A dear mentor and friend, Dr. Jack Geiger,* the founder of Physicians for Human Rights and Physicians for Social Responsibility, passed away recently. He was a giant—perhaps the giant—in the world of social medicine. Dr. Geiger is considered the founder of the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) model. A primary care physician in rural America, he advocated for his patients by arguing that the conditions they lived in helped determine their health outcomes. We now call these “social determinants of health.” Jack called them injustices. The famous story about him getting in trouble for using clinic funds to prescribe food for malnourished patients is true. He was not simply “troubled” by these injustices; he was incensed by them. He channeled this emotion into simultaneously being his patients’ kindest doctor and their fiercest advocate. The concepts of health equity and social determinants are intertwined and time- less. They are the heart of medicine: the desire to improve people’s lives. These lives cannot be improved solely within a med- ical center or doctor’s office; we must, as teachers, healers, and advocates, be with the patient and their life circumstances. I learned the theory of community- based primary health care in public health school, and I applied it at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. Master clinicians and teachers such as Dr. Mirni Reardon and Dr. John Sala demonstrated how caring for the community is both preventative and curative. We saw our Dean of Student Affairs, Dr. Marga Spraul, practice family medicine the same week she functioned as an advisor and administrator. Throughout our medical education, we saw engage- ment. Those who taught, also practiced, and those who primarily practiced, were called in to teach. Through numerous ex- periences and institutions, it was and is the best model of medical pedagogy I have ever experienced.

The state of Vermont taught us important lessons too. In between Gross Anatomy and Pharmacology, we imbibed a certain Vermont style of common-sense ethics, a social libertarianism that defined political definition. Our elected leaders were openly discussing important issues such as health care for all, and civil unions as a precursor to marriage, all putting the state at the forefront of social change. Despite a lack of ethnic diversity, I still came to enjoy rural Franklin County, Vermont as a familiar and welcoming home for this South Asian “UVMer.” Now here we are together at the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic. For those who were involved in vaccine distribution, I hope you are all in the queue and rolling up your sleeves (literally) as we drive ahead to serve those in our communities who need our help the most.

In this shared commitment to service, Vermont is unique and the Larner College of Medicine doubly so. You, the alumni, wherever you are, are always Larner family. I hope you will consider supporting the inclusion initiatives. I also hope you share your own stories of how the College shaped you in your professional trajectory, and perhaps how in these troubled times you look to the idealism of your former educational home as a source of comfort or inspiration. As always, I welcome your thoughts and we may even be able to include them in a future edition of Vermont Medicine.

Omar Khan

*This is one of the best accounts of Dr. Geiger’s life with links to his work: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/28/ health/jack-geiger-dead.html

Submit Class Notes Online
The UVM Alumni Association now offers an easy-to-use online form to submit class notes. You can also browse class notes by year, school, or college, or note type. Submit your class note and read more from classmates.
go.uvm.edu/mecclassnotes

1950s

REUNION 2021: 1956 + 1981

Daniel C. Sullivan was honored with The Prevent Cancer Foundation’s James E. Mulshine, M.D., Leadership Award for his work in founding and chairing the Quantitative Imaging Biomarkers Alliance (QIBA) whose mission is to transform patient care by making radiology a more quantitative science and for his contributions to the field of radiologic cancer screening.

1960s

REUNION 2021: 1957 + 1981

After 39 years of private practice and after serving as a clinical associate professor of op- thalmology at Brown University from 2002 to 2014, Summary Fishkin moved back to Augusta, Ga., where he is an associate professor of ophthalmology at the Medical College of Georgia-Augusta University. Summer retired in June 2020 after “running out of sick leave and annual leave due to COVID.” He enjoys reading and practicing the oboe. He shares that he is “not enjoying sheltering in place”.

1970s


Vermont is unique and the Larner College of Medicine is the best model of medical pedagogy I have ever experienced.
Hall A

In this ongoing series, Vermont Medicine shares a note of thanks from a student for the support they’ve received from alumni.

Anneliese L. Lapides ’24 sends her gratitude to the Medical Alumni Association Scholarship.

Dear Dr. Omar Khan and the Medical Alumni Association,

I cannot thank you enough for the Medical Alumni Association Scholarship. Attending the Larner College of Medicine has been a dream come true for me, and I have quickly felt it become my new home. Becoming a physician is something that I have wanted for years now, but my passion for the field, motivation to learn, and eagerness to practice has heightened since I have stepped foot on campus. I can truly say that I am the happiest I have ever been, and I feel like I am where I am supposed to be.

So, thank you for investing in my education—which I am already learning so much from, both personally and academically—and in my future medical career. I hope to use my time in medical school as a physician to advocate for equity in our healthcare system and to serve communities affected by disparities. One day, I hope we can live in a society where health is fully realized as the human right that it is, and that all people have access to quality care. Your scholarship has allowed me to take the next step in my journey toward that goal, and I hope to make you proud.

Sincerely, Anneliese L. Lapides
Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont Class of 2024
Benjamin Chan, M.D.’07, was named New Hampshire’s Citizen of the Year by The Union Leader for his lead role in the state’s COVID-19 response. As state epidemiologist, he has been a guiding force and key leader at the governor’s press briefings and other public events. The newspapers call him the “calm voice of science and reason that New Hampshire leaders and residents have turned to for facts, context and reassurance amid the fear and uncertainty of an unparalleled health and economic crisis.” After receiving his medical degree at UVM, Chan—a New Hampshire native—completed his residency in infectious disease at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and combined a fellowship in internal medicine at Dartmouth-Hitchcock’s Leadership Preventive Medicine Residency program. He has served as state epidemiologist with the Department of Health and Human Services since 2014.

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DEVELOPMENT NEWS

SUPPORTING WELLNESS

As the Larner College of Medicine puts an even stronger focus on wellness, both physical and mental, two alumni donors have made significant philanthropic contributions that will benefit wellness initiatives for medical students now and in perpetuity.

Suzanne R. Parker, M.D.’73 is a Burlington board-certified psychiatrist and addiction medicine specialist with a passion for physician wellness for that of medical students and other health care providers. After serving as psychiatric director of substance abuse services at Henry Ford Hospital, she returned to Vermont in 1987 and became a founding member and long-term supporter of the UVM College of Medicine’s Student Wellness Committee, a highly effective program that is a model of student/faculty partnership that continues to grow and evolve. The Suzanne R. Parker, M.D.’73 Wellness Endowment will honor and carry forward Dr. Parker’s legacy at her alma mater in perpetuity by supporting wellness programs for medical students with a priority on destigmatizing mental health issues.

In a March 30 online ceremony, Sarah A. Nowak, Ph.D., was invested as the Blodwen S. Huber Early Career Green and Gold Professorship in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. This professorship is named in honor of Dr. Huber’s mother. Dr. Nowak received her doctorate from UCLA, and was an associate physical scientist at the RAND corporation before joining the UVM faculty and the UVM Cancer Center in 2019. In the same ceremony, David J. Seward, M.D., Ph.D., was invested as the Elmer R. Huber Early Career Green and Gold Professorship in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, a position that honors the memory of Dr. Huber’s father. Dr. Seward received his M.D. and Ph.D. from the University of Colorado School of Medicine, and was a fellow at the University of Michigan before joining the UVM faculty and UVM Cancer Center in 2016.

Though completing higher education was not a possibility for Blodwen and Elmer Huber, they instilled a deep respect for it in their children. “There was never a question that my sister and I would ultimately go to college, and we both always had the complete support of our parents,” said Dr. Huber. The ultimate goal for these professorships is to honor the love of learning of Blodwen and Elmer Huber, and to memorialize their deep desire to help others achieve academic success.

HUBER PROFESSORSHIPS HONOR PARENTS OF LONGTIME FACULTY MEMBER

Professor Emerita of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Sally Huber, Ph.D., a member of the UVM faculty for 40 years, has instituted a lasting memorial to her beloved parents by endowing two Green and Gold Professorships for faculty in the early stages of their career.

ROKKAS INVESTED AS INAUGURAL FRANK P. ITTLERMAN CHAIR IN CARDIOThorACIC SURGERY

When Chris Rokkas, M.D., Ph.D., was in grade-school, a special visitor came to his village in the mountains of southern Greece: the pioneering South African heart surgeon Chris-tiansen Barnard, who had performed the world’s first human-to-human heart transplant, was there to visit Rokkas’s cousin, a fellow heart surgeon whom he had helped train. As his cousin explained to him how surgery would change the way the world treated heart disease, the young Rokkas became captivated and decided that he, too, would one day become a heart surgeon.

Fast forward to today, and Rokkas—now an international expert in adult aortic surgery—has been invested as the inaugural Frank P. Ittleman Chair in Cardiothoracic Surgery at the University of Vermont’s Larner College of Medicine. The investiture ceremony was held remotely on February 2, 2021 in front of guests watching from across the United States and around the world. The Ittleman Chair was established through the generous support of a large community of donors, all giving in recognition of Professor of Surgery Frank Ittleman’s long history of outstanding surgical care and medical teaching as a cardiothoracic surgeon and member of the faculty.

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The University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine Medical Development & Alumni Relations Office (802) 656-4014 | medical.giving@uvm.edu | med.uvm.edu/alumni
OBITUARIES

Dr. McMahon served as chief of the practice for an assignment as a physician and Acting Director of Public Health for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTR). In November of 1967, Dr. Howe returned to Vermont to open a practice in Townshend. In 1975, he returned to the U.S. Public Health Service, serving in Norfolk, Va., New London, Conn., Baltimore, Md., and Washington D.C. until his retirement. He did overseas volunteer medical work for short tours with Project Hope (Navaho Nation) Partners of the Americas (Honduras), and as a volunteer physician to Vietnam. He traveled to Zimbabwe as a consultant with a tour of the International. He retired from the U.S. Public Health Service as a captain in 1992.

Dr. Burns returned to Burlington where he became a member of the UVM faculty. He devoted his career to teaching, research, and providing direct patient care and consulting in the field of hematology. He achieved the rank of professor of medicine in 1972 and became emeritus in 1991.

Richard B. Raynor, M.D.

Dr. Raynor died October 1, 2020, at the age of 66. Born in Burlington, Vt., on May 24, 1954, he attended Middlebury College and received his medical degree from UVM in 1982. He completed his surgical residency at the University of Michigan before going on to train as a neurosurgeon and practicing in Wisconsin, Texas, and Portland, Maine. In 1993, after accepting a partnership with the late Dr. Peter Upton, Dr. Corbett moved to Pittsford, Vt. He practiced neurosurgery until his retirement in 2014.

Paul Richard Jarvis, M.D.

Dr. Jarvis, formerly of Barton, Vt., passed away suddenly on January 3, 2021, at his home in Belleaire, N.Y., at the age of 33. He was born on May 31, 1987 in Kansas City, Kan., to Tom and Karen (Richard) Jarvis. He graduated from Lake Region Union High School, with the class of 2005, and then received his Bachelor of Science degree in biology and mathematics from St. Michael’s College, class of 2009. He went on to receive his Doctor of Medicine degree from the Lerner College of Medicine, class of 2014. At the time of his death, Dr. Jarvis was in his second year of a four-year residency program specializing in radiology with rotations at North Shore Hospital in Manhasset, N.Y., and at Long Island Jewish Medical Center in Queens, N.Y. He was an avid runner, and enjoyed playing video games online with his friends. He was on Eagle Scout and a member of the Knights of Columbus Council 2953 in Borton.

In Memoriam

Hugh S. Levin, M.D., ’56

Dr. Levin died August 1, 2020.

Walter F. Minar, M.D., ’57

Dr. Minar died August 15, 2020, in Mount Dora, Fla.

Michael Boniface Bruehl, M.D., ’75

Mount Dora, Fla.

Faculty

Patricia Ann Tiejen M.D.

Dr. Tiejen died January 1, 2021 in Bonita Springs, Fla. Born on June 30, 1956, she graduated from the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center. She completed her postdoctoral training at both St. Vincent’s and Memorial Sloan Kettering. After her training, she continued to be affiliated with both hospitals and eventually became president of Saint Vincent’s Medical Staff. In 2008, Dr. Tiejen became the chair of the Department of Medicine for Danbury Hospital. In 2020, she became the chief medical officer for Nuvance Health. As an as well as practicing medicine, she loved to teach. She received the Richard J. Kennedy Attending Teacher of the Year Award four times. In her role as chief medical officer, she had oversight of all aspects of medical education and was responsible for the development of a network-wide teaching academy. Nuvance Health has named the new teaching academy in her honor.

In Memoriam

1 Luke A. Howe, M.D.

Dr. Howe died July 11, 2020, at Whittier Terrace in Torrington, N.H. Born November 23, 1900, in Turnbridge, Vt., he received his medical degree from UVM in 1925 and completed his residency at Mary Fletcher Hospital in Burlington. Dr. Howe and Beverley Martin, M.D., ’72, were recruited by former Governor Stanley Whitfield to start their practices in Chelmsford, as the governor was greatly concerned about the lack of medical care available in the valley. As a result, Dr. Howe and Martin opened the Chelmsford Health Center and a nursing home. In 1964, Dr. Howe left the practice for an assignment as the Physician and Acting Director of Public Health for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTR). In November of 1967, Dr. Howe returned to Vermont to open a practice in Townshend. In 1975, he returned to the U.S. Public Health Service, serving in Norfolk, Va., New London, Conn., Baltimore, Md., and Washington D.C. until his retirement. He did overseas volunteer medical work for short tours with Project Hope (Navaho Nation) Partners of the Americas (Honduras), and as a volunteer physician to Vietnam. He traveled to Zimbabwe as a consultant with a tour of the International. He retired from the U.S. Public Health Service as a captain in 1992.

2 Edmund B. “Mickey” McMahon, M.D.


3 Margaret Newton, M.D.

Dr. Newton died October 30, 2020, at the age of 92. She received her undergraduate degree in English from Vassar College. In 1954, she graduated third in her medical school class at UVM, as one of just three women in her cohort. Dr. Newton completed her medical residency, followed by a fellowship under the preeminent nephrologist Louis Welt, at the University of North Carolina Hospitals in Chapel Hill. She taught at the University of Wisconsin medical school and practiced as a kidney specialist. As part of Vermont Citizen’s Campaign for Health and Physicians for the National Health Program, she pushed for universal health care.

4 Herbert White, M.D.

Dr. White died September 16, 2020, in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., at the age of 92. Dr. White was a board-certified dermatologist who had a private practice in Middletown, Mass., for 35 years. He was the past president of the Massachusetts Academy of Dermatology and the Section of Dermatology, Massachusetts Medical Society. He served on the American Academy of Dermatology Advisory Council. Dr. White received his medical degree from UVM and completed his residency training in dermatology at Boston City Hospital and University Hospital. He had a lifelong interest in photography and was one of the first to use photography in his clinical practice and teaching.

5 Stanley L. Burns, M.D.

Dr. Burns died October 21, 2020, in Shelburne, Vt., at the age of 94. He served as surgical technician with the 156th Evacuation Hospital with the 7th Army’s Rhineland, Alace-Loran and Germany campaigns in World War II. After discharge he completed his undergraduate and graduate studies under the GI Bill. He received his medical degree from UVM in 1955, which was followed by five years of post-graduate training in internal medicine, cardiology and hematology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. In 1960, Dr. Burns returned to Burlington where he became a member of the UVM faculty. He devoted his career to teaching, research, and providing direct patient care and consulting in the field of hematology. He achieved the rank of professor of medicine in 1972 and became emeritus in 1991.

6 George Adam Southerlin, M.D.

Dr. Southerlin died September 4, 2020, at the age of 92. After serving in the U.S. Army in Japan at the end of World War II he returned home to attend college at Dartmouth. He worked for five years selling shoes before deciding to go back to school at UVM to become a doctor. Dr. Southerlin completed his internship and residency training in OB-GYN in Syracuse and spent the next 36 years caring for the women of Onondaga County. During the 60’s and 70’s, he served as medical director of the Onondaga County Family Planning Program and as consulting gynecologist at Van Dyne Hospital. Dr. Southerlin had teaching appointments in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at SUNY Upstate Medical Center, progressing from clinical instructor to clinical professor in 1976.

7 John C. Mesch, M.D.

Dr. Mesch died December 11, 2020. After receiving his medical degree from UVM in 1941, he completed his residency in New York City at Roosevelt Hospital, moved to Albany in 1970, and started a private practice, later becoming chief of Pulmonary Medicine at St. Peter’s Hospital and a partner in the Pulmonary and Critical Care Services. He was an attending physician at St. Peter’s, Samaritan, and Albany Memorial Hospitals, in addition to Albany Medical Center, where he was also an assistant professor of medicine.

8 Joseph Edward Corbett, Jr., M.D.

Dr. Corbett died December 2, 2020, at the age of 66. Born in Burlington, Vt., on May 26, 1954, he attended Middlebury College and received his medical degree from UVM in 1982. He completed his surgical residency at the University of Michigan before going on to train as a neurosurgeon and practicing in Wisconsin, Texas, and Portland, Maine. In 1993, after accepting a partnership with the late Dr. Peter Upton, Dr. Corbett moved to Pittsford, Vt. He practiced neurosurgery until his retirement in 2014.

9 Paul Richard Jarvis, M.D.

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10 Michael Boniface Bruehl, M.D., ’75

Mount Dora, Fla.

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Dr. Levin died August 1, 2020.

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13 Michael Boniface Bruehl, M.D., ’75

Mount Dora, Fla.
December 15, 2020
10:15 A.M.
Cindy Wamsganz, an Emergency Department nurse at the University of Vermont Medical Center, talks about the importance of being vaccinated after she received the first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.
Come Together October 8-10 for Medical Reunion

We’re hopeful that by October 2021 COVID-19 will have passed, and we will once again be able to gather in-person, but your safety and health are our first priority. Please know that our staff is committed to developing a celebration for your milestone reunion whether it’s in-person or virtual.

Please check med.uvm.edu/alumni/reunion for updates on our planning.

18 Say it Forward
For the past seven years, alumni from across the class years have volunteered to write a short note of encouragement to the College’s newest students for their white coat ceremony.

20 Diverse Voices
The Vermont Leadership Education on Neurodevelopmental Disabilities program prepares health professionals to improve healthcare for children with developmental and intellectual disabilities and their families.

24 Supporting VT Kids
Two Larner College of Medicine alums in Vermont—James Metz, M.D.’06, and Nick Bonenfant, M.D.’17,—are breaking new ground in the critical pediatric fields of child abuse prevention and mental health.