



John Beamis, M.D.'70, at far left, with classmates at their 45th Medical Reunion

Honoring a Friend and Classmate

JOHN BEAMIS, M.D.'70, remembers JAMES GREEN, M.D.'70, as a kind and generous friend with a dry sense of humor. With several other medical students, they shared a house on Mansfield Avenue and kept in touch over the years as their careers took them to different parts of the country. Green moved to the San Francisco area to practice obstetrics and gynecology, while Beamis headed to the Lahey Clinic in Massachusetts where he would spend three decades

as a pulmonologist. After Green died in 1993 from pancreatic cancer, Beamis wanted to honor his classmate and give back to the College of Medicine. The James R. Green, M.D.'70 Memorial Scholarship is designated for fourth-year students pursuing a career in obstetrics and gynecology, with preference for those interested in completing an OB/GYN rotation at University of California San Francisco, where Green was a clinician, professor, and director of the obstetrics unit at San Francisco General Hospital. Green and Beamis spent time on the UCSF OB/GYN service their final year of medical school, so it's a fitting tribute and a worthwhile opportunity for Larner students. For Beamis, his medical school years set the stage for the rest of his life. "I enjoyed the camaraderie and made lifelong friends," he says. "The medical education we received was excellent, including the emphasis on compassionate patient care. It has served me well over the years."



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LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

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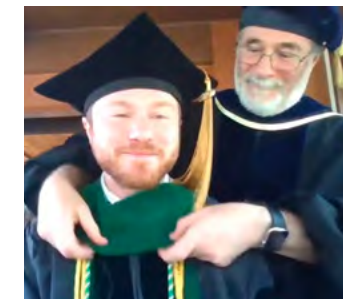
Anne Dougherty, M.D., and Sarah Heil, Ph.D., along with a team of Ugandan colleagues, adapted an intervention used in Vermont to understand how women in Nakaseke, Uganda, might reduce unintended pregnancies.

BY SARAH ZOBEL

WEB EXTRAS

See more online at med.uvm.edu/vtmedicine/web-extras including videos, photos, and blog posts.

Read more Larner COVID-19 stories at: go.uvm.edu/larnercovidstories



7



40



10



37



24

On the Cover: A handmade sign affixed to a lamp post across the street from the Larner College of Medicine and the UVM Medical Center—just one of thousands of such signs of appreciation for health care workers seen across the country during the COVID-19 crisis.





When the last issue of *Vermont Medicine* went to press in April, we were in the midst of The Surge—the intense, awful rise of COVID-19 cases that afflicted our nation, particularly in urban areas in the Northeast, Midwest, and Northwest. Now, another season has passed, and cases are again increasing in other regions of the U.S. We have learned a lot about the disease in the last several months; but we have also seen how much we do not know, and how political and social divides play into the spread of the pandemic.

At the Larner College of Medicine, reaction to this greatest medical challenge in a century has affected all our missions. Rapid onset has begotten rapid change. Our faculty, students, and staff have shown how nimbly we can adapt our educational methods in this time of physical distancing, how innovative we are in our research laboratories, and how vital our care is to patients in the face of a complex and novel disease. We have also seen how inextricably linked we are to our community, both here in Vermont and in the wider world. This magazine is an attempt to show a sampling of our efforts, and the effect our alumni have had across the nation during this crisis.

At the same time as we deal with the pandemic, we have been forced, all too belatedly, to address the enduring systematic racism engrained in our society. This has advanced a dialog on our campus, just as it has opened up the national conversation on race. I am proud that, as you can read about here, our own students have led the way in a nationwide effort to ensure that participation in necessary social action never becomes a barrier to a medical career.

This past season has been a time of loss for so many, and that loss has been felt here on our campus too. In late June, we were saddened by the sudden death of one of our own students, Collins Oguejiofor from the Class of 2022. The tragic loss of such a kind and gentle soul as Collins rocked our community, but also brought us together in groups large and small to recognize Collins’ individual contributions, the gap his passing leaves, and the value of the ongoing support we must provide for each other.

As we look toward the fall, and the start of a new school year, much remains in flux. We will still welcome the Class of 2024 to campus, all the while providing modifications and adjustment of group size and spacing to allow for a safe environment. Although we wish we could host reunion as before, we recognize that this year’s reunion must make use of technology, since we cannot meet in person. We do what we need to do for now, to keep ourselves, our loved-ones, and our communities safe; but I look forward to that time, hopefully in the not-too-distant future, when these challenging days will be behind us, and we’ll be back together, face-to-face.

RICHARD L. PAGE, M.D.
Dean, The Robert Larner, M.D. College of Medicine at The University of Vermont

VERMONT MEDICINE

THE ROBERT LARNER, M.D. COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

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Wallace Elected to American Academy of Arts & Sciences

The American Academy of Arts & Sciences has elected University of Vermont Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics Emerita **Susan Wallace, Ph.D.**, to its membership, in recognition of her status as a world leader in the sciences. Wallace joined 275 new members elected on April 23, 2020. Wallace, who served as chair of UVM’s Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics for 30 years before her retirement in 2018, is the author of more than 200 biomedical journal articles. She has received more than 47 years of consistent National Institutes of Health funding for research exploring the fundamental DNA repair mechanisms involved in the development of cancer, as well as the effects of radiation damage to the genome.

See the list at: amacad.org/new-members-2020

COLLEGE CELEBRATES 2020 PROFESSIONALISM AWARD RECIPIENTS

On May 29, 2020, Dean Richard L. Page, M.D., announced the inaugural Dean’s Awards for Professionalism, an affirmation of the college’s commitment to uphold “the highest standards of professionalism” demonstrated through integrity, accountability, compassion, altruism, and social responsibility, and daily interactions guided by cultural humility, kindness and respect.



DEAN’S FACULTY AWARD
FOR PROFESSIONALISM:
Jennifer Gilwee, M.D. '97,
Assistant Professor of Medicine
and Chief of the Division of
Internal Medicine

A longtime champion for compassionate, respectful, socially responsible care, Gilwee demonstrated an extraordinary level of professionalism and leadership in response to care needs associated with the Birchwood Terrace Rehabilitation and Healthcare facility’s COVID-19 outbreak. She rapidly organized additional support for Division of Geriatrics providers.



DEAN’S STAFF AWARD
FOR PROFESSIONALISM:
Eric Gagnon, Director,
Facilities Administration
and Projects

Recognized for his exemplary ability to consistently demonstrate respect for all colleagues, Gagnon has shown extraordinary commitment to the public as a Colonel and Commander of the Garrison Support Command in the Vermont Army National Guard. He recently played a major role in designing, building, and staffing a 400-bed State of Vermont Alternate Healthcare Facility.



DEAN’S STUDENT AWARD
FOR PROFESSIONALISM:
Isaac de La Bruere '22

Described as a natural leader and encouraging mentor, de la Bruere is recognized for consistently welcoming new members into the Larner College of Medicine community and providing trustworthy guidance and support to colleagues. Isaac is the founder of the UVM Minority Association of Premedical Students club and a leader in the College’s Student National Medical Association chapter.



Students’
Response to
the Pandemic

26+
DIFFERENT
PROJECTS

37,983
PIECES OF PPE
COLLECTED

151+
MEDICAL AND
GRADUATE
STUDENTS
VOLUNTEERS

Notable



and chair of biochemistry (right)—were named UVM Graduate College University Scholars for the 2020-21 academic year. They are two of four UVM faculty members recognized for sustained excellence in research, and creative and scholarly activities.

HOLMES AND STEIN NAMED 2020-21 UVM UNIVERSITY SCHOLARS

Two Larner College of Medicine faculty members—**Gregory Holmes, M.D.**, professor and chair of neurological sciences (left), and **Gary Stein, Ph.D.**, Perelman professor



GALLANT RETIRES AFTER 14 YEARS LEADING ADMISSIONS

After welcoming more than a thousand medical students into the Larner College of Medicine over the course of the last 14 years, Associate Professor of Radiology and Pediatrics **Janice Gallant, M.D.**, stepped down from her position as Associate Dean for Admissions, effective July 1, 2020. She has been succeeded on an interim basis by Nathalie Feldman, M.D., assistant professor and associate residency program director in UVM’s Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences.



FIRST SELECTED AS DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR

Lewis First, M.D., professor and chair of pediatrics, has been selected as one of 16 distinguished educators to serve in the Academic Pediatric Association’s new honorary service academy, the National Academy of Distinguished Educators in Pediatrics (NADEP). Members of NADEP will serve as topic experts for academic institutions; national peer reviewers for educational credentials of pediatric faculty; mentors/coaches for junior faculty; and as a think tank to set future directions in pediatric education.



BATES RECOGNIZED FOR PIONEERING RESEARCH BY AMERICAN THORACIC SOCIETY

Professor of Medicine **Jason Bates, Ph.D., Sc.D.**, has been named the 2020 recipient of the Solbert Permutt Trailblazer Award in Pulmonary Physiology and Medicine by the American Thoracic Society Assembly on Respiratory Structure and Function. The award honors an established investigator who has done pioneering research in the area of respiratory structure and function and has guided and inspired others in the field.



JEMISON RECEIVES AAMC GIR SERVICE AWARD

Jill Jemison, assistant dean for technology/chief information officer, received the 2020 Service Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Institutional Resources (GIR) in recognition of her “significant and long-lasting impact in the field of academic medical center information technology, and to the GIR community.”

Students Push for Advocacy Protection

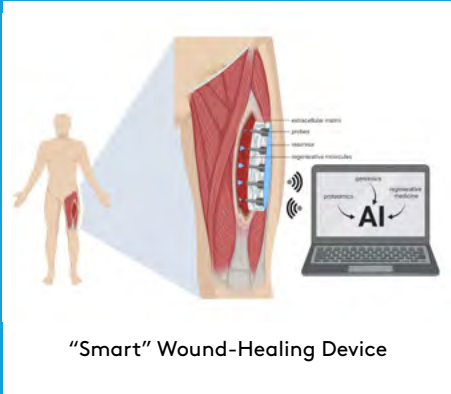
Medical students at the Larner College of Medicine led a national movement in June to appeal to key national medical education organizations to advocate for a change in assessing a record of arrest stemming from social justice-related protesting.

This issue gained in visibility this spring with the increased focus on the Black Lives Matter movement. Protesters asserting their right to free speech and advocacy run the risk of arrest, and such an arrest in the past could cloud a person’s application to medical school and residency programs. Larner students built a coalition of eight national student organizations, and crafted a letter signed by thousands of student supporters that was sent to the members of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), and American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM). On July 7, both the AAMC and AACOM released statements in support of the students’ request. The AAMC’s statement encouraged “selection committees in undergraduate and graduate medical education to conduct a holistic review of applicants and consider each individual in the context of their attributes and lived experiences and the institution’s mission.”

In a posting on the Larner blog, **Luke Higgins ’22** wrote: “I am privileged to attend a school that fosters and elevates key discussions, such as a recent discussion around how our college can more effectively recruit persons taking action to seek a more just world.”

Read Luke’s post at: uvmmedicineblog.wordpress.com

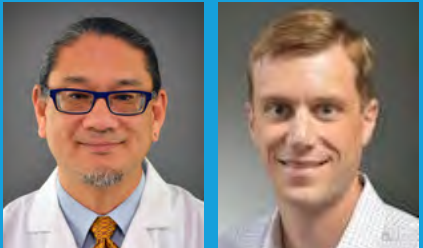
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH MEDICAL CENTER



“Smart” Wound-Healing Device

‘SMART’ DEVICE TO REGROW MUSCLE TISSUE FOCUS OF GRANT

Gary An, M.D. (left), professor of surgery, and **Robert Chase Cockrell, Ph.D.** (right), assistant professor of surgery, received a \$2.8 million four-



The project aims to develop a device combining artificial intelligence, bioelectronics, and regenerative medicine

year grant as co-investigators on a \$22 million Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency-supported initiative led by the University of Pittsburgh. The project aims to develop a device combining artificial intelligence, bioelectronics, and regenerative medicine to regrow muscle tissue, especially after combat injuries.

In addition to An and Cockrell, researchers at Carnegie Mellon University, Northwestern University, Rice University, University of Wisconsin and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center also are part of this initiative.

“My research shows that the biggest knowledge gaps for providers relate to history. We have to know our own history to be able to understand the pain and trauma communities have endured for hundreds of years.”

– Excerpted from a blog post titled “Health and Racial Disparities in COVID-19,” by Maria Mercedes Avila, Ph.D., associate professor of pediatrics and director of Vermont Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND)



Adam Atherly, Ph.D.

Notable

Atherly Receives Robert Wood Johnson Grant to Study Community Health Teams

A new, three-year \$500,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will allow members of the UVM Center for Health Services Research (CHSR), led by center director and Professor of Medicine **Adam Atherly, Ph.D.**, to explore the effectiveness of community health teams in improving the quality and efficiency of health care delivery. Community health teams are composed of nurses, social workers, dietitians, substance abuse counselors, and other roles—all designed to provide services beyond those typically encountered in a doctor’s office.

“In many cases, a patient’s medical problem is linked to underlying behavioral or environmental situations,” said Dr.

Atherly. “it could be an economic problem, for example, where what’s really vital for a long-term solution is for that person to be connected to community resources for housing or food. There’s no drug or surgery that’s going to help that person. That’s where community health teams come in.”

Researchers will be using community-based focus groups and other surveys, and extensive analysis of de-identified electronic health record and insurance claim data. The CSHR, which Dr. Atherly founded in 2018, is well-poised to lead this work, and will also bring in partners from across the University, such as Senior Associate Dean for Public Health and Health Policy Jan Carney, M.D., M.P.H.



Notable

Cushman Receives AHA Meritorious Achievement Award

Over the last three decades, Professor of Medicine **Mary Cushman, M.D., M.Sc.**, has

emerged as a national leader in cardiovascular health.

But the journey hasn't been easy—she's had to overcome more obstacles than most of her male counterparts.

"I've learned we're not gender blind," said Cushman, a hematologist at the UVM Medical Center and UVM Cancer Center member. "It's nobody's fault. Unconscious biases are just baked into you. But as we create a pipeline of future leaders, we have to make sure women in science overcome these biases and have every possible opportunity to grow their careers."

Cushman's contributions to the American Heart Association (AHA) in this area are why she's the recipient of the AHA's 2020 Award of Meritorious Achievement.

She will be honored with the award, which recognizes individuals who have rendered an important service to the AHA, during the association's live stream event in October.

Cushman, who has worked on dozens of AHA committees, co-authored countless papers and won a case full of awards, has made far-reaching contributions on the local, regional and national levels. They include service as chair of council operations and as a national board director.

Currently, she is chair of the Go Red for Women in Science and Medicine Task Force, where she pilots programs to help women better understand their risk for heart disease.

"Volunteering with the AHA has been one of the best parts of my career," she said. "I can't say enough about how it helped me develop my own skills as a scientist, grow as a leader and connect with other people who have a passion for preventing heart disease and stroke."



KING NAMED ASSOCIATE DEAN

John King, M.D., M.P.H. (above), professor and vice chair for academics and regional development in the Department of Family Medicine, has been appointed associate dean for continuing medical and interprofessional education (CMIE). The Office of Continuing Medical and Interprofessional Education provides a broad spectrum of accredited continuing education opportunities for physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals. The office's programs provide lifelong learning experiences for maintenance of certification and to enhance medical knowledge, performance, and patient-related outcomes. King replaces Cheung Wong, M.D., Berta Pi-Sunyer Williams '58 Endowed Professor in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences, who served as associate dean from 2011 to 2019, and became associate vice president for clinical affairs at the UVM Health Network Group in 2018.

A graduate of the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, King completed his residency in family medicine at Duke University and obtained a Master of Public Health degree from the University of North Carolina. He has been a member of the faculty since 2004 and was responsible for the successful development of the Family Medicine Residency Program at Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital in Plattsburgh, N.Y.

Commencement

What Kind of Doctors Are We Going to Be?

On May 17, 2020, students and faculty gathered via Zoom technology to celebrate Commencement for the Class of 2020 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The class chose as its student speaker Eli Goldberg, M.D.'20, who gave his vision of the special circumstances ahead.

Good afternoon, Class of 2020! It is an incredible honor to be coming to you live from my parents' living room as the official halftime show performer of the 2020 Larner College of Medicine Commencement Ceremony. If you need to grab a snack, walk the dog, or reset your router, you've got about 5 minutes...

I've been combing through a thesaurus, looking for the right words to describe this surreal, thrilling, bittersweet, joyful, poignant, totally upside-down moment in our lives. I wish with all my heart that we were together in Ira Allen Chapel right now. And yet, even though this is not how we dreamed that medical school would end, I couldn't be more inspired by the accomplishments of our class. We've really been on an amazing journey together.

Although our celebration is virtual, the hard work that got us here was very real. Let me give you a lightning recap:

We made it through the MCAT, AMCAS, and MMIs. We passed FoCS, A&D, NMGI, CRR, and HDRH, PCR and DIV. We learned to interpret EKGs, ABGs, CTs and MRIs. Our SPs taught us to gather an HPI and ROS, to listen at APTM and document RRR, no MRG, CTAB. We passed the USMLE! We rotated through IM, FM, the OR, L&D, the ED, and two AIs. We learned to manage CHF and COPD, AAAs and IBD, MVAs and AMS. We entered our CVs into VSAS and ERAS. And finally, we made it to MD.

To the family and friends who are watching right now, that probably sounded like a lot of gibberish. But you know how much learning and growth those acronyms represent. This has been an intense journey for you too. You've made huge sacrifices to support us, and through it all, you've looked at us and seen future doctors—even when sometimes we had trouble seeing it ourselves. We wouldn't be wearing these gorgeous gowns today if not for you.



Eli Goldberg, M.D.'20, receives his hood from his father.

Many incredible faculty and staff have also been with us every step of the way. Our lecturers and TBL facilitators, advisors and preceptors, residents and attendings, librarians and deans, OMSE and COMIS, standardized patients and sim lab staff have worked tirelessly and generously to help us become the best doctors we can be.

The path to get through medical school is tough, but at least it's predictable. Our course of training is mapped out in detail, years in advance. We progress through a rigid sequence of courses and standardized clinical experiences. It's always clear what comes next, what to expect.

Can we rise to this challenge, and the challenges to come, to be the kind of doctors that the world needs?

Now, we're graduating into a moment where nothing is predictable, and no one knows quite what to expect. This year, the normal uncertainty of starting residency seems to be amplified a hundredfold. As young doctors we'll be facing things we've never faced before—at the same time as the entire medical system faces something it's never faced before. First Aid for the USMLE doesn't have a mnemonic for starting residency during a viral pandemic. (Trust me, I checked.)

We all chose to become doctors. And now that we are, we have a deeper choice to make: what kind of doctors are we going to be? I don't mean that in the narrow sense of specialty, but in the sense of the presence and principles that we bring to our work. Can we rise to this

challenge, and the challenges to come, to be the kind of doctors that the world needs?

Every day for the past four years—as we've gone from memorizing the brachial plexus to assessing cardiac emergencies in the ED—I've been inspired, comforted, and energized by the folks in our class. And when I look at us today—at least, those of us who have our webcams on—it brings me so much hope to think about this amazing cohort of doctors heading out into the world.

Because this is what kind of doctors I see: I see doctors with integrity, persistence, and heart. I see doctors who are curious, critical, and creative. I see doctors who can stay grounded in an unstable situation, and find their moral compass when answers are unclear. I see doctors who are strong in themselves, yet humble enough to change and grow. I see doctors who are committed to serving others, and who have the passion to change lives.

In fact, we already have changed lives. So one last thing before the orchestra cuts me off: right now, think of a moment in med school when you made a difference for a patient. Remember their face, the thing you said, the way they looked at you, the feeling in your heart. Hold onto that memory, and when intern year starts to get real, remember that you are so much more than your fatigue, your mistakes, or your stress. That person, who your patient saw that day, is the kind of doctor you are.

So, Class of 2020, thank you for an amazing four years together, for everything you've taught me, and for everything you are and will be. To borrow a line from David Foster Wallace's famous commencement speech: I wish you way more than luck. **VM**

Spotlight

Raghav Goyal '22 is an Albert Schweitzer Fellow for Life who first conducted a project involving Burlington's homeless community during his second year of medical school. He shares his perspective on life in the homeless community, as well as an interview with Ronni Pearlman, a community member with a lived experience of homelessness who volunteers for several organizations in Burlington.

"My understanding of homelessness has built over the last three years here in Burlington, Vt., and has revealed, for me, some basic truths: Homelessness is a transient condition that many people go in and out of; not everyone has mental health or substance abuse issues; and the people in the homeless community are unbelievably diverse in age, nationality, race, political bent, and education, with stories you would never anticipate."



Read the blog post from Ronni and Raghav at:

uvmmedicineblog.wordpress.com

Commencement

“A World That Needs You:” Celebrating the Class of 2020

The ceremony began traditionally, with “Vermont Passacaglia,” the Larner College of Medicine’s alumni-composed processional. But instead of graduates and faculty marching into Ira Allen Chapel, a slideshow of photos depicting the Class of 2020’s medical school journey played on the screens of viewers in remote locations across the country and globe.

“Today we send you out into a world that needs you,” said Larner College of Medicine Dean Richard L. Page, M.D., as he welcomed new physicians in the Class of 2020 on Sunday, May 17, 2020, through the most extensive live online commencement ceremony held at a medical school during the coronavirus pandemic.

Joined by more than 100 medical graduates, Page, College of Medicine leaders, and guest speakers were connected via Zoom webinar videoconferencing while friends and family members watched a livestream of the ceremony on YouTube.

The event featured several highlights, including a stirring rendition of “America the Beautiful” by Class of 2020 graduate Nana Agyepong, M.D., who sang from

her home in Connecticut. In addition to remarks from Page, Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education Christa Zehle, M.D., former Larner staff member Mike Cross, and Stephen Leffler, M.D., president and chief operating officer of the University of Vermont Medical Center and Class of 1990 College of Medicine alumnus, graduates and viewers heard a Commencement address by Joia Mukherjee, M.D., M.P.H., chief medical officer of Partners in Health, and associate professor of global health and social medicine at Harvard Medical School. Mukherjee discussed the important role of context, team and love—through the lens of the pandemic—in providing important perspective to individuals in the healing profession.

“It is adversity that makes a doctor a healer,” she said to the graduates, urging them to recognize and address health disparities, understanding that “zip code will define, in large measure, who lives, dies.” And she told the new physicians that “At those final moments when a patient is faced with the end, that is when your presence and your love can heal.” VM

Celebratory snapshots before, during, and after the College’s Zoom graduation.

