



# Outstanding Young Alumnus

## Oleg Shapiro, MD '02, HS '08

I remember the warm August day in 1998 when I first met many of my new lifelong friends. At the time, I didn't realize that I was entering the most exciting chapter of my life. This was an initiation into adulthood and the beginning of the rest of my life. After almost 20 years, I am still very honored to be part of SUNY Upstate Medical University. I can think of no other place that I would rather live or practice medicine. Shortly after my arrival to Syracuse, I immediately realized that this community would be difficult to leave. Except for a short spell in Philadelphia, I completed my medical education, post-graduate training, and the first part of my career as an assistant professor, and subsequently, as an associate professor of urology and radiation oncology, here in Syracuse. I am indebted to many people at SUNY Upstate for providing me the education, resources, and opportunity to successfully help people from around our region and beyond. I now understand how important it is

to contribute to this educational system to allow the next generation of physicians to become competent and caring individuals.

During the last several years of my residency and the first few years of my clinical practice, providing optimal patient care was the most important thing to me. From the beginning, I strived to be interactive and multi-dimensional. While patient care is still at the top of my list of priorities, I feel as though I have learned how to incorporate the teaching of medicine into my daily clinical activities. Although there is a tremendous amount of joy in making someone feel better, I have come to respect how much satisfaction there is in educating our students and residents. I am amazed how much our students and residents appreciate anything we can give them. Every new concept learned makes a huge difference in their day. Simply put, I look forward to every early morning to start my interaction

and instills confidence. A teacher also provides constructive criticism without being condescending. I try to relate to my students and residents and understand their level of knowledge and skill. We are all individuals. Some enjoy quieter office work, while others cannot imagine life without complex, stressful surgeries. As a faculty, we must identify these preferences and talents and nurture them to perfection.

In my role, I believe it is important for the trainees to see that I engage in scholarly activity and that I work to pass on and contribute to the medical knowledge. Quite a few medical students and residents have contributed to chapters, posters, and scientific papers while working with me on various projects.

In addition to teaching the students and residents about the facts of medicine and urology, I also enjoy times I spend with small groups of students speaking to them about a career as a surgeon and family life. My goal is to give trainees a sense of satisfaction that the career path they have chosen will not impinge on their life outside the hospital. I feel that this is one of my most important contributions to student and resident education.

A key step in the evolution of my teaching career has been mentoring urology residents as they progress through our program. The one-on-one involvement allows for both focused teaching and for direct feedback to me about my methods. Five years of working with each resident improves both the student and the teacher. In addition, seeing someone improve clinically as well as guiding that person through a challenging time in his or her career is extremely fulfilling. Those of us who teach will agree with me, there is no better feeling than seeing your resident or fellow perform the most complex surgery without your help. I always ask myself: "Would I let this person take care of me or my family?" If the answer is yes, I have succeeded.

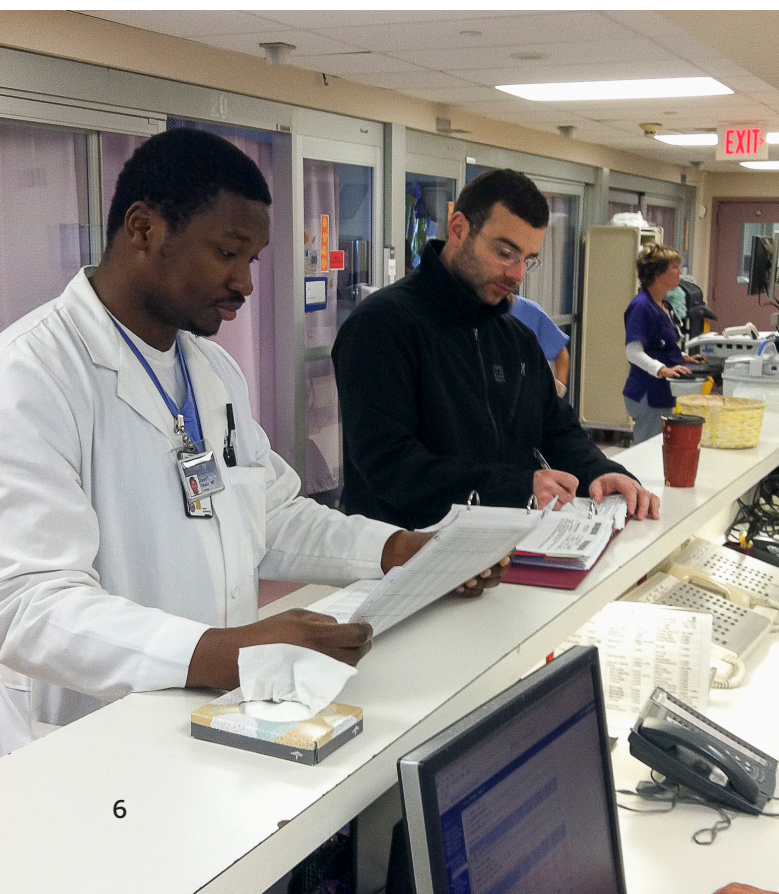
Academically, I have been invited as a speaker and as a moderator to multiple national and international conferences. I have given lectures in Europe, Middle East and Asia. I am also very active on the national academic urology scene.

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with the trainees. This gives me a deep sense of satisfaction and makes me realize that I am not only doing good for the patient, but also for the education of that particular student or resident and also for the future of medicine.

It seemed natural for me to assume a role in training residents and students. In my previous role as Urology Clerkship Director, I was fortunate to participate in the kind of teaching I find most satisfying. I got to teach medical knowledge, but more importantly, I teach, and hopefully model, professionalism and life skills. A teacher is someone who helps guide the student to find his or her own answers

**Dr. Shapiro rounding in ICU with the Chief Resident**



**Dr. Shapiro with Coach Boeheim in support of Prostate Cancer Research**

I have held administrative roles, including vice-Chairman of the Department of Urology, and led several hospital committees, including Operating Room Committee and Cancer Center Operations Committee. This work is being done while being one of the busiest surgeons in the hospital.

I hope that my future at Upstate will be as productive, and as conducive to the development of my students, residents, and myself, as the last nine years on the faculty have been.

I feel very much a part of this medical community. I have a lot to offer SUNY Upstate Medical University and feel obligated to do whatever I can to maintain the success of our medical center and the well being of our community.

*Bio submitted by Dr. Shapiro*