

# CLASS NOTES

## 1956

**Douglas S. Langdon**, of Boonton, NJ, and wife Arlene celebrated 70 years of marriage and five children this past June. "I retired from 33 years of private practice in Cranford, NJ, in 1995 and then switched to volunteering part-time at the then-Free Community Clinic in Dover, NJ," he writes. "I published my first and only book in 2022, *A Preservationist Community on Lake George, NY*. Sad to say, it didn't make the *New York Times* bestseller list! Our congrats to Upstate and Dr. Dewan, et al. for helping create the North Country Medical Scholars Program. It's a home run for the entire eastern region of the Adirondacks and very highly appreciated."

## 1961 Reunion

September 18-19, 2026

**Carlo R. de Rosa**, of Placida, FL, shares that on February 22 he will have completed his 91st trip around the sun. "I cannot believe it is happening. I am a 2x alum, having completed an orthopedic surgery residency in 1968. I remained in Syracuse to practice with Drs. Bastable and Nussbaumer. I was a clinical associate with the department until I retired in 2005-2006. I enjoyed it all and figure I played a part in the education of approximately 200 young orthopedists. It was a pleasure to work with Dr. David G. Murray as well as Dr. Fred Nussbaumer, who are both

marvelous. I am a very fortunate individual."

**Howard R. Nankin**, of Columbia, SC, and **Jack Cohen** met for lunch in February in Boynton Beach, FL.

## 1965

**Lawrence F. Simon**, of Pomona, NY, writes, "Retirement sucks. So, I'm doing wound care to keep my sanity."

## 1966 Reunion

September 18-19, 2026

## 1967

**Bertram Zarins**, of Marion, MA, was born in Latvia. He came to the United States at age four and went on to build a career as an orthopedic surgeon. In 1990, he founded the Latvian Medical Foundation to help improve medical care in Latvia. The President of Latvia, Edgars Rinkevics presented him the Certificate of Merit on June 11, 2025, in the Riga Castle honoring his role in helping

develop Latvian medicine and introducing new treatment methods.

## 1969

**Joann T. Dale**, of Rochester, NY, writes, "After my classmate and husband, **Robert Dale**, died, I lived alone in the nine-room house where we had raised our two children. One evening when I was happily curled up in the family room reading a book, I heard noises coming from the living room, including glass breaking. Since I was alone, that was unsettling, so I went to check on it. Oh my gosh!! There was a furry black creature running along and jumping between the walls. Shaking, I was terrified. I grabbed the sturdy door of the pantry, and called my son for help. By the time he arrived, the invader was gone. Behind my house was a small parcel of land owned by the four houses that bordered it. The forever wild plot was a haven for visiting deer, turkey hawks, and, of course, squirrels. Unknown to me, I had a squirrel hotel in my attic! Neighbors had

had similar problems, so I soon engaged a recommended exterminator and the invaders disappeared. That was when I decided that I didn't belong in a large house sitting on a large lot that I was no longer taking proper care of. Last August, I moved to a huge senior community not very far from my former house. There are tall apartment houses for the very fit as well as one-floor little houses with attached garages, an assisted living center, and a set of three connected two-story apartment houses, all with an assortment of activities, a restaurant, a cafe that offers meals to go, and assorted supplies. I have an apartment on the second floor with a porch. I made a wise move and hopefully am making new friends."

**Mark C. Rogers**, of Miami, FL, writes, "With the publication of the 6th edition of *Rogers' Textbook of Pediatric Intensive Care*, I still get invitations to speak around the world even though I am no longer in clinical practice. Last year, I lectured in Baku, Azerbaijan, and this spring it will be at the Beijing Children's Hospital. I don't know how many more editions I will get to see but, in the meantime, it is fun. My medical entrepreneurial career also continues with a company I founded and chair, getting NIH support and FDA approval for our next phase II clinical trial in Glioblastoma which starts this spring. It would be very pleasing to make some progress in this terrible disease. Elizabeth, my wife of 53 years and a prominent



Bertram Zarins '67 and Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics

academic physician in her own right, and I are blessed with two grown children and five wonderful grandchildren dealing with college. I look back on Upstate with affection for having helped me on this wonderful journey."

## 1970

**Lawrence Handelsman**, of Ann Arbor, MI, writes, "This past year, I did not get engaged, married, divorced or have any kids (whew—my wife woulda been pissed). Every morning (so far) I wake up, both sides of my body seem to be in reasonable working order, and I can still walk three miles comfortably, although I have noticed that I am taking an awfully large handful of pills each day, including Prednisone for the past seven months. Quality research continues to be performed regularly (seeking out quality restaurants and theaters). I made it to Paris for 10 days last May (learning that I dislike French pastries), and saw my first medical school classmate in decades (although **Barry** nicely did not take any money off me). The only award anyone offered up was a white golf hat noting the hole-in-one I made last summer. Darn—if Mr. Netflix was a novelist then I could have bragged to you about all the 'books' I read. Now, if one of you would please tell me where I left my glasses. To say hello, email me at drhandelsman@gmail.com."

**Steven H. Lefkowitz**, of Scottsdale, AZ, writes, "My younger son, Marc, finally found his soulmate in Masami while working in Tokyo. He was married in Hawaii in December. Marc will host a party in Tokyo for family and friends in fall 2026 and we will have a party in Scottsdale, AZ, in the spring 2027 for our family and friends. In May, my wife, Susie, and I will visit Milan, Innsbruck, Munich, Warsaw, Krakow, and Budapest."

## 1971 Reunion

September 18-19, 2026

## 1972

**Philip R. Caropreso**, of Keokuk, IA, writes, "2025 was a difficult year. 2026 is starting off much improved. Today, I learned that I am in remission from my urinary bladder cancer. I have also continued to serve as the chair for the Lee County Iowa Health Department. I have been appointed by the city of Keokuk to the Veterans War Memorial Commission. I will start all American Legion Post 41 services with a prayer as the chaplain."

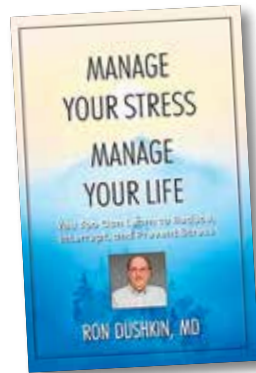
## 1974

**Stephen P. Heyse**, of Silver Spring, MD, shares that he and Chris are very proud of their oldest granddaughter, Natalie, who will be receiving a master of public health degree from George Washington University this spring.

## 1976 Reunion

September 18-19, 2026

**Ronald Dushkin**, of New York, NY, is happy to announce the publication of his book on Amazon, *Manage Your Stress, Manage Your Life*.



## 1978

**Steven Strongwater**, of Natick, MA, is happy to share that he retired after a long career practicing medicine and running hospitals and large physician practices. "I am living outside of Boston and helping start-up companies as well as serving on a number of boards. I wish you all well," he writes.

## 1981 Reunion

September 18-19, 2026

**Richard M. Steinbruck**, of Staten Island, NY, shares, "I am now celebrating my 40th year in practice and am a full-time attending faculty member and site director of surgery at the Prince's Bay campus of Northwell Health-Staten



Richard M. Steinbruck '81 and wife Laurie

Island University Hospital, and still active in general surgery, surgical oncology, laparoscopic, and robotic surgery, and resident and medical student education. With three kids and two grandkids, Laurie and I, married for 43 years, are saving less and traveling more. The balance is great, so I'm not retiring yet!"

## 1983

**Susan Zahalsky Jensen**, of Fort Mill, SC, continues to enjoy her second career in journalism. She is writing an article on retired physicians who have branched into a new direction after leaving clinical medicine. If you have begun teaching bridge on cruise ships, playing an instrument in a local band, discovering a

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new hobby/talent/ passion, etc., and would like to be included in the article, she would welcome hearing from you at: [suejensen57@gmail.com](mailto:suejensen57@gmail.com)

## 1984

**Paula R. Dhanda, MD**, of Lake County, CA, completed a medical mission to Cambodia and Laos, where she led a team of volunteers in conducting HPV screening, providing surgical equipment, and partnering with local hospitals to improve gynecologic care. She continues to lead Worldwide Healing Hands, the nonprofit organization she founded to expand global access to cervical cancer prevention, surgical training, and women's healthcare.



Paula Dhanda '84 performing volunteer gynecologic surgery

## 1986 Reunion

September 18-19, 2026

**Steven B. Goldblatt**, of Haddam, CT, writes, "I have been enjoying my semi-retirement from cardiology practice although I continue to work one to two days a week at Windham County Memorial Hospital in Willimantic, CT, which is part of the Hartford Vascular Institute. I have been part of National Ski Patrol for the past seven to eight years and medical advisor for Ski Sundown ski patrol as well as the state of Connecticut National Ski Patrol. One of the latest projects is exploring methods of CPR during sled transport and focusing on women and CPR, removing CPR hesitancy. I am also working on the Connecticut disaster management assistance team through Health and Human Services. Most recent deployments were in October 2024 when deployed to Western North Carolina following hurricane Helene, one of the hospitals affiliated with the Blue Ridge Hospital system. I have also started to take an interest in instructing EMT students in subjects beyond their basic training. My boys, Ian and Colin, are busy in their pursuits. Ian is an emergency room nurse at Lowell General Hospital in Massachusetts and Colin is at Rutgers pursuing a career in writing."



Beth Prezio, Dan Esper, Richard A. Rubin, and Shelley Berson, all class of 1986

**Richard A. Rubin**, of Slingerlands, NY, attended the Albany White Coat Soiree in October, along with classmates **Beth Prezio, Dan Esper, and Shelley Berson**. "We are hoping to see classmates at our upcoming 40th reunion September 18 and 19. Please consider attending this milestone event. **Shelley Berson, Gabriel Cohn**, and I are the dinner chairs!"

## 1987

**Kirsten P. (Nicolaisen) Magowan**, of Baldwinsville, NY, shares she celebrated her retirement and 40 years of marriage to Danny on June 22, 2025. Friends and family gathered at Jamesville Beach including **Elizabeth A. Magowan '17, Colleen N. Magowan '27, Barb (Safee) Stouter '87 and Liz (Midura) Rajamani '87**. "I am looking forward to seeing a lot of our 1987 classmates at our 40th reunion next year," she writes.



Kirsten P. Magowan, Barb Stouter and Liz Rajamani, all class of 1987

## MICKEY LEBOWITZ, MD '85

## The EQ Prescription

In a new book, Mickey Lebowitz, MD '85, offers a practical approach to emotional intelligence as a tool for enhancing fulfillment and strengthening patient care.

For Mickey Lebowitz, MD '85, connection in health care doesn't begin with a diagnosis or a treatment plan. It begins in the seconds before a word is spoken—when posture, tone, and expression quietly reveal how a person is really doing.

"In health care, connection often happens, or is missed, in seconds," Dr. Lebowitz writes in *The EQ Prescription: Put Yourself First to Thrive in Health Care* (River Grove Books, 2025), his recently released book that focuses on emotional intelligence as a practical, learnable skill for clinicians. The idea is simple but powerful: before physicians can give their best care, they must be well themselves—emotionally and physically—and able to read the emotional landscape of the people around them.

Lebowitz has spent four decades navigating medicine from nearly every angle: private practice endocrinology, hospital medicine, quality leadership, medical education, healthcare administration, and research. Along the way, he has become increasingly convinced that emotional intelligence, often referred to as EQ, is not a soft skill, but an essential clinical competency.

He learned that himself the hard way. In 2007, after 17 years in private endocrinology practice and struggling with the reality that practicing medicine did not meet his expectations, he made the difficult decision to step away. "It was a gut-wrenching decision," he says, writing candidly about his frustration with the insurance-driven health-care system and its impact on his own burnout in his first book, *Losing My Patience: Why I Quit the Medical Game* (2009). Looking back now, he sees the decision as one that opened doors to broader impact.

"I still wanted to play for my team of patients and clinicians," he wrote, "though on a different place on the field."

That "different place" included a formative period at the Syracuse VA Medical Center, where Lebowitz served as a hospitalist and educator. He later spent seven years as senior medical quality director at Crouse Hospital, where he focused on patient safety, systems improvement, and leadership development, work that shifted his lens to shaping care for entire populations.



Mickey Lebowitz, MD '85, is an advocate of building emotional intelligence as a means to professional and personal fulfillment.



"After leaving my bubble of seeing patients all day every day, I was able to see the distress that so many of my colleagues were experiencing that was similar to my own," he says. "I wanted to do something that could help my colleagues stay

well, have professional fulfillment, and take great care of patients without burning out and leaving practice prematurely, like I did."

It was during these leadership years that Lebowitz began to formalize ideas that would later become *The EQ Prescription*. Through training with Six Seconds, a global emotional-intelligence organization, and collaboration with colleagues on clinician resilience, he began to connect emotional intelligence with the concept of a "resilience zone"—a state in which clinicians are regulated, effective, and at their best.

"How do you know if you're in your zone or not?" he asks in the book. "That's

self-awareness. How do you know if the person you're dealing with is in their zone? That's social awareness." Emotional intelligence, he offers, helps clinicians pause, respond instead of react, and navigate high-stakes conversations without escalating conflict.

*The EQ Prescription* is written primarily for health care professionals, but anyone can use these strategies successfully in their personal lives. Lebowitz emphasizes that EQ is a competency, not a fixed trait—something that can be practiced, strengthened, and improved over time. "The difference between IQ and EQ is that EQ is learnable," he says.

Today, Lebowitz continues to practice clinically as an inpatient endocrinologist and leader of the inpatient diabetes program at Crouse Hospital while also speaking nationally on his EQ research and the benefits of the emotional intelligence zone in healthcare education and clinical practice. He gratefully hears from readers who successfully apply its strategies at work and at home.

At its core, Lebowitz says, the message comes down to control. "I can't control the system," he reflects, "but I can control me." Emotional intelligence, he believes, gives clinicians the tools to do just that—and, in the process, to care better for themselves and for others.

—Renée Gearhart Levy

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## 1991 ReUnion

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**Lawrence S. Goldstein**, of Solon, OH, shares that after 27 years in private practice in Youngstown, OH, he has started practicing closer to home by joining the Cleveland Clinic as a staff pulmonologist/intensivist.

## 1996 ReUnion

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## 1997

**William H. Gans**, of Jupiter, FL, completed his MBA from University of Massachusetts Amherst.

## 2001 ReUnion

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## 2006 ReUnion

September 18•19, 2026

## 2009

**Sandeep Mannava**, of Pittsford, NY, is an associate professor of orthopaedic surgery at University of Rochester specializing in sports medicine and complex shoulder surgery. He traveled to Italy to serve as a team physician during the 2026 Milan Cortina Olympic Games—providing medical care for Team USA.

## 2011 ReUnion

September 18•19, 2026

## 2012

**Toni Melville**, of Charlotte, NC, was married to Sam Carson in November 2025 in Charlotte, NC, and **Anna Klausner** attended the wedding.



Toni Melville '12 and Sam Carson

## 2013

**Anthony S. Rossettie**, of Corning, NY, and family are coming back, after a decade in Texas, to live and practice in the beautiful hometown of Corning. They look



Sandeep Mannava '09 with Olympians at the 2026 Milan Cortina Olympic Games



Anthony S. Rossettie '13 and his family

forward to reconnecting with Upstate classmates, especially the Meyer and Smith families. "Cheers!"

## 2016 ReUnion

September 18•19, 2026

## 2019

**Jordana L. Gilman** and **Jenny L. Schreiber**, of Rochester, NY, had another baby last year to complete

their family. Avi is three years old, and Zac is now eight months old. Jenny is a hospitalist at Highland Hospital in Rochester and Jordana is an OB/GYN at Highland.

## 2023

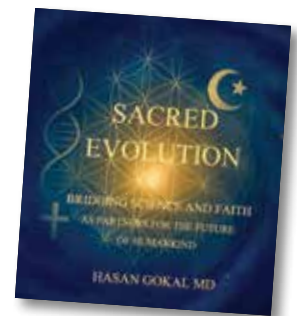
**Eunice E. Choe**, of Plattsburgh, NY, matched into geriatric fellowship at University of Pennsylvania. She also was selected for the Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medical Association FUTURES program.

## RESIDENTS

**Hasan K. Gokal**, of Sugar Land, TX, recently published a book, *Sacred Evolution, Bridging Science and Faith as Partners for the Future of Humankind*.



Jordana L. Gilman '19 and Jenny L. Schreiber '19 with Avi and Zac



## AMY REYNDERS, MD '01

## Playing the Long Game

As an ENT surgeon and Upstate Medical Alumni Foundation Board member, Amy Reynders, MD '01, focuses on continuity—caring for patients across their lifetime while helping shape the future of medical education.

Amy Reynders, MD '01, has built her career on relationships—relationships with patients, colleagues, and the institution that helped shape her path in medicine. As a partner with Syracuse ENT Surgeons in DeWitt, New York, and a longtime member of the Upstate Medical Alumni Foundation Board, Reynders has remained deeply connected to Upstate Medical University, giving back to the place she credits with launching her career and reinforcing the values that guide her work today.

Reynders grew up in Rochester, New York, and attended Rutgers University, where she was recruited to play Division I basketball. She also majored in biological sciences, with a plan to pursue medical school. She chose Upstate because of its proximity to family and the connection she felt to the region. That sense of community ultimately played a defining role in her professional journey.

As a medical student, Reynders recalls sitting in lecture and watching the clock as mid-day approached, waiting for just the right moment to slip out.

"I'd be like, 'Okay, when is someone going to leave first?'" she says. It wasn't that she wasn't interested in the topic at hand, only that she wanted to secure a spot in the daily pick-up basketball games at the Campus Activities Building.

During clinical rotations, Reynders discovered her calling in otolaryngology. Initially torn between internal medicine and surgery, she found inspiration in the ENT residents and faculty she encountered.

"They all just seemed to be very nice and normal people that enjoyed what they were doing," she says. "As I got into it, I was drawn to the combination of procedural, surgical, and medical care," she says.

Reynders completed a five-year residency at Upstate, one of the only female ENT residents during her tenure. After finishing, she stayed local, joining Syracuse ENT Surgeons in 2006 to partner with colleagues she had trained alongside. Nearly two decades later, she remains with the same practice, a testament to the professional satisfaction she has found in both the specialty and her colleagues.

As a general ENT physician, Reynders treats patients across all stages of life, an aspect of the specialty she finds especially rewarding.



Amy Reynders, MD '01, second row, fourth from left, enjoys spending time with her extended family in Central New York.

"You take care of the child that comes in at nine months old and then they have siblings," she says. "There is that continuity where you take care of several family members as time goes on. Yesterday I saw a patient who was 101."

Her long-standing relationships with physicians trained at Upstate also remain an important part of her practice. "I feel I've been very blessed. You can always pick up the phone," she says, describing the collaborative network she continues to rely on when coordinating patient care.

That deep appreciation for her training inspired Reynders to join the Upstate Medical Foundation Board a decade ago. Recruited by alumni leadership after she became more established in her practice, she viewed the opportunity as a meaningful way to give back.

Through scholarships, ceremonial traditions, and student support initiatives, the Medical Alumni Foundation helps maintain what Reynders views as the heart of Upstate's mission. She believes alumni involvement ensures the institution preserves its core values while evolving to meet modern challenges. "There are many board members who have been involved a long time because they're so committed to Upstate and its students," she says. "That says a lot about the institution."

Outside of medicine and philanthropy, Reynders prioritizes family and personal wellness. One of six siblings, she remains closely connected with her extended family in the Syracuse area. A former triathlete who has completed Ironman competitions, she now prefers cycling, gardening, and baking—activities that reflect her evolving approach to balance.

Looking back, she sees a common thread running through her experiences, from CAB basketball games to operating rooms to board meetings: the importance of community.

"At the end of the day," she says, "that's kind of what we all want—to be doing what we enjoy and be surrounded by people that make it nice to come to work each day."

—Renée Gearhart Levy

If you are interested in learning more about the Medical Alumni Foundation Board, please contact Paul Norcross, executive director, at [norcrospp@upstate.edu](mailto:norcrospp@upstate.edu).