

VERMONT MEDICINE

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

SPRING 2024

ALWAYS FIRST

Reflecting on
30 Years of
Caring for Kids



ALSO FEATURED: MATCH RESULTS '24 • FOOD AS MEDICINE • A PICTURE OF HEALTH

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FROM THE DEAN

Spring came early this year in Vermont, and along with the snowmelt and warmer temperatures came one of my favorite moments of the year—Match Day. Our College celebrates the Match like no other; this year’s theme brought back the dancing, exuberance, and somewhat awkward fashions of the Disco Era! In addition to the party atmosphere, witnessing the excitement and joy of our students as they matched in terrific residencies was both inspiring and moving. In all, 117 students matched, and you can read in the upcoming pages where the cohort are heading, and in what specialties.

In just a few weeks the Class of 2024 will graduate as newly minted doctors—a reflection of their “second-to-none” education in the art and science of medicine that will have an impact on programs both near and far. I know they will make us proud. They bring with them the experience of starting med school with masks and social distancing, but the challenges of 2020 did not deter them from their dreams. On the contrary, throughout their time with us they have shown persistence, good cheer, and professionalism. I would not wish a pandemic on anyone, but their experience has provided lessons in resilience and teamwork that will inform their practice throughout their lives.

Having served now as dean for six years, the special culture of our College continues to amaze me. Our students, staff, and faculty make this a special place, characterized by longstanding traditions of excellence, innovation, humanism, and inclusion. We continue to build on these traditions.

In this issue of *Vermont Medicine*, please enjoy the stories that highlight some members of our community who exemplify Larner qualities. As Dr. Lewis First marks his 30th year as chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the Larner College of Medicine and chief of pediatrics at UVM Children’s Hospital, he reflects on his career journey and legacy. Read how a lecture by the late Lawrence Weed, M.D., a professor of medicine at the University of Vermont, sparked an idea in a young medical student’s mind: The student, Art Papier, M.D.’88, envisioned and created a digital diagnostic tool that visually shows, describes, and categorizes thousands of diseases and is now used in clinics and medical schools throughout the nation and across the globe.

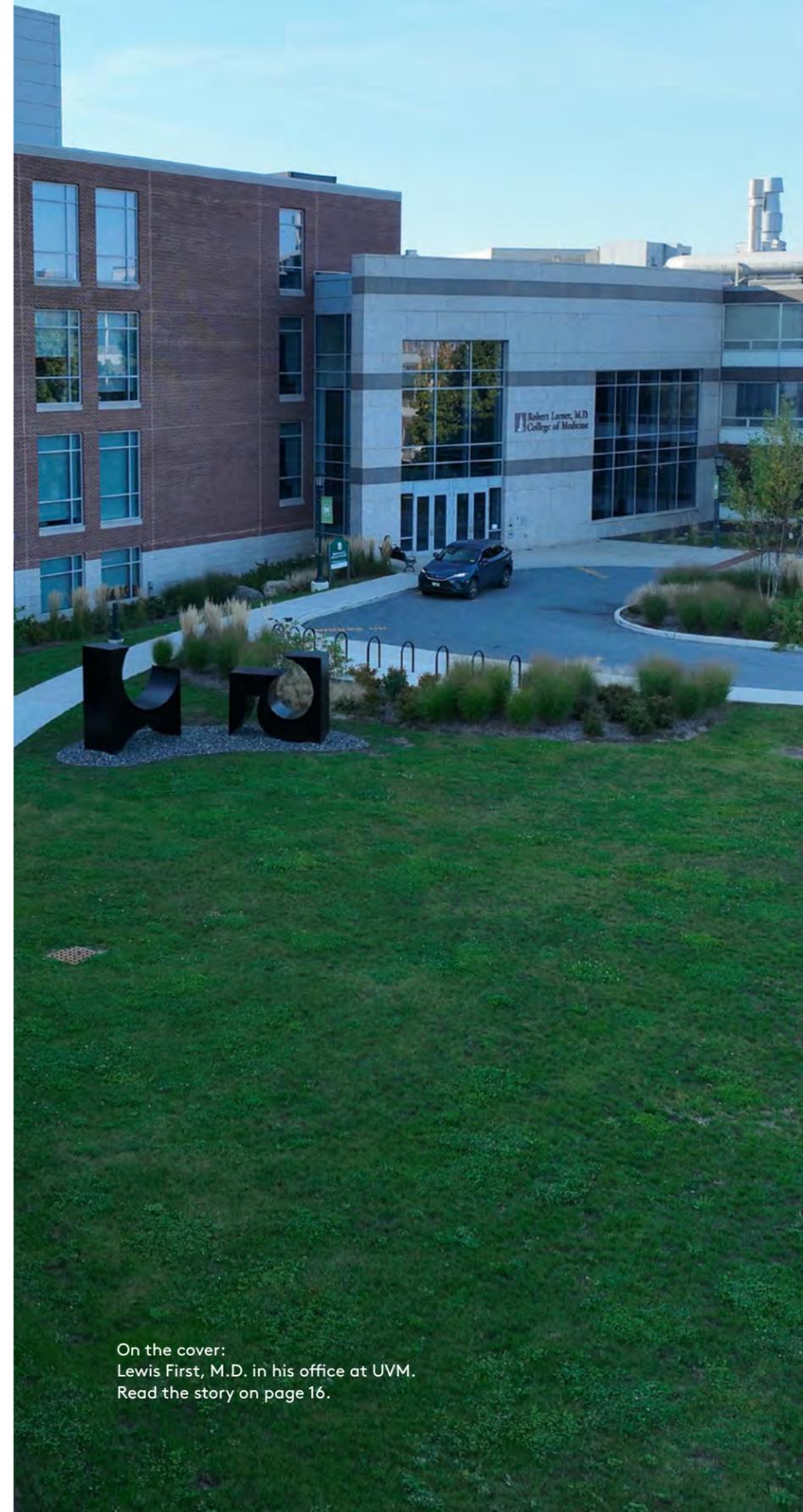
Note the innovation and passion of Larner students, creating and leading a course for first-year medical students to learn about culinary medicine, which pairs nutritional science with preventive health care. And finally, two recent investitures remind us that investing in outstanding faculty members with endowed chairs and professorships allows the College to recognize and celebrate academic achievement, further encouraging scholarship, service, and clinical excellence. Such endowments create a permanent legacy for the donors who establish them, while allowing our College to recruit and retain the very best faculty.

Thanks for your support of our important work here. As always, please consider a return to our campus—even “mud season” is beautiful in its own way—and please stop by and say hello.

With warmest wishes,



RICHARD L. PAGE, M.D.
Dean



On the cover:
Lewis First, M.D. in his office at UVM.
Read the story on page 16.

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Female Faculty Recognized

THREE LARNER SCIENTISTS IMPROVE THEIR U.S. AND WORLD RANKINGS

The second annual online ranking of the top female scientists in the world conducted by Research.com again includes three members of the Larner College of Medicine faculty.

University Scholar Mary Cushman, M.D., M.Sc., professor of medicine and pathology & laboratory medicine, is ranked #90 in the U.S. and #144 in the world (up from #124 and #193, respectively, in 2022); Jane Lian, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry, is ranked #175 in the U.S. and #275 in the world (up from #194 and #305 in 2022); and Janet Stein, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry, is ranked #243 in the U.S. and #399 in the world (up from #265 and #430 in 2022). All three scientists serve on the Larner College of Medicine faculty and are UVM Cancer Center members.

The ranking of the top female scientists in the U.S. was based on an examination of 166,880 scientists from all key areas of science on Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic Graph. Inclusion criteria for this global ranking of top scientists were based on the H-index, a measure of scholarly contributions made within the scholar's given discipline, in addition to the awards and achievements of the scientists. Only the top 1,000 female scientists with the highest H-index were featured in the ranking.

Mary Cushman, M.D., M.Sc.

U.S. RANKING
#90

WORLD RANKING
#144



Jane Lian, Ph.D.

U.S. RANKING
#175

WORLD RANKING
#275



Janet Stein, Ph.D.

U.S. RANKING
#243

WORLD RANKING
#399



Dean Page leads the ribbon cutting

NEW STUDENT LOUNGE OPENS

On Monday, February 5, students, faculty, staff, and guests gathered for the grand opening of the Plante Student Lounge. Dean Page led the festivities with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, which signified the official opening of this new space for students to congregate, study, store and cook food, relax, and enjoy quiet time.

The new lounge renovated existing office space, and later this year a fitness center is slated to open in the old student lounge space.

"This is about wellness. This is about our community. This is about taking care of ourselves and each other. This is a demonstration of our commitment to you," said Dean Page.



Viewers at the opening of "Anatomy Of"

Exploring the Intersection of Art and Medicine

LARNER HOSTS MIXED MEDIA ART EXHIBIT

The humanities and the field of medicine may appear diametrically opposed; however, the integration of these disciplines often holds profound significance for health care professionals. Through exposure to various forms of artistic expression—literature, visual arts, music—medical practitioners can cultivate a deeper understanding of the human experience.

This convergence was evident at the inaugural Humanities in Medicine event hosted by the Larner College of Medicine on Tuesday, February 6, featuring Mary Lacy, a mixed media artist and muralist.

"Art makes us better doctors and scientists," said Larner Dean Richard L. Page, M.D., citing research indicating that physicians who engage with fiction novels exhibit heightened empathy and understanding toward their patients.

The event showcased various pieces from Lacy's recent collection "Anatomy Of," comprising mosaic and mixed media artworks exploring the intricate wonders and limitations of the human body. Housed in the Given Courtyard, Lacy's pieces captivated attendees with their vibrant compositions, often incorporating various fabrics and unique shards of broken ceramic and dishware.

Jeremiah Dickerson, M.D., assistant professor of psychiatry, facilitated a discussion with Lacy, exploring her inspiration and the intrinsic connections between medicine and art. Lacy shared her perspective, noting the shift from being a patient under scrutiny to asserting agency and authority through her artistic expression.

Attendees also engaged in an interactive activity titled "The Art of Observation" that invited them to delve into the deeper narratives and meanings behind the exhibited artworks.

The event concluded with a question-and-answer session, during which participants explored parallels between Lacy's artwork and the challenges encountered in medical practice. Lacy reflected on the lessons gleaned from art, emphasizing the inevitability of imperfection and the transformative power of embracing vulnerability. VM

"As a patient, the microscope is on you. You're the one being observed and judged. It would be easy for me to sit here, as the one holding the mic, to still feel like you folks, as doctors, are the experts. But through my art, I am the one with agency and authority." – MARY LACY, ARTIST



Mary Lacy

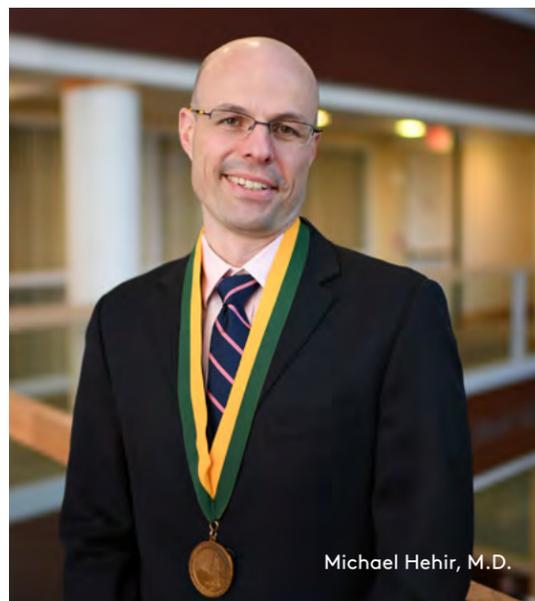
► Learn more about Mary at marylacyart.com

James F. Howard Jr. Professorship in Neuromuscular Disorders

HEHIR HONORED AS INAUGURAL INVESTITURE RECIPIENT

In a formal ceremony held January 26, 2024, at the University of Vermont's Lerner College of Medicine, Professor of Neurological Sciences Michael Hehir, M.D., was invested as the inaugural holder of the James F. Howard Jr. Professorship in Neuromuscular Disorders. Hehir is also chief of neuromuscular medicine and program director of the Neuromuscular Medicine Training Fellowship at the University of Vermont Medical Center. This endowed professorship was established through the generosity of James F. Howard Jr., M.D.'74, and his wife, School of Nursing alum Adrienne (Brown) Howard '75. The professorship supports clinical research in myasthenia gravis (MG), a chronic neuromuscular disease that causes weakness in the voluntary muscles.

Howard, known as "Chip," was born in Bellows Falls, Vermont, in 1948. From a young age, he set his sights on a career in medicine. He earned his bachelor's degree from UVM in 1970 and his medical degree from the UVM College of Medicine in 1974, followed by residencies in internal medicine and neurology at Albany Medical Center Hospital, New York; the University of Virginia Hospital; and the University of Virginia School of Medicine. He became an assistant professor of neurology and medicine at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill in 1979, and was promoted to associate professor in 1985 and full professor in 1992. Howard is the former James F. Howard Distinguished Professor of Neuromuscular Disease and the prior chief of the Neuromuscular Disorders Section at UNC. He was also an adjunct professor of clinical sciences (neurology) at North Carolina State University. A practicing neurologist for more than 40 years with a focus on myasthenia gravis and other neuromuscular disorders, he is a leading expert in the field and has authored more than 110 abstracts, 150 articles, 35 book chapters, and 3 books. He was the 2019 recipient of the European Academy of



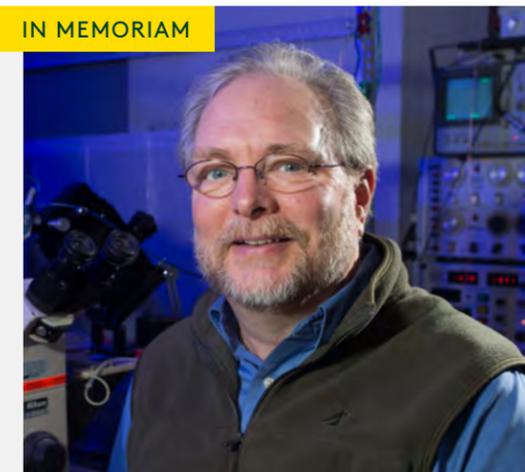
Michael Hehir, M.D.

Neurology Investigator Award and a member of the NIH-funded rare disease clinical research network, MGNet. In 2003 a chair was endowed at UNC in Howard's name for the exceptional care given to a patient years before.

"Neurology is a very small discipline. Neuromuscular medicine is even smaller," stated Howard in his address to Hehir and other members of the UVM and Lerner communities. "In our field, legacies are built through this close community—who mentors you, who you mentor. It is this interconnectedness that allows us to help support each other."

With members of the Howard and Hehir families attending both in person and virtually, UVM Provost and Senior Vice President Patricia Prelock, Ph.D., hosted and led the event in the Lerner College of Medicine's Hoehl Gallery. UVM President Suresh Garimella, Ph.D.; Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and President and CEO of the UVM Health Network Medical Group Jason Sanders, M.D., M.B.A.; Chair of the Department of Neurological Sciences at UVM Gregory Holmes, M.D.; and President and CEO of the UVM Foundation Monica Delisa joined Prelock.

IN MEMORIAM



REMEMBERING GARY MAWE, PH.D.

On February 17, 2024, Gary Mawe, Ph.D., a respected faculty member at the Robert Lerner, M.D., College of Medicine and the University of Vermont, passed away at the age of 67 in Hinesburg, Vermont, after battling an illness.

Mawe held several significant roles within our community here at the Lerner College of Medicine as well as at UVM, including the Samuel W. Thayer Professor of Neurological Sciences and adjunct professor in the Departments of Pharmacology and the GI Division of the Department of Medicine. He also served as director of the Anatomical Gift Program. Known internationally for his work in neurobiology, Mawe played a crucial part in reviewing and awarding National Institutes of Health grants for gastrointestinal research with the aim of saving lives.

► Read more about Gary Mawe at med.uvm.edu/vtmedicine

From Project to Published Success

THE VITAL ROLE OF RESEARCH IN MEDICAL EDUCATION



Each summer, second-year medical students at the Lerner College of Medicine actively engage in diverse research projects under expert faculty guidance, spanning clinical, basic science, and health policy realms. These projects, driven by personal passions, unravel medical puzzles and address unmet health needs, marking research as a pivotal and enriching experience in medical education. Notably, the outcomes of such projects, exemplified by the successes of current third-year students Kenny Nguyen and Jordan Franco, often exceed expectations, leading to academic publications that contribute valuable insights to the medical field.

Jordan Franco, a third-year student, achieved publication success with his project on laboratory literacy, resulting in a paper titled "Defining and Identifying Laboratory Literacy as a Component of Health Literacy: An Assessment of Existing Health Literacy Tools," published in *Academic Pathology*. This study explores the relationship between health literacy and laboratory testing, emphasizing patient comprehension of results in health care decision-making. Franco's meticulous work involved scrutinizing more than 100 health literacy methods, revealing gaps in addressing essential concepts for laboratory literacy.

Franco's mentor, professor of pathology and laboratory medicine Mark Fung, M.D., Ph.D., expressed excitement about the project, stating that it was a unique experience, "Not only because it is something we're both passionate about, but because I saw it as the chance to uplift a future colleague—my thought process the entire time was 'What can I do in my role as a mentor to help Jordan become a great doctor?'"

Likewise, fellow Class of 2025 member Kenny Nguyen collaborated with Associate Professor of Surgery Mirabelle Sajisevi, M.D., on a project investigating treatment outcomes in low and intermediate-grade salivary gland cancers, leading to the publication of "Oncologic Safety of Close Margins in Patients with Low- to Intermediate-Grade Major Salivary Gland Carcinoma" in *JAMA Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*.

Dr. Sajisevi, who is also a UVM Cancer Center member, highlighted Nguyen's pivotal role, stating, "Kenny was fantastic to work with. He was responsible for the IRB proposal and submission, led the data collection at UVM for this multi-institutional study, and outlined a draft of the manuscript that was refined and ultimately published."

Their findings challenge conventional treatment approaches, suggesting that select patients with narrow margins may be observed safely post-surgery given they were found to have comparable oncologic outcomes to patients who received radiation post-surgery. The question of whether to apply radiation is important, especially given the associated morbidity, financial implications, and time intensity. Nguyen, expressing gratitude for Sajisevi's mentorship, stated, "Tackling such a significant project as a medical student was a challenge, but having Dr. Sajisevi as a mentor made it doable."

Sajisevi emphasizes the transformative role of mentorship, guiding her mentees through substantial research undertakings. For Franco, the project evolved from a friendship between Fung and Nancy Morris, Ph.D., ANP, when they were fellows within the Program for Research in Medical Outcomes (PRIMO), and both provided input to Franco on this project, reflecting the power of mentorship in shaping comprehensive research endeavors. **VM**



Margaret Vizzard, Ph.D.,
Colleen Holmes, Gregory
Holmes, M.D.

Vizzard Invested as Colleen A. and Gregory L. Holmes Green and Gold Professor

On March 14, 2024, in a formal ceremony held at the Larner College of Medicine, Professor of Neurological Sciences Margaret Vizzard, Ph.D., was invested as the inaugural holder of the Colleen A. and Gregory L. Holmes Green and Gold Professorship in Neurological Sciences Research. Alongside her role as an educator, Dr. Vizzard serves as the vice chair of research and education at the College.

This distinguished professorship was established through the generous contribution of Colleen A. and Gregory L. Holmes, M.D. Dr. Holmes has played a pivotal role in the Larner College of Medicine since 2013, serving as professor and chair of the Department of Neurological Sciences, as well as a professor of pediatrics. His wife, Colleen, a registered pediatric nurse, has also dedicated her life to the field of medicine.

“Not only is Dr. Holmes an internationally renowned pediatric neurologist with an expertise in pediatric epilepsy—he is also a dedicated, innovative, humble, and caring colleague,” said Richard L. Page, M.D., dean of the Larner College of Medicine.

With members of the Holmes and Vizzard families present both in person and virtually, Dean Page and UVM Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs Jane Okech, Ph.D., hosted and presided over the event in the College’s Hoehl Gallery. Stephen Leffler, M.D., president and chief operating officer of the UVM

Medical Center, and Ginger Lubkowitz, chief development officer for Academic Health Sciences at the UVM Foundation, joined Drs. Page and Okech in presenting this esteemed honor to Dr. Vizzard.

“Dr. Vizzard’s presence brings great distinction to the Robert Larner, M.D., College of Medicine at the University of Vermont,” stated Dr. Holmes. “Her work improves our ability to care for patients, both here in Vermont and around the world.”

Vizzard is a highly respected researcher and scientist specializing in the neural circuitry of the urinary tract. Over the past 25 years, she has meticulously studied the mechanisms underlying micturition reflex plasticity, bladder dysfunction, and bladder pain following neural injury, inflammation, or postnatal maturation. Her groundbreaking work has significantly advanced our understanding of how various chemical mediators, receptors, and channels contribute to bladder control and its dysregulation in conditions such as peripheral neuropathies, spinal cord injury, Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis, stroke, and interstitial cystitis.

“I want to recognize that this honor is a tremendous gift—one that will make a lasting impression in neuroscience research here at Larner for years to come,” said Vizzard. “The Colleen A. and Gregory L. Holmes Green and Gold Professorship is paving the way for continued research excellence in the field.”

HERRERA APPOINTED ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF DEI FOR THE UVM CANCER CENTER

Diego Adrianzen Herrera, M.D., assistant professor of medicine, has been appointed to serve as associate director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for the University of Vermont Cancer Center (UVMCC).

As associate director, Dr. Adrianzen Herrera will help to oversee the Cancer Center’s plan to enhance diversity. He will join the UVMCC senior leadership team and coordinate programs that advance a culture of inclusion across the four pillars of the cancer center: research, education, community outreach, and clinical care.

Adrianzen Herrera is from Peru and received his doctor of medicine and surgery at Alberto Hurtado School of Medicine at Cayetano Heredia University in Lima, Peru. He did his post-doctoral training as a hematology and medical oncology fellow at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York and an internal medicine residency at the Ichan School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York.



Diego Adrianzen Herrera, M.D.

He currently serves on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programs Committee for the American Society of Hematology (ASH) and was a participant in the 2023 ASH Health Equity Collective Roundtable.

In 2022, he was named a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Champion at the annual ASH meeting. Adrianzen Herrera’s research focuses on health outcomes and translational epidemiology in hematologic malignancies.



Empowering Voices

GENDER EQUITY EVENT HIGHLIGHTS INTERSECTIONALITY AND HONORS AWARDEES

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the Larner College of Medicine hosted the fifth annual Celebration of Gender Equity in Medicine and Science on March 7, 2024, in the Sullivan Classroom.

Debora Kamin Mukaz, Ph.D., M.S., assistant professor of medicine and co-founder of #BlackInCardio, presented a keynote address on “Why Intersectionality Matters for Life Sciences and Medicine.” Born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kamin Mukaz’s interest in STEM was stoked by her family, who deeply valued formal education; however, like many young women, Kamin Mukaz quickly realized the pervasiveness of sexism in education, both in her home province of Katanga, as well as abroad, in the U.S.

Presenters included Sherrie Khadanga, M.D., assistant professor of medicine, recipient of the 2023 Rising Star Emerging Professional Award; and Frances Carr, Ph.D., professor of pharmacology, 2023 recipient of the Polaris Award for Outstanding Mentorship award. The 2024 awards recipients are:

- **Gender Equity Champion Award** » This award honors Larner College of Medicine community members—faculty, staff, or students—who have demonstrated outstanding commitment and service to the advancement of women and those with underrepresented gender identities beyond the scope of their job, area of research, or training. Recipients: Jennifer Hall, D.O., assistant professor of psychiatry, and Class of 2025 medical student Neeki Parsa.
- **Gender Equity Outstanding Achievement in Medicine and Science Award** » This award is given to a woman or gender-diverse** faculty member within the Larner College of Medicine who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in medicine and



“I exist at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities, each shaped by systems that determine what rights and resources I have access to.”

– DEBORA KAMIN MUKAZ, PH.D., M.S.

science through research, education, or service. Recipient: Sarah Schlein, M.D., associate professor of emergency medicine.

- **The Polaris Award for Outstanding Mentorship** » The Polaris Award honors a Larner College of Medicine faculty or staff member who provides outstanding formal or informal mentorship for women or gender-minority College community members. Recipient: Rebecca Wilcox, M.D., associate dean for faculty affairs and professor of pathology and laboratory medicine.
- **The Rising Star Emerging Professional Award** » This award recognizes a woman or gender-diverse** faculty or staff member at the Larner College of Medicine who is in the early stage of their career, and who demonstrates excellence in contributions to students, colleagues, and/or the institution in the areas of gender equity and inclusion through service, program development, teaching, research, or beyond. Recipients: Anja Jokela, M.D., assistant professor of family medicine, and Karine Sahakyan, M.D., assistant professor of radiology.

**Gender-diverse refers to those who identify with a gender outside of the she/her, he/him binary. VM



Molly Bumpas, M.Ed., (right) and Jeremiah Dickerson, M.D., assess children for autism in the Vermont Center for Children, Youth & Families.

Improving Autism Assessment and Follow-Up

REMOVING BARRIERS TO DIAGNOSIS

Over the past several years, child health professionals have increased their practice of screening young children's development with validated tools in the medical home. As a result, more young children exhibiting early signs of autism are receiving referrals to child development specialists for appropriate assessment and formal diagnosis. Like subspecialists across the nation, providers at UVM Children's Hospital Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics division and the Vermont Center for Children, Youth, and Families (VCCYF) saw a significant increase in referrals for autism assessment during the past decade, resulting in extremely long wait times.

"As our referrals kept creeping up and up, we struggled to meet the needs of the state of Vermont," says Jeremiah Dickerson, M.D., assistant professor of psychiatry and director of the VCCYF autism assessment clinic. "There was this lore that pediatricians and family practice providers couldn't diagnose, so children would get on a list waiting up to 18 months to see us, when in fact someone could have provided at least a provisional diagnosis a lot earlier to get the ball rolling on intervention."

To address this need, the pediatric and psychiatry departments collaborated to restructure the autism assessment program at VCCYF. This involved expanding the clinical team, bringing in specialists from different departments, and streamlining the intake process to reduce paperwork and wait times. "It's now easier and quicker for children to see a specialist, and a better experience for families," says Elizabeth Forbes, M.D., M.P.H., assistant professor of pediatrics and division chief for developmental and behavioral pediatrics.

In addition, the Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP), in partnership with the Vermont Department of Health, launched a statewide-level initiative to improve rates of developmental screening and remove barriers to autism assessment and diagnosis. VCHIP Executive Director Rachel Garfield, Ph.D., and Heidi Schumacher, M.D., principal investigator at VCHIP, lead this effort with Molly Bumpas, M.Ed., speech language pathologist at VCCYF, and Patricia Prelock, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, professor of communication sciences and disorders and professor of pediatrics.

Providers in pediatric and family medicine practices now receive coaching, data support, tools, and training to make screening, diagnostic, and treatment decisions with confidence.

"We see children at 18 and 24 months where we conduct a very basic screen for autism. [In the past,] if it's a positive screening, we would refer away to an outside specialist. Now, we don't have to refer away and wait for further evaluation," says Monica Benjamin, D.N.P., M.B.A., M.S.N., RN, of Porter Pediatric Primary Care in Middlebury. "Learning the assessment tools has been invaluable, and it now feels like it will integrate easily into the flow of the office."

Bumpas and Dickerson additionally support parents with young children diagnosed with autism and awaiting assessment, offering group learning sessions where families discuss topics such as social communication strategies and home visits with video feedback and problem-solving. "We want to make things easier for parents and ensure that we are getting children into intervention as early as possible because we know that's what promotes the best outcomes," says Dickerson. **VM**

Healing Smiles in Honduras

FACIAL PLASTIC SURGEONS BRING MEDICAL CARE AND CREATE LASTING IMPACT

Elizabeth Blasberg, M.D., a 2014 graduate of the Larner College of Medicine, and her colleague, former UVM Medical Center general surgery resident Ryan Kunkel, M.D., both facial plastic surgeons, are gearing up for a medical mission to the Ruth Paz Foundation Hospital for Burned Children and Pediatric Surgery in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, in fall 2024. The mission, sponsored by the Angeles Para Honduras (APH) foundation, aims to address cleft palates and other childhood disfiguring conditions.

The Ruth Paz Foundation Hospital for Burned Children and Pediatric Surgery provides medical care to Honduran children, particularly those who have suffered burns or need reconstructive surgery. The hospital focuses on reducing the delay in pediatric surgeries at a regional level and hosts international medical brigades, including the upcoming mission led by Blasberg and Kunkel, to address the health care needs of the northwestern region.

Blasberg first learned of Angeles Para Honduras through her father, UVM Class of 1971 alumnus Walter Blasberg. Walter's passion for APH's mission was inspired by his partner—and founder of the organization—John Dewane.

Dewane was born in Honduras, where he spent most of his childhood before moving to the U.S. As an adult, he settled in Vermont, but frequently visited Honduras, where he saw the rising crime rate and a community in turmoil. He founded Angeles Para Honduras, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, with the aim of assisting and caring for the health and education of economically disadvantaged Honduran children who have the desire—but not the means—to attend school and receive quality education.

Inspired by Dewane, Walter and Elizabeth, along with Elizabeth's mother, fellow UVM alumna Nancy Heckman Blasberg '71, have dedicated themselves to helping the mission of this Vermont-based international organization.



The Ruth Paz Foundation Hospital for Burned Children and Pediatric Surgery, Honduras.

"I think we were all inspired by John's story," said Walter Blasberg. "Now that we've been able to get our boots on the ground down in Honduras and interact with the people in these communities, we've been able to assess two major points of need for these kids—education and health care."

The groundwork for this Angeles Para Honduras mission was laid during a recent visit to Ruth Paz Foundation Hospital on December 13, 2023. Juan (Johnny) Craniotis-Rios, medical director of Ruth Paz Foundation Hospital, alongside medical brigade director Marcela Martínez, received the group and provided a thorough tour of the hospital, showing the team its various facilities, including waiting rooms, patient rooms, operating rooms, pre-op and post-op recovery rooms, supply closets, the pharmacy, the lab, and much more.

Craniotis-Rios, who is also a pediatric surgeon with a specialty in colorectal pediatric surgery, provided a detailed history of Ruth Paz to the team, remarking that it is one of the only facilities in the country offering high-quality specialty care for children, and emphasizing that most services are offered for free or greatly reduced in cost, according to need. It has become a beacon of hope, caring for over 270,000 individuals in San Pedro Sula and the surrounding area.

Martinez will help navigate Kunkel and Blasberg through the bureaucratic process—for example, there is 40-day approval period for missionary doctors. The mission now awaits coordination of a suitable timeframe and the subsequent application process. While the hospital is well-equipped for surgeries, fundraising efforts are under way to cover travel and accommodation costs for the volunteer doctors.

This journey is not just about surgical procedures,—it's about mending lives, bringing smiles, and creating lasting impact. **VM**

Learn more about the Angeles Para Honduras (APH) foundation at aph1.org



Match Day 2024

Match Day—the annual rite of passage that ignites a senior medical student’s future—took place on Friday, March 15, 2024. Beginning at noon, medical students in the Larner College of Medicine’s Class of 2024 and soon-to-be-doctors from across the U.S. and world learned which U.S. residency program they have been matched to for the next three to seven years.

The celebration began when members of the cohort, clad in ’70s and disco-themed attire, processed into the Grand Maple Ballroom in the UVM Davis Center—packed with family, friends, and loved ones—led by bagpiper H. James Wallace, M.D.’88, a medical alumnus and radiation oncologist. This

was quickly followed by the students opening their envelopes and announcing to exuberant cheers and applause where the next phase of their medical career would take place.

How does The Match work? The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) uses a computerized mathematical algorithm to align the preferences of applicants with the preferences of program directors, to produce the best possible outcome for filling training positions available at U.S. teaching hospitals.

The students participating from the Larner College of Medicine were among a record-breaking nearly 45,000 future physicians taking part in the NRMP’s 2024 Main Residency Match.



RESIDENCY MATCH LIST*

UVM LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE CLASS OF 2024

ANESTHESIOLOGY

Samuel Aldous Mass General Brigham
 Jeremy Altman Albany Medical Center
 David Bachoy University of Connecticut School of Medicine
 Carl Brasch Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai (New York City)
 Zain Chaudry Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Boston)
 Tonya Conley Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
 Varun Gupta Mass General Brigham
 Alia Johnson Maine Medical Center
 Louisa Moore Mass General Brigham
 Sean Taylor University of Vermont Medical Center
 Erik Zhang NYU Grossman School of Medicine

DERMATOLOGY

Simran Kalsi Tufts Medical Center

DIAGNOSTIC RADIOLOGY

Sam Afshari Emory University School of Medicine
 Amy Chang Santa Clara Valley Medical Center
 Gina Jin Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Boston)
 Weida Ma Zucker School of Medicine (Lenox Hill, N.Y.)

EMERGENCY MEDICINE

Nicholas Brunette Zucker School of Medicine (New Hyde Park, N.Y.)
 Sadie Casale Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Boston)
 Tayler Drake West Virginia University School of Medicine
 Edom Girma NYU Grossman School of Medicine
 Ian Guertin University of Vermont Medical Center
 Max HoddWells Maine Medical Center
 Paul McCleary University of Washington Affiliated Hospitals
 Mikaela Mohardt University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
 Nathaniel Moore University of Vermont Medical Center
 Jesse Naumann Temple University Hospital
 Elise Prehoda Mass General Brigham
 Clifford Reilly Emory University School of Medicine
 Nathan Schweitzer Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Boston)
 Noah Sorkow University of Washington Affiliated Hospitals

FAMILY MEDICINE

Betsy Assoumou Cheshire Medical Center Dartmouth Health
 William Buick Full Circle Health (Boise, Idaho)
 Christina Cobb Oregon Health & Science University
 Julie Connor University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health
 Arley Donovan UMass Chan Medical School
 Krystal Gopaul UC Irvine Medical Center
 Alexander Kubacki Providence Hospital (Anchorage, Alaska)
 Tyler Landman Maine Medical Center
 Grace Merritt MultiCare Health System (Tacoma, Wash.)
 Rhys Niedecker University of Vermont Medical Center
 Mahima Poreddy UMass Chan Medical School
 Brianna Spano University of Vermont Medical Center
 Aathman Swaminathan UVM Health Network CVPH

GENERAL SURGERY

Kali Amoah Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital
 Sydney Cardozo University of North Carolina Hospitals
 Rachel Carpenter University of Vermont Medical Center
 Amanda Galenkamp Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital
 Keira Goodell Maine Medical Center
 William Robinson Tufts Medical Center
 Brian Shaw UMass Chan Medical School

INTERNAL MEDICINE

Robert Adamian University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
 Eliot Binkerd Boston University Medical Center
 Stephen Brand University of Florida College of Medicine (Gainesville)
 Lily Deng Temple University Hospital
 Liberty Dupuis University of Vermont Medical Center
 Aria Elahi MedStar Georgetown University Hospital (D.C.)
 Jake Ermolovich Johns Hopkins Hospital
 Juwairiyah Fatima University of Illinois College of Medicine
 Colby Fischer Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
 Stephen Foley UMass Chan Medical School
 Tyler Harkness Boston University Medical Center
 Timothy Long Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Boston)
 Ying Loo Tufts Medical Center
 Colleen McCarthy Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital

Arjune Nibber UC San Diego Medical Center
 Rebecca Rawlings University of Washington Affiliated Hospitals
 W. Evan Shaw Tufts Medical Center
 Sean Wang Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center

INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY

Kirolous Soliman University of Florida College of Medicine (Jacksonville)

NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY

Natalie Bales University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine

NEUROLOGY

Mohamad Hamze Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
 William Yakubik University of Rochester/Strong Memorial

NEUROLOGY – CHILD

Nicholas Krant University of Washington Affiliated Hospitals

OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY

Rachel Bombardier University of Utah Health
 Gabriela Bosmenier Cruz Boston University Medical Center
 Izabella Ostrowski Zucker School of Medicine (Great Neck, N.Y.)
 John Steinharter Brown University/Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island
 Rachel Wayne Pennsylvania Hospital

OPHTHALMOLOGY

Andrew DesLauriers Stanford University
 Joaquin Reategui Indiana University

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

Jeremy Abolade University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics
 Justin Esteban University of Connecticut School of Medicine
 Jack Mangan University of Kansas School of Medicine

OTOLARYNGOLOGY

Alexis Miller University of Alabama Medical Center

PATHOLOGY

Alayna Westcom University of Vermont Medical Center

PEDIATRICS

Trevor Coles University of Vermont Medical Center
 Rosie Eiduson University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
 Mialovena Exume Childrens National Medical Center
 Morgan Howlett Maine Medical Center
 Anneliese Lapidus Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital
 Jennifer Lor Rush University Medical Center (Chicago)
 Trevor McDonald University of Utah Health
 Natalie Qin Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital
 Alexandra Sarkis University of Florida College of Medicine (Gainesville)

PEDIATRICS/EMERGENCY MEDICINE

Alex Jenkins University of Maryland Medical Center

PEDIATRICS/PSYCHIATRY/CHILD PSYCHIATRY

Kiana Heredia University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

PHYSICAL MEDICINE & REHABILITATION

Jeremy Frank New York Medical College-Metropolitan Hospital Center
 Nicole Walch Mass General Brigham

PLASTIC SURGERY

Rosie Friedman UCLA Medical Center

PRELIMINARY MEDICINE

Benjamin Price New York Medical College-Landmark Medical Center

PRELIMINARY SURGERY

Matthew Breseman University of Rochester/Strong Memorial

PRIMARY MEDICINE

Daniel Fried Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital
 Timothy Greenfield Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital
 Patrick McClurg University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics
 Finlay Pilcher University of Vermont Medical Center

PSYCHIATRY

Elie Kaadi Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
 Megala Loganathan Duke University Medical Center
 Ankrish Milne Zucker School of Medicine (Glen Oaks, N.Y.)
 Ryan Warner University of Vermont Medical Center

PSYCHIATRY-ADULT/CHILD

Hannah Cook University of Vermont Medical Center

UROLOGY

Warrick Sahene Carolinas Medical Center

VASCULAR SURGERY

Maxwell Tulimieri Corewell Health/Michigan State University

CLASS OF
2024 MATCH
RESULTS

117

STUDENTS
MATCHED

68

INSTITUTIONS
MATCHED

13

MATCHES IN
VERMONT

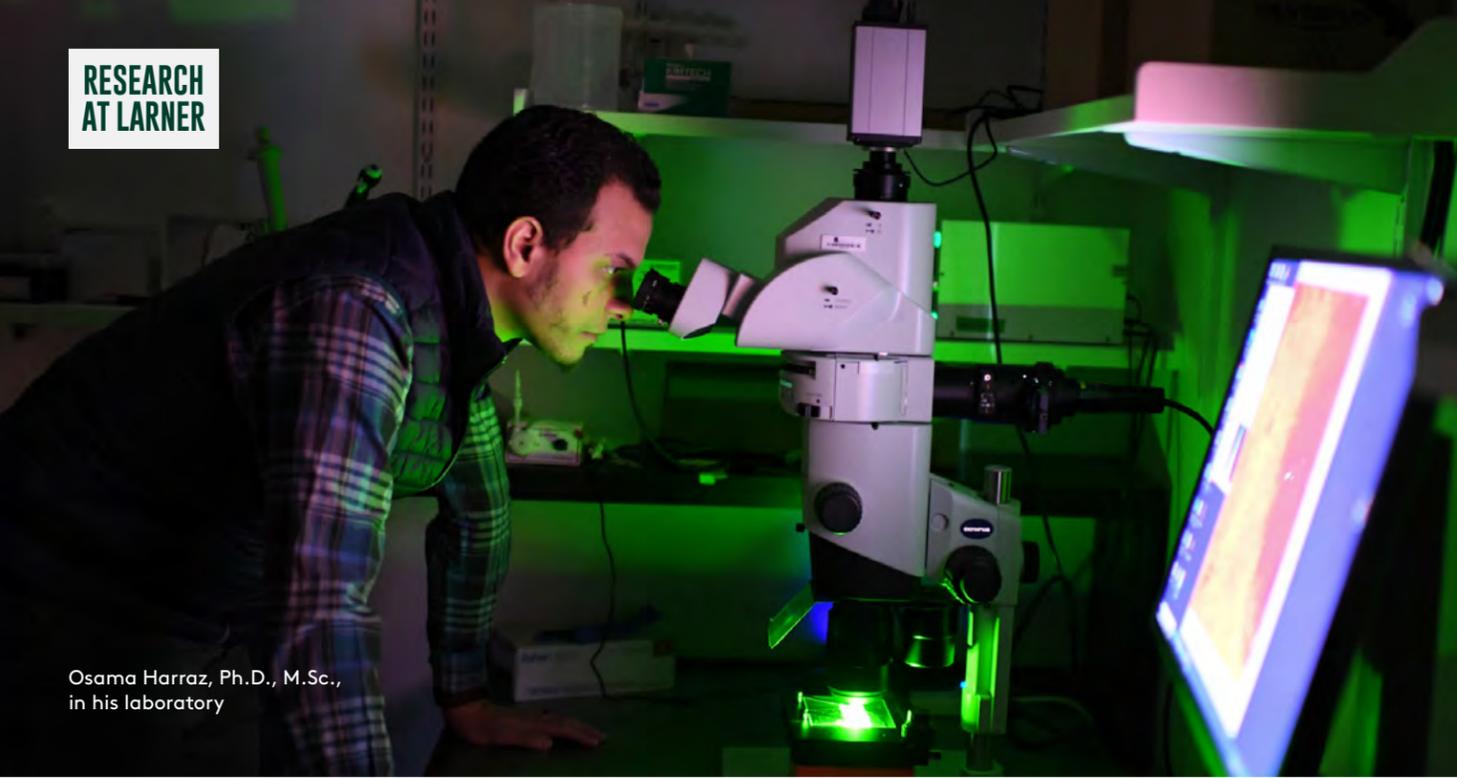
46

TOTAL TO
PRIMARY CARE



Watch a short video of the celebration on YouTube at youtube.com/UVMColofMedicine

*As not all students who matched want their information made public, there will be a slight discrepancy with the total published Match numbers.



Osama Harraz, Ph.D., M.Sc.,
in his laboratory

Tackling Neurodegenerative Diseases

OSAMA HARRAZ, PH.D., M.SC. WINS CHAN ZUCKERBERG INITIATIVE GRANT

Larner College of Medicine scientist Osama Harraz, Ph.D., M.Sc., and his colleague from the University of Maryland (UMD), Thomas Longden, Ph.D., are recipients of a prestigious Collaborative Pairs Pilot Project Award from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative’s (CZI) Neurodegeneration Challenge Network (NCDN). This award supports pairs of investigators and their teams in exploring innovative, interdisciplinary approaches to tackling critical challenges in neurodegenerative diseases and fundamental neuroscience.

Harraz and Longden’s project will focus on the reprogramming of blood flow to satisfy changing needs in different brain regions, a process the team refers to as vascular signaling plasticity. Certain brain regions are engaged in energy-intensive processes—such as complex cognitive functions like learning or memory formation—and therefore require more blood flow to sustain their functions. This is analogous to a flexible irrigation system delivering water to a field of crops depending on where growth is needed most.

“This is an exciting opportunity for Drs. Harraz and Longden to advance our scientific understanding of neuroplasticity across the lifespan,” said Kate Tracy, Ph.D., senior associate dean for research at the University of Vermont’s (UVM) Larner College of Medicine. “Results of this innovative research will have implications for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases and recovery from cerebrovascular and traumatic brain injuries.”

The CZI’s Phase 1 Pilot Project Award empowers collaborating teams to explore new, transformative ideas related to neurodegeneration. Harraz, Longden, and their supporting researchers at UMD and the Larner College of Medicine’s Harraz Lab will receive a total of \$200,000 over 18 months to support their project. Successful progress in this phase may lead to eligibility for a Phase 2 Pilot Project Award, which could grant the chosen Collaborative Pairs teams an acceleration award of \$1.6 million over four years.

The impact of blood flow in the brain extends beyond the provision

of energy; Harraz, who is the Bloomfield Early Career Professor in Cardiovascular Research and an assistant professor of pharmacology at the Larner College of Medicine, recently showed that the associated forces with flow are sensed through mechanical interoception. While a link between vascular signaling plasticity, and brain blood flow sensing has not been established, Harraz, Longden, and their respective teams will delve deeper into this possible connection and its impact on neurodegeneration. Their goal is to demonstrate whether manipulating blood flow sensing and vascular signaling plasticity could potentially slow, stop, or even reverse the progression of neurodegenerative diseases.

“By unifying two distinct and challenging research areas—vascular plasticity and blood flow sensing—this project will unveil a novel dimension of brain plasticity which without the combined expertise of our groups would remain hidden,” said Harraz, who is also a member of the Vermont Center for Cardiovascular and Brain Health (VCCBH). “We are excited to bring together two teams of emerging scientists to test out-of-the-box ideas that could lead to breakthroughs and novel therapies that are much needed to combat neurodegeneration.”

Collaborative Pair Awardees must hold a Ph.D. or M.D., hail from separate institutions, be classified as early- or mid-career investigators, and provide a statement on diversity and equity, among other criteria. Awardees are selected based on the quality of the scientific team, the extent to which the collaboration leverages complementary strengths, and the potential of the work to advance neurodegeneration research or fundamental neuroscience.

“Just a few short years ago, Dr. Harraz started as a beginning assistant professor funded and mentored by our center,” said Mary Cushman, M.D., M.Sc., University Distinguished Professor and codirector of VCCBH. “He is now a rapidly rising star in the neurovascular field, and we can’t wait to see his further progress.” VM



RETHINKING SCREEN TIME

INVESTIGATING IMPACTS ON ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH AND BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

A \$2M National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant is poised to drive groundbreaking research led by Assistant Professor of Psychiatry Bader Chaarani, Ph.D. The study aims to delve into the effects of screen time on adolescents’ brain development and mental health, utilizing data from the ongoing Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study.



Bader Chaarani,
Ph.D.

The ABCD Study, initiated in 2016, spans a 10-year duration and involves nearly 12,000 youth ages 9–10 across 21 research sites nationwide. It stands as the largest long-term study of brain development and child health in the United States. Dr. Chaarani’s grant zeroes in on five-year data related to screen time, focusing on subjects ages 9–15 enrolled in the study. Given the relatively recent prevalence of screen time, little research has explored its long-term impacts on children and teens.

This grant will help Chaarani and his team of Larner researchers—Chair of Psychiatry Robert Althoff, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Psychiatry Hugh Garavan, Ph.D., M.A., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry Matthew Albaugh, Ph.D., and Associate Professor of Pediatrics Leigh-Anne Cioffredi, M.D., M.P.H.—examine screen time while controlling for other important factors, such as age differences, subtypes of screen time, gender disparities, puberty, sleep disorders, and substance use disorders.

The team also aims to delve deeper into the specific impact of each screen time category—active, passive (TV watching), mixed (texting, social media, browsing)—potential causal relationships, and more, leveraging state-of-the-art techniques and the knowledge gained from several sets of twins in the ABCD cohort, many of whom are identical.

“As a video game enthusiast, I am thrilled to be leading this project that will analyze one of the largest and most comprehensive longitudinal datasets to uncover both the beneficial and detrimental impacts of screen time categories,” stated Chaarani. “Our goal is to provide valuable insights that can reshape best practices surrounding digital media use in children and adolescents.”

Understanding REV1

STUDYING DNA DAMAGE AND MUTAGENIC REPAIR RESPONSES

Nimrat Chatterjee, M.Sc., Ph.D., assistant professor of microbiology and molecular genetics, has been honored with a prestigious Maximizing Investigators’ Research Award (MIRA, or R35) from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS). The five-year \$1.9 million grant is intended to provide investigators with increased stability and flexibility, allowing ample opportunity for important breakthroughs. The funding will support Dr. Chatterjee’s work studying DNA damage and mutagenic repair responses.

Chatterjee specializes in investigating mechanisms by which the translesion synthesis pathway that leads to genetic mutations can result in genome instability in cancer resistance and relapse and how this pathway can be therapeutically targeted.

She studies REV1, the principal molecule in this mutagenic pathway, known to be responsible for causing harmful mutations. Still, recent work from her laboratory suggests that there may be other REV1 functions that collectively cause genome instability and cancer resistance. The R35 MIRA funding will help Chatterjee understand how REV1 engages in these novel broad arrays of cellular functions, with the ultimate hope of increasing our understanding of mechanisms that lead to cancer relapse and therapy resistance.

“We have uncovered novel arrays of REV1-dependent cellular functions leading to genome instability,” says Chatterjee. “Using basic and synthetic biology tools and REV1-based targeted therapy, we aim to delineate complex genome instability networks implicated in cancer etiology, therapy resistance, and other debilitating human diseases.”

Chatterjee collaborates extensively across the University of Vermont campus, including with fellow UVM Cancer Center members Eyal Amiel, Ph.D., Jason Stumpff, Ph.D., Julie Dragon, Ph.D., Ying Wai Lam, Ph.D., and Douglas Taatjes, Ph.D., as well as with researchers at other institutes, including Duke, Harvard, UMass, and the University of Connecticut. Her work has been extensively supported by the University of Vermont Center for Biomedical Shared Resources.



Nimrat Chatterjee, Ph.D., M.Sc.,
in her laboratory at the Firestone
Medical Research Building



STUDENT VOICES

Through My Brother's Eyes

FOURTH-YEAR MEDICAL STUDENT JAKE ERMOLOVICH WRITES ABOUT FINDING MEDICINE THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF HIS BROTHER'S CARE

Jake Ermolovich

I found medicine in the eyes of my brother, and through his eyes I've seen the voiceless rise. My brother can't speak well, or walk even short distances without assistance. His activities of daily living are only given to him—he can't take them for himself. Despite being over a decade older than me, he still needs help with many things, including how to understand the world and its judgement. My brother has cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and an intellectual disability. These diagnoses are broad and barely breach what it means to be bound by them, as they are only a set of descriptions attempting to understand another's life. My brother can't communicate the words that are meant to define him, but that doesn't stop him from reaching out beyond his body's limitations.

A Sick Electricity That Overtakes His Brain

Some of the most harrowing moments of his life have stemmed from his seizures; a sick electricity that overtakes his brain, flooding his consciousness until it's drowned in dark waters. This disordered cerebral static instills fear in even the minds of those it doesn't control. I'll never forget the look in my brother's eyes when these episodes overtake him: at first, I see concern, his eyes worried that something behind them is awry. Then concern cedes to panic, followed swiftly by blankness, as the presence in his eyes is ripped from this world. His eyes sign language that his hands want to and speak where his mouth can't. It's these orbital pools I find myself returning to as I progress through my education, exploring a depth to his experience I could only surmise from the surface before.

“It's these orbital pools I find myself returning to as I progress through my education, exploring a depth to his experience I could only surmise from the surface before.”

– JAKE ERMOLOVICH, CLASS OF 2024

I often see reflections of my brother's eyes in the eyes of my patients. My brother was frequently hospitalized as a child, affording him the experience of strange people doing strange things to him he didn't like; I see the same mistrust and anxiety in the patient who “asks too many questions,” when they only want to know how to control the mess made by illness and the attempts to cure it.

My brother had many seizures before an adequate medication regimen could control them, which has left him hypervigilant to any change in his body that could provoke the galvanic beast in his head. I recognize his look in the fatigue of a patient who, after another failed SSRI, is left riding the line of “I'm doing fine” and “I'm not safe at home alone.”

His Eyes Are Telling the Truth

My brother would ask for my hand before doing something that scared him—something like meeting a new case worker or receiving a needed vaccine. I see how offering a hand can do something words can't for the patient on hospice who's left bereft at the realization they can no longer travel to the island their grandfather was honored on.

My brother no longer lets others draw his blood to check his medication levels, so I do it now. All the pain I've seen in him—manifested in outbursts of frustration to fend off the fear—is pain I've seen again and again in outpatient offices and inpatient rooms. I can see it in the eyes of those who have suffered at the hands of a medical system that isn't perfect. I can feel it like the strength of my brother's impossibly tight grip on my hand, reminding me his eyes are telling the truth. Once his grip relaxes, I'm reminded by my pulsing hand that I, too, am feeling pain.

I see this pain, too, in the eyes of the resident physicians I've worked alongside. Their eyes hoped for their patients to get better, then found the eyes of families to explain why they got worse. Their eyes have found bleary daylight after a night of crying into the nothingness of loss. Their eyes have seen the same loss

of trust in a sick-care system that has done so much but still struggles to keep people healthy. When there is so much injustice and suffering in one's work, it seeps into the life surrounding that work—like a wound bleeding without pause until the gauze is saturated. We tamp down the wound the best we can to survive training, but sometimes we tamp too hard, and the packing disrupts the flow of emotion that brought us to this work.

Catching the Spark

Too often we stomp out any smoldering ember of feeling in an attempt to avoid burnout. Yet without any fire at all, we end up lost in our own little cliché allegories Plato has taunted us with from that cave of his, seeing only shadows of the passion, resilience, and empathy that fueled us. To mitigate this, we must catch the spark that's catching hold on the orbital floors circling us every day, meeting them where they are. When we see ire, we must understand the passion for life that drives people to anger; kindle that passion within. When we see hopelessness, we must understand the dread of a world with ceaseless suffering; we must be equally as ceaseless to provide balance to the sufferer. When we see negative emotions in our patients, we need not internalize their emotions wholly, but rather take only the pieces that hold value and drive us. Helping a patient to transform these feelings could be the first step in changing their health trajectory.

While much change is needed broadly across the health care system, we must never forget the possibility of change that exists in each physician-patient interaction. From one moment of understanding springs many others, like the branching of a tree. I'm reminded now of the trees in my backyard. I was always the one climbing them while my brother signaled me to go higher, laughing when I did. The bark of the oak left marks on my arms and hands as I ascended, but when another limb loomed above, I was lifted to it by his audible joy. Watch me climb, brother, this is for you. **VM**

Behind the scenes with **Lewis First, M.D.**

If you raise or care for a child in Vermont or upstate New York, you likely know of Dr. Lewis First. You probably have listened to or watched "First with Kids," the long-running weekly health tips segment he writes and hosts for local radio, television, and community newspapers. You may have seen or heard him as a spirited participant or emcee at community events to benefit children and families in the region. And if a child you know ever needed hospital or specialty care, it's a fair bet you encountered Lewis First, M.D., M.S., at UVM Children's Hospital.

As he marks his 30th year as chair of pediatrics at the University of Vermont and chief of pediatrics at UVM Children's Hospital, Dr. First reflects on his career journey, the choices he made along the way, and the legacy he continues to build.

By Janet Essman Franz

(Right) Dr. Lewis First poses at the television studio where he records his health tips show.





With his penchant for Mickey Mouse ties, rewriting silly song lyrics, endless puns, and “dad jokes,” pediatrics seems like it must have been a natural fit for Lewis First from the start, but that wasn’t what his family intended for him.

Growing up in Philadelphia with a great-uncle, father, and paternal uncle who were obstetrician-gynecologists (and a medical librarian mother), there was a strong desire for Lewis First and his brother, Ken, to join the family practice. But young Lewis could not stand the sight of blood or the sounds of pain: As a teenager, he promptly fainted while witnessing his father deliver a baby, perform a cesarean section, or suction mucous from a crying newborn.

He was determined to prevail, however. At age 16 he volunteered in the emergency room trauma bay at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital as a means of overcoming his syncopal difficulties, which he successfully accomplished. More importantly, First also learned about the varied backgrounds and life experiences of the patients he encountered in that emergency department, and he began to develop the sense of cultural humility and appreciation for patient- and family-centered care that is vital to his practice and leadership today.

•••

First came to the University of Vermont in 1994 from Boston Children’s Hospital with his wife, Sandy, and their two young children, David and Rachel, accepting positions as professor of pediatrics, department chair, and pediatric hospitalist. Shortly after his arrival, he visited every pediatric office in Vermont and upstate New York to establish and strengthen relationships with all pediatricians served by the college of medicine. Over the years, he has cared for patients in emergency, primary care, and inpatient settings, enabling him to relate to the many different aspects of overseeing the department and children’s hospital and listen to the needs of patients and clinicians. He strategically led the ongoing expansion of the department and its clinical services and the branding of the University of Vermont Children’s Hospital as “a children’s hospital without walls” across the UVM Health Network.

In 2003, First was named senior associate dean for medical education, a position he held for seven years while continuing as department chair, and helped implement the Vermont Integrated Curriculum, which integrates active learning with basic and clinical sciences. He continues to teach and mentor trainees using creative methods that have garnered him accolades

and honors, including the rank of Distinguished Educator in the Teaching Academy, the Association of American Medical Colleges Alpha Omega Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teacher Award, and the George V. Kidder Outstanding Faculty Award for excellence in teaching from the UVM Alumni Association.

In 1995, First launched “First with Kids” on radio station WOKO 98.9 FM, delivering evidence-based tips for keeping children and adolescents healthy—with his special brand of humor. NBC5 picked up the segment for broadcast on morning and evening television newscasts and it is syndicated for publication in 15 community newspapers, making First a celebrity in the region. In 1999, he further applied his literary skills as the author of several textbooks and was the inaugural editor of AAP Grand Rounds, a monthly newsletter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. He became editor-in-chief of the peer-reviewed journal, *Pediatrics* in 2009. Well respected among the medical community, First has been a popular presenter and keynote speaker at national and international conferences.

“Lewis First is an icon. He’s a master clinician and brilliant educator. He has touched the practice of every pediatric care provider in our state and region and educated countless members of the community through his wisdom and wit, says Larner College of Medicine Dean Richard Page, M.D. “Under his leadership for 30 years, the Department of Pediatrics has become nationally and internationally recognized for its excellence.”

First established a new set of principles for faculty: They must strive to be national or international leaders in the field of pediatrics... they must act to improve the communities they live in...and they must love caring for children, not just as a job but as a calling.



(Above) First focuses on work in his office at the UVM Larner College of Medicine.

Today, First is the longest lasting current pediatrics department chair in the United States. He oversees a network department spanning the six UVM Health Network hospital sites and five outpatient pediatrics primary care sites serving approximately 225,000 children across Vermont and New York, with nearly 110 pediatricians and advanced practice providers, 300 nurses, 50 support staff, and 60 patient-family advisers, and more than \$10 million in research funding in 2023 that includes basic, translational, and clinical science and quality improvement studies.

Leadership and Service

First is the third chair of the department, following R. James McKay, M.D., the founding chair, who served for 33 years starting in 1950, followed by Carol Lee Philips, M.D., who served for 10 years. Stepping into this role was humbling, First says, and he made it his mission to carry on the original doctrines of Dr. McKay, who had instructed department faculty to always be gentle, respectful, understanding, sympathetic, and kind.

First established a new set of principles for faculty to apply these qualities: They must strive to be national or international leaders in the field of pediatrics, through either clinical work, education, research, or advocacy; they must act to improve the communities they live in through volunteering and service; and they must love caring for children, not just as a job but as a calling. These tenets are important to the department’s visibility

and enable it to grow its academic and clinical mission locally, nationally, and internationally, First says.

“When we’re out there volunteering, educating, taking leadership roles, and advocating for child health improvements, people see us embedded in the region and realize how much we care for our patients, and they appreciate having a children’s hospital and pediatrics department that is here for them,” says First. In 2014, because of the department’s accomplishments, First received the Joseph W. St. Geme Jr. Leadership Award, the highest leadership award given nationally in academic pediatrics.

Since 2020, First added three more tenets for his team: Everyone must help improve health disparities through their work in diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice; take time for well-being activities; and make sure the department culture is sustainable for those who follow. Department meetings always include reflections of gratitude, and all educational gatherings contain an “equity slide” focusing on how health care disparities play a role in illness diagnosis or treatment. “We educate ourselves in what it means to be antiracist, be a gender equity ally, understand the stigma of weight, disability, or when English is not your primary language, and then act to reduce these disparities in our interactions with patients and each other,” he says.

First personally meets annually with faculty on campus to discuss their work in the community and their career aspirations. He wants to know what they enjoy doing

on and off the job and how the department can support them in achieving their aspirations. Faculty and staff say Lewis's guidance cultivates their own well-being.

"When I interviewed for residency at UVM Children's Hospital, I could tell that he was the kind of leader who fostered a culture I wanted to be in. He is so thoughtful about relationships and focusing on the value of people," says L. E. Faricy, M.D., assistant professor of pediatrics and attending physician for pediatric pulmonology. "I always feel seen as a person and not just an employee. He puts time and effort into building relationships with people and the community in a way that I emulate, with a constant focus on what's best for children."

Sue Victory, who has worked for every UVM pediatrics department chair during her 46-year administrative career in the pediatrics department, emphasizes First's visionary skills and supportive demeanor. "Lewis has a way of encouraging people and making them want to excel and to reach goals. He helps people succeed, and he applauds them for it. He has done that for me, and for everyone else, including staff, faculty, division directors, residents, and students," Victory says, noting that he starts every meeting with expressions of appreciative gratitude for a person, program, or division accomplishment and always injects his sense of humor. "People appreciate that he can be both very serious and also lighthearted at appropriate times."

Creative Outlets

As an undergraduate biochemistry major at Harvard College, First made a point to take as many non-medical courses as he could fit into his schedule. He took history, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, and economics courses because "I love learning, reading, the creative use of words, and humanistic interactions with people," First says. He worked his way into a job on the college newspaper (pre-med students were discouraged from such extracurricular activities) and gave campus tours, through which he honed his skills as an entertainer. "My tours were my performance art. Telling stories about the college buildings and history was fun."

As a medical student at Harvard Medical School, First lived with three classmates with whom he wrote skits and musical numbers for the Second Year and Fourth Year class shows, the campy, irreverent Harvard tradition tapping theatrical talents of students. First enjoyed writing parodies of Broadway show tunes and performing as a lounge singer. "During intermissions I walked through the audience doing song parodies," he recalls, adding that this talent has proven useful in professional settings. To this day, when First gives a national talk or grand rounds, he sings show tunes with lyrics he rewrites for the occasion.

Until his third year of medical school, however, First did not realize that he could incorporate his fun, creative side into his serious work. A senior resident teaching the pediatric clerkship rotation showed First that one could take patients and illness seriously but with a dose of humor and creativity.

"It was my last clinical rotation, and I was apprehensive about communicating with children who were ill,"



First recalls. "The resident said very seriously, 'I expect you to present a patient perfectly, in three minutes or less' and called on me. I sheepishly presented the case of a boy who was wheezing. The resident turned around, put on funny moustache glasses, and said in a Groucho Marx voice, 'Was it a wheeze, or was it a sneeze?' He was a hoot and a half, and he taught me how to manage asthma at the same time!" The same resident later had a cold, and the nurses reminded the team to wear protective masks during patient rounds. "He took us on a field trip to buy us funny masks. I thought, 'Oh my gosh, he can be humorous and caring and demonstrate enormous command of pathophysiology underlying pediatric illnesses!' The chance to be creative and at the same time be a scientist, a clinician, a teacher, and a compassionate caregiver is why I chose a career in pediatrics."

The spectrum of caring for patients from day one of life to young adulthood fascinated First, along with "the ability to go upstream in caring for patients," focusing on preventive strategies to keep children healthy rather than only treating them when they are sick.

Paying It Forward

The lessons First learned as a teenager volunteering in a diverse Philadelphia emergency room, as an undergraduate scholar and tour guide, and as a medical student remain embedded in his interactions with others, including young people exploring careers in medicine. He dedicates department funding and his own time to a program led by Larner students called URiM (underrepresented in medicine) Pathways to Pediatrics, giving a glimpse of medical school to undergraduate students who self-identify as being underrepresented in the field of medicine. First mingles with participants and leads "Clinical Mystery Case" sessions to help them understand how

(Above) First joins the fun at events benefiting children and families.

"The chance to be creative and at the same time be a scientist, a clinician, a teacher, and a compassionate caregiver is why I chose a career in pediatrics."
– Lewis First, M.D.



(Above) A personable mentor and creative teacher, First has earned numerous accolades for medical education.

pediatricians think about solving a problem. It's just one of many examples of First's commitment to medical education and creating opportunities for others to excel.

"Being able to introduce undergraduate college students who self-identify as under-represented to the field of child health is a meaningful experience for all involved, especially when it results in attendees considering pursuing a career in pediatrics that they may never have considered before," First says. "Many of these students stay in touch with people they met from our department, helping us build a pathway for underrepresented child health professionals."

Class of 2024 medical student Kiana Heredia created URiM Pathway to Pediatrics in 2022 with an aim to support students who feel doubtful about their ability to succeed, as she says she once felt. Getting to know First has been integral to her personal and professional growth and success. "Dr. First taught me to have faith that there are people out there who believe in you. He has shown me the richness of not only mentorship but also sponsorship. I appreciate him for providing me with a safe space and room to breathe," Heredia says. "Dr. First is extraordinarily personable and down to earth. We can chat about anything from academics and life goals to the next best thing to watch on TV."

What to watch on television is one of First's favorite topics at staff and faculty meetings. At morning reports, he encourages participants to share what they did for fun outside of the workplace and shares his antics on the golf course and stories of family activities. He encourages department personnel to participate in wellness challenges hosted by the pediatric chief resident, sharing photos of themselves completing tasks like taking a hike, playing with a pet, or having fun with their work team.

"Rather than struggling to juggle our careers, family and friends, and personal interests, we try to make the space where those areas overlap as large as possible," says First. "Knowing that overlapping space can exist is a formula for wellness for ourselves and for the patients we take care of."



Elevating Impact

While humor provides an anchor, there are times, First says, when he is the most serious person in the room. "I don't use humor if it's sarcastic or cynical. Humor is my 'white coat,' it's a sign of my professionalism. It's my commitment to shape what I do relative to the needs of the patient or the room I am in."

On a recent day in the Children's Specialty Center, while First chatted with staff at the reception desk, a young patient waiting to be seen and their caregiver caught his attention. First addressed the child and caregiver by name and assured them he had not forgotten about an earlier conversation. He promised to follow through, and the caregiver expressed confidence in his words. It was clear that First knows the patient, her family, and her plight.

Reflecting on his accomplishments during the past three decades, First points to the high quality of care his team provides daily for children and families across the region, and the longevity of department personnel, including himself. After three decades at the helm, First continues to give grand rounds at the hospital, mentor faculty and residents, teach medical students, counsel trainees, write and host "First With Kids," edit *Pediatrics*, serve on national committees, and speak at educational conferences.

"I am as energized in my 30th year as chair as I was when I arrived in Burlington in 1994. I enjoy what I do and the difference our department and children's hospital are making," he says. "My own children and grandchild have grown up needing this children's hospital, and there's nothing more reassuring than seeing your kids overcome health issues and become caring members of our community in part because of the great pediatric care they got here over the past 30 years. I want everyone that connects with our department and children's hospital to feel they are part of a team improving the well-being of children and paving the way for a better future." VM



LARNER
STUDENT'S
PILOT
COURSE
GETS
FUTURE
DOCTORS
COOKING

By Janet Essman Franz

FOOD AS MEDICINE



Medical students working together to prepare a meal with nutritious, low-cost ingredients and simple tools include (left to right): Oliver Koch, Isaac Sellinger, Raihan Kabir, and Kyra Weaver.



Ali Chivers '27 and Lauren Schiff '27 prepare kale for stuffed sweet potatoes.

Benjamin Sebuufu '27 scoops soup for Dr. Dittus and Jake Ayisi '27.



Ginger, garlic, and curry aromas waft through the first-floor hallway in the medical education center, where sounds of light conversation blend with scraping, clinking, and chopping. Inside the Larner Classroom, medical students peel carrots, dice onions, and de-stem kale. **This is not a potluck social, it's an academic class.**



Twenty-eight first-year medical students are learning about culinary medicine, which pairs nutritional science with preventive health care. This evening's session is one of five in a semester-long extracurricular program, developed by medical class of 2026 students Sarah Krumholz and Molly Hurd, that teaches about lifestyle interventions for chronic disease. Tonight, as the students learn about the role of vegetables and fruits in preventing disease, they prepare and eat their dinner.

On the menu: golden lentil soup, sweet potato stuffed with black beans, and cancer prevention.

Co-leaders of the Lifestyle Medicine Student Interest Group at UVM, Hurd and Krumholz recognized the value of including nutrition in medical education. Working with faculty advisor Whitney Calkins, M.D., assistant professor of family medicine, they developed the pilot class with an aim to educate future doctors on the science of culinary medicine and increase their confidence when engaging with patients about nutrition, because nutrition counseling can save lives.

"Diet can be positively linked to disease outcomes. If you intervene early enough, you can make a difference in people's health," said Krumholz. "Being able to work with first-year medical students to lay foundational knowledge in nutrition and basic skills in counseling early in their training allows them to maintain that perspective as they continue their training and future patient care."

A registered dietitian, Krumholz was inspired to attend medical school by her experience counseling patients with diabetes and liver and cardiovascular diseases. At Boston Medical Center she talked to patients at bedside, often after acute coronary events or limb amputations resulting from uncontrolled diabetes. She also taught therapeutic cooking classes for people with chronic illness and served as a nutrition expert on a pediatric intervention study.

Hurd learned about culinary medicine while pursuing a certificate in integrative health at UVM, concurrent with a B.S. in neuroscience, graduating in 2019. She earned an M.S. in pharmacology at UVM in 2020. As part of her undergraduate coursework, Hurd studied abroad in Denmark and Iceland, where she witnessed the benefits of health care focused on illness prevention through nutrition, exercise, and other lifestyle behaviors.

"Many primary care physicians [in the U.S.] don't have skills to talk to their patients about nutrition or how to have an impact on patients' diets," Hurd said. "My goal for this class is to help students feel more comfortable talking about food and diet with patients."

Course participants include Jake Ayisi '27, who aspires to explain the reasons behind choosing some foods over others. "I've asked a physician for help with my diet, and he said he didn't know enough about it. I want to be able to understand the macronutrients and micronutrients and give real



advice. As opposed to saying, 'avoid sugar, avoid sodium,' I can tell them what to try instead," Ayisi said.

Hamza Mirza '27, has personal, along with professional, goals in mind: "I like food, I like cooking. I want to learn how to cook healthy for myself, and how to advise patients on easy ways to incorporate healthy eating practices," Mirza said.

Each class focuses on a medical aspect of diet, including controlling obesity, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes, cancer survivorship, and nutrition through the lifecycle. Following a didactic segment, the students cook together as a group. To pay for recipe ingredients, Hurd and Krumholz applied for and received a Taste of Medicine micro-grant through the American Academy of Lifestyle Medicine.

"We have an opportunity to improve patient outcomes if we figure out the keys to lifestyle medicine, and so much of that is about social determinants of health." — Sarah Krumholz '26

On this evening, guest speaker Kim Dittus, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor of medicine, presents the didactic portion of the class. An oncologist and UVM Cancer Center member, Dr. Dittus's research focuses on the impact of nutrition and exercise on improving cancer outcomes. She shows the students the scientific evidence linking food and health: Cancer prevalence is higher among people who eat fewer vegetables; individuals who are food insecure tend to eat fewer fruits and vegetables and are more likely to experience chronic conditions; phytonutrients (chemical compounds produced by plants) play a role in cell signaling pathways; and insoluble fiber cleanses the digestive track and improves mucous thickness, important aspects of the immune system.



"In the Cancer Center, we work with patients to improve their fruit and vegetable intake because it's so important," Dittus said. Her advice for good health: eat vegetables and fruits at every meal and snack, consume a variety of produce for a more diverse microbiome, and eat a "rainbow" of colors for essential phytonutrients.

Sarah Pfreundschuh '27 cites her personal experience with food to treat health concerns. "Nutrition helped me a lot with gut issues. I want to learn more about how to put nutrition into my practice," she said. "As a future doctor, I want to help patients figure out their barriers to choosing a healthy diet and help them overcome those barriers stepwise."

"We have an opportunity to improve patient outcomes if we figure out the keys to lifestyle medicine, and so much of that is about social determinants of health," said Sarah Krumholz '26.

A patient's culture and food customs should factor into dietary recommendations, said Ali Chivers, B.S.'19, Larner Class of 2027. "Food is central to how we connect to each other, and to our

culture. As a future physician, I hope to provide advice to patients that helps them make nutritional choices connected to their culture, such as healthy alternatives to their traditional foods."

As an example, "If you tell a patient to eat more protein, but [their traditional dishes] are vegetarian, it's important to have knowledge to navigate that," said Harjas Sabharwal '27.

Appropriate counseling on dietary improvements must also consider patients' economic and social conditions, including employment status, disabilities, and access to resources, said Krumholz. That's why this course examines social determinants of health and preparing meals without expensive ingredients or elaborate tools. Recipes prepared in class typically involve using a hot plate or microwave and nonperishable foods that are low cost and nutrient dense, because "not everyone has access to a full kitchen," Krumholz said. "We have an opportunity to improve patient outcomes if we figure out the keys to lifestyle medicine, and so much of that is about social determinants of health."



Outside of class, Jake Ayisi has been making the dishes for himself, enjoying the variety, ease of preparation, and frugality. "I can make a frittata one morning for the week ahead, and it's nutritious and inexpensive," he said. "I was surprised to learn how many recipes you can make on a budget, and how cost effective eating nutritiously can be."

Krumholz and Hurd plan to offer the culinary medicine extracurricular course again next fall while they explore funding opportunities to support the course after they graduate. **VM**



Get cooking with recipes on Larner Lifestyle Medicine Instagram @larnerlifestylemed

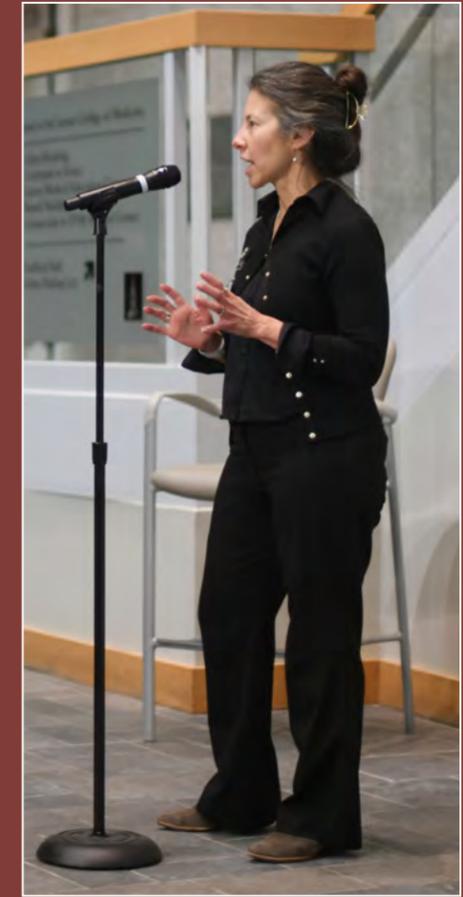
STORYSLAMRx

“Humbling Moments,” was the theme of the sixth annual “StorySlamRx: Voices in Medicine” held on January 18. Modeled after The Moth live storytelling on public radio, the yearly open-microphone event welcomes anyone affiliated with the UVM’s health science community to tell their stories. Speakers explored the night’s theme through five-minute, true stories that prompted laughter, tears, and reflection from the audience of 60-plus students, faculty, physicians, university and hospital staff.

Medical students in the Alpha Omega Alpha honor medical society and Gold Humanism Honor Society organized and hosted the event with mentorship from faculty advisors Andrea Green, M.D., professor of pediatrics, and Marie Sandoval, M.D., associate professor of medicine. Class of 2024 students Lily Deng, Amanda Galenkamp, Simran Kalsi, and Jack Steinharter served on the planning committee.



► Read more about Story Slam at med.uvm.edu/vtmedicine



“It can be a powerful healing tool to listen to stories and tell stories without fear of being shamed, blamed, or ignored.”

– Andrea Green, M.D.



CAPTURING A PICTURE OF HEALTH

BY JANET
ESSMAN
FRANZ

“The human mind simply cannot carry all the information about the patients in a practice or store all the information about every single medical diagnosis.”



These words of wisdom, paraphrased from a 1984 lecture by the late Lawrence Weed, M.D., a professor of medicine at the University of Vermont, sparked an idea in a young medical student’s mind. That spark led the future doctor to envision and create a clinical decision tool that visually shows, describes, and categorizes thousands of diseases. Used in clinics and medical schools throughout the nation and across the globe, this tool, VisualDx, delivers time-sensitive, clinically relevant information for diagnosing and treating common and rare diseases and brings public health to the point of care.

Art Papier, M.D. '88, was a first-year medical student in Vermont when he attended Dr. Weed’s brown-bag lunch lecture 40 years ago. Papier was fascinated by Weed’s work, which focused on the advantages of keeping detailed, shareable medical records to improve patient care and health outcomes. Weed devised the now widely used problem-oriented medical record (POMR) to organize patient data by diagnosis and SOAP notes (Subjective, Objective, Assessment, and Plan), a standardized method for organizing and guiding patient information and thinking. Following Weed’s lecture, the future Dr. Papier began working for Weed’s medical software company, Problem-Knowledge Couplers (PKC), where Papier entered medical literature information into a data bank for physicians and learners.

“In his small attic office, I was introduced to the problem of cognitive biases in medical decision-making and the limitation of the human mind in handling complexity. I began to appreciate that individual practitioners could not possibly store every single diagnosis in their heads and—just as important—it was impossible to know all the right questions to ask for each potential complaint the patient might have,” says Dr. Papier, associate

professor in dermatology and medical informatics at the University of Rochester and dermatologist at University of Rochester Medical Center. “With the explosion of medical knowledge, if we are to deliver high-level care, we need to augment our brains with reliable information as we make decisions.”

This revelation stuck with Papier as he started his residency in 1990 in Rochester, New York, where Kodak—the photographic film company—was headquartered. The digital photography revolution was beginning, and Kodak had recently designed a system for digitizing Kodachrome slides onto compact discs. By 1999, digital cameras had become ubiquitous, and Papier was creating prototype digital tools under the company name Logical Images. The product software was released in 2001, but at the time, few people could use it.

“There were no computers in medical exam rooms (to run the software), no smart phones, and no electronic health records being used (to share the information), so there was little commercial interest in our product,” Papier recalls. “Then 9/11 [terrorist attacks] happened, and Anthrax [deadly bacterium] was spread in the mail.” These momentous events set VisualDx on trajectory to success, he says. >

(Above) Dr. Weed,
1971 Internal Medicine
Grand Round lecture
(from YouTube)

In November 2001, Papier received a phone call from D.A. Henderson, M.D., M.P.H., a renowned physician who had led the effort to eradicate smallpox. Dr. Henderson was leading U.S. preparedness to address the threat of intentional dissemination of biological agents, including smallpox. The George W. Bush's administration intended to mandate smallpox vaccination for 60 million Americans in six months, with Henderson overseeing the rollout. The smallpox vaccine carried risks that concerned Dr. Henderson, including a potentially fatal complication in people with eczema or the immunocompromised. Henderson engaged VisualDx to create a website and print materials for the Centers for Disease Control to visually show health care workers normal and adverse reactions to the vaccine.

"We then met with health departments to show how VisualDx could assist professionals with patients with fever, rash, and possible bioterrorism diseases," says Papier. "We could give them software they can use daily for common things, and the bioterrorism information will be there if they need it." Within two years, health departments in five states and New York City, Los Angeles County, and San Antonio licensed VisualDx, establishing it as a tool in public health preparedness.

Fast forward to 2007 and the proliferation of smartphones with cameras and internet connectivity. With this new technology, VisualDx returned to its core idea of bringing pattern-recognition skills for any medical problem to the point of care.

How It Works

VisualDx is a digital resource that guides clinicians in differential diagnosis, treatment decisions and patient education. Its library contains 47,000 skin, oral, eye, genital, hair, nail, radiographic, electrocardiogram, and pathologic images covering more than 3,400 diseases and public health threats, including COVID-19, mpox, Lyme disease, measles, and rabies. The content is created by an editorial board of invited experts and is continually updated. Additionally, a smartphone user can take a photo of a rash or lesion and the software's AI-assisted tool will analyze the photo and guide the user through possible conditions, with narrative descriptions and images. The platform interfaces with Epic and

other electronic health records, which improves information sharing, decision-making, and workflow in a busy health care setting.

VisualDx can be customized for state and local public health reporting, with alerts about whom to contact and links to reporting forms and phone numbers. The Vermont Department of Health launched a pilot project in November 2022 to provide the technology to all clinicians, residents, and nurse practitioner and medical students in Vermont. The initiative aims to remove barriers between public health goals and busy medical professionals, to improve Vermont's readiness for emerging infectious diseases. The Vermont-customized platform allows public health alerts to go out unobtrusively, and clinicians can access reference information about emerging conditions and are guided to submit specimens to the Vermont Public Health laboratory.

"We believe this first-of-its-kind initiative will improve public health by supporting our health professionals with intuitive tools for timely diagnosis, testing, and patient education," said Vermont Health Commissioner Mark Levine, M.D., professor of medicine. "Connecting Vermont's time-strapped medical professionals with the information they need right when they need it ensures that they will be ready for the ever-changing and seemingly constantly emerging public health emergencies."

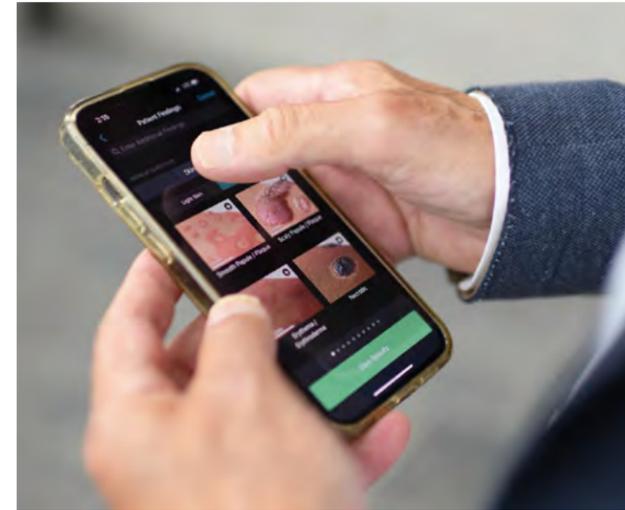
Educational Tool

VisualDx has gained attention in medical education, with 113 medical schools in the U.S. currently using it. As part of the Vermont health department initiative, Larner medical students can access VisualDx through an app on their smartphones and through the university's electronic library. Students and faculty find it helpful for learning and discussing skin maladies on a variety of skin tones.

"It is a strong educational resource for students as they encounter common and uncommon dermatologic



Art Papier, M.D.'88



VisualDx brings public health to point of care.

entities. The descriptive rubric VisualDx uses provides a useful way to demonstrate the best terminology to typify skin lesions in a clinical setting," says Jonathan Rosen, M.D., professor of psychological science and director of undergraduate medical education at the UVM clinical branch campus.

Keith Morley, M.D., assistant professor of medicine, uses VisualDx both in his clinical practice as a pediatric dermatologist and as a teacher of residents and medical students. "Dermatology is a field where you really need to train your eyes. Rashes, skin cancers, and birth marks can be quite nuanced and have a wide range of appearances," he says. "To be able to see a wide variety of high-quality images, particularly in patients across all skin tones, truly this helps provide better care to our patients and better teaching to our learners."



Keith Morley, M.D.

Dr. Morley is one of 50 expert contributors across the U.S. who prepares VisualDx entries that are published online for other providers to use in their practice. He has prepared more than 20 entries with UVM medical students and residents. "Writing for VisualDx is an amazing opportunity to stay up to date on the latest research within our field."

"It is a great way to learn more about different diseases and how they may present in the clinical setting," says Negar Esfandiari, M.D. a dermatology resident at UVM Medical Center and VisualDx contributor. "Writing VisualDx articles helped me learn about the cutaneous manifestations of diseases and how they can present in individuals with different skin tones, which has been invaluable to my medical training."

In clinic, VisualDx expands differential diagnoses, the list of possible diseases considered when seeing a patient. "It's easy to get locked in to the first diagnosis that comes to mind, but in medicine it's important to stay open minded. VisualDx has a well-organized section on differential diagnoses for almost every skin condition, which

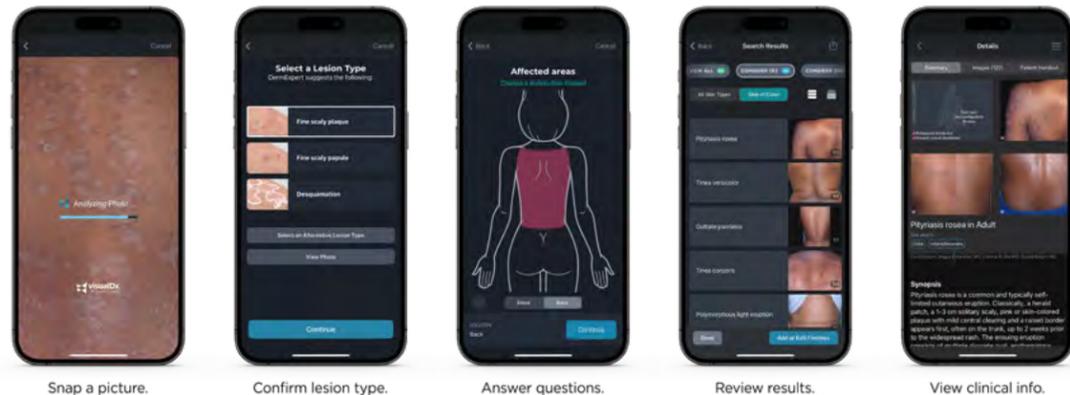
easily links to the full article on those similar but distinct diseases with photographs to compare," Morley says.

Patient adherence to follow-up plans improve when the patient understands the diagnosis and shares in medical decision-making. "We throw a lot of information at our patients during a routine visit, and it often takes longer than 20 minutes to fully absorb these complicated discussions. VisualDx has patient handouts on most conditions that we can print out and provide to patients so that we can ensure they have the best information," says Morley.

Dermatology shortages drive interest in VisualDx. Many skin complaints are handled by non-dermatologists, including emergency medicine and primary care physicians, and 15 percent of primary care visits have a skin complaint as a primary or secondary complaint, says Papier. Most non-dermatologists have had brief training in dermatology and may not recognize some rashes or lesions, so misdiagnosis is not uncommon. Additionally, dermatology educational sources typically don't cover patients of varied ethnic backgrounds or skin tones, yet darker skin tones can present differently than lighter skin, with subtle variations and manifestations requiring unique therapies. VisualDx allows the user to filter images by skin color and body location.

Robert Holland, M.D.'72, a physician in the emergency department at North Country Hospital in Newport, Vermont, attests to the value of this feature: "I recently had an African American female patient present with complaints of weakness, feeling cold, and new onset of a graphic rash on her posterior thighs that was a repetitive reticulated pattern. I had never seen the rash before despite significant clinical experience, and I certainly had not seen it in an African American patient. The patient was extremely disappointed that I could not explain her rash," says Dr. Holland, who also worked for Dr. Weed during medical school. "I checked VisualDx. Using the differential diagnosis features, I had a diagnosis within two minutes: Livedo Reticularis (mottled skin linked to constricted blood vessels). I showed the VisualDx picture to the patient. She agreed that it was her rash. We ordered additional tests, and she planned on follow-up with her primary care provider. Having a firm diagnosis was reassuring to the patient, and to me."

Today, VisualDx employs 80 people, including image specialists, editors, medical librarians, software engineers, quality assurance, and marketing professionals, at its headquarters in Rochester, and the platform is a standard professional resource at more than 2,300 hospitals and clinics worldwide. As VisualDx marks its 25th year, the company is developing a new application, supported by a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant, to help health care workers identify neglected tropical diseases. Additional grants support delivering VisualDx to free and charitable clinics throughout the U.S. Papier retired from clinical practice last year but continues to oversee VisualDx and work with public health agencies to bring public health to point of care. **VM**



VisualDx covers more than 3,400 diseases and public health threats.

HALL A

NEWS & NOTES FOR ALUMNI

**UVM Larner College of Medicine
Alumni Association Alumni
Executive Committee Officers
(Two-Year Terms)**

President

Mary Cushman, M.D.'89, M.Sc.
(2022–2024)

President-Elect

Michael D. Upton, M.D.'94
(2022–2024)

Secretary

Heidi Schumacher, M.D.'10
(2022–2024)

Executive Secretary

John Tampas, M.D.'54
(Ongoing)

Members-at-Large

(Six-Year Terms)

JJ Bivona, Ph.D.'21
(2022–2028)
Annie Coates, M.D.'07
(2018–2024)
Brian Cuniff, Ph.D.'14
(2020–2026)
Seth Dorsky, M.D.'10
(2020–2026)
Janice M. Gallant, M.D.'89
(2021–2027)
Danie Leahy, M.D.'17
(2018–2024)
Marissa Mendez, M.D.'15
(2022–2028)
Gus Papadakis, M.D.'92
(2018–2024)
Anand Parthasarathy, M.D.'02
(2022–2028)
Cordelia Ross, M.D.'16
(2022–2028)
Pramila R. Yadav, M.D.'99
(2021–2027)

Ex-Officio Members

Richard L. Page, M.D.,
Dean
Ginger Lubkowitz,
UVM Foundation



Mary Cushman, M.D.'89, M.Sc.
President, University of Vermont Larner
College of Medicine Alumni Association

I've been around the UVM campus long enough to have witnessed the rhythms of our academic medical center life—the new faces of first-year medical students every August, for instance, or the graduates heading off for their residency programs each May. So I shouldn't be surprised to find yet another cycle reaching its end, this time one that involves me. It has been my honor to serve as your Medical Alumni Association president for the past two years, and I can't believe my time in the role has passed so quickly—but I can look back on this time with many fond memories.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I've had the pleasure of meeting and visiting with so many of you at Reunion and at numerous

other events, and I want to take this opportunity to encourage you to stay engaged with the Larner College of Medicine. Please continue to nominate classmates for alumni awards, keep sending in class notes, enjoy the programming and events offered, and return to campus for Medical Reunion, which this year takes place October 18–20, 2024.

As I pass the baton, I want to give a warm welcome to Michael Upton, M.D.'94, your new president as of July 1, 2024. A practicing physician, and assistant professor in the Larner Department of Psychiatry, he is a full-time member of the psychiatric team at the UVM Center for Health and Wellbeing. Dr. Upton has special interest in working with students with mood and psychotic disorders as well as around issues of sexual identity and sexual health.

As a UVM scientist, I can attest how research can be challenging under the best of circumstances, and upon reflection the positive impact of the new Firestone Building that opened early in my tenure as president cannot be understated. We are all so thankful to the many alumni who supported its fundraising, particularly our lead donor, Dr. Steve Firestone from the Class of 1969. The space has allowed us to retain at least two early faculty that I know of who had attractive job offers elsewhere! It is a game-changer. Please keep an eye open for new discoveries always coming out from across our college that improve people's health and lives.

One of the goals of my tenure was to enhance alumni participation and support of our students, whether it be writing a white coat note, mentoring a student, conducting an admissions interview, or supporting the College with a gift to the annual fund or other area of interest—there are so many ways to be involved. I hope you will join me and continue supporting medical students, educators, and researchers in whatever way suits you. Thank you for all you do for your patients, your profession, and your College of Medicine, and thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Medical Alumni Association president.

I know Michael shares my love for this special place, and I wish him all the best as he begins his term in the summer.

✉ mary.cushman@med.uvm.edu

🐦 [@MaryCushmanMD](https://twitter.com/MaryCushmanMD)



Stay Connected!
UVM Connect allows graduates across the University to join groups based on interests or affinity. There's a UVM Larner College of Medicine specific networking area you may find very valuable. Stay connected at: uvmconnect.org

UVM CONTINUING MEDICAL AND INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

DIABETES 2024: UPDATES ON MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT

May 3, 2024 • South Burlington, Vermont

FAMILY MEDICINE COURSE

June 4–7, 2024 • South Burlington, Vermont

WOMEN'S HEALTH AND CANCER CONFERENCE

September 20, 2024 • Burlington, Vermont

DERMATOLOGY UPDATE FOR PRIMARY CARE

September 26–27, 2024 • South Burlington, Vermont

2025 STEM CELLS, CELL THERAPIES, AND BIOENGINEERING IN LUNG BIOLOGY AND DISEASES

July 7–10, 2025 • University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont

Conferences are planned for in-person, subject to change

For information, please contact:

University of Vermont Continuing Medical and Interprofessional Education

401 Water Tower Circle
Suite 102
Colchester, VT 05446

802-656-2292
UVMCMIE@med.uvm.edu
med.uvm.edu/cmie

CLASS NOTES

Share your news or updated contact information at go.uvm.edu/infoupdate. Contact your class agent, or the Larner Development & Alumni Relations office at medalumni.relations@med.uvm.edu or 802-656-4014.

1950s

REUNION 2024: 1954 + 1959

'50 Olive M. Davies is retired and spends her summers and holidays at her home in Poultney, Vermont. The remainder of the year she divides her time at the homes of her five children. She has 9 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren with another great grandchild on the way. Olive completed a residency in pediatrics after med school and practiced pediatrics in Vermont and Massachusetts. During her 50s she completed a residency in child psychiatry. She practiced child psychiatry until her retirement. Olive's granddaughter, Olivia Carpinello, graduated from UVM Medical School in 2013 and is board certified in both obstetrics and gynecology, reproductive endocrinology and infertility.

1970s

REUNION 2024: 1974 + 1979

'78 William Spina writes: No more surgery, just doing IMEs and living the good off-the-grid life in the Kingdom. 2 grandkids keep me busy, and my orchard and off-the-grid home. Hope all my classmates are well.

**SUBMIT
CLASS
NOTES
ONLINE**



We'd love to hear what you are up to at home, work, with family—etc! The UVM Alumni Association offers an easy-to-use online form to submit class notes to share your story. 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/medclassnotes



Dinehart family

DINEHART FAMILY SUPPORTS SKIN CARE EXPERTISE

Dermatopathology is the study of skin pathology and a subspecialty of dermatology and pathology. A Dermatopathologist is trained in the study of skin pathology—which is the analysis and description of the various components of skin disorders. Recognizing the importance of this specialty and its benefit to patients with skin disorders, the Dinehart family’s goal is to “make the system stronger and to keep up the standard and quality of care for patients high. We want to make care better for people.” To achieve that goal, the Dineharts established the **Matthew S. and Allison Dinehart Green and Gold Professorship in Dermatopathology** at the UVM

Larner College of Medicine and the **Matthew S. and Allison Dinehart Endowed Dermatopathology Fellowship** at the UVM Medical Center. Debra Leonard M.D., Ph.D., chair of the Department of Pathology expressed her gratitude saying “The gift is extraordinary and was such a nice surprise. I am very proud that a part of their motivation was to recognize and further support the outstanding education by our dermatopathologists of dermatology and pathology residents and dermatopathology fellows, as experienced by their son, Matthew Dinehart M.D. We are so grateful for the vision and generosity of Sheri and Scott and especially for honoring one of our resident alumni and his wife, Matthew and Allison, in the naming of the gift.”



Lorri and William Street, M.D.'59

the students they supported and participating in reunions, scholarship events and developing enduring relationships with UVM College of Medicine leadership and staff. Dr. Street also served UVM as a volunteer on the UVM Foundation Leadership Council. The Streets have made a profound impact on the UVM College of Medicine, their commitment, generosity and support of medical education will be appreciated for many years to come.

IN MEMORIAM

William Street, M.D.'59 passed away in July 2023. With his beloved wife Lorri, Dr. Street established the **William C. Street, M.D.'59 and Lorraine Hassan-Street Endowed Scholarship Fund** at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. Supporting medical students was the priority for Dr. Street and in order to ensure that legacy, he provided a generous gift through his estate that will allow the college to support even more students in perpetuity. Together, Lorri and Bill visited campus often and their greatest pleasure was meeting



Erin Garvey, M.D.'11

FOR HER GRANDFATHER, DAUGHTER AND FUTURE PHYSICIANS

Erin M. Garvey, M.D.'11, came to the Larner College of Medicine planning to be pediatrician. That dream dates back as long as she can remember. After a few weeks at UVM however, a couple of her new medical school classmates said, “you’re a surgeon,” in reference to Garvey’s self-described down-to-business, assertive personality.

They were right. Today, Garvey is a pediatric surgeon with Phoenix Children’s Hospital, where she also was the first pediatric surgery fellow to train there. And she is a champion for women in surgery, serving on committees for the Association of Women Surgeons among other surgery professional organizations.

So, when she decided recently to establish the **Rudy C. Perko and Mackenzie J. Garvey Family Medical Scholarship** at the Larner College of Medicine, she wanted it to support UVM medical students active in the Association of Women Surgeons Student Interest Group or the student chapter of the American Women’s Association. Garvey also wanted the scholarship to honor the memory of her paternal grandfather, Rudy C. Perko, and create a family legacy for her daughter, Mackenzie, along with students at the College in the generations to come.

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ALUMNI VIGNETTE

Above, left: The Werners (l to r) Irving, Fanny, Lily, George, and Harry Werner.

Above, top-right: From 1991, when Harry Werner received the Medicine and Community Award from the College of Medicine Alumni Association.

Above, bottom-right: Harry and Anne Werner on the day Anne graduated from UVM in 1942.

Honoring Their Parents

David Werner, M.D.'73, wanted to honor his father. David’s sister, Ellen Werner, B.A.'67, wanted to also honor their mother.

So, they each recently established two new endowed scholarships at the Larner College of Medicine—one in memory of Harry Werner, B.S.'37 M.D.'41, and one in memory of Anne Cohn Werner, B.S.'42. Harry led a distinguished career as a urologist at the VA in Bath, NY, and received the Service to Medicine and Community Award from the College of Medicine Alumni Association in 1991. Anne was a pre-med student at UVM but chose family life over a career in medicine, though she did build a successful real estate business.

David, an ophthalmologist in State College, PA, said he and his wife, Susan, wanted to establish the **David Werner, M.D.'73 and Susan Werner Scholarship** to give back because UVM played an important role in the family. “There weren’t many universities, and especially medical schools, that would accept Jews when my uncle, father and mother attended UVM. By helping the next generation of doctors succeed, we feel that we are helping to continue the open and accepting nature of the university.”

In addition to Harry and Anne, Harry’s oldest brother Irving was a 1927 UVM alumnus of the College of Medicine.

David said his grandparents, Louis and Sarah, were Jewish immigrants from Poland and raised their five children in a tenement on the lower east side of Manhattan. He said Sarah decided that her



sons would be doctors and her daughters would be college educated. After UVM, Irving practiced as an obstetrics and gynecology physician. Siblings Fanny and Lily both graduated from City College of New York. Lily was artist. Her work is on display at the Royal Ontario Museum of Art in Toronto. Fanny worked for the City of New York. A fifth sibling, George, was an ophthalmologist.

Ellen lives in New York City and served for 25 years as the Executive Director of the Kniesel Hall Chamber Music School and Festival. She wanted to establish the **Anne Cohn Werner, B.S.'42 Medical Scholarship** at the medical school in part to honor her mother’s unfulfilled dream of becoming a doctor herself and to see that dream carried out for others in her mother’s name.

Ellen said her parents met when Anne was a freshman and Harry was a first-year medical student. They both answered a notice for a carpool to New York City off a ride board in the Waterman Building. “From the moment she entered the car until the day he died in 2001, they were a couple” ... and “had a long happy marriage,” Ellen said.

Her mother was “a good woman in the community, volunteering and helping,” she added. “She was a smart and savvy businesswoman. If she had been 10, 15 years younger, there is no doubt that she would have been Anne C. Werner, M.D. It is my wish that whoever is awarded the Anne Cohn Werner scholarship has a rewarding career as an M.D., and if she wants, a rewarding family life. It is now possible to have both.”



Colchester High School Field Hockey Team

Pink Out Cancer

LOCAL FIELD HOCKEY TEAMS HONOR THEIR COACHES AND SUPPORT WORLD-CLASS CANCER CARE

Last fall, when the Colchester High School and South Burlington High School field hockey teams faced off for a game, they all donned pink for a very good cause. They honored their coaches—both of whom were battling breast cancer—by hosting and standing in solidarity with a Pink Out Cancer event to raise awareness and funds for the UVM Cancer Center Breast Cancer Patient Support Fund. At the event, Rhonda Forcier, UVM Cancer Center’s assistant director of philanthropic engagement, spoke to the importance of the local community showing up for their own.

“We honor patients and family members affected by this disease, and the doctors and researchers working to detect, treat and cure breast cancer,” said Forcier. “Today, the Colchester field hockey team chose this game to demonstrate their love and support for two great coaches as they travel on their own cancer journeys.”

Part of a growing national movement of organizations giving back, the goal of Pink Out Cancer games is to direct local fundraising efforts toward critical cancer care in their communities. At the UVM Cancer Center, Pink Out events support a range of initiatives such as access to integrative therapies that make patients more comfortable during treatment and guidance from patient navigators to help families understand the complexities of their cancer care. Funds also help ease the financial burden of a cancer diagnosis.

For organizations that participate, the Pink Out Cancer fundraising effort adds meaning to events; local teams at the youth, high school and college levels as well as other groups, individual organizers, and even businesses can honor their friends, family and neighbors while supporting the lifesaving care they need. Events like these bring the UVM Cancer Center’s mission full circle by providing the opportunity to celebrate community and the value of world-class health care right here in Vermont.



Colchester Coach Shawn Lefebvre connects with a player

To join efforts to relieve cancer’s burden on patients, contact Rhonda Forcier: Rhonda.Forcier@uvmhealth.org 802-238-1204 (mobile)



'61 Richard D. Morrison, M.D.

Dr. Richard D. Morrison, passed away peacefully at his home on October 23, 2023, after a short battle with kidney disease. He was born in Hanover, NH and grew up mostly in Canaan, NH. He graduated from Cardigan Mountain School, New Hampton prep school and Dartmouth College. He attended the University of Vermont Medical School and graduated with his M.D. in 1961. He undertook his post-graduate studies at the DeGoesbriand Memorial Hospital in Burlington, Vt., and entered private practice with his first office in Essex Junction, Vt. He was on the attending staff of both the Fanny Allen Hospital in Colchester and the Mary Fletcher Hospital in Burlington, Vt. He was a founder of the Green Mountain Nursing Home which he started in 1965 and owned until the 1980's. He owned and operated the Ethan Allen Medical Center from 1965 until December 2022. He loved sports and coached community basketball, Little League baseball and Babe Ruth teams for many years. He had a passion for horses and obtained his full pari-mutuel harness horse driver and trainer credentials. He drove in many of the country's leading raceways, with one of his greatest accomplishments driving and winning the “Gentleman's Trot” during Grand Circuit week at the Red Mile Racetrack in Lexington, KY. He loved gardening and working in the woods on his land and was a collector of fine antiques and model trains. He served in the Vermont National Guard from 1961 thru 1987 retiring as a colonel. He was in the medical branch but also obtained his armor qualifications. He later served in the Vermont State Guard becoming a major general and commander of the state unit. He started the Junior Competition Team of the Burlington Rifle & Pistol Club, coaching the athletes to many state and national titles.

'62 N. John Fontana, M.D.

Dr. N. John Fontana II, 90, passed away on November 1, 2023. He was born in White River Junction, Vt, and raised in West Lebanon, NH. He graduated from West Lebanon High School, was drafted, and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War from 1951-1953 when he was honorably discharged. He attended

the University of Vermont College of Medicine and earned his medical degree in 1962. He was in private medical practice from 1965-1972 and from 1974-1990 in Nashua NH, where he was active at St. Joseph's Hospital. He served on the Nashua School Board and was the team physician for the Nashua High School football team for many years. From 1972-1974 he was a research and development executive with Eli Lilly & Co. in Indianapolis.

'62 Donald P. Miller, M.D.

Dr. Donald P. Miller, a beloved husband, father, and friend has passed away. He was born in Burlington, Vt., and graduated from Montpelier High School. His pursuit of knowledge took him to Dartmouth College, class of 1957, and then to the University of Vermont Medical School, where he received his medical degree in 1962. In the early years, he worked with the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, but his true calling was found in Gardner, Massachusetts. It was there, he opened a thriving pediatric practice. While devoting many hours to his private practice which was affiliated with Heywood Hospital, he also served as chief of staff as well as on the board of directors. After retiring from his medical practice, he continued serving the community as a member of the Gardner Board of Health and the Knowlton Foundation. He was an active member of several social organizations, including the Chair City Club, Boat Club, Monomoc Sporting Club, and the Lake Mansfield Trout Club in Stowe, Vt, a beloved family retreat. He had a zest for life, enjoying skiing, fly fishing, and tennis, and sang with the Gardner Community Choir, and in Theater at the Mount musical productions.

'65 Philip T. Cole, M.D.

Dr. Philip T. Cole, 85, passed away on September 6, 2023, at home in Shoal Creek, Alabama. He was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts, and attended Michigan State University, the University of Vermont Medical School, and Harvard University (M.P.H., 1967). He also earned a Dr.P.H. in 1970, from Harvard. He began his professional career in epidemiology at Harvard, where he authored or co-authored

more than 70 research papers relating to the epidemiology of cancer. In 1979 he relocated to Alabama where he assumed a position as senior scientist at the Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). He served as chairman of the department of epidemiology at UAB from 1981 to 1994, and during that time he authored or co-authored more than 130 research papers on causality in epidemiology, health policy and law, innovative approaches to smoking cessation, occupational and chemical carcinogenesis, and the health effects of electromagnetic fields. After retiring from UAB he was named professor emeritus in 1999, continuing his career in cancer epidemiology by teaching and consulting on epidemiological issues. He received many professional honors and awards, both nationally and internationally, for his distinguished achievements in the field of public health.

'66 Frederick G. Lea, M.D.

Dr. Frederick G. Lea, age 84, passed away on October 26, 2023. He was born in Pembroke, NH, in 1938, lived and attended Concord schools and later enlisted in the United States Air Force. He proudly served his country during the Vietnam War as a lieutenant colonel and flight surgeon. Upon his return home, he attended Ohio State University Veterinary College before he eventually decided to enter medicine and became an OB/GYN physician, graduating from the University of Vermont and later Yale University. He began a long and distinguished career over the decades at Emerson Hospital, delivering over 16,000 babies until he retired in 2023. He cherished the time with his family, especially camping and vacations specifically his favorite place, Disney. He also enjoyed spending time in his gardens, tending to the plants, and cooking for his friends and family.

'71 William K. Fifield, M.D.

Dr. William Fifield, age 79, passed away on February 2, 2024. He grew up in Granville, NY, and after high school attended the University of Vermont where he met his wife, Jean, and earned his B.A. and M.D. degrees. After completing a residency in family medicine in Syracuse, NY, he entered the U.S. Air Force and

served two years at the USAF Academy in Colorado, achieving the rank of major. Following this, he joined the staff at the Castleton Medical Center where he practiced until 1979, when he moved to Middlebury and practiced until his retirement. In addition to being a practicing physician, he was a member of several boards and committees and was a past president of the Vermont Academy of Family Physicians. Known for his colorful sense of humor, he had many interests and hobbies outside of medicine, including boating, model railroading, alpine skiing, and photography. An avid reader, he also had a huge collection of “golden oldie” records. He was a tireless advocate for the environmental movement, which he strongly supported.

'74 Richard Graves Voigt, M.D.

Dr. Richard “Dick” Graves Voigt, 75, passed away at his home in Louisville, KY. Born in Providence, RI, he was a graduate of Bradley University in Peoria, IL and University of Vermont, Medical School. He first practiced medicine in Honolulu for Kaiser Permanente before serving as physician/medical director of the Emergency Department at Rutland Regional Medical Center, starting the Paramedic Program in Rutland, Vt. In 1984 he opened Convenient Medical Care – Urgent Care in Rutland, the first of its kind. In 1999 with his wife Jan, they moved to Louisville, KY, where he opened Convenient Medical Care in Holiday Manor. He sold the business and continued with Baptist Health Urgent Care until his retirement in 2021. He was fond of downhill skiing, golf, quahogging, bocce and playing cards with friends and family. He was a lover of golden retrievers and enjoyed a house project considering himself something of a jack of all trades.

'75 John Gerald Long, M.D.

Dr. Long, 74, longtime resident of Jericho, Vermont, passed away at home February 17th, his life shortened by High Grade Glioblastoma. He was born in Washington, D.C., and his early years and education were spent in multiple locations in the U.S., followed by college at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and medical school at the University of Vermont. Pediatric training included

residency programs at the University of Rochester, University of Washington, and a neonatology fellowship at UVM. Throughout his long career in pediatrics in Vermont and Haiti, he embodied the philosophy of an early mentor; GRUSK with PAP: be gentle, respectful, understanding, sensitive and kind, with patients, parents, and personnel. This applied to all colleagues, staff, patients and their families, rugby teammates (and opponents), friends, family, community members—all persons, everywhere and always.

'84 Roland E. Baker, M.D.

Dr. Roland E. “Butch” Baker, 71, passed away unexpectedly on October 25, 2022. He was born in Patuxent River, MD, raised in Madawaska, ME, and lived in Sanford, ME., and attended the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD upon graduating high school. He received undergraduate degrees from the University of Maine and from the University of Vermont. After graduating from the UVM College of Medicine in 1984, Dr. Baker performed his OB/GYN residency in Hartford, CT at St. Francis Hospital, where he was awarded the Alumni Award for Excellence In Undergraduate Teaching in 1987. He also received the McCrann Award for Excellence in Patient Care the same year. After finishing residency in 1988, he joined the Center For Women's Health and practiced at Goodall Hospital in Sanford, ME and at Frisbee Memorial Hospital in Rochester, NH. He retired in 2014 after 26 years as a practicing physician. He loved his family, electronic gadgets, science fiction, music; from Motown to Bocelli to smooth jazz, nature and being at the camp with his camp neighbors.



REUNION 2024
LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
OCTOBER 18-20



Celebrate on Campus!

Save the Date for the Larner College of Medicine Reunion 2024

We are excited to welcome you back to the campus where your medical career began for the Larner College of Medicine Reunion 2024. You'll be able to catch up with old friends, explore the reimagined Given Courtyard, stroll down Alumni Way, enjoy the best fall foliage in the world and get a taste of what life is like for today's medical students.

Learn more at med.uvm.edu/alumni/reunion



**MARCH 15, 2024
11:45 A.M.**

For Match Day, held this year in the UVM Davis Center, Larner faculty and staff, including many from the Office of Medical Education, joined the student cohort and embraced the '70s disco theme.

PHOTO: ANDY DUBACK

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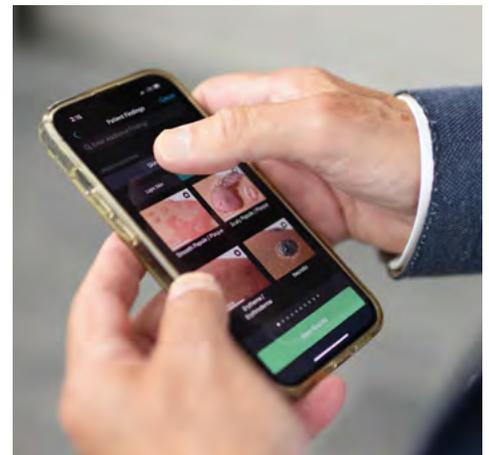
16 Lewis First, M.D., M.S.

The chair of the Department of Pediatrics reflects on 30 years as an educator, physician and lifelong punster.



22 Food As Medicine

Student's culinary medicine course pairs nutrition and healthcare to get future doctors cooking.



28 A Picture of Health

The digital diagnostic tool developed by Art Papier M.D.'88, brings public health to the point of care.