



UPSTATE MEDICAL

Alumni JOURNAL

AUTUMN 2024 PUBLISHED BY UPSTATE MEDICAL ALUMNI FOUNDATION

PUTTING THE ARTS IN MEDICINE

The study of humanities helps students
develop empathy and communication skills



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AUTUMN 2024 ISSUE

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ON THE COVER:
A glass mosaic created by Anthony Vinciguerra, MD '76. For more about Dr. Vinciguerra, see page 8.

The Immigration Debate

I am writing in response to the article titled: "Georgia Needs More Doctors, But I Can't be One of Them" (*Winter 2023*).

Being an immigrant myself and having trained at Upstate as a resident and fellow, this article caught my attention. I understand the perspective of Katherine Narvaez '25 but also see the perspective of following laws. I had to postpone my education in order to get my immigration paperwork settled prior to residency and I was very careful to do so. It is unfortunate that her mother did not recognize the harm her illegal presence in the country would cause for her family. She should have followed U.S. immigration laws, which happen to be very liberal and inviting compared to other countries.

I think it is unjust for laws to be made and then only applied under certain circumstances. I hear the phrase often these days that "no one is above the law" as we prosecute a former U.S. president. It is also unfair for those who do follow the rules or for those who can't come into our country illegally, such as those who live overseas. Katherine is extremely fortunate to be here, where, even though she is not here legally, has been able to pursue a medical career in 15 states. That would be unlikely in most countries.

Although not mentioned in her article, Katherine may be eligible to legalize her living in the U.S. and should do so if she is serious about adopting the U.S. as her home country. Even though this topic has obtained much media attention recently, we should not be promoting illegal activity, especially in the medical community. If laws are not enforced, it undoubtedly leads to chaos.

David DiCesar, MD, HS '09

Fayetteville, New York

Good Deeds Inspire

I am a long-retired doc who completed my residency at Upstate in 1974. I left for warmer weather but enjoy the *Alumni Journal* and its uplifting stories about the great young doctors and students and their contributions to a better future for a healthier Upstate community.

I am going to make an anonymous donation to the area's children's hospital in honor of the Tau Chapter of Phi Delta Epsilon's contributions to the community (*Winter 2023*). In this very challenging era, this senior citizen is inspired by the young highlighted in the *Journal* as well as their esteemed mentors.

Anonymous

Class Achievements

As an unofficial 1960 class historian, I note my pride in finding three recent medical articles published by class members. Sam Thier, Lewis Wexler, and Phillip Wolfe are to be congratulated on pursuing medical education 60 years post-graduation.

I would also note the non-medical achievements of our class president, Roger Moore. Roger, a veteran of the Korean War, has been a major contributor to art in Central New York. I hope the school would find it in their interest to utilize some of his paintings in the school buildings in honor of the Class of '60.

Leonard Friedman, MD '60

Middleton, Massachusetts

Fond Memories

I was saddened by the In Memoriam notice of the death of Dean Geno Andreatta. During my time at Upstate (1965-1969), he was always a very positive and encouraging presence in our lives and our educational experience. He will be missed.

Noah Finkel, MD '69

Huntington, New York

Seeing the photo and obituary of Arnold Moses, MD, in the *Alumni Journal* brought back so many happy memories. I knew him as a teacher, as a mentor, and finally, as a colleague.

My contact with the Endocrine Service began in summer 1960, when I had a rewarding student fellowship with the newly developed endocrine group headed by Drs. Streeten and Moses. After completing my senior year, I chose a mixed medicine-surgery internship at Upstate (1961-1962). The first six months were on surgery. In January 1962, my six months on medicine began with a month at the downtown outpatient clinic. I spent five days a week seeing outpatients and there were no night or weekend duties. On Friday afternoons, the various medical specialties had follow-up outpatient clinics. After patient visits were completed, each group had informal educational gatherings. These were available for me to attend. I walked into the room occupied by the endocrine group. Dr. Moses shouted out, "Nankin." Both Dr. Streeten and he welcomed me. The room was filled with familiar friendly faces. I attended the endocrine sessions for the rest of the month. It was like coming home.

In February 1962, I met with Dr. Streeten, who welcomed my interest in endocrinology but advised I needed to see Dr. Lyons, Chairman of Medicine, to get his acceptance.

Dr. Lyons was friendly and receptive to the idea but, because all first-year internal medicine resident positions were filled, he wondered if I would like to be a first-year endocrine fellow next year. It would be out of the usual sequence but legal.

It turned out that the Endocrine Service had just been awarded NIH funding for two endocrine fellows. The offer was immediately accepted.

What a great year. Richard Aubry, who had just finished four years as an OB/GYN resident, was the other fellow. Then on to my first year of internal-medicine residency. After spending seven years at the Upstate Medical Center, I finished training at the University of Utah, in Salt Lake City, followed by two years of selective service in the Commissioned Corp of the U.S. Public Health Service, in Rockville, Maryland. Then, there was six months as a guest worker in the Endocrine Section of the National Cancer Institute at the NIH, followed by seven years as an instructor, assistant professor, and associate professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

In 1977, I joined the faculty at the medical school at the University of South Carolina to help start up a new medical school, where I spent 31 years until retirement. Over the years I met Drs. Streeten and Moses at national medicine or endocrine meetings. We always had cordial and informative discussions. They are both gone but I remain thankful to both of them for their friendship, instruction, guidance, and support. They were gifted in so many ways.

Howard Nankin, MD '61

Columbia, South Carolina

Your Opinion Counts!

The Upstate Alumni Journal welcomes letters to the editor. Letters relating to magazine content should be submitted online at medalumni.upstate.edu/editor or mailed to: Upstate Alumni Journal, Upstate Medical Alumni Foundation, Setnor Academic Building #1510, 750 E. Adams St., Syracuse, New York 13210-9976. Letters must be signed and are subject to editing for space and style.

SUNY Chancellor Honors Upstate Student

Hannah Connolly, who received MD and MPH degrees from the Norton College of Medicine and a PhD from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs in May, was honored with a 2024 Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence.

The award acknowledges students who have received recognition for distinguished achievements and is the highest honor bestowed upon a student by the SUNY system.

"Your dedication and achievements are a testament to your unwavering commitment and determination," said SUNY Chancellor John B. King of award-winning students. "The SUNY community is extremely proud of your accomplishments, your ambition, and the incredible individuals you have become."

Dr. Connolly has excelled academically, elected as a member of both the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society and the Gold Humanism Society, as well as carrying a 4.0 GPA in her doctoral courses. The focus of her study, service, leadership, and scholarship over the past eight years has been related to combating health inequities through medical education. A role model for servant leadership, Connolly has contributed greatly to the pursuit of health equity and the enhancement of the curriculum at Upstate.



Hannah Connolly, MD/MPH '24, PhD, is currently a psychiatry resident at the UCLA Semel Institute of Neuroscience.



Nicholas Brennan

Upstate MD/PhD Student Awarded NIH Fellowship

Upstate MD/PhD student Nicholas Brennan was awarded the NIH Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award, a grant funded by the National Institute on Aging (NIA). This award provides \$210,000 over four years to support the research and training of MD/PhD candidates, fostering the growth of pre-doctoral students with the potential to excel as physician-scientists. Brennan's current research is focused on the mechanism of muscle atrophy and aging.

Brennan's interest in science and medicine began in his college years. After volunteering at a hospital and later becoming an EMT, he found his passion for medicine. After graduation, he then spent two years working in a lab at the NIA, igniting his interest in research.

The intersection of medicine and research led Brennan to matriculate into the MD/PhD program at Upstate. "Through my experience as an EMT, I knew I wanted to pursue a career in medicine," he says. "My

time at the NIA solidified my interest in research. It became clear to me that the MD/PhD program was the best way to integrate research and medicine."

His work at Upstate Medical University centers around investigating unique forms of mitochondrial stress and their correlation with muscle wasting. "I believe this grant will not only help me to further understand the mechanistic underpinnings of skeletal muscle atrophy with age, but it will allow me to further develop as a physician-scientist, which will ultimately help me treat patients," he says. "We all know that there is much morbidity that accompanies aging. However, many of the mechanisms that underlie the complex aging process remain elusive. Receiving this grant will allow me to further contribute to the field of aging research. My hope is that our work will one day improve the quality of life for the aging population."

Medical Students Honor Anatomical Gift Donors

Students at the Norton College of Medicine joined students from Upstate Medical University's physical therapy and physician assistant programs in honoring nearly 200 anatomical donors whose gifts provided the cadavers for their anatomy education at a memorial service on April 13.

The annual memorial service is organized largely by students to acknowledge and thank families for the important role their loved ones have played in education and includes performances of music and poetry that reflects their respect for the donors.

"The men and women we honor, along with their families, have contributed greatly to the education of our future health care professionals," says Dana Mihaila, MD, PhD, director of the Anatomical Gift Program. "This service provides our students with the opportunity to say thank you and to pay tribute to those who are assisting them in their medical education."

"The men and women we honor, along with their families, have contributed greatly to the education of our future health care professionals."

Hosts for the service included medical students Colleen Magowan '27 and Christopher Bushnell '27. "Our 'first patients' are those who could not be saved, but the knowledge they provide will help save countless others," says Magowan. "That generosity and selflessness deserves to be recognized. This service is a meaningful way to pay our respects to the donors and their families."

Bushnell says the memorial service is an extension of the respect that student learners have for anatomical donors. "Their gift is truly invaluable, and it is a privilege to learn from them."

To learn more about Upstate's Anatomical Gift Program visit www.upstate.edu/cdb/donor/ or call 315-464-4348. The website includes the Anatomical Gift Pledge Form as well as frequently asked questions.



Scenes from the Anatomic Gift Program memorial service. From top: Dana Mihaila, MD, PhD; students offer remarks of thanks; photos of anatomical gift donors; family members of donors at the service.





Auyon Ghosh, MD '14

Auyon Ghosh, MD '14, Awarded \$1 Million NIH Grant

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) impacts more than 11 million Americans, resulting in billions of dollars in healthcare costs each year. While the disease can be triggered by any irritant introduced to the lungs—such as air pollution, chemicals, dust, or fumes—smokers are most at risk of developing COPD.

Upstate pulmonologist and assistant professor Auyon Ghosh, MD, MPH, received a five-year, \$1 million grant from the National Institutes of Health/National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute to bring together data from multiple studies and more than 60,000 patients to study genetic factors that contribute to disease risk, as well as those that may protect those at risk from developing COPD. Dr. Ghosh hopes this information might be used to better predict risk for COPD and identify new treatments.

About 40 percent of people who smoke develop COPD. "COPD is a smoking-related disease, but interestingly, only a minority of smokers develop COPD," he says. "The majority of folks who smoke don't get COPD, so what makes them resistant?"

Ghosh theorizes there are genetic variants that help protect against developing COPD. By combining data from 11 different studies providing a pool of more than 60,000 patients to study, he plans to apply what's called a polygenic resilience score (PRS): an estimate of an individual's genetic liability to a trait or disease.

"This type of PRS framework was used by my mentor for this study, Dr. Stephen Glatt in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Psychiatry," said Ghosh. "He and his colleagues used it to study psychiatric diseases like schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease, and others that have a genetic component." Ghosh says they were able to evaluate if a person had not only a high genetic risk, but also a high resilience. "The idea is to bring that framework into COPD, which is not something that's been done before."

With a better understanding of the biological mechanisms that contribute to resilience, Ghosh hopes to find ways to prevent the painful and costly impacts of COPD.



Arabinda Choudhary, MD

Arabinda Choudhary Named Chair of Radiology

Arabinda Choudhary has been named chair of the department of radiology at Upstate Medical University.

Choudhary comes to Upstate from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), where he held numerous positions, including most recently as chair of the department of radiology since August 2019, and as professor in the department of biomedical informatics. He also has served as interim chief of the division of pediatric radiology and quality officer of radiology.

"I am pleased to welcome Dr. Choudhary to the Upstate faculty," says Lawrence Chin, MD, dean of the Norton College of Medicine. "Dr. Choudhary brings with him key leadership experiences from top level medical institutions. We look forward to his leadership of our radiology department."

Prior to joining UAMS in 2019, Choudhary served as director of pediatric neuroradiology at Penn State College of Medicine, the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center from 2006 to 2013, chair of the department medical imaging at Nemours Al duPont Hospital for Children from 2013 to 2019, and faculty positions in pediatrics and radiology at Sidney Kimmel Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University from 2016 to 2019.

Choudhary is an internationally acclaimed expert in the field of pediatric neuroimaging. His research has focused on diagnosis of brain and spinal trauma, as well

as chronic disease and surgery involving the brain. He was the lead author on a 2018 consensus statement on abusive head trauma, the leading cause of fatal head injuries in children younger than two years of age.

Choudhary has published extensively and lectured internationally on neuroimaging. He received the Society of Pediatric Radiology's prestigious Walter E. Berdon award in 2016 for authoring the best clinical research paper in *Pediatric Radiology* in 2015. He received the Dr. David S. Hartman Faculty Golden Apple Award for outstanding medical student teaching at Hershey Medical Center in 2010.

He earned his medical degree from the Medical College of Calcutta in 1994; an MBA from the Wharton School at the University Pennsylvania in 2017, and was named a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives in 2018. He is board-certified in clinical informatics, radiology, neuroradiology, and pediatric radiology. He completed fellowships in pediatric radiology and pediatric neuroradiology at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and residencies in pediatrics at Princess of Wales Hospital and the University of Wales and Llandough Hospital in the United Kingdom, as well as a residency in radiology at Cambridge University.

Norton College of Medicine Confers 152 Degrees at Commencement 2024

Upstate Medical University held a joint commencement ceremony on May 5 conferring degrees on graduates from all four Upstate colleges: Graduate Studies, Health Professions, Medicine and Nursing.

The Norton College of Medicine awarded 152 degrees (134 doctor of medicine and 18 master of public health degrees.) Two students received MD, MPH degrees. Four students—Jennifer Cheung, Michael Edward Garone, Nich-

olas Hoai Van Nguyen, and Brandon Lee Wyman—earned MD/PhD degrees.

Upstate Medical University also presented three honorary degrees at Commencement. The honorees included: Jose Jalife, MD, PhD, professor emeritus of internal medicine and of molecular and integrative physiology at the University of Michigan, and distinguished senior investigator at the Spanish National Center for Cardiovascular Research; Katelyn K. Jetelina,

MPH, PhD, founder and publisher of “Your Local Epidemiologist” e-newsletter and senior scientific consultant at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Nader Rifai, PhD, professor of pathology at Harvard Medical School; and Orah S. Platt, MD, chair in laboratory medicine, and director of clinical chemistry at Boston Children’s Hospital.





Thomas Schulze, MD

Thomas Schulze, MD, Elected President-Elect of World Psychiatric Association

Thomas G. Schulze, MD, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences and a leading researcher in the field of mood disorders, has been elected president-elect of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA). He will serve as president of the WPA from fall 2026 to fall 2029.

The WPA represents 250,000 psychiatrists from 145 psychiatric societies in 121 countries. The association promotes collaborative work in all areas of psychiatry, has developed ethical guidelines for psychiatric practice and position statements on topics relevant to psychiatric practice and the role of psychiatrists, and presents scientific meetings, including WPA World Congress of Psychiatry.

Schulze was appointed to the Upstate faculty in 2019; he also serves as director of the Institute of Psychiatric Phenomics and Genomics at Ludwig-Maximilians-University (LUM) in Munich, Germany.

He was instrumental in developing a Memorandum of Understanding between Upstate and LUM to foster international contact and student exchange.

Schulze's research focuses on genotype-phenotype relationship in psychiatric disorders. He created the international Consortium of Lithium Genetics (www.ConLiGen.org), to study the genetic basis of response to lithium treatment in bipolar disorder comprising several research groups from Europe, the Americas, Asia, and Australia.

Schulze's honors and awards are numerous and include the Hamilton Award from the American Psychopathological Association and the Hans-Jorg Weitbrecht Award for Clinical Neurosciences, one of the most prestigious German awards for neuroscience. He was elected to the German Academy of Sciences in 2021.

Upstate Researcher Awarded Federal Grant to Develop 3D-Model of Optic Nerve Head Cells

Preethi S. Ganapathy, MD, PhD, assistant professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences was awarded \$447,000 over two years from the National Eye Institute to develop a new way to test the potential causes of and contributors to glaucoma.

Currently, glaucoma affects three million Americans, is incurable, and is the second leading cause of blindness worldwide.

"Glaucoma is often associated with high pressure inside of the eye; this pressure causes strain, so it can either compress or pull on the optic nerve and cause damage to the cells in that region," explains Dr. Ganapathy. "But we don't know exactly how the strain damages the optic nerve."

Ganapathy plans to create a 3D-model system of human optic nerve head cells to test how this strain impacts the eye. "The human optic nerve head has a mix of helper cells that all work together to support the retinal ganglion cells," she says.

By creating a model system of these helper cells, called glia, Ganapathy proposes that researchers will be able to use cultured cells and apply strain in a way that will mimic the strain seen in human eyes.

She plans to use this technique to test the idea that fibrosis, or the hardening/scarring of tissue, is a contributing factor to the development of glaucoma.

Once the model has been developed, Ganapathy plans to work with Colleen McDowell, PhD, a researcher at the University of Wisconsin-Madison who studies a specific protein, called fibronectin, that



Preethi S. Ganapathy, MD, PhD, assistant professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences, was awarded a two-year, \$447,000 grant from the National Eye Institute to develop a 3D-model of human optic nerve head cells as part of her research into glaucoma.

promotes fibrosis. "For the second step, we're going to use this system to see whether this specific protein is making the whole situation worse," Ganapathy says.

Ganapathy is an investigator at Upstate's Center for Vision Research.

Paula Trief Honored by American Diabetes Association

Paula M. Trief, PhD, SUNY Distinguished Service Professor, has received the Richard R. Rubin Award from the American Diabetes Association. The award recognizes outstanding scientific achievement in the understanding of behavioral aspects of diabetes and was presented at the ADA's 84th Scientific Sessions in June.

Dr. Trief, a member of the Upstate faculty since 1993, is a prolific researcher in the field of diabetes with nearly 100 peer-reviewed papers and dozens of worldwide presentations. She has also served as principal investigator or co-investigator for numerous research trials addressing the psychological and behavioral aspects of diabetes, which affects more than 12 percent of the U.S. population. She is currently co-investigator of a study investigating ways to improve the quality of life in families of youth and adults with type 1 diabetes.

Trief has had a particular interest in how diabetes affects partner relationships and how relationships affect diabetes. In a 2016 study in *Diabetes Care* (coauthored by Upstate's Ruth Weinstock, MD, PhD, HS '85, and Donald A. Cibula, PhD), Trief found that a collaborative couples intervention resulted in significant, lasting improvement in blood sugar control, obesity measures, and some psychosocial outcomes.

Her recent work focuses on medication adherence in young adults with youth-onset type 2 diabetes, a



Paula Trief, PhD, was honored for scientific achievements in understanding the behavioral aspects of diabetes.

group at very high risk for early, and serious, diabetes-related complications.

Trief's previous honors include the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Central New York Psychological Association, the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service, and the SUNY President's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service.

International Sleep Award Named for Upstate Neurologist

Upstate Medical University's Antonio Culebras, MD, has been honored by the World Sleep Society for his groundbreaking work promoting the importance of sleep to good health with an award in his name.

The Antonio Culebras Award will recognize excellence in the promotion of sleep's essential role in health on World Sleep Day, observed in March.

Dr. Culebras and colleague Liborio Parrino, MD of Parma, Italy, co-founded World Sleep Day in 2008 to raise awareness of the importance of sleep, in part by honoring sleep centers around the world since its inception. Now, the awards will be named for the two founders.

The Antonio Culebras Award will recognize the work of an activity organizer who celebrates healthy sleep, promoting its capacity for nourishment and healthy living and will be presented for the first time

at the World Sleep Society Congress in Singapore in September.

Culebras, a professor of neurology, started the first sleep center in Syracuse in 1978 at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. That led to a sharing agreement with Upstate Medical University. Thereafter, a private sleep laboratory was created at Community General under the guidance of Culebras and Robert Westlake, MD '74. This sleep laboratory was later absorbed by Upstate to create Upstate's current sleep center. Culebras also was active as a founding director of the World Association of Sleep Medicine, which merged with the Sleep Research Society to become the World Sleep Society.

"I'm very proud and very much honored," said Culebras, of the award in his name.



Antonio Culebras, MD

PUTTING THE

Arts

IN MEDICINE

RUTH HART, MD '80, AND ANTHONY VINCIQUERRA, MD '76, USE ARTS AND LITERATURE TO HELP STUDENTS CONNECT THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE TO THEIR FUTURE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.

As a first year Upstate medical student, Ruth Hart, MD '80, recalls trudging from Clark Hall in frigid, snowy January weather to attend the latest production at Syracuse Stage.

It wasn't a class requirement. For Hart, attending theater after a long day in the classroom was the balm she needed to balance her studies and feed her soul. "I found it was an essential part of my life because it filled out the whole picture of what it is to be human," she says.

Nearly 50 years later, Dr. Hart is still attending Syracuse Stage, but now she's often accompanied by a cadre of medical students who are enrolled in the Literature and Medicine: Examining Issues in Primary Care elective.

Hart created the class and has been teaching it since the 1990s. Over the course of the fall semester, students read texts ranging from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* to *Morphine* by Mikhail Bulgakov as a springboard to discussing an array of issues, from clinical and ethical decision making to the personal stresses of the profession. Often, the texts correlate with either a Syracuse Stage production or an author lecture. Last fall, for example, students read *The Empire of Pain* by journalist Patrick Radden Keefe, about the Sackler family's role in the opioid epidemic, then

heard Keefe speak as part of the Friends of the Central Library Author Lecture Series. After reading *Frankenstein*, students watched a National Theater Live production from London starring Benedict Cumberbatch and engaged in a discussion about artificial intelligence and how it might impact medicine. They attended the Queer Night: Shared Stories Between Generations event at the Everson Museum, and afterward engaged in a discussion with members of SAGE, which represents the senior gay population in Syracuse, about their own histories, including experiences with health care providers.

Hart's goal is to expose students to relevant medical issues through the lens of the arts and humanities, specifically using fiction, poetry, essays, art, dance, theater, music, history, film, photography, and author lectures. At the same time, she hopes she's also exposing students to new experiences while encouraging their social learning and empathy through small group interaction over the course of the semester.

"As physicians, we draw from many factors in our decision-making, not just scientific knowledge, but also spiritual, moral, and cultural influences," says Hart. "Exposure to arts and literature helps develop observational skills, analytical reasoning, empathy, and self-reflection, and provides insight into

human conditions, illness, and suffering that aren't necessarily covered in the medical school curriculum."

AN ORGANIC BEGINNING

In all respects, Hart's Literature and Medicine class is an extension of her own interests. She grew up as an avid reader who enjoyed film, theater, and the visual arts who aspired to become a physician. As an undergraduate at St. Lawrence University, she majored in biology on the pre-med track. "I enjoyed science and did well, but something was missing," she says.

So, Hart also took 14 courses in English as a means to read, earning all A's and fulfilling the requirements of the major. "I'd be reading Shakespeare in between dissections," she says.

"I didn't bother filling out any paperwork to officially declare it," she says. "In those days, a second major in English was not going to help get me into medical school."

But studying literature helped balance her, helping her to excel in her science studies as well. At Upstate, she found those outlets on her own, at Syracuse Stage (which had opened only two years before she started medical school), the Everson Museum, and through active use of a library card.

As an emergency medicine physician working at St. Joseph's Hospital

NE

"AS PHYSICIANS, WE DRAW FROM MANY FACTORS IN OUR DECISION-MAKING, NOT JUST SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE, BUT ALSO SPIRITUAL, MORAL, AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES. EXPOSURE TO ARTS AND LITERATURE HELPS DEVELOP OBSERVATIONAL SKILLS, ANALYTICAL REASONING, EMPATHY, AND SELF-REFLECTION, AND PROVIDES INSIGHT INTO HUMAN CONDITIONS, ILLNESS, AND SUFFERING THAT AREN'T NECESSARILY COVERED IN THE MEDICAL SCHOOL CURRICULUM."

—RUTH HART, MD '80



A recent glass mosaic created by Anthony Vinciguerra, MD '76

Health Center, Hart also taught physical diagnosis to Upstate medical students. Recalling her own experience, she began inviting students to accompany her to Syracuse Stage, providing their tickets.

"Afterwards, we would always debrief about what we had seen and heard," says Hart, who expanded those activities to lectures at Syracuse University, art exhibits, or to hear authors appearing as part of a local author lecture series.

By the 1990s, Hart realized she had enough students participating to formalize her efforts, and with the endorsement of the Department of Family Medicine, created a non-credit

elective. In order to better achieve her educational goals for the course, she secured an evidence-based medicine fellowship from the department allowing her to study instructional design at Syracuse University, where she earned a master's in education.

For many years, at the invitation of N. Barry Berg, PhD, then coordinator of the gross anatomy course, Hart gave the opening lecture for Human Anatomy, a metaphysical dissection of *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, a 1632 oil painting by Rembrandt, using some 400 slides. Dr. Berg nominated Hart to give this as a guest presenter for the Society of Clinical Anatomists, which she did at Cambridge University.



At the final session of each semester, Dr. Hart asks students to bring an object of importance to them to share with the class. "The students are quite comfortable by this point and share meaningful things about themselves," says Hart. "It becomes an exercise in empathy."

Shortly thereafter, she received a call from a physician ethicist at Oxford University, and ultimately was invited to teach a new course in literature and medicine at Oxford, which she did for a month each spring for nine years. In 2005, she was invited to teach the first medical humanities course for medical students in the graduate program at Cambridge University, at Lucy Cavendish College, where she was made an honorary fellow.

Since 2004, Literature in Medicine has been a two-credit elective. Because Hart changes the content each semester, it's not unusual for students to take it more than once.

One of those is Jessica Dobler '25, who first took the course in her second year, took it again last year, and has enrolled again for this fall. "This class is easily the most meaningful class I've taken in medical school, and the lessons Dr. Hart taught me will last long after the last remnant of the Krebs cycle is wiped from my memory," she says.

Dobler says the first time she took the class she was blown away by how much her life felt enriched. "I felt less stressed, even though it was another time commitment," she says.

At first, Dobler enjoyed the opportunity to read books again for pleasure, to get out of the medical school bubble

and into the community. But she says the course took on greater meaning when she began clinical rotations.

"Third year of medical school is often the first time that medical students do CPR and see people die," she says. "It is these difficult-to-parse emotional experiences that make medical school, and medicine in general, so difficult. To be able read about or watch a play about someone (in medicine or not) who goes through tough times and learns something from them really helped me process my own experiences."

Indeed, Hart attributes the course's popularity and longevity to the fact that it's taught by a physician who can draw from years of personal experience. "Medicine puts you in unique circumstances that you can never foresee," she says. "When we read an article about addiction and then talk about working with an aggressive patient who is mentally ill or under the influence, it's not an abstract conversation."

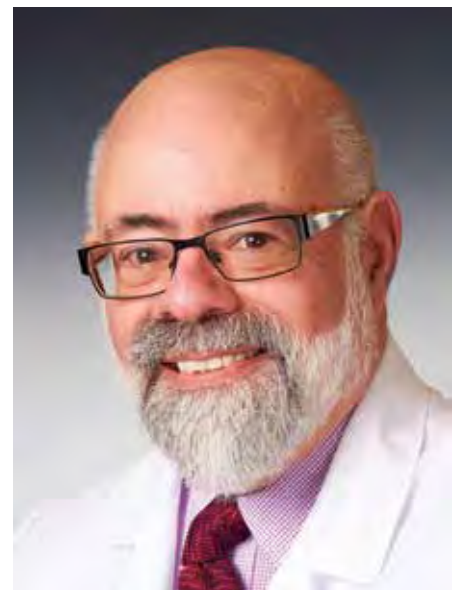
For many, the course helps remind them that the practice of medicine is more than symptoms and disease.

"Connecting the arts to medicine reminds me how human we all are," wrote a student on his course evaluation. "We get stuck in our ways learning about pathology and cause-and-effect and a class like this is a great reminder

that a patient's story is not just a chart on Epic. There are lived experiences that have shaped each of them."

A GROWING TREND

Hart is not alone in her belief that the humanities inform medical practice. According to a 2020 report by the AAMC, "the integration of the arts and humanities into medicine and medical education is essential to educating a physician workforce that can effectively contribute to optimal



Anthony Vinciguerra, MD '76

“THIRD YEAR OF MEDICAL SCHOOL IS OFTEN THE FIRST TIME THAT MEDICAL STUDENTS DO CPR AND SEE PEOPLE DIE. IT IS THESE DIFFICULT-TO-PARSE EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES THAT MAKE MEDICAL SCHOOL, AND MEDICINE IN GENERAL, SO DIFFICULT. TO BE ABLE READ ABOUT OR WATCH A PLAY ABOUT SOMEONE (IN MEDICINE OR NOT) WHO GOES THROUGH TOUGH TIMES AND LEARNS SOMETHING FROM THEM REALLY HELPED ME PROCESS MY OWN EXPERIENCES.”

—JESSICA DOBLER '25

health care outcomes for patients and communities.”

The report, *The Fundamental Role of the Arts and Humanities in Medical Education*, cites four functions of arts and humanities in strengthening the education of medical students and physicians: mastering skills such as case presentation and clinical thinking; taking perspective; personal insight; and social advocacy. Many medical schools now offer some humanities-focused coursework, either as an elective or non-credit course, although few institutions have integrated humanities courses into the required curricula.

But the benefits aren't limited to physicians alone.

At Le Moyne College, a Jesuit institution in Syracuse, Medical Humanities is one of the foundational courses of its physician assistant (PA) program, taught during the first year. From 2011 to 2022, the course was directed by Anthony Vinciguerra, MD '76, a psychiatrist who has been a member of the PA program faculty at Le Moyne since 2008. During his tenure, Dr. Vinciguerra developed the course to engage PA students in thinking critically and holistically about patient management in the Jesuit tradition of *cura personae* (care for the whole person).

The didactic component of the course is a series of lectures, practicums, dialogues and other curated activities that draw upon the humanities, the social sciences and the visual and performing arts. The use of films, such as *Philadelphia* and *The Doctor*, is complemented with recent and contemporary readings in medical ethics. The course also has two labs: Medical Communication and Inter-

viewing, and more recently, Art in Medicine.

In 2022, Dr. Vinciguerra partnered with the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse to launch a pilot program that uses interactions with art to heighten the observational and interpretive skills of PA students.

A mosaic artist himself, Vinciguerra has a long-standing interest in visual arts and says the practice of making art has helped him balance the stresses of his work. Interested in combining his avocation with his profession, he says he was inspired by a growing body of evidence showing exposure to art in medical humanities results in enhanced patient empathy, more compassionate care, greater professionalism, increased observational acuity and better descriptive language skills.

In researching ways to incorporate an arts experience into the curriculum, he discovered a continuing education course in visual thinking strategies for medical professionals offered by Harvard Medical School and set out to create a similar program that would be both feasible and sustainable for Le Moyne.

“Medicine is as much of an art as it is a science,” says Vinciguerra. “The goal of this initiative is to help students use their eyes and their ears to connect with patients and enhance their practice of medicine. I hope to help them increase their visual literacy and



LeMoyne PA students develop communication skills by describing art works to each other.

improve their analytic thinking because this will help them navigate the uncertainty they will have with patients sometime later on in their practice.”

In its first year, 76 first-year PA students visited the Everson Museum during the Fall semester for an “Art in Medicine” experience.

In the first of two exercises, students were shown a painting and asked to consider what they saw and understood about the piece. As a team, they discussed various interpretations, taking care to listen and respect each other's opinions, working to arrive at a collective hypothesis. “Many physicians and healthcare providers are afraid to

admit, ‘I’m not sure what this is. I need to look it up. I need to get a colleague to give me a second opinion,’” says Vinci-querra. “That’s what leads to clinical mistakes. Students need to become comfortable articulating ambiguity. And finally, they need to learn how to navigate uncertainty in order to ultimately reach that collective truth.”

In the second exercise, students pair off, with one partner facing a piece of art and the other with their back to it. The student facing the artwork must describe it in as much detail as possible while the other student attempts to draw a representation of the artwork based solely on that description.

“A crucial part of diagnosing a patient is being able to—no pun intended—paint a full picture of the patient’s condition and the potential impact of that condition within the context of their lifestyle, cultural background, and living situation” says Vinci-querra. “These exercises with art support students’ understanding of what it means to actually ‘see’ a patient, as opposed to merely looking at one.”

This fall, the lab experience will be expanded to include occupational therapy and nursing students, fulfilling a need for interprofessional education (IPE) and collaboration.

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

In many ways, Vinci-querra’s current role is a full-circle experience.

He grew up in Syracuse in a first-generation Italian family. “I didn’t learn to speak English until it was time to go to kindergarten,” he says.

His uncle was a professional sculptor who exhibited at the Everson in the 1960s and taught Vinci-querra how to sketch and sculpt as a youngster.

Vinci-querra landed a scholarship to Le Moyne College, where he earned a 4.0 on the senior year pre-med track, and then completed his medical degree at Upstate through a U.S. Army Health Professions Scholarship. “When I turned 18, I had a low draft number for Vietnam. I had the option to take



Upstate medical students engaged in a painting activity at the Everson Museum of Art

a deferment to finish medical school and then the Army would get a doctor instead of a private and that’s what I did,” he says.

As a medical student, Vinci-querra was influenced by Ellen Cook Jacobsen, MD ’50, who was double boarded in internal medicine and psychiatry, and emphasized looking at the wholeness of the patient. “She embraced the bio, psychosocial, spiritual paradigm that was very new at that time,” he says. “She reminded us always to step back and zoom out so you can understand how details of a disease impact a person’s entire life and a person’s family. That resonated with me so much I remember clearly thinking, ‘This is how I want to practice medicine.’”

Vinci-querra completed a combined residency in psychiatry and neurology at Eisenhower Army Medical Center. After three years serving as a combat psychiatrist for the 24th Infantry Division Rapid Deployment Force in Savannah, Georgia, and later as chief of Psychiatry and Mental Health at Ft. Stewart Army Community Hospital, he completed his active-duty commitment and returned to Upstate as a faculty member. (Vinci-querra remained in the Army Reserve for 8 years and was reactivated during Operation Desert Storm.)

A year after his residency, the first AIDS patient was documented. Vinci-querra became one of the earliest physicians in the U.S. to work with AIDS patients. He was appointed to the American Psychiatric Association’s Commission on AIDS in Washington, DC, helped write the HIV Psychiatric

Residency Training Curriculum for Upstate, and gained additional training in HIV/AIDS psycho-oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City.

“Those patients were incredibly complex. They had many specialists and many ancillary medical caregivers, but the team members were not talking to each other, which resulted in errors and fragmented care. That experience underscored early on the importance of interprofessional communication,” he says.

In 1991, Vinci-querra moved to the VA Hospital in Syracuse, where he spent 17 years working on the inpatient unit. At age 60, as he contemplated retirement from the VA, he was asked to join the PA program at Le Moyne as a Professor of Practice. In 2013, he was awarded the inaugural Julia and Thomas Lanigan Distinguished Chair in Medicine and Ethics, and later, the inaugural Chair in Interprofessional Education.

Now 74 and director emeritus of the PA Medical Humanities Course, he continues to wear many hats within the program. In addition to teaching the psychiatry module, he helps interview applicants, works on grants for special projects—such as one that focuses on how PAs and primary care can impact mental health and substance use disorders—and he teaches the two labs: Medical Communication and Inter-viewing Skills and Art in Medicine. He is also guest faculty at the Department of Interprofessional Education at McGill University College of Medicine in Montreal, and a Life Fellow and Trustee of the Rochester Academy of Medicine.

Approaching 50 years in medicine, Vinci-querra is “profoundly, eternally grateful for the education that I had at Le Moyne and the education that I had at Upstate Medical Center,” he says. “I met mentors who literally changed the course of my life for the better.”

Undoubtedly, he is doing the same. “The whole point of these efforts is to improve patient outcomes,” he says. ■

To Hear Your Voice: Connecting Isolated Patients with Worried Loved Ones

THIS STORY PROVIDES AN UPDATE TO OUR WINTER 2020

article on the efforts of Tamatha Fenster '08 and Marc Schiffman '03 to connect hospital patients isolated due to the COVID-19 pandemic with their loved ones.

BY BAILA ROSENBAUM

When Marc Schiffman, MD '03 started medical school at SUNY Upstate Medical University decades ago, he was eager to fuse his natural empathy and his analytic, scientific proclivity to heal patients in need. He never dreamed, though, that one day he'd pair his medical work with a tech startup. But then again, COVID-19 shifted many medical practitioners out of their comfort zones. And confronted with the desperation that the pandemic engendered in so many patients and their families, Dr. Schiffman knew he had to take action.

When a new, mysterious virus called COVID-19 reared its head in March 2020, Weill Cornell Medicine found itself inundated with patients in critical condition. While his specialty was interventional radiology, Dr. Schiffman, an interventional radiologist, volunteered to pivot to intensive care and do what he could to support the beleaguered ICU staff.

The day he agreed to report for duty, a contingent of volunteer ICU doctors came in from California and areas in upstate New York where the pandemic hadn't yet hit in order to bolster the ICU staff. Schiffman and his colleagues were now no longer needed in the ICU, but they still stood ready to serve. Aiming to identify the most vital need, Schiffman took note of the patients who were kept in isolation because of safety concerns, realizing that the medical personnel working harrowing shifts in a chaotic environment weren't up to the task of trying to keep patients' families updated. Frantic family members were home worrying and praying, with no way to reach out to their loved ones.

Schiffman and his colleagues recruited other doctors, all of whom would accompany the ICU doctors on their morning rounds and then break away and spend the remainder of their day calling patients' families and supplying them with consistent daily communication.



Drs. Tamatha Fenster and Marc Schiffman during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic

“Every single family member we spoke to was desperate,” he recalls. “Almost all asked us to hold the phone up next to their family member’s ear so they could hear their voice. It was heartbreaking.”

Schiffman consistently saw how patients who connected with loved ones, even if only by voice, felt noticeable relief—not only emotionally but physically. Blood pressure would stabilize, breathing would ease, and even comatose patients would respond in some way to the voices of their family members. Seeing the results on the ground, Schiffman worked with colleague Tamatha Fenster, MD '08, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology and director of innovation and biotechnology at the Weill Cornell Medicine



Marc Schiffman, MD '03, used an inheritance from his mother to commercialize the VoiceLove app for widespread use.

Fibroid Center, to find a solution to bring down the intolerable barrier COVID was erecting between patients and their families.

“Health care communication had always been a problem that had gone unaddressed,” he says, “and we decided we were going to fix that.”

Keeping Connected

Schiffman, whose professional titles include co-executive director of the Weill Cornell Medicine Fibroid and Adenomyosis Center and assistant professor of radiology at Weill Cornell Medical College/New York Presbyterian Hospital, says his background as an interventional radiologist prepared him to take on this new, ambitious endeavor. While diagnostic radiologists are doctors who specialize in diagnosing and treating illnesses and injuries using medical imaging such as X-rays, computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), nuclear medicine, positron emission tomography (PET) and ultrasound, the interventional radiologist goes one step further and uses medical imaging to guide minimally invasive surgeries that diagnose, treat, and cure medical conditions.

“I was drawn to my field because a lot of what an interventional radiologist does is to treat patients where there is no textbook solution for their illness. They need someone to come up with one,” he says.

To identify the right solution for every patient’s needs, Schiffman must integrate processes from other disciplines and apply them forward. While it’s a chal-

lenging field, the catalyst that drives this innovative thinking is his empathy for people. “I’ll figure out something to help them,” he says.

Upon spending his days in the ICU, that natural compassion drove him to find a solution to connect patients to their families. In an unlikely, rather prosaic spin, he and Dr. Fenster found the solution in Target. An online search yielded a toy speaker that connected to an app. After the speaker would be set up near a patient’s bed and activated, family and friends could download the app and speak to the patient via their phones. Patients were often in compromised positions that didn’t allow them to use their own phones, but with the device they didn’t have to do anything except listen as their family’s voices were relayed over the speakers. Bolstered by the feedback, Dr. Schiffman drove out to Target and picked up all the speakers they had in stock.

Grateful families connected, talked, sang, prayed, and expressed their love and encouragement to their loved ones, while compromised patients, some comatose, others immobilized by ventilators, were able to hear and take heart. Things moved quickly from there. In short order, Schiffman arranged for the toy company to donate speakers to Weill Cornell patients, and they were distributed to more than 150 families.

As the virus continued its relentless spread, people from across the country who heard about Schiffman and Fenster’s initiative reached out to them with heartbreaking stories. “I haven’t heard about my loved

one for a week. I don't know if he's alive or dead," one person painfully shared. Schiffman responded by buying and shipping out toy speakers to anyone who requested one.

At the end of December 2020, Schiffman's work in the trenches took a more intimate turn. His mother developed a fever, and, after a long stay in the ICU, passed away. Before Gail Schiffman became ill, her son would share his work with her and describe the help he was providing those who were suffering. After her passing, he decided to use the inheritance she'd left him to establish something in her honor that would change the health care system and help people around the world.

"She was so proud of the work we were doing, and I knew this would be a meaningful tribute to her," Schiffman says. And that's how VoiceLove, an innovative, interactive communication device designed to facilitate communication and improve patient care, was born.

Drs. Schiffman and Fenster developed VoiceLove as a voice messaging app that can be used on any smartphone or computer. Its goal is to facilitate communication in medical settings between patients, their loved ones, medical staff, and even clergy.



Schiffman's parents, Gail and Leonard Schiffman, on their 50th anniversary

Practically speaking, the device works as a more complex version of a walkie-talkie, with the patient listening on one end and family able to speak on the other. Patients who are conscious and well enough to respond can simply press a palpable large heart with minimal effort and be heard, too.

"I was drawn to my field because a lot of what an interventional radiologist does is to treat patients where there is no textbook solution for their illness. They need someone to come up with one."

—MARC SCHIFFMAN, MD '03

Schiffman knew that for the device to fill the connection gap for ill patients, he had to develop something that even a compromised patient could utilize independently. Even under normal conditions, ICU nurses are extremely busy. With the extenuating circumstances forced on them by the pandemic, they were far too strained to hold a phone up for a patient for an extended period. There was also the concern that sitting with a patient would

introduce an increased risk of exposure to staff members, which has always been a safety issue that limits connection assistance for many patients.

Keeping all that in mind, the VoiceLove device was designed to offer maximal simplicity, with only one button to activate it. A blind or aged person can easily manipulate it, and, alternately, a nurse can quickly "press and go" before moving on to care for other patients.

Schiffman wanted the device to offer the option for multiple people to connect, so a patient's whole congregation, school, or other community group could log in and send messages of hope. During COVID, the device allowed clergy members from all religions to log in and pray with patients. And, for purposes of privacy and protection, the device had to be HIPAA compliant and secure, so participants' personal contact information would remain private and safe.

Never Alone Again

Ultimately, getting VoiceLove off the ground involved extensive planning and testing, unsurprising for a new technology being introduced into a medical setting. After initial interviews with software developers, Drs. Schiffman and Fenster immediately realized that the device had to be something that would be accessible to users from all over the world—an app as opposed to a product. It would need to be programmed so that it could be downloaded, with the option to accept updates. It could not depend on WiFi, which is inadequate at many hospitals around the country.

When the pandemic eased somewhat, Schiffman and Fenster met with the American Hospital Association multiple times to discuss how the prototype could meet the current and future hospital cybersecurity requirements. The hospitals, though, were initially wary, Schiffman says. They were being forced to adopt major technological shifts at a stunning pace, and they were overwhelmed. As security is always a primary concern in health care, the answer to any innovation is often a default no.

Schiffman recounts an instance during the height of COVID, when he shipped a speaker to a hospital and the patient's whole family gathered around to speak into the app. But the hospital would not allow the device into the patient's room, and the patient passed away without his family's last words of support and final prayers.

Despite the medical world's reluctance to introduce new technology, the challenges of the times demanded it. Zoom and other technologies were being incorporated into the medical world with uncanny rapidity. Video medicine and telehealth remote treatment of patients became viable options. In Schiffman's opinion, the extenuating circumstances COVID wrought led 20 years of innovation in health care to be compressed into months, which ultimately, changed medical practices forever. There was room for VoiceLove on the medical front.

After touring hospitals throughout the country, visiting ward after ward to assess patients' needs, the doctors soon identified pockets of vulnerable patients in desperate need of additional attention and care. Elderly patients often lay alone. Blind patients, thrust

into unfamiliar environments, needed assistance for basic needs. Non-English speakers were lost without a means of communication. Though the medical establishment may have been addressing their patients' bodies, their minds and spirits were in pain.

"How," asks Schiffman, "has this never been a concern on the forefront of health care, when you're taking care of the sickest of people?"

When Schiffman reached out to researchers from all over the world and told them what he was working on, he was met with enthusiastic response. In late 2021, the device was piloted at Tennessee's Vanderbilt University Medical Center with great success. The doctor who headed the pilot program told Schiffman that when he saw the device being used and realized what benefits it offered, he had an "Aha!" moment. "Why didn't I think of that?" he wondered.

No Patient Left Behind

The plight of elderly patients in particular struck a personal chord for Schiffman. When his mother had been ill, he had free access to visit her because she was hospitalized at Weill Cornell. However, he found that when he left her side, the nurses would call him soon after to report that she had become confused and agitated. He says that delirium in elderly patients is often an unfortunate byproduct of an extended hospital stay. To compound the problem, health care workers often resort to treating agitated patients with sedation, which worsens delirium and harms the patients in the long term.

Schiffman approached the National Institute on Aging and applied for a grant to develop VoiceLove, with the goal of seeing how it could benefit the aging population. The study would explore if increasing the connection between elderly patients and their family and friends throughout hospitalizations would help prevent confusion and delirium, and speed the recovery when delirium presents.

Schiffman points out that patients suffering from confusion and delirium actually cost hospitals a great deal of money. Delirium leads to longer hospitalizations, longer ICU stays, more intubations and falls, and the comorbid illnesses that develop with longer hospital stays. In addition, after patients develop early dementia and leave the hospital, they generally experience more readmissions than they otherwise would.

Sadly, many elderly patients are admitted with their mental faculties intact, but then develop dementia or Alzheimer's in the hospital and are unable to return to independent living. And, the longer a patient suffers from delirium, the more likely he or she is to develop dementia, if it is not aggressively stopped or reversed. Schiffman says studies show that mortality



rates go up 10 percent every day that a patient is left untreated for delirium.

Ultimately, VoiceLove received a \$3 million grant from the National Institute on Aging on the day of his mother's passing. Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project's research development were fast-tracked, and the device came to fruition a year after her death.

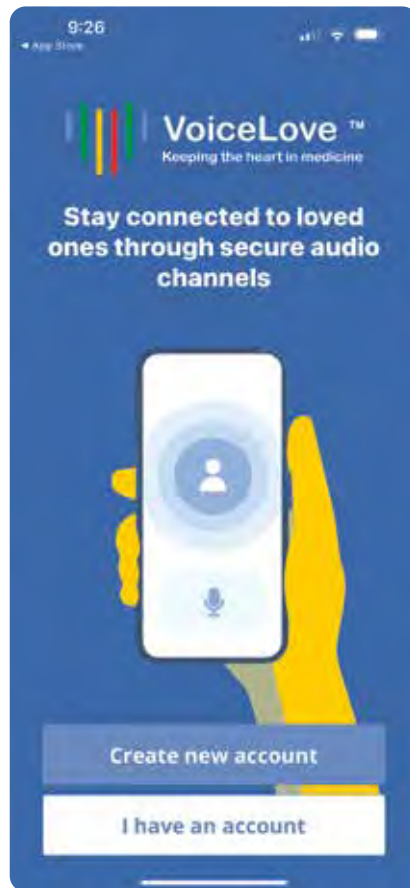
Why the name? "VoiceLove named itself," Schiffman says. "We heard the love that poured through the speakers as whole families would gather and get on, taking turns talking, praying, and singing their love."

Today, VoiceLove is up and running, available to hospitals, nursing homes, hospices and other health care facilities to onboard. Innumerable modifications have been made through the real-world experience during the pilot programs, and improvements continue to be made. Patients can be provided with a VoiceLove phone, creatively nestled in a protective case with an enlarged, heart-shaped "talk" button that broadcasts audio messages as they are received, while still respecting sleep cycles and procedures being performed. The case is affixed to a hospital bed, while facility staff manages all codes and settings from a dashboard interface.

Each device gets its own secure channel code and can be accessed by any number of people the patient or their health care proxy chooses. The device records families' messages as voice notes and will arrange them in order if several people are talking at once. These messages can be replayed, so if a confused patient needs to be reoriented, a voice message from their child or parent can be repeated to calm or refocus them. Patients across the US have received voice notes and prayers from as far away as France, Senegal, Nigeria, Germany, London, and Israel.

The VoiceLove developers have even made it possible for celebrities and sports figures to send messages to sick children who need a pick-me-up. Celebrities can easily download the app, access the child's channel, and talk to them from their personal cell phones without revealing their personal contact information and jeopardizing their privacy or security.

Up next for VoiceLove is its application in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), the military, and in



hospice units. Schiffman is in the process of applying for a grant from Vanderbilt University for another \$3 million to study the benefits that VoiceLove may yield for mothers and infants and has received preliminary notice of a positive response. Mothers of premature or ill infants often aren't able to stay in the hospital round the clock, and it can be heart-wrenching for them to leave their fragile little ones behind daily, or upon returning to work when their maternity leaves are up.

Mothers with infants in the NICU are at increased risk of postpartum depression, anxiety, and psychosis. However, Dr. Schiffman says it's been shown that when mothers are able to sing and interact with their infants that risk is considerably reduced. The app can be placed in the infant's bassinet, and both the infant and the mother benefit from the

• connection. The babies display lower heart and respiratory rates; pain scores during procedures are reduced, and the mothers exhibit lowered rates of depression and improved milk production.

• VoiceLove is currently seeking collaboration with the military to develop and research ways to benefit wounded soldiers far from home. Schiffman is also in contact with different facilities that tend to end-of-life issues to see if enhanced family communication will benefit hospice patients who do not live near their loved ones, or whose loved ones cannot stay at their bedside. With a little effort and innovative technology, he says, "No one ever has to die alone again."

• Ultimately, ensuring that patients experience as much love and connection as possible is not just a nice thing to do, it actually improves outcomes. And Dr. Schiffman's passion is evident as he reiterates his goal: "I don't want another family to suffer the way mine—and millions of other people—have been forced to until now. We will keep the heart and humanity in health care, and a new communication paradigm in medicine is here to stay." ■

• (Adapted with permission from *Mishpacha* magazine, Issue 1003)

Unanswered Questions

WILLIAM BORCHERT '25 WANTS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE HOW AND WHY IN MEDICINE.

For William Borchert '25, the thrill in life is the pursuit of the unanswered question. "I've always had a lot of intellectual curiosity about why and how things happen," he says.

Take his approach to his current pathology elective. "Often in pathology, it's about diagnosing a cancer. But I'm interested in what's around the cancer. What potentially caused it? Is there a contributing factor that we're missing?" he asks.

He cites two unusual cases that sparked his interest. "We looked at the lungs of occupational workers who were exposed to silica dust from stone countertops and literally the lung was filled with stone—an unanticipated occupational hazard. We also had an untraditional mesothelioma case, a patient who was a barber who was exposed to asbestos from talc. My main driver in medicine is this underlying curiosity as to the why and how things happened."

For Borchert, that exploration never gets old. When the fourth-year medical student earns his medical degree next spring, he will add to an impressive list of academic credentials that include three master's and a PhD. But he insists he's not driven by the pursuit of degrees. "Ultimately it's not about the letters listed by your name, it's the knowledge that you've accumulated," he says.

Borchert grew up on an orchard in Marlboro, New York, a hamlet of 3,500 people. He attended nearby SUNY New Paltz, where he graduated in three years with three majors (biology, history, and Asian studies) and three minors (business administration, evolutionary studies, and religious studies) and honors.

He was also heavily influenced by his work-study job in the university's Center for International Programs. "At the time, based on size, the school had a greater

"The goal of my dissertation was to focus on a different exposure window that typically isn't investigated in the context of environmental health to determine if temperature and air pollution are also associated with negative outcomes, in this case, sudden cardiac death in the long term."

—WILLIAM BORCHERT '25

percentage of international students and sent more domestic students abroad than any other SUNY school," he says. "Even though I was in a small town in upstate New York, I felt like I got a truly global education."

Wanting to expand on that experience, Borchert secured a Japan Graduate Student Research Scholarship to go to Tokyo as a graduate scholar. Interested in medicine, he chose Japan based on the fact that it's a country with an efficient healthcare system and the longest life expectancy. "I thought, 'clearly they must be doing something right, I need to study health in Japan,'" he recalls.

Initially, Borchert studied the Japanese government response to the influenza pandemic. After getting his language skills up to speed, he enrolled in the master's in international health program at the University of Tokyo,

where he wrote his master's thesis on the effects of urbanization and survival following out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

Although he knew he wanted to pursue medical school, Borchert first wanted another international living and learning experience. He chose the UK, where he earned a second master's in public health from the University of Cambridge.

"Although they sound similar, they were actually very different degrees," he says. "The coursework for the international health degree was very much based in the biomedical sciences and the public health degree focused on health systems, biostatistics, and epidemiology."

Borchert enrolled at Upstate Medical University but found he still had questions about public health that he wanted to explore at a deeper level. In his second year, he spoke with Upstate administrators and received permission to chart his own path.

After completing his second year of medical school, Borchert took an approved leave of absence to enroll at Harvard University. While earning a doctorate in population health studies and a master's in epidemiology, he built off of his research in Japan and the UK, focusing on sudden cardiac death.

Borchert used health data from the Nurses' Health Study, in conjunction with environmental data on air pollution and temperature from throughout the United States, focusing his dissertation on the associations between different exposures of temperature, altitude, and particulate matter air pollution to sudden cardiac death.

"My advisor was studying the short-term effects of air pollution and temperature, and my dissertation was on the long- and medium-term effects of air pollution and temperature, because we wanted to see if the acute effects of an



increase in exposure persist in the long term,” he says. “The goal of my dissertation was to focus on a different exposure window that typically isn’t investigated in the context of environmental health to determine if temperature and air pollution are also associated with negative outcomes, in this case, sudden cardiac death in the long term.”

The research found different risks in the short and long term related to temperature, and also an association with particulate air pollution in both the medium and long term, based on the size of suspended particulate matter pollution in the air.

“One of the reasons why I studied environmental epidemiology is because environmental exposures (such as temperature and air pollution) affect everyone. In epidemiology, I like to focus not on what is known, but what is possible in that a better understanding of the distribution of disease will create novel insights that drive patient care,” he says.

Back at Upstate, Borchert says he approached his clinical rotations with

an open mind and equal enthusiasm but finds his greatest interest in pathology and environmental and occupational medicine.

His plan is to become a physician-scientist in an academic setting, splitting his time between research and clinical work. He says it’s also likely that he’ll be involved with clinical informatics. “There’s so much data accumulating in electronic records that hasn’t been tapped yet for investigation,” he says. “I’d like to see how we can use laboratory data that we’ve been collecting for years to generate new findings that help drive patient care.”

His end goal is to create a legacy that outlives his career. “I want to contribute to scientific discovery to help improve patient care,” he says. “I don’t want to provide the same outcomes for patients, but better outcomes for patients.”

Medical student William Borchert '25 is interested in how environmental exposures impact health.

CLASS NOTES

1953

Daniel J. Mason, of Coral Springs, FL, is "aging in place with wife Lauris. All is well," he writes.

1954 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

David J. Turell, of Houston, TX, shares that he is "just getting older."

1956

James J. La Vine, of Baldwin, NY, is alive and kicking, with 24 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren. Two kids are medical doctors, Nancy earned her degree from Tufts and Sean from Downstate. His wife, Nancy, has lost her sight and "I'm her seeing eye dog," he writes.

1958

George B. Jacobs, of Cape Coral, FL, writes "We are almost two years since we were badly damaged by Hurricane Ian. Two smaller towns were devastated and are only beginning the recovery process. Matlacha and Fort Myers Beach had wind damage and a surge of seven feet of water running down the town center. Buildings were not just damaged but literally swept away. We only recently managed to get our roof replaced and pool cage rebuilt. We were among the



Thor III, the dog of George B. Jacobs '58, with a friend

residents who did not experience the major destruction. On a more cheerful note, our adopted German Shepard dog, Thor III, who was given up for adoption because he was too aggressive, has just about completed his service and therapy training. He is a completely different dog. He wasn't aggressive, he was bored. He turned out to be extremely bright and a natural therapy dog. Incidentally, he loves children. I have been telling folks who see a dog like this that this is not a breed for amateurs. They are brighter than many owners and when that happens, they decide you need protection. These dogs want to and need to work. The 2024 hurricane season has just begun. We are all praying it will spare our otherwise close to paradise neighborhood."

1959 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

1962

John Ritrosky, Jr., of Sanibel, FL, retired in September 2023 after 57 years of pediatric practice and hospital staff service in Fort Myers. He has three children in medicine, all boarded and working hard. John is a plastic surgeon, Steven an anesthesiologist, and Susan an internist but presently in her second year at the University of Florida Veterinary College.

1963

Philip M. Gaynes, of Longboat Key, FL, and Suzan had an impromptu reunion this past March with Judy and **Stuart Kaplan**, and Harriet and **Arnold Derman** in Punta Gorda, FL. "We have remained friends all these years and are grateful to still be able to enjoy each other's company," he writes.



Stuart '63 and Judy Kaplan, Arnold '63 and Harriet Derman, Philip '63 and Suzan Gaynes

1964 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

Lawrence W. Myers, of Camarillo, CA, shares, "My wife and I have done a great deal of traveling since I retired in 2022. We recently spent 12 days on a Rombauer Wine cruise embarking in Lisbon and disembarking in Amsterdam. While aboard, we celebrated our 63rd wedding anniversary. We have



Lawrence W. Myers '64 and Shirley

three children and six grandchildren, all nearing adulthood, who keep life interesting."

A. Albert Tripodi, of Longboat Key, FL, and Fran have successfully completed exploring their 15th National Park (Olympic) recently. "We've visited 30 countries over the last 20 years and continue to live comfortably on the beach in Longboat Key," he writes. "We remain in relatively good health and look forward to our 60th reunion in September."



A. Albert Tripodi '64 and Fran

1966

Louis A. Rosati, of Mesa, AZ, was invited to review his novel, *The Boy in Abruzzo*, at the Italian-American Literati annual meeting in Chicago. His presentation was called "My Life in Three Books."



Frank G. Yanowitz, of Salt Lake City, UT, is approaching 85 this summer, but is still active, teaching ECGs, and enjoying his music. "I'm adding this photo to my CV," he writes.



1967

Martin L. Cohen, of Boynton Beach, FL, is now officially retired. "We are Florida residents but have kept our New Jersey home for the summer. I have seen **Danny Niejadik** in Florida and keep in touch with **Charlie Sitrin**. Hope to be there for the big 60th reunion."

Bertram Zarins, of Marian, MA, finished writing a book, *Surgical Anatomy and Exposures of the Knee*. "It's a thriller," he writes.



Bertram Zarins '67

1969 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

Joann T. Dale, of Rochester, NY, says it is hard to believe she turned 80 at the end of March. She celebrated with a gala restaurant dinner with her son, daughter, and their spouses and four close friends. She continues to travel a bit and was at Longwood Gardens to see the fabulous holiday decorations in early December. She hosted her son and daughter-in-law on a cruise on the Elbe River in early June. "I had taken my daughter on trips, so I heard complaints from her sibling and decided to treat Matthew and his wife, because I wouldn't want to sleep in the same room with my dear son's impressive snores," she writes. "See you all at the reunion in September!"

Richard B. Tenser '68, of Los Angeles, CA, competes twice a year in the 100-meter dash races in the senior games. "I will definitely finish first, if I live long enough," he writes.

CLASS NOTES

Richard I. Markowitz, of Merion Station, PA, and Luci celebrated their upcoming 58th anniversary with a trip to Utah and Colorado to see Zion, Bryce, and other national parks. "Breathtaking!" He is still at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia doing pediatric radiology two days per week. "We were so saddened by the loss of our dear friend and classmate

Diane LoRusso, a truly brilliant and innovative radiologist," he writes. "Hope to attend our 55th Reunion!"

1973

Stephen J. Moses, of Orange, CT, writes, "Our 50th reunion this past October was simply great. It was so nice to see members of our illustrious class there, but also a bit sad to remember those classmates who are no longer with us. It was especially interesting to see how much our school has expanded in 50 years. Walking the halls of the Basic Science Building filled me with vivid memories and being reunited with several classmates with whom I've continued to maintain contact was particularly gratifying."

Gerry E. Slater, of Las Vegas, NV, writes, "After living in Colorado for 32 years, at an altitude of 7,800 feet and shoveling snow in May, we made the move to Las Vegas. We are loving the lower altitude, the wonderful weather, and the world-class food scene. Hope everyone is finding their joy and enjoying good health."

1974 Reunion September 20-21, 2024

Philip Schulman, of Melville, NY, is fully retired. He is enjoying his granddaughter, Fiona Rose. Daughter Jamie was married in May.

1975

Craig J. Byrum, of Manlius, NY, writes, "Kathy retired just before COVID and is busy with volunteering, mahjong, regular exercise, yoga, and gardening, while I am still working in pediatric cardiology here in Syracuse four days a week and still loving it, especially after ditching call some time ago. Our sons are healthy and happy with good jobs. We have gotten back to traveling and just returned from Croatia and heading to France in the fall. I otherwise busy myself with skiing in the winter and sculling in the summer, along with regular trips to spin classes at our local YMCA."



Craig J. Byrum '75

Robert M. Goldberg, of Somers Point, NJ, is happy to remain in solo private practice of medical oncology/hematology, just across the bay from Ocean City and across the marshes from Atlantic City. "It has been 44 years since I hung up my shingle on July 1, 1980, and I am grateful for those who have trained me, and for being in good health," he writes. "Best wishes to all my classmates and others I have known from SUNY Upstate. Looking forward to our 50th reunion in 2025. Hope to see all who can make it there."

Mark H. Katz, of Los Angeles, CA, is happy to have had a nearly 40-year career with Kaiser Permanente West Los Angeles, first as an emergency physician, now as a hospitalist. He is also involved in HIV outpatient care, gender-affirming care education, and physician-patient communication. He teaches first-year students at Keck-USC Medical School, and every time he's with them, his mind floods with wonderful

memories of the class of 1975. "I especially LOVE telling them that many, if not most, of our faculty not only smoked, but smoked while they lectured!" he writes. "I am an adoptive parent of wonderful 22-year-old Marcus."



Mark H. Katz '75 and son Marcus

1976

Ronald Dushkin, of New York, NY, writes, "I hope you are well and happy. I am. I have been practicing holistic and homeopathic medicine for more than 40 years, the last 30 in New York City. Here is my website info if you're interested or if you want to see what I look like without the long hair and beard, www.drdushkin.com. I was recently elected president of the Homeopathic Medical Society of the State of New York for the second time, serving as president of the American Institute of Homeopathy in between. I am currently writing a book, with the working title, Reduce Stress/Increase Happiness."

MARK ERLEBACHER, MD '79

The Art of Listening

For Mark Erlebacher, MD '79, the euphoria of medicine is in a successful diagnosis. Even after 45 years of practicing internal medicine, that satisfaction hasn't waned. "Anything can walk in the door," he says. "I like to solve the puzzle."

For Dr. Erlebacher, the key to diagnosis most often lies in the patient history. "A patient's visit should be 80 percent history and 20 percent exam," he says. "With a good history, you often know what's going on before the exam, just from listening to the patient."

It's a skill honed through years of practice, one that hasn't gone unnoticed. "Years ago, I had a medical student ask if he could come back during his week off to shadow again," Erlebacher shares. "He said, 'I just want to come and watch you tease out the history from your patients.'"

In addition to being a good listener, Erlebacher's guiding principle is, "the patient comes first," which he says is essentially treating others how he'd want to be treated himself.

That includes maintaining an active role in co-managing patients that he refers to specialists. "I communicate with specialists routinely to speak up on a patient's behalf," he says.

In his own practice, regardless of whether there's room in the schedule, patients who need to be seen get seen. That may result in longer waits for others, but those who've been fit in when they had an emergency become patients for life. (A Google search of Erlebacher reveals multiple thanks from family members for care received by loved ones in their obituaries.)

The son of Jewish German immigrants, Erlebacher grew up in Syracuse. He credits a Nottingham High School science teacher for recognizing his potential beyond his average grades. "I think she saw that I asked good questions and was good at processing information but perhaps not so great at memorization," he says.

With her encouragement, he buckled down on his studies, and also followed her suggestion to volunteer at University Hospital. He asked to be placed in the clinical pathology department, where he ended up working full time each summer through high school, and later, college, in the lab of John Bernard Henry, MD.



Mark Erlebacher, MD '79, is a longtime member of the Medical Alumni Foundation board of directors and clinical faculty member at Upstate.

While Erlebacher was in high school, Upstate's Max Mozell, PhD, launched a test program to see how top high school science students would perform taking medical school classes. Erlebacher was one of 11 students selected to take a renal physiology course alongside Upstate medical students. "We all passed," he says.

With his interest in medicine cemented, Erlebacher majored in biology at SUNY Buffalo, graduating in just over three years. When he applied to medical school at Upstate, Drs. Henry and Mozell wrote his recommendation letters.

His time in the pathology department had taught Erlebacher that working in a lab was not for him. "I get bored quickly," he says. "I like human interaction."

Wanting to be on the front line, he set his focus on internal medicine, doing several away rotations to gain different perspectives. One of those was a "bucket list experience" working with Dame Sheila Sherlock, MBBS, MD, a pre-eminent liver specialist at the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead Heath, outside London.

"She had been knighted by the Queen a year earlier," Erlebacher says. "She treated people from all over the world and I saw extremely rare conditions. I would work up her patients and present them to her."

Another elective was at the University of Miami, where Erlebacher would go on to complete an internal medicine residency. "It was one of the largest programs in the country and I wanted a program where I saw a lot," he says.

After completing his training, Erlebacher returned to Syracuse. After two years working for an HMO, he maintained a solo practice for 27 years, becoming part of a large internal medicine group in 2007, which was acquired by Crouse Hospital in 2010.

But Erlebacher likes variety. For 25 years, he was also medical director of the Jewish Home of Central New York, where he chose to be on call 24/7. He's done a variety of consulting, ranging from peer review and insurance work to serving as a medical malpractice expert witness (mostly defense) and media, hospital, and laboratory consulting. He's also served on multiple boards and committees, mostly related to local hospitals and medical organizations.

But his longest-running volunteer commitment has been to Upstate Medical University, where he serves as a volunteer clinical professor and was honored with the President's Award for Outstanding Faculty Service in 2006. He spent 14 years as a member of the College of Medicine admissions committee and is a longtime board member of the Medical Alumni Foundation, serving as president from 2000 to 2002.

"I really love what I do," says Erlebacher. "In appreciation for my profession, I give my time, both to help the school and to help students."

Erlebacher says he's very happy he chose internal medicine and is thankful to now be working for the love of the job. "I think anybody lucky and hardworking enough to go into medicine can adjust their lifestyle to the specialty they choose," he says. Erlebacher plans on working for at least two more years. "I love helping people and am grateful for the role I get to play in people's lives."

—Renée Gearhart Levy

CLASS NOTES

1977

Carolyn A. Smith, of Port Ludlow, WA, is retired from rheumatology practice and enjoys sailing with her husband in the Salish Sea on their 40' Najad. She is on the ethics committee of the American College of Rheumatology and recently received a master's degree in bioethics from Loyola.

1978

James A. Shaw, of Cabin John, MD, wrote a book, *Historical Diseases from a Modern Perspective: The American Experience*, published by Springer Nature. "Fascinating stuff: malaria, polio, smallpox, typhoid, cholera, hookworm, leprosy, syphilis, RMSF, yellow fever, etc.! Check out a summary blurb on the Barnes & Noble or the Amazon web site," he writes.



1979 Reunion

September 20-21, 2024

1980

James T. Bilbo, of Fort Mitchell, KY, retired from OrthoCincy after 38 years of practice. "My body was ready, not as sure about my mind," he writes. "Now to figure out the next phase of my life after so many years in practice. I finally got my first grandchild, so that will



James T. Bilbo '80 and grandchild

help. Now if only my wife Becky would retire from her college faculty position."

Robert M. Vandemark, of Hillsborough, NC, reports that his book, *A Totally Unoriginal, Remarkably Effective, Commonsense Way to Lose Weight...One Last Time*, has been selling well on Amazon and he is now in the process of completing a follow-up. "I have been enjoying retirement, writing, and traveling. It helps that my wife of 54 years is a travel agent," he writes. "My son has been nominated six times for the James Beard Award for best chef of the southeast and his restaurant is doing well. Hope to see some of my classmates at our next reunion."



Nicholas G. Tullo '82

1982

Nicholas G. Tullo, of Towaco, NJ, is still working full-time as a cardiac electrophysiologist but has backed away from surgery and ablation to concentrate on his major interests of syncope and POTS. He still offers accredited CE/CME courses on his website, ECG Academy, and now gives a

live ECG masterclass every month. His older son, Chris, is working as a mental health counselor in New Jersey, while his younger son, Alex, is doing 3D animation in Montreal and working on his own original animated short film project. His youngest, Veronica, graduated from Chapman University with a film directing major and landed a job in Los Angeles as a production coordinator for a company that produces behind-the-scenes interviews for major motion pictures. He and his wife, Lucy, finally decided to put in a pool. "So, bring your bathing suit when you come to visit!" he writes.

1983

Larry N. Bernstein, of Philadelphia, PA, has produced a podcast called "Charging U" which examines why it costs so much to go to college, www.chargingupodcast.com.

Kevin M. Coughlin, of Elmira, NY, writes, "Still running...."



Kevin M. Coughlin '83

1984 Reunion

September 20-21, 2024

Michael Komar, of Danville, CT, offers, "A toast to the class of 1984 and remembering those classmates we have lost. I am staying busy in retirement, writing grants for our local airport and a community pickleball project."

1985

Gloria S. Pryhuber, of Rochester, NY, writes, "**Keith '84** is a retired rheumatologist, and I am a nearly-retired neonatologist and busy physician-scientist. My research focuses on pediatric lung disease, using fresh technologies to produce molecular atlases of healthy and postnatal developing lung in human samples."

1988

Gary Kurmis, writes "After 25 years of anesthesia practice in Los Angeles, I've mostly retired and moved near Reno, Nevada."

1989 Reunion

September 20-21, 2024

Stephen R. Weinman, of New Paltz, NY, unveiled his new FirstCare Medical Centers Mobile Medical Unit on May 19 at the Blue Hill Cabin Challenge. This 100-mile bike race through the Catskills began and ended in New Paltz. The new van was available for any injuries as a result of participants meeting the pavement. "The MMU is a 2022 Mercedes Sprinter Van, and in addition to being used to extend FirstCare's services to the surrounding areas, it can also be used as a fully functional camper. So, if you see a big blue van in your driveway, come out and have a drink!" he writes.

R. Eugene Bailey, of Manlius, NY, is currently the program director for the Upstate Medical University Family Medicine program. Since its inception in 2019, the program has graduated three classes, and 10 out of 17 graduates have remained in Syracuse. "This year, we will be hosting our first 3-year medical student and will begin an exchange program with Toyama University, Japan," he writes. "We also began a rural training track program in Auburn, NY, that will take its first residents in July 2024. Personally, I have traveled annually to Central America on mission work and hope to start a resident and medical student experience in Honduras. I also travel annually to Japan, where I continue to be involved with the Advance Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO-Japan) and collaborate to expand family medicine education. It has been a wonderful 30-plus years at Upstate and there may be plans for retirement over the next few years. In addition,

my son, **Frank '20** will be graduating in anesthesiology from the University of Chicago and will go on to a fellowship in critical care at Vanderbilt University. My oldest daughter, Joanna, works as a data analyst/statistician for Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh, and my youngest, Zoe, is an ICU nurse at Upstate. Karen, my wife, works for Delaware Primary school in Syracuse as an assistant in the social work department."

Brian S. Brundage and **Pamela L. Foresman**, of Auburn, NY, have retired and embarked upon the Great Loop, a one-year-plus boat ride around the country. "We look forward to Reunion!" they write.

J. Marc Pipas, is semi-retired and living in Sheldon, SC. "Cheers to all the class of 1989!"



Stephen R. Weinman '89 with a patient

1990

Lauren Pipas of Cazenovia, NY, and husband **Elliot Rodriguez '93**, are proud to announce that their son, Alex Rodriguez, has graduated from Brown University and will be joining the Upstate Medical School class of 2028!

1991

John C. Brancato, of West Hartford, CT, has been division head of emergency medicine at Connecticut Children's in Hartford since January 2022. "I am looking forward to welcoming **Carl D'Andrea** to my neighborhood," he writes. "I am also looking forward to our 35th reunion in Syracuse in 2026."

1994 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

Brian S. Foley, of Carmel, IN, enjoys teaching other physicians how to achieve financial freedom. In addition to workshops and presentations, he offers his website, WealthyDoc.org and his newly published book, *Wealthy Doc's Guide to Achieving Financial Freedom: Transform Your Physician Salary Into Wealth*.



1999 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

Iris Kerin Orbuch, of Los Angeles, CA, was featured in and helped create the *Below the Belt* documentary, which raises awareness of her specialty and passion, endometriosis. Executive producers are Hillary Clinton, Mitt Romney, Elizabeth Warren, Corinne Foxx, Mae Whitman, and Rosario Dawson. It has been shown across the world since its premiere in 2022. Currently its available for viewing on PBS Passport.

2004 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

2007

David Spirer, of Buffalo Grove, IL, was recently awarded the prestigious distinction of being named a 1/350 NIOSH certified B reader. He is also in the process of getting an Israeli medical license.

2009 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

2012

Ryan LaFollette, of Cincinnati, OH, was elected to the board of directors for the Society of Academic Emergency Medicine.

2013

Nikolai V. Kolotiniuk, of Fresno, CA, received advice from a wise attending during residency: "one marriage, one mortgage, save 15 percent, and be nice to nurses," he writes. "I've been checking all the boxes so far as a cardiothoracic anesthesiologist in Fresno and have a 17-year wedding anniversary coming up!"

2014 Reunion

September 20•21, 2024

2016

Rachel A. Kopicki, of Seattle, WA, and husband Clayton welcomed a healthy baby boy, Luca, to the family in early January. "We are overjoyed," she writes.

KAREN CYNDARI, MD/PHD '19

Forging Her Own Path

As a child who loved to read and draw, Karen Cyndari, MD/PhD '19, spent her adolescence creating her own worlds within comic books, refining her drawing style over time.

As she approached college, Cyndari was at a crossroad. She was serious about art. But she also loved science and considered a career in medicine. Ultimately, she followed advice from her mother: "You can study to be a doctor and still be an artist, but you can't study to be an artist and still be a doctor."

Today, Cyndari is a physician-scientist who practices emergency medicine and just launched her own research lab at the University of Iowa. She's also an award-winning graphic novelist, honored by the Small Press Alternative Press Expo for the Best Graphic Novel of 2023.

"I have no regrets about the path I chose," she says. "I think my love of art and written communication has really helped me communicate my ideas in a very essential way."

Cyndari studied biology at SUNY Brockport, graduating summa cum laude. But when she applied to medical school, she didn't receive a single interview. "With no doctors in my family, I didn't know that you needed more than just good grades."

Instead, she went to Roswell Park Cancer Institute/University at Buffalo to earn a master's specializing in immunology. Sitting in class one day, she was struck by the way another student was answering their professor's questions. "These were mechanistic basic science questions, but she answered in such a way that was brilliantly intertwined with clinical experience and clinical practice," says Cyndari. "I found out that she was an MD/PhD student, and that basically changed my entire trajectory. It was my Scully Effect moment."

One of the most important things Cyndari learned during her master's was the importance of having the right mentor. "In my opinion, the project that you're working on as you complete your degrees is less important than who you're going to be working with and how they are going to mentor you," she says.

Accepted into Upstate's MD/PhD program, Cyndari found the right mentors in Kenneth Mann, PhD, and Megan Oest, PhD, in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery. Her research focused on mechanisms of aseptic



Dr. Cyndari (center) with staff in her new lab at the University of Iowa, and below, with a poster advertising her award-winning graphic novel.

loosening of human total knee replacements. “It was very different than anything I’d ever worked on, and I was excited to try something new and different,” she says.

Doctoral students are steered to pick a clinical specialty that aligns with their research. Orthopedics would have been the natural choice, but Cyndari wasn’t interested in long days in the operating room. She also wasn’t interested in rheumatology, another suggestion.

“I thought being an MD/PhD should give me more choices, not fewer,” she says. And what she wanted was emergency medicine and the wide range of medical care it encompasses, a field not typically associated with research.

Undeterred, Cyndari landed at the University of Iowa, where she became the first EM resident accepted to the Physician Scientist Training Pathway program (a position they created specifically for her).

The PSTP includes a three-year clinical residency followed by an optional two-year clinical fellowship. After graduating as chief resident, Cyndari began her research fellowship in the Peterson Lab, using her experience in immunology, emergency medicine, and the human knee to examine mechanisms of Lyme arthritis.

Her research focuses on the unique immune regulation of the joint space as maintained by the synovial resident macrophage and other synovial cells. “The brain and the eyes are two immune privileged areas that house critical functions for our body,” she says. “There are many parallels with the joint space, but the difference is we have one brain and we have two eyes but we have more than 200 articulating joints. I don’t think we understand how those joints are immune regulated at all.”

The Joint Space Immune Regulation Lab at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine opened July

1 with Cyndari as principal investigator. “I have a research associate and will be mentoring medical students and undergraduate students,” she says.

Although her schedule is skewed toward research—she practices clinically one week a month—she continues to believe her dual roles are symbiotic. “I’m constantly asking my colleagues to consider whether something could be a tick-borne illness and there are definitely cases I have caught,” she says.

In her down time, Cyndari finds balance through her art and writing. She is currently reading a novel, *The War of Winds*, for publication.

“I’m very blessed to have the work-life balance that I have,” she says.

Cyndari’s biggest piece of advice to students is to find their joy and follow it. “I’m very glad that I did not listen to a lot of well-meaning advice and chose a path that was new and different,” she says. “It was scary, but I found a place that was willing to support me in my goals.”

—Renée Gearhart Levy



I N M E M O R I A M

1945

BRINTON T. DARLINGTON, of Saddlebrook, AZ, died December 19, 2023. Dr. Darlington completed his medical training at St. Luke's Hospital in Cleveland, OH, and a residency at the Marine Hospital in Staten Island, NY. There, he worked out of a mobile x-ray van to detect tuberculosis during the national TB epidemic. Darlington served his country from 1942 to 1952 in the U.S. Army, Coast Guard, and Public Health Service, the latter in a Tuberculosis Sanitarium in Fort Stanton, NM. He moved to Portland in 1952 and to Augusta in 1954, where he joined the Dirigo Clinic as an internal medicine physician, and later established his own practice. He served the medical community as president of both the Maine Tuberculosis and Maine Heart Associations and as Maine's representative on the National TB and American Medical Associations. Darlington was survived by his daughters, Linda, Ann, and Martha; two grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

1949

STUART KENNETH COHAN, of Southwest Houston, TX, died April 24. Dr. Cohan was a pediatrician and spent nearly 50 years making kids feel safe and healthy. After he retired, he taught pediatrics for another decade at the University of Texas Houston. He finally retired from teaching around the age of 85 and started delivering Meals on Wheels. Cohan was survived by his children, Steve and Priscilla, Leslie and Richard, Caryn, Andy and Mitch; 11 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

ROBERT W. RAKOV, of Maybrook, NY, died September 13, 2023. Dr. Rakov completed his surgical residency at Pennsylvania Hospital. He served two years as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy before setting up a surgical practice in Goshen, NY. He was chief of surgery at Arden Hill Hospital for more than 20 years and president of the Orange County Medical Society before

his retirement in 1999. He received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Arden Hill/Horton Hospitals in 2001. Rakov was survived by his daughters, Kathy and Lisa; eight grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

1954

JOSEPH EDMUND MATHER, of Oswego, NY, died April 11. Dr. Mather completed his internship and residency at Nassau County Medical Center. He was a captain in the U.S. Army Medical Corps stationed at Womack Army Hospital in Fort Bragg, NC, from 1959-1961. In 1961, he joined two colleagues to found Oswego County OB/GYN, where he provided care to the women of Oswego county until his retirement in 2013. Mather was an associate professor at Upstate and served in many other leadership capacities. He was certified as a medical hypnotherapist and hypnotic anesthesiologist. Mather was survived by his wife, Marge; children Christopher, Patrick, Timothy, Daniel, and Katherine; 12 grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren.

1956

LAWRENCE H. PORT, of Lake Worth, FL, died on March 31. Dr. Port completed the combined Syracuse University and Upstate Medical degree program in 1956 with Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Omega Alpha honors. He served two years as a captain in the U.S. Army. He completed his internal medicine residency at Upstate and had a private internal medical practice in Syracuse from 1964 to 2003. He truly loved his work, enjoying both the intellectual challenges of diagnosis and treatment as well as the personal relationship with his patients and colleagues. He was known for his sense of humor. Patients would save up jokes to share with him during their visits and felt comfortable enough to call him for an informal second

opinion years after he had retired. Port served on the Upstate Medical University admissions committee and in Student Health. He was co-director of medical care at Hutchings Psychiatric. After retiring and moving to Florida, he was a volunteer physician for 15 years at the Caridad Center, caring for the uninsured and underserved children and families of Palm Beach County. He was survived by his wife, Dilys, their three daughters; and four grandchildren.

1957

BERNARD L. MEYERS, of Schenectady, NY, died March 24, 2023. Dr. Meyers began his medical career in Queens, New York, and eventually returned to Troy where he started his general medicine practice. He was at the cutting edge of his specialty in gastroenterology and performed endoscopies and colonoscopies before they were a common procedure. Meyers was survived by his wife, Ruth; daughters Karen and Paula; son Jeffrey; and two grandchildren.

WILLIAM D. NUGENT, of Liverpool, NY, Thousand Island Park, NY, and Cape Coral, FL, died February 24. Dr. Nugent was a dedicated anesthesiologist for the Anesthesia Group PC at St. Joseph's Hospital in Syracuse until 2005. He retired at 76. He served as president of the American Heart Association (NY Chapter) and was president of the New York State Society of Anesthesiologists. Nugent was survived by his wife Donna; children Kim, William, Kelly, Kristin, Megan, Keri, Ryan and Patrick; 21 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

1958

GEORGE E. RANDALL, of Skaneateles, NY, died May 6. Dr. Randall completed an OB/GYN residency and eventually a fellowship in gynecology/oncology at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. He served honorably in the U.S. Air Force for 21 years before returning to Skaneateles, where he continued to practice OB/GYN oncology for 18 years. Randall was survived by his wife, Sydney; daughters Sharon, Cindy, Margie and Pam; and one granddaughter.

1961

ABRAHAM S. LAKSHIN, of Palm Desert, CA, died December 3, 2018.

1962

RICHARD ALAN COURTNEY, of Tampa, FL, died May 16. Dr. Courtney began his residency at Tufts New England Medical Center, followed by a pediatric surgical residency at Boston Floating Hospital. He was recruited by Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, MA, to become the first pediatric

surgeon in the western Massachusetts area, where he served as chief of pediatric surgery. He was the recipient of the Clinician of the Year in 2008 for his dedication to his profession and work ethic. He was a pioneer in the surgical community and a staunch advocate for children. Courtney was survived by his wife, Geraldine; daughters Carol and Christine; three grandchildren; stepsons Scott, Glenn and Brian; and two step grandchildren.

Paul Parkman, MD '57: Inventor of Rubella Vaccine

PAUL DOUGLAS PARKMAN, of Auburn, NY, died May 7.

A 1950 graduate of Weedsport High School, Dr. Parkman attended St. Lawrence University under an accelerated pre-med program and received his B.S. from St. Lawrence and MD from the Upstate Medical University in 1957.

After interning at Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown, he returned to Upstate Medical Center, for pediatric residency and serving as chief resident.

Parkman joined the Army and, in 1960, was assigned to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Maryland as a virologist. It was during this time he began studying the rubella (German measles) virus.

Dr. Parkman was the first person to isolate the virus, which was the most critical step in developing the vaccine. In 1963 he joined the National Institutes of Health (NIH), where he partnered with Dr. Harry Meyer to develop the vaccine that would prevent infection and the resulting birth defects.

As a result of their work, Drs. Parkman and Meyer held two Rubella Patents, which would have enabled them to profit from the sale of manufacturing rights. Instead, they assigned their patents to the U.S. Department of Health so that the vaccine could be distributed as quickly and affordably as possible, to as many people as possible. It was eventually incorporated with measles and mumps vaccines (MMR) and is now commonly administered as part of pediatric protocol.

Included among the many honors bestowed upon Dr. Parkman was a letter from U.S.

President Lyndon B. Johnson, which reads, in part: "Few men can number themselves among those who directly and measurably advance human welfare, save precious lives, and bring new hope to the world. Through your accomplishments in developing an effective experimental vaccine against German measles, you and Dr. Harry Meyer have joined that tiny legion."

Parkman went on to have a very long and distinguished career holding multiple positions at Walter Reed, the National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration and authoring more than 90 scientific papers. He retired in 1990 from the FDA as the Director of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, but for many years continued to consult as an expert in his field.

Among Parkman's many honors and recognitions are letters of commendation from Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and George H.W. Bush, the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation's International Award for Distinguished Scientific Research, the American Academy of Achievement Golden Plate Award, and the Department of Health and Human Services' Meritorious Award. He received an honorary Doctor of Science degree from SUNY Health Science Center, was recognized as a Distinguished Alumnus by the Upstate Medical Alumni Foundation, and as the first Graduate of Distinction by the Weedsport Central School District.

Parkman was a fellow at the Corning Museum of Glass, founding member of the James Renwick Alliance, and a commissioner



Drs. Meyer and Parkman © NLM/Science Source

of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Parkman will be long remembered for his outgoing personality, wonderful sense of humor, dapper appearance, and his love and devotion to his extended family and friends, especially his wife, Elmerina. He was a gentleman to his very core, and those of us fortunate enough to have spent time with him will remember his authenticity and exemplary character.

Parkman was survived by his wife, Elmerina; nieces: Wendy Elizabeth Thompson and Mary Brooke Thompson-Mills; and numerous extended family members.

Mary G. Ampola, MD '60: Pioneering Pediatric Geneticist

MARY G. AMPOLA, of Atlanta, GA, died June 8. A native of Syracuse, Dr. Ampola was born to Italian immigrants and defied the constraints of childhood poverty and patriarchy to blaze trails as a pioneering, award-winning physician and loving mother and grandmother.

Her educational journey began at North High in Syracuse, where she later earned a place in their Hall of Fame. Working hard to earn money and scholarships, Ampola graduated cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Syracuse University before entering the Upstate College of Medicine in 1956, one of only five women in her class. Her dedication and clinical achievements were later celebrated with Upstate's coveted Distinguished Alumna Award in 1980.

Ampola did her medical internship at George Washington University Hospital in Washington, DC followed by a pediatric residency at Children's Hospital in Washington, DC, where she served as pediatric chief resident. Fascinated by recent discoveries in DNA, she completed fellowships in genetics at Children's Hospital in Boston and in amino acid research at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Ampola's professional path was characterized by groundbreaking contributions in pediatric genetics. Her tenure at New England Medical Center in Boston spanned nearly four decades, during which she established the Pediatric

Amino Acid Laboratory, rose to lead the Division of Metabolism, and was a professor at Tufts University School of Medicine. Her legacy lives on through the lab that now bears her name, a testament to her enduring impact on medicine and education.

Among her many achievements, Ampola was internationally recognized for her pioneering work saving lives by treating genetic disorders in utero. This feat was written up in the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association* and immortalized in a documentary narrated by Lloyd Bridges. In 1982 she published the book *Metabolic Diseases in Pediatric Practice*, which was translated and used by physicians around the world. She was a frequent participant on the Jerry Lewis Telethon and hosted her own radio show about raising children.

However, all who knew Ampola recognized that her most profound impact was felt through her boundless kindness and empathy. She cared for metabolic patients from birth to early adulthood, forging deep bonds that extended far beyond medical treatment. Each year, she brought these families together at a cherished picnic, fostering a supportive community where lifelong connections were formed. Today, her former patients, now adults, remain steadfastly connected to their beloved childhood physician, friend, and guiding maternal figure.

Ampola's retirement in 2004 marked a transition to a new chapter in Atlanta, where she continued to touch lives at Northside and Scottish Rite Hospitals before fully embracing time with her beloved grandchildren. She filled her days with joyous activities such as knitting blankets for NICU babies, indulging in her love of reading, and cherishing beach outings with family. Throughout her life, she found immense joy in exploring Europe, crossing Canada by train, and adventuring in exotic locales like the Galapagos Islands and Tahiti.

Ampola was predeceased by her husband Vincent Ampola. She was survived by her children, Leanna and David Ampola; grandchildren Sienna and Vince Ampola and Maggie Ainsworth-Darnell; son-in-law James Ainsworth; brother-in-laws Joseph Agonito and Ronald Morgan; and several nieces and nephews.



Mary G. Ampola, MD '60

1963

MICHAEL W. MCINTYRE, of Gadsden, AL, died December 13, 2023. Dr. McIntyre served his internship at the University of Michigan and served as a distinguished officer in the U.S. Air Force. After his military service, he completed a residency in ophthalmology at UAB Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital. In 1971, he moved to Gadsden, where he dedicated his career to healing and caring for others until his retirement in 2012. McIntyre was survived by his wife, Beverly; daughters Rebecca and Sarah; son Mark; seven grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren.

FRANK ALAN PEDREIRA, of Gaithersburg, MD, died December 26, 2023. Dr. Pedreira was a pillar in his community and a medical researcher of international distinction. In 1969, after doing virology research at the National Institutes of Health, he joined one of largest pediatric practices in Montgomery County. He practiced in Montgomery Village and Germantown for more than 40 years and did house calls. He also taught and practiced at George Washington University, Children's National Hospital, Shady Grove Hospital and Holy Cross Hospital. He and his colleagues published many research papers including a collaboration with

Children's National Medical Center showing that ten days of antibiotics were needed to treat strep throat and another study determined that parental smoking increased the incidence of respiratory illness in children. Pedreira was survived by his wife, Anita; daughters Tracy and Christine; son David; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

1968

STEPHEN P. BLAU, of Larchmont, NY, died February 8. Dr. Blau was a psychiatrist in private practice. He completed his residency at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He was a devoted practitioner and continued seeing patients as long as his health permitted. Blau was survived by his wife, Patricia; and many family members.

ELLIOTT ROSENWORCEL, of West Hartford, CT, died May 2. Dr. Rosenworcel was a resident in medicine at Maimonides Medical Center and Albert Einstein University Hospital before going on to complete a fellowship in nephrology at Tufts University New England Medical Center in Boston, MA. He served as a doctor in the U.S. Air Force stationed at Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul, IL. Returning to New England, he developed a thriving practice in nephrology at Mount Sinai and Saint Frances Medical Center in Hartford, CT. Rosenworcel was survived by his wife, Willa; daughter Jessica; son Brian; and five grandchildren.

1970

JERRY P. PALMER, of Seattle, WA, died February 28. Dr. Palmer completed his internal medicine residency at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire before training in an endocrinology fellowship at the University of Washington. Following fellowship, Palmer remained at UW as a junior faculty member rising through the academic ranks over 44 years before his retirement in 2019. He opened the Diabetes Care Center at UW, a center of excellence that became the standard for diabetes care and served as the impetus for what is today the UW Medicine Diabetes Institute. Palmer was a prominent contributor to the largest study ever conducted that proved controlling blood sugar helped prevent complications from diabetes. His discovery of insulin autoantibodies garnered him a nomination by international colleagues for a Nobel Prize in medicine. This finding helped predict type 1 diabetes in children

and is widely used throughout medicine. Palmer was survived by his wife, Christine; children Bliss, Billy, Robert, Deanna, Ben, Jerry, Michael, and Bethany; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

1979

GREGORY V. WHITE, of Wolfeboro Falls, NH, died June 9, 2023. Dr. White completed his residency in diagnostic radiology at Wilford Hall U.S. Air Force Medical Center in 1983. He proudly served in the U.S. Air Force for 24 years, with 14 years of active duty. From 1989 to 1991 he practiced radiology in Dover, NH, and from 1991 to 2020 he practiced at Huggins Hospital in Wolfeboro. White was survived by his wife, Lois; son Steven; daughter Meredith; stepson Ryan; and stepdaughter Kyle.

1982

FRANCIS JOSEPH VARGA, of Joplin, MO, died January 4, 2023. Dr. Varga recently retired from Mercy Hospital in Springfield, MO, where he served as director of hematopathology, flow cytometry, and immunoperoxidase for 14 years. Prior to his tenure at Mercy, Varga held the same position at St. Joseph Medical Center in Towson, MD. Before moving to Maryland, he practiced for two years at Washoe Medical Center in Reno, NV, and one year working with his father C. Francis Varga, M.D. as a locum tenens at the Adirondack Medical Center in Saranac Lake, NY. Varga completed his residency at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire, specializing in anatomical and clinical pathology. Following his tenure at Dartmouth, he became certified in hematopathology and received the Hitchcock Foundation Scholars Award. Varga was survived by his children, Karissa and Alexander; and parents, Anita and Francis Varga.

1988

DAVID T. TERASAKA, of North Syracuse, NY, died May 7. Dr. Terasaka completed his pediatric residency at Upstate. He was employed by Health Services Association, Crouse Hospital, and Summerwood Pediatrics, prior to opening and operating Wee Care Pediatrics, in August 1999. He touched the lives of countless families in Central New York with his compassionate and dedicated medical care. Terasaka was survived by his daughter, Kathryn; sister Barbara; and former wife, Susan Call.

Residents

JOSEPH C. DARROW, JR., of Columbia, MO, died March 3. Dr. Darrow completed his medical education at the Rutgers New Jersey Medical School in 1977. He performed his surgical internship and orthopedic residency at Upstate and his special fellowship in hand surgery at the Mayo Clinic and Foundation, graduating in 1983. He was in private practice of orthopedic surgery until his retirement in 2017. Darrow was survived by his wife, Kristine; daughters Grace and Summer; son Robert; and four grandchildren.

WILLIAM MARTIN DINN, of Fernandina Beach, FL, died March 4. Dr. Dinn served in the Army from 1971 to 1973, stationed at Walter Reed Hospital and the Pentagon. He performed his residency in radiology at Upstate and moved back to Massachusetts in 1977 to practice, specializing in mammography. He moved to Georgia in 2008, serving as a staff radiologist at Fort Stewart until he retired in 2018. Dinn was survived by his wife, Laura; children Robbie, Ashley, Marty and Jenna; and three grandchildren.

RONALD G. DONELSON, of Ann Arbor, MI, died December 27, 2023. Dr. Donelson completed his orthopedic residency at Upstate. He specialized in non-surgical spine care. He authored three books, taught physicians and therapists all over the world, and contributed to the science underlying evidence-based treatments for back pain. In 1999, he earned a master of science degree from Dartmouth Institute, Geisel School of Medicine. Donelson was survived by his wife, Lois; daughter Kimberly; sons Marc and Brett; and four grandchildren.

ROMULO FERRIOLS GONZALES, of Stockton, CA, died March 29. Dr. Gonzales was born in the Philippines. He entered the University of the Philippines in Manila but was forced to leave school when Japan invaded the Philippines. He worked as a civilian for the U.S. Army Medical Division and then returned to Manila to complete medical school at University of Santo Tomas, specializing in pediatrics. A pediatric residency followed at a hospital in Peoria, IL. He became a board-certified pediatrician and moved to Petersburg, VA, to work with developmentally disabled youth. He obtained a grant to train in psychiatry and was a resident in 1954 at Upstate and later became a child psychiatrist. He initially ran a new hospital for developmentally disabled and emotionally disturbed youth, then he worked at a child guidance center, consulted with the Pittsburgh School District, and developed a private practice. He later worked at the Child Guidance Center in California and then at San Joaquin County Mental Health Children's Services and was a consultant at the Children's Home of Stockton and other residential treatment and group homes while maintaining a private practice. He retired at 81. Gonzales was survived by his daughters, Sandra, Elena, Faith, and Jennie; son John; and five grandchildren.

JOAN HOLOHAN HOWANITZ, of New York, NY, died March 29. Dr. Howanitz graduated from the Medical College of Pennsylvania. She trained in internal medicine and endocrinology at Upstate Medical University from 1969-1973, then chemical pathology at Columbia University in New York City. She returned to Upstate in 1975 as assistant professor and associate director of clinical laboratories and director of the chemistry laboratory. Seven years later, she began working in Los Angeles at the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at UCLA Medical Center and at West Los Angeles Veterans Administration Medical Center, where she was professor, vice chair, and chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. In 1998 she became professor and vice chair of the Pathology Department at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, director of the Pathology Department at Kings County Medical Center and director of chemistry at SUNY Downstate before retiring in 2014. Howanitz was survived by her husband, **Peter J. Howanitz '70**; a daughter; and two grandchildren.

WILLIAM Y.W. AU, of Wahiawa, Oahu, HI, died April 6. Dr. Au attended Boston University School of Medicine and pursued further education at Upstate Medical University. He served in the U.S. Air Force Medical Corps. Au worked at various institutions throughout his career including the National Institutes of Health, National Heart Institute, Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, NY, Rochester General Hospital, St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, England, Veterans Administration Hospital in Little Rock, AR, Norwich Eaton Pharmaceuticals in Norwich, NY, and Norwich Clinical Research Associates Ltd.

Emeritus Faculty

FRANCIS J. GILROY, of Binghamton, NY, died April 26. Dr. Gilroy graduated from Georgetown University School of Medicine in 1958 and the Graduate School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania in 1960. He served his internship at DC General Hospital, Washington, DC, and his residency in ophthalmology at Graduate Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corp as a captain, and while on active duty, served as chief of ophthalmology at Kimbrough Army Hospital, Fort Meade, MD. He was a diplomat of the American Board of Ophthalmology and a fellow of the American College of Surgeons. He returned to Binghamton in 1964 and practiced ophthalmology for 43 years, retiring in 2007. He was a member of the original curriculum committee that developed the Upstate Medical University's Clinical Campus at Binghamton in 1978 and he directed its Department of ophthalmology for 30 years. In 2008, he received the Distinguished Teaching Award from Upstate and retired as emeritus clinical professor of ophthalmology. Gilroy was survived by his wife, Joyce; sons Michael and Thomas; daughter Linda; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

DAVID VERNON KEITH, of Fayetteville, NY, died April 19. Dr. Keith received his medical degree at the University of Minnesota. He provided medical care to indigenous tribes in Peru before serving as a flight surgeon in the U.S. Air Force. He began his residency in psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin followed by a fellowship in child psychiatry and joined the faculty. He joined the department of psychiatry at Upstate Medical University in 1988 and retired in 2017, continuing as professor emeritus. His most cherished professional accomplishments were mentoring psychiatry residents and becoming a resource for family therapy practitioners around the world. Keith was survived by his wife, Noel; children Peter, Rosalind, Douglas, Gregory; and five grandchildren.

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