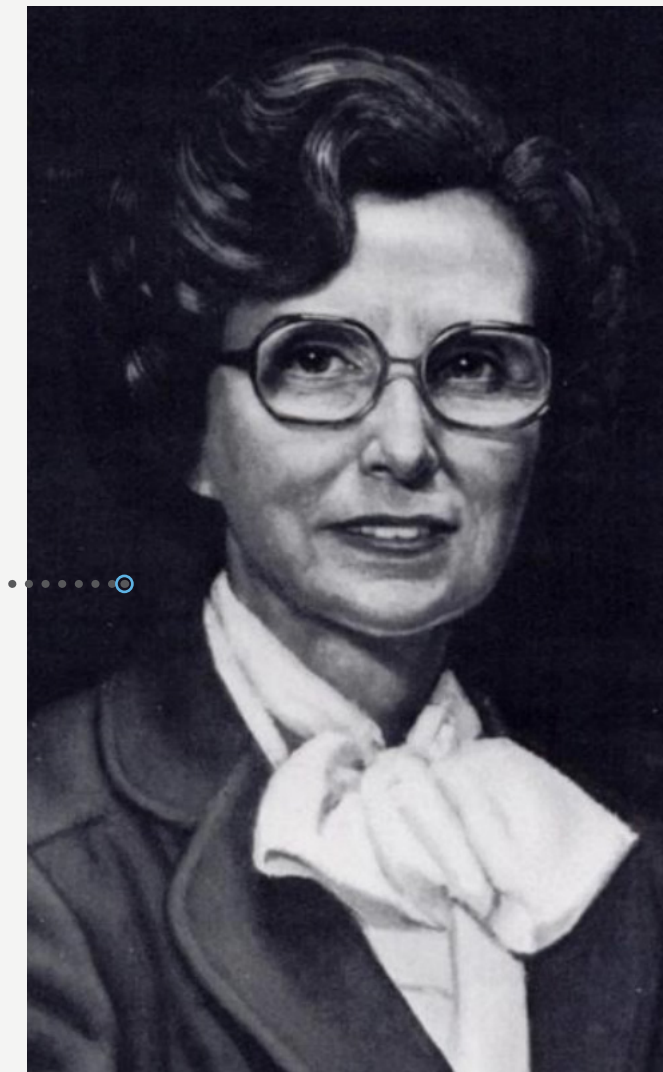
The Faculty Executive Committee, on the motion of William Goodner, MD, chair of microbiology, unanimously votes to recommend admitting women to the medical college.

1965

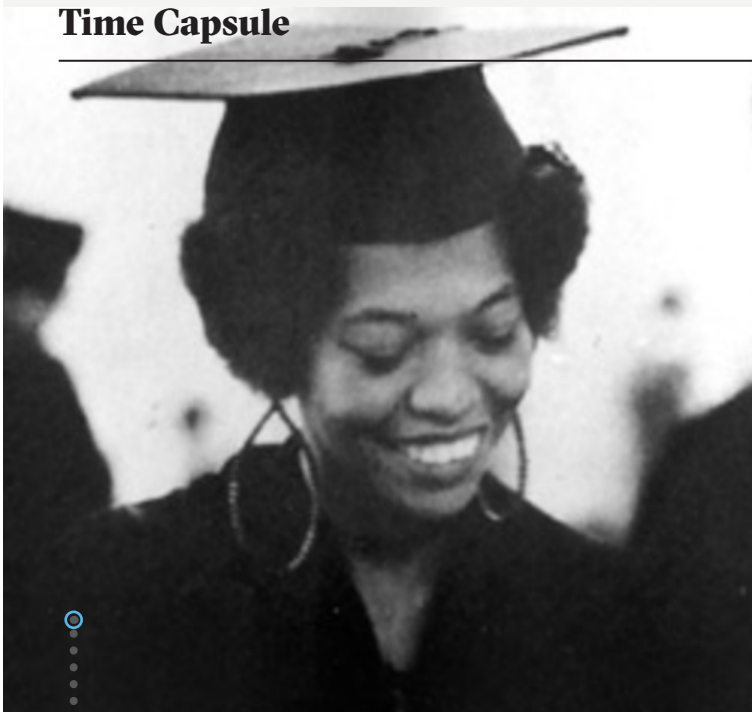
Eight of the first female students graduate in June (the ninth transferred). Nancy Szewc Czarnecki was the first woman to receive her diploma.

1968

Martha Southard of the Radiation Therapy Department becomes the first woman to attain a full professorship.



Time Capsule



1971

Cora LeEthel Christian becomes the first Black woman to graduate from Jefferson.

1972

Dorrance Hill "Dodo" Hamilton becomes the first woman named to the Board of Trustees.

1978

Gaylynn G.L. Li-Ma becomes the first Asian woman to graduate from Jefferson.

1982

Leah M. Lowenstein becomes the first female dean of Jefferson and first of any U.S. medical school open to men and women; Dean Lowenstein served only 18 months before becoming ill with cancer and resigning.



1989

The Jefferson Alumni Association elects its first female president, Nancy Szwec Czarnecki, MD '65.

1998

Women comprise 50 percent of the entering class at Jefferson for the first time.



2002

Marion J. Siegman, PhD, becomes first female chair in basic sciences as chair of Molecular Physiology and Biophysics.

Vijay M. Rao, MD, RES '78, becomes first female chair in a clinical department as the David C. Levin Professor and Chair of Radiology.

2011

The 50 & Forward Celebration marks the "golden anniversary" of the acceptance of Jefferson's first female medical college students.

2020

Patricia Wellenbach becomes the first female chair-elect of Jefferson's Board of Trustees, set to assume the role of chair on July 1, 2021.



2015

Karen Knudsen, PhD, becomes the first female director of Jefferson's Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center.

Edith Mitchell, MD, director of Jefferson's Center to Eliminate Cancer Disparities, is named the 116th president of the National Medical Association.



18th Annual Jefferson Gala

For 17 years, the high point of Jefferson's calendar has been the annual gala, a night to gather the Jefferson family to feast and fete, brag a little, laugh a little, and celebrate a lot. But in a year of coronavirus, when everything is different, the 18th Annual Jefferson Gala was like none before. Instead of gathering in one room, the Jefferson family came together by staying apart for a first-ever, totally reimagined virtual Jefferson Gala.

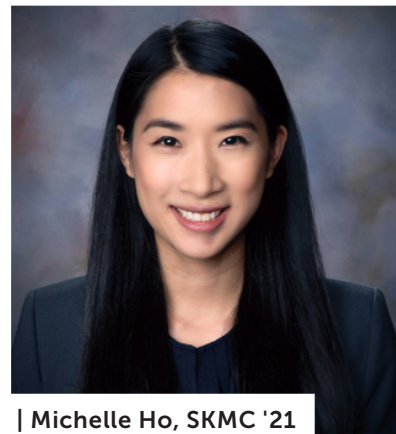
The gala raised \$1.5 million to benefit Jefferson's partnership with Italy and the education, research, and healthcare initiatives we've undertaken together. An unusual feature of this year's gala were the 300 guests who deferred receiving their meals and sponsorship gift boxes, instead donating the value, which totaled \$100,000, to JeffSecure, an emergency fund that helps food-insecure students at Jefferson.

As in galas past, the gathering celebrated two distinguished honorees. Lavinia Biagiotti Cigna, president and CEO of the Biagiotti Group, received the Award of Merit, and pioneering transplant surgeon Dr. Ignazio Marino, EVP of International Innovative Strategic Ventures at Jefferson and executive director of the Jefferson Italy Center as well as a former senator in Italy and Mayor of Rome, was recognized with the Achievement Award in Medicine.

New this year were awards honoring a healthcare hero and two Jefferson students. Enterprise Vice President of Infection Control Kelly Zabriskie, MLS, BS, CIC, was recognized for her expertise and leadership, which saved lives during the pandemic and kept Jefferson safe, with the Faegre Drinker



| Ignazio R. Marino, MD, ScD



| Michelle Ho, SKMC '21

Healthcare Hero Award. Michelle Ho, SKMC '21, and Allyson Naiken, Nursing '21, were honored for their resourcefulness and care for others with the Algernon Brashear Jackson Student Award.

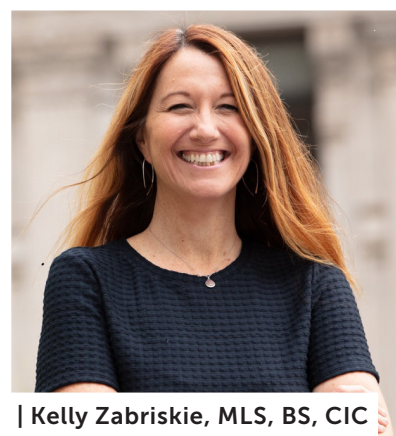
The gala festivities were topped by Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli performing "Amazing Grace" and the classic rock band Well Strung, featuring guitarist, neurosurgeon, and president of Vickie and Jack Farber Institute for Neuroscience Dr. Robert Rosenwasser, playing a cover of the Doobie Brothers hit "Long Train Runnin." 🎸



| Lavinia Biagiotti Cigna



| Allyson Naiken, JCN '21



| Kelly Zabriskie, MLS, BS, CIC



| Robert Sergott, MD

Dr. Robert Sergott Named to Editorial Board of MSARD

The international journal *Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders* named professor of ophthalmology, neurology, and neurosurgery Robert Sergott, MD, as its neuro-ophthalmology section editor.

Sergott is an expert in neuro-ophthalmology and founding director of the William H. Annesley, Jr, MD, '48 EyeBrain Center in the Vickie and Jack Farber Institute for Neuroscience. He is chief of neuro-ophthalmology at Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia. Sergott began serving in the prestigious, three-year editorial post in August 2020.

Dr. Brooke Salzman to Lead JCIPE

Brooke Salzman, MD, '01, RES'04, FEL'05, was appointed associate provost for Interprofessional Practice and Education, and co-director of the Jefferson Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education (JCIPE). Established in 2007, JCIPE works to improve patient care through



| Brooke Salzman, MD

implementing and evaluating patient-centered interprofessional education and collaboration throughout the Jefferson curriculum. Salzman is also an associate professor of Family and Community Medicine.



| David Cognetti, MD, RES '07

New Chair of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Named

David Cognetti, MD, RES '07, was appointed the Herbert Kean, MD Professor and Chair of the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, succeeding William Keane, MD, after nearly three decades of building and leading the department.

Cognetti is president-elect of the Pennsylvania Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, and chair of the Head and Neck Surgery Education Committee for the American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery. He is a member of the Head and Neck Steering Committee Rare Tumors Task Force for the National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute. At Jefferson since 2008, he was vice chair of the department, co-director of the Jefferson Center for Head and Neck Surgery, and director for the Advanced Head and Neck Oncologic Surgery Fellowship.

Department of Surgery Promotes New Professors

Karen Chojnacki, MD, RES '00, was named the Francis E. Rosato Professor of Surgery. Chojnacki also serves as

vice chair of Education, the Residency Program Director, and Director of the Division of General Surgery.

Nathaniel Evans, III, MD, was promoted to professor of Surgery. Evans also serves as director of the Division of Thoracic and Esophageal Surgery and Co-Director of the Gastroesophageal Center.

Alliric Willis, MD, was promoted to professor of Surgery. Willis also serves as vice chair for Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development as well as assistant dean for Faculty Affairs.



| Karen Chojnacki, MD, RES '00



| Nathaniel Evans, III, MD



| Alliric Willis, MD



Jefferson's Health Design Lab Teams Up with UArts to Study ER Burnout

BY BRIAN HICKEY

Amid the pandemic, over 70 percent of emergency physicians say they've experienced the sort of fatigue that can lead to exhaustion and stress.

Thomas Jefferson University and the University of the Arts have teamed up for a creative approach to studying physician burnout in the emergency

room, at a time when those insights are needed most.

Through a cross-disciplinary project—made possible by a grant from the Emergency Medicine Foundation (EMF) and HKS Architects—Jefferson's Health Design Lab and Emergency Medicine Department will partner with the University of the Arts' new Center for Immersive Media (CIM). The team will use high-fidelity virtual reality modeling to analyze the environmental factors of the Emergency Department at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital to identify and improve physical conditions that contribute to stress, fatigue, and poor job satisfaction.

"Now more than ever, we must understand and redesign the human experience of frontline emergency rooms," says Stephen K. Klasko, MD, MBA, president of Thomas Jefferson University and CEO of Jefferson Health. "It's a brilliant opportunity to provide much-needed relief and benefit emergency staff and their patients."

"It is this type of cross-disciplinary thinking and creative collaboration that embraces the essential role of the arts that I believe is going to be critical to our success as society as we emerge from a global pandemic," says David Yager, president of University of the Arts.

in the current pandemic, the impact of poor ER design is felt even more by frontline workers.

Leading the effort is Matt Fields, MD—principal physician investigator and associate professor of emergency medicine at Thomas Jefferson University—and Alan Price, director of the CIM, a 5,600-square-foot facility devoted to emerging and new technologies. The multidisciplinary team also includes Bon Ku, MD, MPP, the Marta and Robert Adelson Professor of Medicine and Design and director of Jefferson's Health Design Lab; Morgan Hutchinson, MD, RES '18, director of education at Jefferson's Health Design Lab; Jennifer White, MD, associate professor of Emergency Medicine; and Billie Faircloth, an architect at KieranTimberlake Architecture.

"If you have ever been in a busy ER, or seen one on TV, it's not surprising people working in them frequently burn out," says Fields. "There can be high stress, chaos, noise, crowded halls, poor lighting, and a lack of windows or respite areas. In the current pandemic, the impact of poor ER design is felt even more by frontline workers."

Fields notes that while efforts have been made in the past to reduce physician burnout, this collaboration marks the first time that attempts have been made to change the environment itself to help do so. That's what makes the collaboration to use high-fidelity virtual modelling of the ER space so important.

Environmental factors such as lighting, presence of windows, access to nature, aesthetics and imagery, ventilation, space, circulation and wayfinding, noise, and ergonomics have been proven to correlate with levels of stress, fatigue, and low job satisfaction in other healthcare settings.

The goal is to pinpoint areas that create the most stress and then apply design-thinking principles to reimagine and redesign them, Fields adds.



| Morgan Hutchinson, MD, RES '18



| Jennifer White, MD

"The sensory-rich experience of virtual reality has the ability to elicit increased verbal, physical, and emotional response to what physicians actually experience in emergency settings," says Price. "Our simulation will allow doctors to 'step out' of the moment, and hopefully provide detail that would otherwise be difficult or impossible in the actual environment."

Still, these factors have not been explicitly examined within emergency room settings—in part due to the complexity of studying an active and highly trafficked emergency setting. Leveraging virtual reality will help the team study, and later manipulate, the emergency setting's environmental factors without disrupting the lifesaving activities of a currently operating academic emergency department.

The grant was made possible by HKS—a recognized leader in healthcare design—and the Emergency Medicine Foundation, a nonprofit founded by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP).

"Staff burnout is a significant issue across the healthcare system," says Jason Schroer, AIA, principal and health practice leader at HKS. "Design can help mitigate stressful conditions and support staff well-being, which is critically important. We are honored to partner with EMF to research design's potential to ameliorate caregiver burnout." 📌



| Bon Ku, MD



Jefferson Alumni Travel Program

As part of our commitment to lifelong learning, the Office of Alumni Relations offers opportunities for group travel for Jefferson, Textile, and Philadelphia University alumni. A varied itinerary of travel destinations is offered each year, combining educational forums, unique adventures, and excursions to places of historical and cultural interest, with opportunities to discover nature's majestic landscapes and incredible wildlife. These trips offer the highest-quality travel experience through our partnerships with experienced travel providers.

- ▶ **Undiscovered France—Featuring Albi, Toulouse & Carcassonne**
June 8-16, 2021
- ▶ **Discover the Canadian Rockies by Rail**
August 4-10, 2021
- ▶ **Discover Southeast Alaska**
August 6-13, 2021
- ▶ **Greece, Athens & the Island of Poros**
August 27-September 5, 2021
- ▶ **Apulia—Undiscovered Italy**
September 22-30, 2021
- ▶ **Flavors of Northern Italy**
September 25-October 1, 2021
- ▶ **Wonders of Peru—Featuring an Amazon Cruise & Machu Picchu**
October 14-25, 2021
- ▶ **Galapagos Islands—Western Itinerary**
October 26-November 2, 2021
- ▶ **Iberian Immersion—Monte Carlo to Rome, Oceania Cruises**
November 6-17, 2021
- ▶ **Florence in the Serene Season**
November 15-23, 2021
- ▶ **Antarctica Discovery**
January 13 - 24, 2022

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A Message from Elizabeth A. Dale



Building a New Legend

In their third volume on Jefferson's history, the excellent *Legend and Lore: Jefferson Medical College* published in 1996, editors Frederick B. Wagner, Jr., MD '41, and J. Woodrow Savacool, MD '38, compile a treasure trove of alumni vignettes about student life.

Whenever the country was going through hard times, the stories show that alumni stepped up—through service, volunteerism, and philanthropy.

In one recollection, Joseph L. Finn, MD '35, writes, "Economic clouds were very dark when the Class of 1935 began its student days. Real estate was almost worthless and bank failures were rampant. I was one of many across the country whose bank closed as I was preparing to pay my first

tuition installment." Finn highlights the transformative impact of alumni giving, noting that he was able to become part of Jefferson's first residency program in 1937 because of a bequest given by alumnus and professor of obstetrics Pascal Brooke Bland, MD 1901.

In addition to a long and impactful career practicing medicine, Finn would go one to become a prolific Class Agent, rallying his fellow 1935 graduates to lead the way in alumni giving from 1950-1952.

Resiliency, generosity, and creativity have been hallmarks of Jefferson since its founding, and those traits are needed now more than ever as our students navigate the COVID and post-COVID world. That's why, as part of the Reimagine Campaign, we launched the Reimagine Scholarship initiative to help our students through today's "dark economic clouds." The response from alumni has been nothing short of amazing.

So far just this academic year, we've raised nearly \$2 million from 275 alumni for medical college scholarships, including creating nine new scholarships.

The stories behind alumni scholarship gifts are just as amazing. Suzanne Springer Zeok, MD '69, and John V. Zeok, MD '67, created the Springer-Zeok Scholarship in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary and the 50th anniversary of their graduations. "We thought there was no better way to honor the moment than to pay forward the support we received as students and residents to help future Jefferson physicians excel," Suzanne remarked.

Through the Reimagine campaign, we hope to create 100 new endowed scholarships. If we can achieve that goal together, it surely will become the stuff

of Jefferson legend and lore for future generations.

If you'd like to learn more about what you can do to help this effort, visit Jefferson.edu/ReimagineSKMCScholars or reach out to me directly. I'd love to hear from you. 📩

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Please contact me if you'd like to learn more about the doors you can open and lives you can change. I'd love to hear from you.



Predicting Heart Disease from the Skin

Jefferson researchers find that the genetic underpinnings of a skin disorder at birth indicate future heart problems.

Our skin tells us when we've spent too much time in the sun or when the dry air of winter has sucked away too much moisture. Now Jefferson researchers find that the skin can also foretell issues unrelated to the protective barrier.

An international team of researchers led by Jouni Uitto, MD, PhD, professor of dermatology and cutaneous biology, report that mutations in a gene known to underlie a rare skin disorder also lead to a serious heart disease. The findings are the latest example from Dr. Uitto's laboratory to show that when combined with genetic analysis, the skin may help to predict future medical conditions.

"By looking into the skin of newborns, we can predict the development of a devastating heart disease later in life," Dr. Uitto says. "This is predictive personalized medicine at its best."

The researchers published the findings December 10 in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

A renowned skin disease expert, Dr. Uitto has been on a global hunt for mutations in families with genetic skin disorders for three decades. Over the last five years, he and his team have analyzed mutations in about, 1800

families around the world, searching for the genetic culprits behind skin conditions such as epidermolysis bullosa (EB). EB is a severe disease that makes the skin extraordinarily fragile. Patients with EB can develop blisters and poorly healing wounds from the lightest touch.

In the new publication, co-first authors Hassan Vahidnezhad and Leila Youssefian, along with a small cadre of researchers, scrutinized the DNA of more than 360 EB patients from around the world. In particular, they analyzed DNA isolated from blood samples for sequence variants in a set of 21 genes known to harbor mutations that cause EB. The analysis revealed that two patients had the exact same mutation in a gene known as JUP.

The patients had shown the same symptoms in early infancy, including very fragile skin, thickened skin on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, and hair loss that extended to the eyebrows and eyelashes. But now one patient was a 2.5-year-old boy who only showed skin anomalies, while the other was a 22-year-old woman who also had a heart condition called arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy (ARVC).

"By looking into the skin of newborns, we can predict the development of a devastating heart disease later in life. This is predictive personalized medicine at its best."

"This is a serious disease that can require a heart transplant if the damage is too severe because of heart failure and life-threatening fast heart rhythms," says Reginald Ho, MD, a cardiologist in the department of medicine at Sidney Kimmel Medical College, who co-authored the study.

In ARVC, rigid, fibrous tissue displaces healthy heart muscle over time. As a result, the heart develops abnormal rhythms and becomes weak. ARVC patients are vulnerable to heart failure and sudden cardiac death. Indeed, ARVC is responsible for as much as 20 percent of sudden cardiac deaths in those under 30. Many require an implantable defibrillator to manage life-threatening arrhythmias. Mutations in JUP that cause EB can also lead to stiffness of the heart muscle and ARVC.

Although the young boy did not yet have heart problems, the genetic findings suggest that he will develop them down the road.

"This means that with mutation analysis, you can predict, when looking at EB patients at birth, whether they will have this very severe heart condition later in life," Dr. Uitto says.

"These patients need to be monitored carefully for heart problems," he adds.

The findings add to a string of discoveries Dr. Uitto and colleagues have unveiled in recent years in their search for the genes that underlie severe skin conditions. In 2019, for example, the researchers found that patients with a skin condition known as ichthyosis can develop liver problems later in life that are severe enough to require a transplant.

"We are looking to identify new genes behind skin diseases like EB and ichthyosis," Dr. Uitto says. "By looking at patients' symptoms and family history, we have uncovered something completely unexpected."

"Together, these studies show how the skin can help predict severe medical problems," Dr. Uitto says.

Article reference: Hassan Vahidnezhad, Leila Youssefian, Masoomeh Faghankhani, Nikoo Mozafari, Amir Hossein Saeidian, Fatemeh Niaziarimi, Fahimeh Abdollahimajd, Soheila Sotoudeh, Fatemeh Rajabi, Liaosadat Mirsafaei, Zahra Alizadeh Sani, Lu Liu, Alyson Guy, Sirous Zeinali, Ariana Kariminejad, Reginald T. Ho, John A. McGrath, and Jouni Uitto, "Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy in Patients with Biallelic JUP-associated Skin Fragility," Scientific Reports 10.1038/s41598-020-78344-9, 2020.



A Knight in Scientific Armor

In December 2020, Dr. Jouni Uitto received the distinction of Knight of the White Rose, First Order, of the Republic of Finland for his contributions to science and medicine in researching rare heritable skin disorders. Established in 1919, the Order of the White Rose is one of three official orders in Finland, along with the Order of the Cross of Liberty and the Order of the Lion of Finland. Congratulations to Sir Uitto!



Gender Equity in Medicine Still a Work in Progress

BY ROBIN WARSHAW

There's good news: applicants to U.S. medical schools are now about evenly divided between women and men. That was reflected in the first-year class for the 2019–20 academic year at Sidney Kimmel Medical College, which was 50 percent female and 50 percent male.

"I think it's refreshing to have a class that reflects the new culture of medicine, the way it is more split [by gender] and not male-dominated," says Elyse Andrews, MD '20, a resident in pediatrics at Nemours duPont Pediatrics at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Pennsylvania.

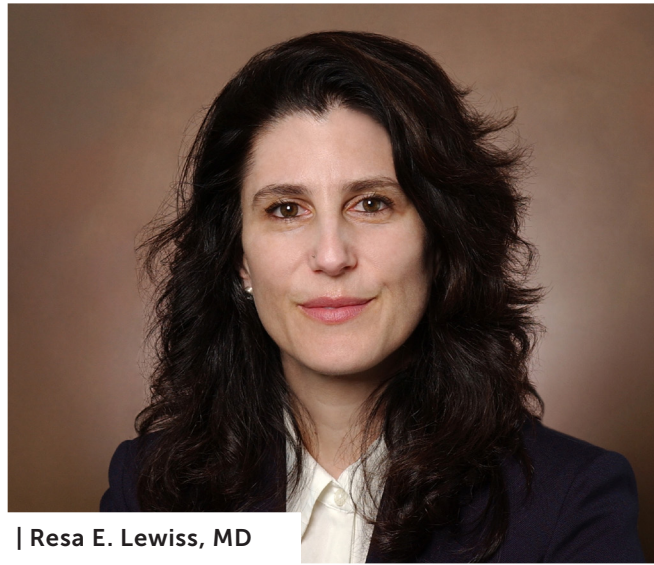
Despite that numerical balance for students nationwide, medicine is still often not a welcoming professional environment for women. Female physicians today encounter problems that women in medicine have experienced for decades: gender discrimination, sexual harassment, lower pay, micro- and macro-aggressions, biases, fewer leadership positions, and more.

"People thought that the problem would fix itself by having more women getting into medical school—that by women being present in the room, it would self-correct," says Resa E. Lewiss, MD, professor of emergency medicine and director of ultrasound point-of-care. "There's been a delay in understanding that there's much more to the institution and structures of medicine."

Recent research shows that gender inequities persist. A 2019 national survey of 7,409 general surgery residents (2,935 female) published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* found that 65 percent of the women had experienced gender discrimination and about 20 percent had been sexually harassed. Women in other medical specialties have reported being the targets of similar behaviors.

Such bias happens well beyond the training years. Dr. Lewiss co-authored a 2019 article in the *Journal of Women's Health* that discussed how women physicians experience multiple inequities that marginalize them—lower salaries, less professional sponsorship by senior physicians, limited promotions, fewer speaking or publishing opportunities, plus bias related to pregnancy and child-rearing. As a result, she says, some women in medicine seem to become professionally invisible by mid-career.

Institutions are looking more closely at harmful disparities that affect people by gender as well as by race, national or ethnic origin, LGBTQ identity, religion, disability, and other traits. Some are acting to dispel the cultures that have condoned the status quo. In 2019, Jefferson signed a commitment to align with the core principles of TIME'S UP Healthcare, an organization formed to challenge sexual harassment and gender inequities in the healthcare workplace.



| Resa E. Lewiss, MD



| Karen Novielli, MD

At SKMC, programs and initiatives address discriminatory challenges that women and underrepresented minorities might face as medical students, trainees, or faculty. “We’ve been focused on diversity for over a decade,” says Karen Novielli, MD, vice dean for faculty affairs and professional development. The college has strengthened recruitment of faculty from underrepresented groups as well as hiring women for a wider range of specialties and senior leadership roles.

“We’re making progress,” Novielli says. “Not as much as we would like, but we are making progress.”



| Susan Rosenthal, MD

Being Heard

Gender-based inequities sometimes seem baked into medicine and society at large. Female physicians may experience discriminatory behaviors that get tacit approval from their colleagues. They don’t speak up because they believe it could hurt their careers.

Even micro-aggressions, such as dismissive remarks and gender-related jokes that aren’t funny, have a negative impact. Karyn L. Butler, MD, professor of surgery and director of surgical critical care, has attended many medical conferences and has witnessed such incidents.

“I’ve been at national meetings where inappropriate comments have been made at the podium, in front of a group of surgeons, and... there’s laughter,” she says. When the laughter goes unchallenged, “then there’s an affirmation that it’s okay to say that,” Butler adds. “If it’s not recognized and called out, there isn’t an opportunity for that behavior to change.”

Some women hesitate to speak out because they don’t know if they’ll have the support of their peers and leaders. After all, physicians are trained to work intensely hard, and endure challenging situations. Women don’t want to be labeled “too sensitive,” a description that can harm advancement. Many stay quiet, even as more women are speaking out about gender bias in other professional cultures.

Jefferson has a zero-tolerance policy on discrimination and harassment. All students, trainees, and faculty are

encouraged to speak up and report such behavior. Information about how to get help is provided through educational workshops, training sessions, advisors, and the SKMC website. “I want to make sure that they have the courage and knowledge to bring it to our attention so we can act on that,” says Novielli.

Kelly Daniels, MD ’20, now a resident in Otolaryngology at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, served on the student-run Physician Executive Leadership organization, which focuses on issues that affect healthcare. She says they talked about the #MeToo movement and the attention it gave to sexual assault. She also attended discussions on sexual harassment sponsored by Jeff SOAR (Students Organized Against Rape), in which alumni talked about their experiences in medical school or residency. “We as students couldn’t imagine [such things] taking place,” she says. “I remember being very moved by those conversations.”

According to Daniels, both her female and male peers at SKMC help each other when one of them has a difficult interaction related to gender bias or something else. Those experiences are infrequent, she says, but “the support is across the board, which I think is really a positive reflection on people entering the field.”

Widening Options

Jefferson was the last U.S. medical school to admit women. That happened in 1961, when the first-year class had nine women (5 percent of total enrollment) and 167 men. The gender disparity lessened gradually over decades [see sidebar, pg. 29].

Today, SKMC programs aim to increase diversity and understanding in physicians and medicine, to create a profession with less bias and more balance. The Student Leadership Forum (SLF) presents conversations on nonclinical issues in medicine to develop students who show the potential to become medical leaders. SLF students meet with Mark Tykocinski, MD, provost and executive vice president for academic affairs at Thomas Jefferson University and the Anthony F. and Gertrude M. DePalma Dean of SKMC.

Each year, about 80 students apply to join SLF and 18 are selected. Members are about evenly split between women and men. “We pick students with diverse leadership in the arts, business, and health,” says Susan Rosenthal, MD, associate dean of student affairs and career counseling at SKMC. “They bring their experiences in all fields to the group, which makes for lively discussions.”

For Andrews, who played on a Division I lacrosse team and helped run a charity in college, being in SLF supported her future goals. She joined because she

By the Numbers: Jefferson Medical Students, by Gender (1st-year classes)

| 1st Year Class | # Woman in Class | Total Class Size | Total Class Size (rounded) |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1961–62 | 9 | 176 | 5% |
| 1970–71 | 26 | 212 | 12% |
| 1980–81 | 47 | 223 | 21% |
| 1990–91 | 98 | 226 | 43% |
| 2000–01 | 105 | 223 | 47% |
| 2010–11 | 129 | 260 | 50% |
| 2019–20 | 135 | 270 | 50% |

wanted to find out, “as a female, what are things that I can improve on to distinguish myself and get into leadership roles as I [continue] in my career?”

SKMC’s chapter of the American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA) provides professional and personal support to students through mentorships and seminars. Novielli, the group’s faculty advisor, talks with members about how to report harassment or discrimination. She encourages female students to think about choosing specialties that women have historically not entered. Novielli says unconscious bias from faculty, families, and society may steer women into supposedly more “family-friendly” specialties, which often pay less.

Daniels went happily into surgery, a field that women are often steered away from. “What really helped me decide on it was that the faculty and mentors I found in head and neck surgery at Jefferson never made me feel like I was anything lesser because I was a female,” she says.

Women Faculty

While the SKMC student population is nearly equal by gender, the faculty snapshot looks different. Only 19 percent of current department chairs are women. Among full-time faculty, 40 percent are women, compared to 31 percent in 2010.

It took until 2002 for the first female chair to be named in a clinical department; Vijay M. Rao, MD (radiology). That followed the 2002 appointment of the first woman chair in basic sciences, Marion J. Siegman, PhD (physiology). Leah M. Lowenstein, MD, became the first

woman dean of JMC (now SKMC) in 1982 and served 18 months before leaving due to illness. Lowenstein, who died in 1984, was the first female dean of any U.S. medical school that admitted both women and men.

“When you survey women, most want to ascend to be leaders,” says Lewiss. Yet, even today, assumptions are sometimes made that women, especially those with families, aren’t interested in advancing. When women aren’t considered for higher-level posts, they can lose professional visibility, which also keeps many inequalities in place. “If we get more women in positions of leadership, that can change,” Lewiss says.

SKMC supports the growth of early-career female faculty by sending them to professional development conferences held by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). Mid-career faculty participate in the Jefferson Leadership Academy, to gain skills for further success. Women at the associate or full professor level may attend the national Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® (ELAM) program, which trains participants to become senior leaders at academic health centers.

Across the U.S., female physicians at all levels may face the long-standing problem of pay inequity compared to male physicians. Even in high-level positions, their salaries lag behind men’s. A *JAMA Internal Medicine* study published online in 2020 found that, after adjusting for multiple factors, male department chairs in academic medicine were paid significantly more than their female peers, even when all had served in their posts for more than 10 years.

SKMC initiatives are addressing unequal pay and promotions. A new compensation plan is built on a formula rather than on subjective opinion. “That was really important from an equity perspective,” Novielli says. In 2021, a system for appointments and promotions will begin. It will make job review feedback more systematic by looking at milestones that must be achieved. According to Novielli, the new system is designed to help level the playing field for promotion.

Making Medicine Better

Some women also are in minority groups that are underrepresented in the physician workforce. This intersectionality can make it even more complicated for them to navigate disparities and bias.

Messages about who belongs in medicine still infuse the culture. Walking through their institution’s hallways, women may see only portraits of white men. They might attend meetings where nearly everyone is male and conferences that have “manels” instead of panels with diverse members. Those things drive home

what, in many environments, continues to define the profession.

“For me, as an African American woman, it’s tough sometimes to understand whether discrimination is gender or ethnicity, or both,” says Butler. “In some ways, does it matter? I don’t think so. All of this becomes based on a need to develop tolerance.”

The benefits of seeing and valuing everyone in medicine are clear. “When I was a resident, we didn’t have transgender residents. If they did exist, no one knew,” Butler says. “We have to be intentional, thoughtful, mindful about the need for tolerance, and have an appreciation of diversity. Because that’s the foundation to address these inequities.”

Much work still needs to be done. Changing medicine’s traditional view of what a physician looks and acts like will improve the profession for doctors and for their patients.

Visibility will make a critical difference, for women as well as those who identify as transgender or non-binary. “Jefferson is taking the steps to educate everyone across our hospitals and universities, and develop the necessary skills for providing inclusive and affirming healthcare to people of all genders and sexualities,” said Dr. Jaymie Campbell Orphanidis, director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Education at Jefferson.

Having faculty who look like the students is critical, Novielli contends. “Students need to see themselves in the various roles. Women need to see themselves as surgeons, radiologists, whatever. We have an extra obligation to make sure the faculty is diverse.”

Women students who were recently on the residency interview circuit had a glimpse of the changing world of academic medicine. “I’m going into a very non-diverse field and it is very white male-dominated,” Daniels says. “The people I talked with said, ‘This is not what we want our department to look like.’”

She believes that because diversity and inclusion stir passion from students, departmental interviewers make a point to mention those issues in their discussions with applicants.

“It’s nice to hear,” Daniels says, “but even nicer to see things they’re actually doing.”



Med School Rotation Brings Student Back to Magee after Devastating Spinal Cord Injury

When Michelle Konkoly walked into Magee Rehabilitation Hospital on July 6, wearing a white coat and scrubs, it was a surreal experience to say the least. It had been more than nine years since she arrived at Magee for the first time. Then, she was a patient with a devastating spinal cord injury; this time, a Sidney Kimmel Medical College student, working under the doctors, physical therapists, and other residents who cared for her as a patient back in 2011.

During her freshman year at Georgetown University in 2011, Konkoly tragically fell out of her dorm room window while trying to open it one night. The impact of plummeting five stories left her with numerous broken bones, shattered the L2 vertebra in her back, and damaged her spinal cord. She endured multiple surgeries, months of inpatient rehabilitation, and many additional months of outpatient therapies. It was during this difficult time that she decided that she wanted to pursue a career in medicine.

While not as competitive as she was before her injury, Konkoly continued as a Division I swimmer at Georgetown

and even served as team captain. Not wanting to give up her dream of being an elite swimmer, she deferred medical school for two years to train full-time for the Paralympics. She won four medals, including two golds, at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro games.

“I feel like I can accomplish almost anything after having to learn to walk again,” says Konkoly, now a fourth-year medical student.

She’s currently doing clinical rotations, shadowing physicians and residents and gaining hands-on experience with patients. Konkoly elected for a physical medicine and rehabilitation rotation, which brought her back to Magee for several weeks this summer. As a former rehab patient, Konkoly says she understands the significance and magnitude of this patient-doctor relationship.

Konkoly is preparing for the next phase in her life and career as she awaits results on where she matches for residency. She hopes to practice pediatric rehabilitation medicine.

“I want patients to know there will be a day where you will go back to doing the things that you love,” Konkoly says. “You have a full life in front of you. You’ll find ways to be proud of yourself for things that you wouldn’t have thought of before.”



BY SARI HARRAR

Going Rogue

Diane Merry has spent a lifetime chasing the “bad” gene behind Kennedy’s disease

In the 1990s, as the massive Human Genome Project claimed newspaper headlines and the public imagination, a single mutant gene captured the attention of Diane Merry, PhD.

Twenty-nine years later, it still does.

Merry, a professor in Jefferson’s Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, has won dozens of major grants and co-authored 30 papers focused on how one rogue gene causes the rare neurodegenerative disease spinal-bulbar muscular atrophy (SBMA). Back in 1991, she had just finished her PhD when the discovery of SBMA’s bad gene was announced in the journal

Nature. “I was fascinated by it and felt I had the tools to contribute to understanding it,” she says. As a post-doc in the University of Pennsylvania lab of one of the gene’s discoverers, Merry published early papers on the mysterious gene and its effects. Today at Jefferson, she leads one of the few labs in the U.S. dedicated solely to SBMA research.

“It’s my goal, my dream, to find a treatment that lets people with SBMA live a normal life,” she says.

There’s currently no treatment or cure for the inherited disorder, which affects about one in 40,000 men. Symptoms usually crop up at midlife, as SBMA—also

called Kennedy’s disease—destroys motor neurons in the spinal cord and brain stem that control muscles for speech, chewing, and swallowing as well as for arm and leg movements. SBMA can also reduce male fertility and, new evidence suggests, increase risk for metabolic problems like insulin resistance, obesity, fatty liver, and unhealthy cholesterol levels. Women who carry the gene may have mild symptoms, like muscle cramps.

The National Institutes of Health has awarded three large, multi-year grants to Merry so she and her lab can develop a new transgenic mouse model of SBMA and look even more closely at how the disease unfolds at a molecular level. “The grants are game-changing,” she says.

Merry moved her lab into a big, newly refurbished space in Jefferson Alumni Hall in 2019 and added new researchers and staff to her team. “Normally we have five to 10 members, but we’ll go up to 13 now,” she says. “There’s a large tissue culture room where everyone can do their work. And we have a new, high-resolution microscope for live cell imaging—we can watch what’s happening inside the cell nucleus in real time. The lab, the people, the equipment, it’s all been a real game-changer. I’m excited and optimistic.”

The Merry Lab already has a long-standing reputation for discoveries that advance research on SBMA and also for a whole family of inherited diseases called polyglutamine disorders, says Harry Orr, PhD, director of the Institute for Translational Neuroscience at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. These related diseases include Huntington’s disease and spinocerebellar ataxias, which Orr studies. “Diane’s group has made state-of-the-art observations about novel and innovative concepts that move the whole field forward,” Orr says. “Her work is significant for SBMA and for a larger group of researchers. What she’s doing now is very ambitious.”

Moonlighting Androgen Receptors

SBMA’s “bad” gene carries faulty instructions for making androgen receptors—proteins that bind with testosterone. Normally, androgen receptors and testosterone hook up, waltz into a cell’s nucleus, and regulate genes for the development of male reproductive organs and for the growth of muscle and bone mass, among other duties.

But the mutant gene, which has a long strand of extra DNA subunits, creates mutant androgen receptors. They still link up with testosterone and get into the nucleus. Then, there’s trouble. The mutants fold into the wrong shape, which may affect the way they interact with DNA and with other proteins. They also pile up in the nucleus, like curbside trash during a sanitation strike.

Merry is studying these abnormalities, using transgenic mice as well as cell cultures, to find a practical solution to SBMA.

“We’re trying to understand the mechanism of the disease so we can identify therapeutic targets—potential ways to intervene that don’t interfere with the normal functioning of the hormone testosterone and its androgen receptor in men,” she explains. “We want testosterone and its androgen receptor to keep on doing their day job, but we want to stop them from moonlighting and causing problems for men with SBMA.”

That’s in sharp contrast to another current research path. Testosterone fuels SBMA. Some other researchers are looking at the testosterone-blocking drug leuprorelin to reduce SBMA’s symptoms or slow its progression. Previous research using the testosterone-blocking drug dutasteride yielded small benefits, possibly because SBMA had already caused too much damage, Merry says. She and other experts suspect blocking testosterone in younger men before SBMA causes problems would stop SBMA from developing. “Nobody would argue that if you removed testosterone before any onset of the disease, you’d prevent SBMA,” Merry says. “But who would want to live that way?”

Edward Meyertholen, a retired biologist who acts as the liaison between the Kennedy Disease Association’s scientific advisory board and its board of directors, agrees. “The disease doesn’t shorten your life span. The symptoms can be severe—plenty of men end up in wheelchairs or using a cane, and swallowing problems can be dangerous. But most can still lead a full life. Taking a testosterone-stopping drug from early adulthood because you carry the gene for SBMA isn’t appealing. It would be life-changing to have a treatment that helps while leaving the healthy effects of testosterone alone.”

At the KDA, Meyertholen works with Merry, who serves on the organization’s scientific advisory board. Several years ago, Meyertholen worked as a volunteer in the Merry Lab during a sabbatical from his college teaching post. “I had the time of my life. I learned so much,” he says. “Diane’s a fantastic person. She’s dedicated to training her lab staff, furthering research, and explaining it to people with SBMA and their families. For men with Kennedy’s disease and their families, just knowing people like her are working so hard to find treatments is very reassuring.”



A Pioneering Career

Dr. Lorraine King Blazed Trails as a Woman in Medicine

From the time she was a child, Lorraine King, MD, REN '77, had three desires: to make music, heal the sick, and soar the skies. Although she's checked off all those boxes, she says she's not done yet.

"I don't look at retirement as an end; it's just a new beginning," she says.

King, who retired in December 2019, spent 49 years at Jefferson blazing medical trails, serving in leadership positions within administrations, and establishing a scholarship fund that provides the next generation of physicians with the financial means to attend medical school.

Sitting in the serene, sunlit living room of her seaside Stone Harbor, New Jersey, home, with her beloved 13-year-old toy poodle, Jorgi, on her lap, King, recalls the past with fondness and regards the future with a sense of eager anticipation.

She became a doctor at a time when opportunities for women in the medical profession were predominantly limited to nursing. She studied classical music when female professional concert pianists were few and far between. And she took to the skies when aviation was a man's world.

"I was never a follower. I always wanted to do my own thing," she says.

Born and raised in the Port Richmond section of Philadelphia, King was introduced to the medical profession by her grandmother, an Irish immigrant

who was trained as a nurse in Belfast, and practiced in Philadelphia.

At the time, she was intrigued by both medicine and aviation. "But in that era, I was directed toward becoming a nurse or stewardess rather than a physician or aviator," she says. A third career option was still on the table—that of a classical musician, as she was a bit of a prodigy on piano and violin.

By the time she got to high school, King made up her mind—she wanted to go to medical school. But she had some doubts. Her father's health was failing, and the family's financial situation was tenuous.

She brought her concerns to her father, a blue-collar railroad worker. He sat her down at the dining room table, where the family would often gather for important discussions.

"He told me: 'You can do anything that you want to do. Always remember that!'" she says. "I never forgot those words, and I took them to heart."

King says her father was "quite a role model"—one of many role models and mentors that would go on to shape her life—and her life's work.

One of the most influential mentors in King's career was alumnus Alfred H. Diebel, MD 1927. Diebel not only delivered King, but cared for her family throughout their lives. He noticed the young girl's interest in medicine early on.



"He recognized my desire to go into medical school, and took me under his wing like a daughter," she recalls fondly. When she was just 16 years old, Diebel invited her into the operating room to observe surgeries, and into the delivery room to witness births.

Reaching for Her Dreams

King graduated first in her class in high school, and accepted a full-tuition scholarship to Temple University, enrolling as biology major and setting her sights on a career as a physician. When her father died in 1962, she switched her major to medical technology so that she would be able to get a job in order to work her way through medical school. At the same time, her mother returned to work to help King continue her education. She describes the mother-daughter relationship as close and loving, and credits her mother with helping her succeed. "Her love, inner strength, and pure courage was truly the wind beneath my wings."

After three years of working, she had only enough to pay for her first year of medical school, but enrolled in the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, which was later absorbed by the Drexel University College of Medicine. At the end of her first year, King received scholarship assistance for the remainder of her education.

She credits another mentor—Abraham Rakoff, MD, a 1937 graduate of Jefferson Medical College—with "making" her career. Rakoff was a nationally known fertility specialist and the first head of the Division of Reproductive Endocrinology at Jefferson when the division was created in 1971.

When King chose to do her residency in obstetrics/gynecology at Jefferson, she became Rakoff's mentee, shadowing the doctor on rounds, taking notes for him, following patients' progress, and lab studies, participating in his research, and absorbing all she could.

She followed up her residency with a fellowship in gynecologic endocrinology. At the urging of Rakoff, King applied for, and received, an NIH grant in the field; it was the first NIH-approved fellowship in the field of reproductive endocrinology awarded at Jefferson. She completed her research through the grant under Savino A. D'Angelo, PhD, professor of Anatomy and a leader in neuro-endocrine research. Upon completion of her fellowship, she joined the medical staff and began her practice at Jefferson.

While she never kept count of all the women she helped to have babies, she estimates it's in the thousands, judging by the overflowing boxes and bags of letters, baby photos, and cards she has kept over the years.



"There's no greater feeling in the world than to be able to help a couple bring a life into the world," she says.

To Infinity—And Beyond

Once her career path was on solid ground, King felt there was another path yet to conquer—the flight path.

"Flying was always there in the back of my head," she says. Her cousin-in-law was a flight instructor and, after a few years of cajoling, in 1979 he finally agreed to give her flying lessons.

"But first he said I needed a plane," she remembers. "So I bought one!" It was a slightly used Cessna four-seater.

She says she had no trepidation in taking to the skies, but admits that it "takes courage and confidence."

"It's an incredible feeling of freedom," she says. "It's a heavenly feeling when you're up there alone. It's very, very peaceful. It's the closest thing you can imagine to really being with our Maker."

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

King has never forgotten the generous benefactors whose scholarships helped her become a doctor. Now, she is paying that kindness forward by becoming a benefactor. In 2016, she established the endowed Lorraine C. King MD Scholars Scholarship Fund; upon retirement, she committed an additional \$4.5 million to the endowment.

"I was awarded the opportunity to continue my studies, to achieve my dream," she says. "I wanted to enable others to be able to achieve what I've been able to in my lifetime—with the hope that they will remember, and in the future give back."

The scholarship, she says, is part of her Jefferson legacy. And while she is at a time in her life when she is giving a lot of thought to what she leaves behind, she is also thinking of what's ahead.

She plans on staying involved at Jefferson, and devoting time to two other constants in her life: her church, and her volunteer work with the poodle rescue organization through which she found Jorgi.

King has owned a number of small dogs over the years. When she adopted Jorgi three years ago, she ended up volunteering as a consultant with the rescue organization. She jokes that her second new career extends to helping care for abandoned pets.

When King reflects on her life and career so far, she sums it up with one word: "Exciting." After a moment, she adds, "And truly blessed."

"There will be a lot of quiet walks on the beach in the morning," she says. "Just me, Jorgi, and my Lord." 🐾



To see a video featuring Dr. Lorraine King, visit Jefferson.edu/Bulletin



SKMC Students Learn from the Best at the National Institutes of Health

BY MIKE BEDERKA

Over the past year, a pair of Sidney Kimmel Medical College students learned from some of the brightest minds and biggest names in medicine and research, including none other than Anthony Fauci.

After a rigorous application and interview process, fourth-year students Matt Rohn and Mark Shapses became National Institutes of Health (NIH) Medical Research Scholars. Only 50 students from around

the country entered the highly competitive training program, for which they paused their university studies to immerse themselves in basic, clinical, or translational research at the NIH.

The pandemic, of course, altered some facets of this year's program, but importantly, Rohn and Shapses still spent the majority of time on campus in Bethesda, Maryland, and engaged with medical luminaries like NIH Director Francis Collins.

The top of the top talked to us about their careers and how they made it. It was such an inspiration.

— MATT ROHN

"The top of the top talked to us about their careers and how they made it," Rohn says. "You see Dr. Collins testifying before Congress and read all the incredible research he has done, but then he comes to talk to you about his journey. It was such an inspiration."

Rohn and Shapses participated in research projects that matched their professional interests and career goals. They worked under the mentorship of full-time NIH investigators and had unique access to the full continuum of NIH biomedical research.

"My first day at the NIH was the last day of a five-year study," Rohn says. "I get there, and there's all this data ready to be analyzed."

His research focused on asthma medication in pregnancy; a "black hole" exists here because not much is known about how the efficacy of these medications changes in pregnancy, Rohn says. Furthermore, many women may stop using them on their own out of fear their children will be harmed. His team found that certain medications may play a significant role in controlling asthma, the benefits of which are much better for mother and baby than any potential risks from the medications themselves.



Early in the program, Mark Shapses had the opportunity to speak with Dr. Anthony Fauci about his research.

Student Profile



Among just 50 students selected for the yearlong NIH program, Matt Rohn (left) and Mark Shapses (right) participated in research projects that matched their professional interests and career goals.

In one of Shapses's projects, he examined non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and anesthesia, another underexplored area.

"The liver is responsible for breaking down many drugs and toxins in the body, and we hypothesized that the excess liver fat and associated injury would impact this function," he says.

Shapses's team discovered that patients with fatty liver disease take longer to recover from anesthesia, suggesting that the organ may not process anesthetic medications as effectively as in patients without the condition.

COVID-19 prevented Shapses and Rohn from presenting their research at conferences and cut short their time physically on the NIH campus. Fortunately, they could do much of their work remotely, which will allow them to have their research published in leading medical journals in the near future.

"The pandemic definitely threw a curveball at us," Rohn says. "We had to adapt and shift our priorities."

The NIH moved the program's research symposium, seminars, and journal clubs to virtual platforms, so the scholars still could continue through the curriculum. Both Jefferson students plan to pursue research in their careers, so these sessions proved invaluable in teaching them best practices of writing papers, the nuances of grant funding, and how renowned scientists approach their work.

"I think the connections we made with people at the NIH and others in our cohort will continue throughout our careers," Rohn says. "In fact, we had several former scholars come back and tell us where they are now and how this experience helped them in their careers."

Some highlights for Shapses include meeting Fauci and developing friendships with fellow scholars; attending lectures by world leaders in a diverse array of biomedical topics; and teaming up with Yaron Rotman, a clinical investigator in the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

"Mark has been an important member of my research group," Rotman says. "He joined the study team for one of our clinical trials to help in data management, but his contribution became far more than that, including suggesting scientific ideas that led to changes in the trial design. He also led or assisted in several retrospective data analysis projects, leading to two first-author abstract presentations and two peer-reviewed manuscripts currently under review. Most of all, it was a pleasure to work with Mark and watch his growth and development throughout his year at the NIH."

"I just connected with Dr. Rotman really well," adds Shapses, who's leaning toward a career in gastroenterology and hepatology. "He will be my mentor for life." 🙌



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—Leonard A. Erdman, MD '50



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- You must be age 70½ or older at the time of your gift.
- Transfers must be made directly by your IRA administrator to Jefferson.
- You can transfer up to \$100,000 annually from your IRA to Jefferson; spouses can transfer up to \$100,000.
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Jefferson does not provide tax, legal, or financial advice.

Please consult your own advisors regarding your specific situation.

Questions? | We're here to help.

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Dear Fellow Jeffersonians,

I accepted the nomination to be president of the SKMC Alumni Association at the end of February 2020. A week later, we were in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Needless to say, that changed everything.

Since then, we have been doing things differently, like our reunions and how we help students and the way we engage alumni. It changes how we do things, but why we're doing them is the same. The COVID cloud may not exactly have a silver lining, but it does present opportunities for us to do what Jefferson has always done in new and creative ways.

On July 20, at my first student orientation as president, I said to the class of 2024, "Being a physician is one of the most rewarding professions. We run toward crises; we embrace challenges, and we have the privilege of caring for people."

The frontline healthcare-hero stories—yours among them—have been plentiful and inspiring. I want to personally acknowledge and thank all of you for all you've done to make things better for patients, families, friends, students, residents, and colleagues. So many are looking to us for hope and comfort in these challenging times. As Jefferson alumni, we rise to meet this occasion as we do all challenges. I am deeply grateful for your generosity, and your caring and open-hearted, spirit.

As alumni, one of the important ways we can take care of others is by supporting SKMC students. This year, students from all classes are looking to us for guidance and assistance as we navigate the "new normal" together. At our welcome in July, I promised first-year students that they could count on the alumni association—by which I mean they can count on all of

us alumni—to be with them during their four years at Jefferson.

We are hosting virtual programs for alumni to meet with students, holding virtual roundtable discussions, and connecting fourth-year students with alumni from around the country to provide insights into residency training and answer questions about what it's like to live in your community and work in your specialty. This is the perfect moment to share your time and talent with students. It's an all-hands-on-deck moment for the alumni association as we collaborate with students to set up these and other alumni-student engagements. Why not sign up to be a mentor and a resource? It's never been easier: You can Zoom in from the comfort of your living room or kitchen.

Our redoubled commitment to students hasn't diminished our determination to connect more fully with alumni, those who have remained active as well as graduates who have been out of touch. Many are eager to stay connected or to reconnect, and we are doing all we can to meet that need. We intend to engage and communicate with periodic email updates, mailings, phone calls, reunions, specialty meeting receptions, our annual business meeting, and programs by Alumni Relations—the get-togethers all by Zoom until it's safe to meet in person. We are also strategizing about ways to connect with our postgraduate alumni, former Jefferson residents and fellows.

We have found that classes that have a class agent tend to be more engaged and more philanthropic. The class agent is a marvelous channel for communication in both directions. We will explore ways to make sure every class has a liaison who can connect their classmates and the alumni association.

You would be surprised to learn about all the wonderful ways Jefferson has changed since you were a student. One of the most exciting has been the new JeffMD curriculum, which brings basic science together with clinical experience from the very start. My daughter Mary is a member of the class of 2021, the first class to learn through JeffMD. I've seen the curriculum through her eyes, and I've seen the excitement in her eyes too. Practically from day one, we were bouncing ideas off each other about how to manage patients with various medical conditions. It's been fun and really inspiring to watch her learn and grow into a Jefferson physician.

The class that entered last July, the class of 2024, will graduate the year Jefferson celebrates its 200th anniversary. They came into Jefferson with the coronavirus and (we hope) will depart with the pandemic behind them and with the best careers in the world ahead of them.

Who knew this would happen? Who knew a pandemic and quarantine would give us this unexpected chance to connect and reconnect in new ways? With the largest alumni body of any private U.S. medical school, we have an extraordinary opportunity to be successful right now, right in these "unprecedented times," especially given the talented leadership of our Alumni Board and Alumni Relations staff.

But we need your help. Tell us how you can help us, your alumni association and alma mater, and tell us how we can serve you. How can we be there for you?

On YouTube, the Choir of Women Physicians in Toronto sings a wonderful tribute to healthcare workers in the pandemic: "We Rise." Who knew they had such talent as a Zoom choir or that healthcare professionals had such capacity for giving hope in such creative ways?

"When the lights go dark," the choir sings, "we rise again in the voices of our song....As sure as the sunrise...we rise again."

Their melody and harmony are ours. Let's use this opportunity to really connect, to embrace each other and make Jefferson's SKMC Alumni Association stronger than ever. 🎵

Patricia Curtin White, MD '88, FEL '00, FACP, CMD, is Section Chief of Geriatric Medicine, Geriatric Medicine Education Coordinator in the Department of Medicine residency program, and medical director of the Acute Care of the Elderly Units at Christiana Hospital and Wilmington Hospital of ChristianaCare. She is part of the team that opened the Swank Center for Memory Care and Geriatric Consultation at ChristianaCare and medical director of Stonegates Health Center and clinical assistant professor of medicine at SKMC. She has led 16 medical mission trips to Haiti with the University of Notre Dame's Haiti Program over the last decade. Dr. Curtin was president of the medical college student council in her fourth year and is the first woman to serve as alumni trustee. She has been a class agent and secretary of the SKMC Alumni Association. She and her husband, Tom, live in Chadds Ford,

Pennsylvania. They have three children: Mary '21, Ann, and Joseph.

Dr. Curtin welcomes your feedback and input. You can reach her through the Alumni Relations office at alumni@jefferson.edu or 215-955-7750, or you can contact her directly at pcurtin@christianacare.org or 302-540-4216. You may use the contact information if you are interested in helping with the alumni-student programs.

SKMC Alumni Association Board Members

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Eddie Chang, MD '00

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Erica Locke, MD '10

Kelly Malloy, MD '02, RES '07, FACS

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Love Story

Physician-Researchers Lynda Schneider and Leonard Zon Found Life's Work—and Each Other—at Jefferson

On his first day at Jefferson, Leonard Zon stepped onto the elevator with fellow first-year Lynda Schneider. "Nice, but I would never go out with her," he thought. "Not my type," she thought. Neither was interested in getting into a relationship at the time.

A few months later, Zon saw Schneider again in anatomy class. He decided this time he would make a move. So he sauntered over to her as she stood above the cadaver she was dissecting, and delivered his killer pickup line: "Nice body."

She wasn't impressed.

Although she didn't take the bait right away, a few months later Schneider eventually agreed to a date. By the end of freshman year, they were a couple. They stayed together through medical school, graduated in 1983, were granted a couples match for residency in Boston, and married in 1985.

Since that time, they have become a power couple in medicine. Patient care, research, teaching—they do it all. And they still have time to dance.

Leonard Zon, MD '83, a pediatric cancer specialist, is internationally recognized for his pioneering research in the new fields of stem cell biology and cancer genetics. He is director of the Stem Cell Program at Boston Children's Hospital; the Grousbeck Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School; and an investigator at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. He has been the president of the International Society for Stem Cell Research and also the American Society for Clinical Investigation; head of the external investigators of the Zebrafish Genome Institution; and chairman of the Harvard Stem Cell Institute Executive Committee.

In 2002, Zon established an International Society for Stem Cell Research, consisting of 4,500 researchers from about 60 countries. The ISSCR promotes global collaboration among the world's most talented and committed stem cell scientists and physicians, and plays a catalyzing role in the development of effective new medical treatments.

Lynda Schneider, MD '83, is director of the Allergy Program and of the Division of Immunology Clinical Research Program at Boston Children's Hospital; founder and director of the Atopic Dermatitis Center; and professor of pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. An award-winning researcher, she's currently focused on improving the care of patients with atopic dermatitis and developing treatments for food allergies.

**we
complement
each other**

Both credit Jefferson for setting them on the path to success in their respective fields.

"Jefferson offers great opportunities," Zon says, "from research to clinical care. That set me up for my entire life as a scientist." He pauses for a second, and quickly adds: "And most importantly, I met my wife there!"

Schneider smiles. She concurs the education and training couldn't have been better, noting that "the clinical rotations offered a great mix of experiences and really prepared me for my residency."

"The people you meet at Jefferson are quite incredible," Schneider says. After a moment, she adds, "And, of course, I met my husband there."

Love Means Never Having to Say "I'm Studying"

Zon and Schneider are living proof of the theory that opposites attract.

During medical school, Zon was the extrovert. He liked to party. He was always on the move. He played trumpet in the orchestra, competed on the rugby team, was a member of a fraternity, and served as president of student council.

Schneider was studious and on the shy side, spending most of her time in the library and serving as student council treasurer.

When she first met Zon, Schneider says he just wasn't her type: "He was too energetic."

She only agreed to their first date because she was too embarrassed to admit in front of her classmates that she was planning on staying in and studying on a Saturday night. But after that date, she knew he was "the one." The feeling was mutual.

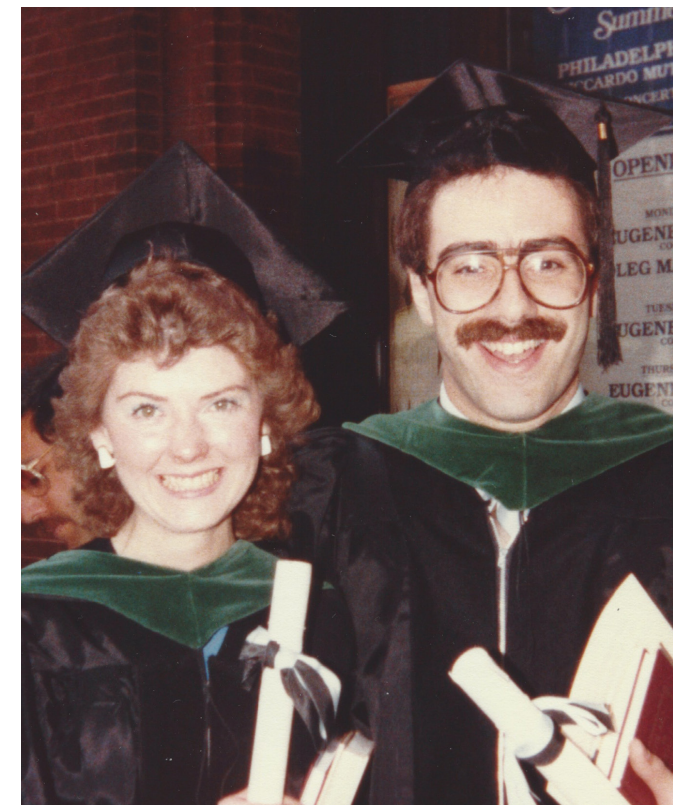
Today, Zon is still the outgoing one and Schneider is still on the quiet side. But they look at their differences as beneficial; "We complement each other," Zon says.

Life Experiences Shaped Life's Work

Zon and Schneider explain that they chose their specialties based on very personal experiences.

Zon's interest in cancer research began by chance after his freshman year in college, when he was chosen for a summer internship at Roswell Park Memorial Cancer Institute in Buffalo. A few years later, during his senior year at Jefferson, his interest deepened when he lost his mother to breast cancer, inspiring him to use his abilities in the laboratory to conduct research on cancer stem cell biology. Today, he runs a 42-person laboratory with multiple drugs in several trial phases.

Zon's current research centers on zebrafish in the search for cures for cancer and blood disorders. He is an expert on blood stem cells. The work has the potential to lead to the development of drugs that could provide effective treatments against certain kinds of tumors and a rare condition called Diamond-Blackfan anemia. Zon's laboratory is also using zebrafish to study melanoma, with an eye toward



developing skin creams that would stop the cancer before it even begins.

Schneider's interest in her field was also very personal—growing up, she suffered with a lot of allergies. She says she was drawn to the field because of the ability to improve lives.

"One of the nice things about allergy immunology is if you can identify allergic or immune problems, particularly when children are young, you can really make a difference in their whole life," she says.

For the past three decades Schneider's research has focused on atopic dermatitis and food allergies. About 20 years ago she established a multidisciplinary atopic dermatitis center—one of the first in the country.

Although the couple have set down permanent roots in Boston, where they raised their two children—daughter Becky, who is following in her father's footsteps as a hematology oncology fellow at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute/Brigham Women's Hospital/Massachusetts General Hospital program, and son Tyler, a professional in the private equity financial services industry—Philadelphia is not far from their hearts.

They are always excited to welcome Sidney Kimmel Medical College graduates to their institutions, and contribute regularly to Jefferson scholarship funds.

"We went there and we're proud of it," Zon says. "We value the education we got and want other people to have that great education and clinical training."

When not practicing in their field, the couple enjoys traveling, music, and dining out—although COVID-19 has curtailed their favorite activities. However, even during a pandemic, Schneider says her husband finds a way to have fun.

He recently rode his bike 100 miles to raise money for cancer research, practices his trumpet every day (he has performed with the Longwood Symphony as principal trumpet for 35 years), and hosted a dance party—for two. In the middle of the pandemic lockdown, he found a list of party music, turned the speakers up, and grabbed his wife for a little rug-cutting.

While he and his wife danced, their son stood by and laughed at them—until Zon cajoled him into playing DJ.

"It was a grand time," Zon says. 🎵



▶ To see a video featuring Lynda Schneider and Leonard Zon, visit [Jefferson.edu/Bulletin](https://www.jefferson.edu/Bulletin)



2020 has been a year unlike any other—yet, despite the year's many challenges, our alumni came together via Zoom for the first-ever Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) Virtual Alumni Reunion Celebration to honor the classes ending in 0 and 5.

SKMC Alumni Association president **Patricia Curtin White, MD '88, Fellowship '00, FACP**, kicked off the event by welcoming the more than 150 alumni who logged in for the night's festivities.

Highlights include the "Parade of Classes" slideshow, which offered attendees a walk down memory lane with pictures from each class; "Day in the Life" videos, provided by second-year students Adam Schneider and Baylor Wickes; and an SKMC update presented by **Mark Tykocinski, MD**.

The reunion also honored several prestigious 2020 SKMC Alumni Award recipients:

- The inaugural Early Career Alumni Award was presented to **Rachna Shroff, MD '04, MS**, associate professor of medicine and chief of GI medical oncology at the University of Arizona Cancer Center. In the 16 years since Dr. Shroff graduated from Jefferson Medical College—now SKMC—she has built a reputation as a premier expert in pancreatic and biliary cancers, and is a renowned clinical and translational researcher in gastrointestinal medical oncology.

- The Alumni Achievement Award was awarded to **Ronald J. Wapner, MD '72**, vice chair of research in obstetrics and gynecology and director of women's genetics at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Dr. Wapner is an internationally recognized physician and researcher—with more than 500 publications—specializing in reproductive genetics, and has pioneered a variety of prenatal diagnostic procedures used around the world.

The event also included a moment of silence and necrology to honor the friends and classmates who have passed. The event concluded with Dr. Tykocinski inviting attendees to activate their mics and join him in reciting the Hippocratic Oath.

This virtual reunion offered alumni a unique chance to reconnect with their fellow classmates, and proved, despite the circumstances and physical distance, that the SKMC family is closer than ever! 🎵

'60

Gene R. Adams, MD, writes, "Enjoying my retirement!"

'61

David K. Subin, MD, is continuing to work virtually for the Social Security Administration as a medical consultant.

'67

Marc A. Shuman, MD, retired from seeing patients at UC San Francisco in 2018. He returned on a recall appointment and is mostly involved in teaching and mentoring fellows and faculty. He is still teaching the course Bioengineering 260 in the joint UCSF-UC Berkeley Master's in Translational Medicine (MTM) graduate program. Also, he continues to serve as chief medical officer of MORE Health, Inc., in nearby San Mateo. Over the course of the last 20 years, Dr. Shuman has been an invited lecturer at approximately 10 institutions in China, including Peking Union Medical College Hospital, the No. 1 government-rated hospital there. He is also an advisor and consultant for Meridian Inc., a medical A.I. company in San Diego. He and his wife have enjoyed living in San Francisco in the same house for 44 years.

'71

James Thomas Hay, MD, has retired after 42 years in practice of family medicine in San Diego. He is still very active in CMA and AMA and several local nonprofits. He is looking forward to lots of travel post-COVID-19.

'73

Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS, was selected by the University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents to serve as the seventh president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), effective Sept. 11, 2020. Dr. Jarrell had served

as UMB's interim president since January 6, 2020. The selection was made following a nationwide search.

'75

Greg Lewis, MD, is a retired gastroenterologist living in central Pennsylvania. He and his wife enjoy traveling and spending time with their two grandchildren. He also contributes his medical expertise to a local federal health clinic for underserved patients.

'79

Katherine Wagner-Reiss, MD, retired to Florida with her husband after practicing pathology for over 30 years. Professor Gonzalo Aponte, "The Gonz," had told her that pathology would be good to her, and it was! Her daughter practices orthodontics, and her son, Jacob Reiss, MD '18, followed in her footsteps by completing Jefferson's Penn State Accelerated Program; he is currently an internal medicine resident at Lankenau Hospital, where he was chosen to be a chief resident.

'83

Thomas Carnevale, MD, was elected chair of the board of directors at Penn Highlands Clearfield Hospital. Additionally, he recently received the Educator of the Year award from family medicine residents at Penn Highlands Dubois. He is currently an active OB/GYN staff physician at both hospitals.

'85

Marilyn J. Heine, MD, FACEP, FACP, FCPP, was elected chair of the American Medical Association (AMA) Council on Legislation (COL) during its June meeting.

A tenacious advocate for physicians and patients, Dr. Heine has held multiple leadership positions and

continues to serve in prominent roles in state and national medical organizations. In addition to serving as chair of the AMA COL, Dr. Heine represents the AMA on the Board of the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare Committee on Operating Rules for Information Exchange. She is chair of a congressional physicians advisory board, secretary of the Forum for Medical Affairs Executive Committee, and a member of the Governing Council for the AMA Private Practice Physicians Congress. She serves as national faculty on health policy, advocacy, and hematologic emergencies.

Dr. Heine is also clinical assistant professor in the Department of Medicine at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia, and an emergency medicine and hematology oncology physician in southeast Pennsylvania.

'89

Charles D. Tullius, MD, writes, "I'm practicing anesthesiology in Somerset, Pennsylvania, but getting to spend a lot of time at our home near Hilton Head Island. I'd love to hear from my JMC friends."

'90

Galicano Inguito, MD, is the 2020 recipient of the University of Delaware Alumni Association's Alumni Wall of Fame Award. Selection is reserved for University of Delaware graduates who exhibit outstanding professional and public service achievements as well as a commitment to their alma mater.

'94

Mahesh Krishnan, MD, recently transitioned from being the founding international chief medical officer for DaVita to head up the DaVita Venture Group. He says he loves being accountable for external innovation while building

and deploying great products and services for patients with renal disease.

'97

Amanda Grant Smith, MD, is director of clinical research at the USF Health Byrd Alzheimer's Institute, and professor of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience at the Morsani College of Medicine at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida.

'98

Philip Ovardia, MD, has established Ovardia Heart Health, an online telehealth practice focusing on optimizing metabolic health and cardiac risk factors through dietary and lifestyle modification. He also continues to work as a locum tenens cardiothoracic surgeon throughout the southeast United States. He lives in St. Petersburg, Florida, with his wife and two daughters.

'06

Christopher McGowan, MD, announced the opening of his new practice True You Weight Loss in Cary, North Carolina, which is the nation's first and only physician-founded medical practice exclusively focused on providing nonsurgical, state-of-the-art, endoscopic weight loss procedures and support. Dr. McGowan is one of the few physicians in the nation who is triple-board-certified in internal medicine, gastroenterology, and obesity medicine. He is a world-renowned leader in endobariatrics, a new field of gastroenterology that aims to address the obesity epidemic.



'01 Marcella Nunez-Smith

Tasked with guiding the president-elect's robust federal response to the coronavirus pandemic, Jefferson alumna Marcella Nunez-Smith, MD '01, was tapped to serve as co-chair of the Transition COVID-19 Advisory Board.

"Dealing with the coronavirus pandemic is one of the most important battles our administration will face, and I will be informed by science and by experts," said Joe Biden in a statement. "The advisory board will help shape my approach to managing the surge in reported infections; ensuring vaccines are safe, effective and distributed efficiently, equitably and free; and protecting at-risk populations."

A 2001 graduate of Sidney Kimmel Medical College and member of the Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society, Nunez-Smith is an associate professor of internal medicine, public health, and management at Yale University. She's also the associate dean for health equity research at the Yale School of Medicine.

"Our country is facing an unprecedented time with COVID-19 cases accelerating nationwide,"

Nunez-Smith told *Yale News*. "Everyone is affected by this pandemic, yet the burden is disproportionate. We know communities of color are grieving at high rates and are facing substantial economic impact. The Transition Advisory Board is setting a course for everyone in our country to experience recovery. I'm honored to help lead on that work and thank President-elect Joe Biden for the opportunity to serve."

The team of leading scientists and public health experts will consult with state and local officials to determine the public health and economic steps necessary to get the virus under control; deliver immediate relief to working families; address ongoing racial and ethnic disparities; and reopen our schools and businesses safely and effectively, according to the Biden-Harris transition team.

At Yale, Nunez-Smith's research focuses on promoting health and healthcare equity for structurally marginalized populations, with an emphasis on supporting healthcare workforce diversity and development, developing patient-reported measurements of healthcare quality, and identifying regional strategies to reduce the global burden of non-communicable diseases.

Jefferson alumna Cora Christian, MD '71, has known Nunez-Smith for decades and served as a mentor during her time at Sidney Kimmel Medical College and beyond. She says Nunez-Smith is poised to tackle any challenge that lies ahead.

"Not only is she a brilliant physician and researcher, but she's also one of the nicest people you will meet," Dr. Christian says.

Class Agent



Galicano Inguito, Jr., MD, MBA Class of 1990

I was in Texas on a military training exercise when I received a message saying I was to call my father right away. I called from a pay phone, as I thought it was bad news. It turned out that a postcard from Jefferson Medical College had arrived in the mail welcoming me as a member of the Class of 1990.

In a career filled with many highlights, this was one of the brightest. It was one of the happiest days in my life. I still feel lucky to be able to take care of patients, and I am grateful to Jefferson for the medical education that made my "luck" possible.

Over the years, I have run into Jefferson alumni from across the country and around the world. Most have told me they are thankful that Jefferson prepares students well for internship, residency, and beyond in whatever specialty they choose. This has certainly been my experience.

Upon graduation from Jefferson Medical College, I was commissioned as a captain in the U.S. Army and stationed at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii, where I completed my internship. I was then

stationed as a field surgeon of the second Infantry Division at the Demilitarized Zone in Korea, where I provided medical care to U.S. and Korean soldiers. I completed my residency in family medicine at the Eastern Virginia School of Medicine – Ghent, where I served as chief resident.

I am grateful for the many opportunities that were given to me by this institution. That is one of the reasons why I became involved with the Sidney Kimmel Medical College Alumni Association. As an alumnus and class agent, I know how important it is for alumni to help SKMC move forward with the challenges in healthcare, with providing an outstanding education to students, and with recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty who make that kind of education possible. I am currently serving as secretary of the Alumni Association Board.

There are many engaged alumni who want to give back to the medical college, either financially or by mentoring students and residents. There are lots of ways to be engaged. Some of us gathered virtually to celebrate our Class of 1990 Zoom reunion on

November 14, 2020. Dr. Maria Alaimo, Dr. Vincenzo Berghella, and I helped plan the reunion with a lot of help from Roberta Watson, Cristina Geso, and Jeff Spence from the Office of Alumni Relations. We invited several distinguished faculty members to the reunion: Dr. Clara Callahan, Dr. George Brainard, Dr. Marion Siegman, and Dr. Joseph Majdan. These were some of the faculty who shaped me as a physician. I am honored to have been taught by them.

We are planning a live, in-person Class of 1990 reunion celebration for the 2021 Alumni Weekend, October 15–16. We would like to have as many of our classmates join us as possible, and we hope other alumni gather to reminisce about their time as students and to catch up with alumni friends.

I am grateful for the education I received at Sidney Kimmel Medical College, and I feel it is a privilege to represent the SKMC Alumni. My wife, Pia, and I are especially proud that our oldest son, Kai, is an SKMC student, Class of 2022. 🎓

Galicano F. Inguito, Jr., MD '90, MBA, is board certified in family medicine by the American Board of Family Medicine and in medical management by the American College of Physician Executives, and is a fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians. He is president of Delaware Family Medicine, LLC, and in addition to private practice, he works in a 24-hour urgent care practice. Dr. Inguito has served on numerous national boards, including the Federation of State Medical Boards, the United States Medical Licensing Examination Step 3 Committee, and the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education. He was honored by the Delaware Academy of Family Physicians as the 2008–09 Family Physician of the Year.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Achievements

Milestones



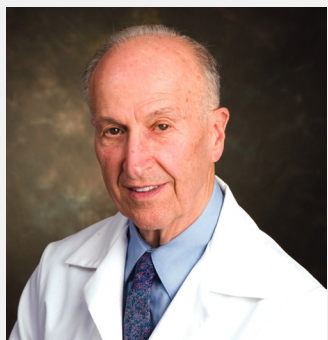
Accolades

Events

Let the *Bulletin* community know what you've been up to by sharing your news in Class Notes!

Send us your news: editor@jefferson.edu

In Memoriam



Robert L. Brent, MD, PhD
*An International Authority on
Congenital Disorders*
1927 - 2021

Even as a young boy, Bob Brent had a calling. When he was 8, he announced to his mom that he was going to be a doctor “who didn’t charge his patients.” He went on to fulfill his dream, becoming one of the world’s leading experts in radiation biology, developmental biology, embryology, and teratology, while providing free reproductive risk assessments to women and families for over five decades.

Jefferson lost a legend with the passing on February 24, 2021, of longtime faculty member Robert L. Brent, MD, PhD, the Louis and Bess Stein Distinguished Professor of Pediatrics, Radiology, and Pathology.

Raised in Rochester, New York, Brent took advanced exams early and was accepted to the University of Rochester at age 15. As a student, he held a job with the Manhattan Project, researching the effects of radiation on developing embryos. The work provided the foundation for his entire career.

Brent received his MD in 1953 and a PhD in embryology and radiation biology in 1955, then

completed a pediatric residency at Massachusetts General Hospital. He served his country for two years in the Army, heading the radiation biology section at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. After his military service, Brent joined Jefferson’s faculty and advanced to become chair of pediatrics, a role he held for three decades.

The author of nearly 500 scientific publications, including six books and four movies, Brent won many awards for his achievements, including the Alfred I. DuPont Award for Excellence in Children’s Health Care, the Gustav O. Lienhard Award, and election to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies.

Brent’s charitable activities extended beyond free health counseling. He and his wife of 70 years, Lillian, who passed away in October 2020, established four scholarships for the medical college as well as the endowment for the school’s Dean of Students and Admissions.

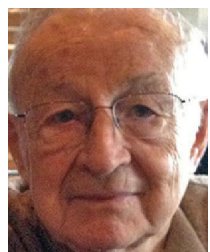
In 2014, the Bulletin asked Brent what advice he would give students going into medicine today? He said, “Don’t be discouraged by the pressures and responsibilities that come with being a physician—they are all worthwhile. No other profession will give you more satisfaction or allow you to make a greater contribution to the world. You will constantly be stimulated by new discoveries, so take every opportunity to learn.”

Like his countless contributions to medicine, that’s advice that will last.



‘44 William A. Morton Jr., MD, died peacefully of a stroke in Oxford, Pennsylvania, on November

19, 2020, at age 100. He graduated as part of the Jefferson class of 1944, and was deployed to Germany for the last months of WWII as a member of the U.S. Army Medical Corps. Honorably discharged with the rank of captain, he returned to Pennsylvania to build a family with his wife, Anne T. Caffrey. Dr. Morton spent a decade working in advanced urological medicine at the Cleveland Clinic and the Guthrie Clinic, as well as Hahnemann University Hospital. In 1957, he moved his young family to West Chester, Pennsylvania, with the goal of bringing the best in urological care to a small-town hospital. Chester County Hospital became the hub of his medical practice for the next three decades. Over the years, he was proudest of being a Jefferson alumnus and would periodically attend alumni dinners in Philadelphia.



‘45 Harold Joseph Laggner, MD, passed away on Saturday, August 1, 2020, at 98. Dr. Laggner graduated

from the University of Scranton, Pennsylvania, in the class of 1942. He joined the U.S. Army, but was allowed to continue his studies at Jefferson. He married his beloved Betty, and within a week was sent to active duty. In 1948, after leaving the Army, Dr. Laggner opened a family medical practice in Smyrna, Delaware, where he treated patients until 1973. In addition, Dr. Laggner treated patients at the Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill in

Smyrna, where he served as director of medicine from 1956 to 1988. At this location, Dr. Laggner trained geriatric residents from Jefferson. Still, he found time for his hobbies of golf, skiing, and needlepoint.

‘50 Maurice (Ray) Raymond Turcotte, MD, died peacefully at his home at Saint George Village in Roswell, Georgia. After graduating from Jefferson in 1950, he completed his residencies in Maryland and Connecticut, and briefly opened an office in general practice. He enjoyed the GP role, but his true love was anesthesiology, so he returned to Hartford, Connecticut, and completed his two-year residency at St. Francis Hospital. He was stationed in Germany with the U.S. Army. He practiced anesthesia at St. Francis until 1967 and then relocated to South Fulton Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1977, he served as president of the Georgia Society of Anesthesiologists. After a brief attempt at retirement, he volunteered at the Atlanta VA Medical Center and shortly thereafter was promoted to assistant professor at Emory University School of Medicine.

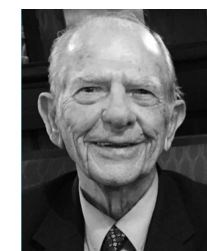


‘53 Lloyd W. Bailey, MD, passed away at the age of 92 on August 12, 2020, at his residence with his wife, Sarah,

and daughter, Joan, at his side. After graduating from Jefferson, he served as flight surgeon for the 12th Air Rescue Group, covering Western Europe and North Africa. He completed his residency in ophthalmology at Wills Eye Hospital and practiced in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, for 54 years. His patients knew they might wait to

see him but also knew they would not be rushed, would have all questions answered, would have the best of care, and might hear a joke before they left.

Dr. Bailey, a fierce defender of civil liberties outlined in the Bill of Rights, drew national attention when, as a Republican elector, he voted independently as allowed by law at that time. This action resulted in his testifying before the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary and his vote being upheld by Congress. To recharge, he enjoyed skiing, tennis, boating, and travel.



William K. Jenson, MD, 97, passed away early Thanksgiving morning. Doc Bill, as he was known during

his time in Cody, Wyoming, was born in 1923 in Lewiston, Montana, to James and Helen Jenson, the youngest of four children. He and his wife, Norma, went to London, England, for his fellowship in medicine at Guys Hospital. He had a long and successful career in internal medicine in academic, clinical, and administrative roles including faculty positions at the University of Pennsylvania, Jefferson Medical College, UCSD, and the Ministry of Defense and Aviation Hospitals in Saudi Arabia, as well as Veterans Affairs positions in San Diego, California, and Walla Walla, Washington. He lost Norma to breast cancer in 1992. In 1994 he married Joan Sargent from Wichita and they lived in both Wichita and La Jolla. He lived in Wichita for three years prior to moving to Yarmouth, Maine, 15 months ago.

Dr. Jenson enjoyed sculpting, photography, listening to big band

jazz, and reading about history, philosophy, and medical articles.



‘68 Jacquelyn J. Wilson, MD, passed away June 1, 2020. She was a graduate of both the University

of Pennsylvania and Jefferson Medical College. In 1969, she left Philadelphia to move to San Diego, California.

She set up her general medical practice and became board certified first in family medicine, followed by homeopathy, homeotherapeutics, and integrative and holistic medicine. Dr. Wilson dedicated herself to optimizing the health of all on the planet by bringing sustainable and nontoxic therapies over her 40-year career.

As a member of the LGBTQ community, she was a pioneer in serving on the board of the Human Dignity Foundation, making medical care available to all.

Dr. Wilson’s fascination with how we can heal with the support of nature in love was there until her last breath. She said, “Don’t worry about dying; we will never completely separate, because we are all cradled in the arms of the Universe.”

‘58 Carl Richard Bemiller, MD, Capt., U.S. Navy Ret. passed away on October 3, 2020, at his residence in Pottsville, Pennsylvania. He was 88 years old. He received his MD from Jefferson and went on to do specialty training in internal medicine and cardiology. In his capacity as a physician, Dr. Bemiller proudly served for 20 years in the United States Navy, which included

a tour aboard the USS *Vulcan* during the Cuban missile crisis. Following retirement from the Navy, Dr. Bemiller spent his second 20-year career in Pottsville as a partner in the medical group Marshall Rismiller & Associates.



'69 John Bussard, MD, 84, of Ringoes, New Jersey, passed away June 17, 2020. Dr. Bussard interned

at Lancaster General Hospital, and completed a residency in anesthesiology at Hartford Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut. He then practiced at Hunterdon Medical Center in Flemington, New Jersey, serving as head of the department before his retirement. He devoted his spare time and retirement years to the enthusiastic pursuit of several major interests: restoring and flying antique biplanes; the study of Mayan civilization, including many visits to Central American ruins; and a lifelong love of classical music, especially the works and operas of Mozart. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Elizabeth S. Bussard, MD '69; a daughter, Anne Bussard Supina, MD '01; a son, John M. Bussard, Major, USMC; and four grandchildren.

'73 William T. Chain Jr., MD, passed away Tuesday, October 27, at Bryn Mawr Hospital after a yearlong battle with cancer. Known as "Bill," Dr. Chain was raised in Narberth, the son of well-known family doctor William Thomas Chain and Elizabeth Wickwire Chain.

Dr. Chain completed an internship in 1974 and a residency at Bryn Mawr Hospital. He began practicing



'68 Raphael J. DeHoratius, MD

Raphael J. DeHoratius, MD, passed away on November 26, 2020, at his home in Upper Gwynedd, Pennsylvania, with his companion Elizabeth Grace nearby.

Having completed his internship at Jefferson, Dr. DeHoratius left the Philadelphia area briefly for a residency and fellowship under the tutelage of Dr. Ralph Williams at the University of New Mexico, where he began teaching in the early '70s.

During this same time, he served two years as a major in the United States Air Force, caring for the young families of airmen and women in Wichita, Kansas ("Tornado Alley," as he remembers it).

On returning to Philadelphia, Dr. DeHoratius began teaching at Jefferson. Between 1976 and 1982, Dr. DeHoratius inspired young doctors with a love of learning, which was itself a signature of his own academic life. These early graduates, even to this day, remember a master teacher with great affection.

From 1982 to 1992, Dr. DeHoratius directed the Division of Immunology and

Rheumatology at Hahnemann University. At some time during his tenure at Hahnemann, he also served as acting chief of the Department of Medicine. Subsequently, Dr. DeHoratius returned to Jefferson as the director of the Clinical Rheumatology Fellowship Program. Under his leadership, some 30 young fellows from the early '90s to 2006 graduated from so rigorous and demanding a program that they were sought out consistently year after year by hospitals across the United States.

During these years, Dr. DeHoratius distinguished himself as a leading rheumatologist in Philadelphia. Patients traveled long distances to be seen by this remarkable diagnostician. Dr. DeHoratius dedicated himself to each one of them, listening attentively and determining the precise diagnosis, the appropriate medication, or the singular therapeutic approach needed to resolve the issue.

He developed the first Lupus Center in Philadelphia, served as president of the American College of Rheumatology in 2002–2003, and was awarded both the prestigious title of Master in Rheumatology and the Hollander Award for his significant contributions to the field of rheumatology. Dr. DeHoratius continued his important work as medical director in rheumatology at Johnson & Johnson until his retirement in 2017.

internal medicine in Gladwyne in 1976 before moving his practice to Narberth in 1978. In 1991, he earned certification in addiction medicine. A recovering alcoholic, he drew from his experience to lead others out of addiction.

Dr. Chain married Christine Duncheskie in 1973; they had two sons. He coached CYO football for St. Margaret Parish, especially the seventh and eighth graders. In 1981, he was named coach of the year. He loved auto racing and went with friends as far away as Florida, Ohio, and Watkins Glen, New York, to watch the sport.



'82 Ann Stoneman Vorys, MD, passed away Sunday, July 26, 2020. Her family, friends, and work colleagues

will miss her generosity of spirit, wonderful sense of humor, kindness and humility, deep commitment to family and work, love for animals, and passion for gardening. She will always be remembered for the profound fortitude and courage with which she faced her nine-year battle with cancer.

Dr. Vorys was born and raised in Columbus, and had extensive postgraduate education and training, including studies at the London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in London, England, and in infectious disease epidemiology at Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore. She focused her drive to help people as an infectious disease specialist. Her career began as an assistant professor of medicine in the

Infectious Disease Division of The Ohio State University Medical Center.

At OSU, Dr. Vorys conducted NI-H funded AIDS trials. She founded the International & Domestic Public Health Foundation to focus scarce resources to combat the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. She also collaborated with the Presbyterian Church (USA) International Health Ministries to sponsor a malaria control program in Africa. Her greatest source of pride and joy was her beloved son Frank, whom she adopted from Vietnam in 2002.



'86 Patrice Lamb Trauffer, MD, passed away Wednesday, September 25, 2019, at Fox Chase Cancer Center. She

completed fellowships in obstetrics and high-risk obstetrics at Thomas Jefferson University, as well as in genetics at the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Trauffer was a dedicated physician specializing in high-risk obstetrics and genetics in several hospitals in the Philadelphia and Trenton areas. She went above and beyond for her patients and prided herself in providing quality and diligent care.

Her life was filled with family time, unforgettable vacations, big parties, scuba diving, board games, horseback riding, and other outdoor adventures. Dr. Trauffer was a devoted mother who supported and loved her children fiercely. She is remembered for her gracious

hosting, quick wit, commitment to her work, deep faith, and love for her family and friends.

'98 Michael Martin, MD, passed away in May 2020. Classmate David Gould writes: "The Class of 1998 lost another member, sadly—Mike Martin—arguably our most interesting classmate, and one who made a great and lasting impact on those who knew him best. When not busy with Emergency Medicine, Mike had a variety of passions (up to and including falconry), and was a most kind and loving father to his children. He is survived by his wife and two daughters in Wichita, Kansas; and by two brothers and a sister in New Jersey."

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The Bookshelf



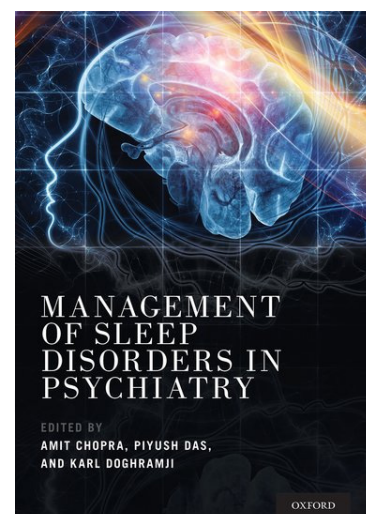
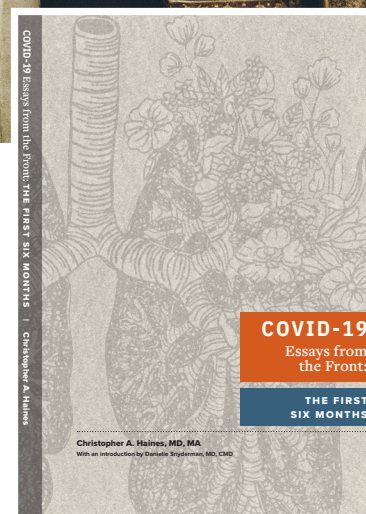
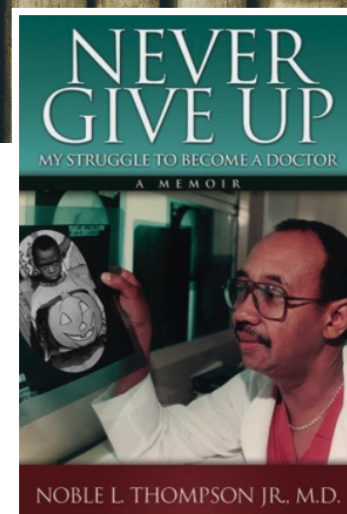
Michael J. Stephen, MD, director of the Adult Cystic Fibrosis Center, pays tribute to the lungs in *Breath Taking: The Power, Fragility, and Future of Our Extraordinary Lungs*. Stephen takes the reader on a journey from the history of oxygen on the planet and the origins of breathing to the part our lungs play in the immune system, in mindfulness, and in nearly everything.

Christopher A. Haines, MD, MA, '99, RES'02, FEL'03, assistant professor of family medicine, recounts the science, medicine, and policy as well as his personal story in the life-and-death battle with the pandemic in *COVID-19 Essays from the Front: The First Six Months*.

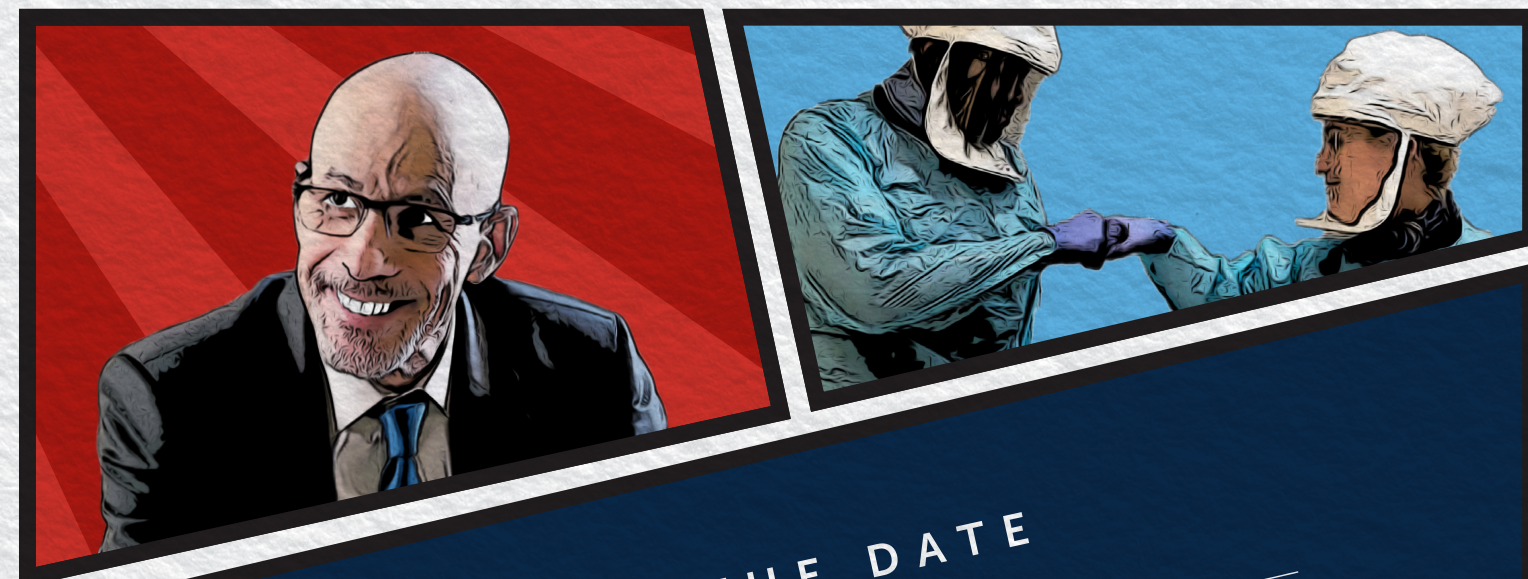
History professor Michael Gabriel edits and annotates the correspondence of his father, **Frederick R. Gabriel, MD, '40**, who, fresh out of medical school, writes to his family about everyday life in a wartime hospital in *Physician Soldier: The South Pacific Letters of Captain Fred Gabriel from the 39th Station Hospital*.

Radiologist **Noble L. Thompson, Jr., MD '68, RES'75**, tells his inspirational story of overcoming numerous challenges and disadvantages in *Never Give Up: My Struggle to Become a Doctor*.

Professor of psychiatry, neurology, and medicine **Karl Doghramji, MD, '80, RES'84**, is one of three co-editors of *Management of Sleep Disorders in Psychiatry*, the first comprehensive textbook on sleep disorders for psychiatrists. The text reviews the literature for



clinical management of DSM-V sleep-wake disorders commonly associated with a range of psychiatric disorders. Doghramji is medical director of the Jefferson Sleep Disorders Center and program director of Jefferson's Fellowship in Sleep Medicine.



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