

VERMONT MEDICINE

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

SPRING 2019

FIRST TAKE

A conversation with
Richard L. Page, M.D.,
the College's 18th dean



ALSO FEATURED: • STUDENTS & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • STAPLETON RESEARCH

PROFILE IN GIVING

Supporting Future Physicians
with the Gift of Education

Hyunsoo No '19 has found a constellation of mentors and ardent supporters in Larner College of Medicine alumni. A married father of two children, No worked for a decade in Boston and New York City in the field of radiation oncology as a dosimetrist; now he's on the path to becoming a radiation oncologist. The mentorship of alumnus and faculty member H. James Wallace, M.D.'88, and the financial support of alumnus Arnold Goran, M.D.'58 and his wife Mariel B. Goran through their Medical Scholarship has provided the support he's needed to achieve that goal.

"I'm grateful for The Arnold Goran, MD '58 and Mariel B. Goran Medical Scholarship that has greatly reduced the financial burden of attending medical school," No says.

"My family and I had the chance to meet Arnie and Mariel Goran, who welcomed us with open arms. My connection with them has provided not just financial assistance, but career and life advice as well. Arnie continues to remind me that 'family comes first' and that self-care is critical to being a care provider."



Donors Mariel B. Goran and Arnold Goran, M.D.'58 (left) join Class of '19 medical student Hyunsoo No and his children for a visit.

For information about how you can support the work of the UVM Larner College of Medicine and its affiliates, please contact the Medical Development and Alumni Relations Office.


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The Campaign for The University of Vermont

THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

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First Take

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BY ERIN POST



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www.med.uvm.edu/vtmedicine

View a photo gallery from the recent hooding ceremony for graduates of the master of public health and master of medical science programs.

See videos, blog posts and additional stories about Larner students in action.

Read more about research from Renee Stapleton, M.D., Ph.D.

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

DEAN
Richard L. Page, M.D.

INTERIM SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN
FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION
Christa Zehle, M.D.

SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN
FOR RESEARCH
Gordon Jensen, M.D., Ph.D.

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 The University of Vermont
LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

FROM THE DEAN

I have now experienced the beauty of both fall and winter in Vermont since I began my deanship of the UVM Larner College of Medicine, and am looking forward to the spring that is just weeks away. Throughout these cold winter months, my wife Jeannie and I have been sustained by the warm welcome we have received from faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends of the College.

I mentioned in my first “From the Dean” message that I looked forward to meeting many members of the Larner community; since that time, I have participated in several informal “town hall” gatherings, many formal meetings with students, chairs, center directors, and associated faculty, and hundreds of introductions to people from across the institutions in the course of daily life here on campus. As I mention in the interview in this issue, I have even enjoyed getting momentarily “lost” on the medical campus, and in the course of asking directions, meeting even more Larner community members and hearing about their work.


In addition, I’ve met many members of our alumni community as I’ve traveled around the country these past few months. It is a great strength of our College to have such active, engaged alumni who care so much about what is going on today at their alma mater, and who support our work to prepare the next generation of physicians and biomedical scientists.

As I look at the year ahead, there is excitement and opportunity across all of our missions. Our educational program is receiving national accolades for our commitment to active learning as we prepare students for careers in medicine and science



in a changing world. We have a new research complex planned to support our faculty scientists doing critical work unlocking new treatments for heart disease, cancer, addiction and more. Our clinical partners at the UVM Health Network are making a difference in the lives of more than a million people across our region, and are on the forefront of shaping healthcare policy that will meet the needs of our communities both today and tomorrow.

While advances in science and public policy are changing the face and practice of medicine, what has not changed is the importance of the doctor-patient relationship and commitment to professionalism that are central to our work. One of my first initiatives at the College has been to develop a statement on professionalism to serve as a reminder of our commitment to our core values. This will further guide our way as we commit to the care of our patients, scientific discovery and innovation in education.


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

Zehle named to interim post

Christa Zehle, M.D., associate dean for students, was named interim senior associate dean for medical education in January. She replaced William Jeffries, Ph.D., who became senior advisor to the dean.

A 1999 alumna of the UVM Larner College of Medicine, Zehle joined the faculty in 2003 as assistant professor of pediatrics and was promoted to associate professor in 2011. She successfully launched the Pediatric Hospitalist Program at UVM Medical Center, and has continued to have a clinical role at Vermont Children’s Hospital along with her responsibilities as associate dean. In her interim post, Zehle will oversee all operations of the Office of Medical Student Education.


Christa Zehle, M.D., ’99

UVM Medical Center President to Retire

In January UVM Medical Center President **Eileen Whalen, MHA, RN**, announced her plan to retire in June after four years at UVM Medical Center and 35 years in health care. **Stephen Leffler, M.D. ’90**, will take on the role of interim president. Under Whalen’s leadership, the organization advanced key initiatives including construction of the new mother-baby unit and the Miller Building, implementation of a regional critical care transport system, and the development of innovative approaches to address the opioid crisis.


Eileen Whalen, M.H.A., R.N.


Stephen Leffler, M.D.



Mary Cushman, M.D., M.Sc. (left) and Russell Tracy, Ph.D. (above)

Cushman, Page and Tracy Rank in Top 1% for Research Paper Citations in 2018

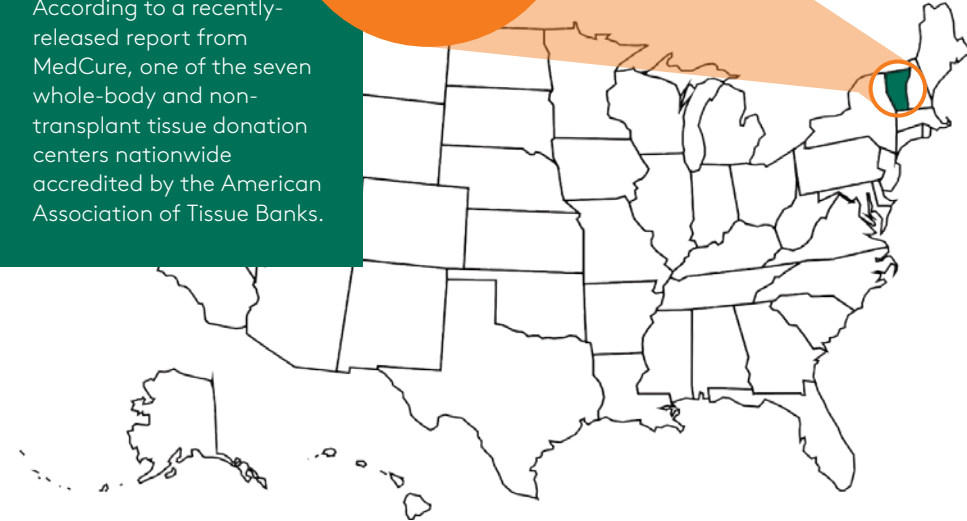
What’s it like to be in the top one percent? In the world of scientific influencers, UVM biomedical scientists **Mary Cushman, M.D., M.Sc.**, **Richard Page, M.D.**, and **Russell Tracy, Ph.D.**, have first-hand knowledge. They are among the most Highly Cited Researchers in 2018, according to a recently-released report compiled by Clarivate Analytics. Highly Cited Researchers are selected for their exceptional research performance, a status determined by the publication of multiple highly-cited research articles that rank in the top one percent by citations for their field in the Web of Science—a scientific citation indexing

service maintained by Clarivate Analytics. Researchers are selected for their exceptional performance in one or more of 21 fields used in the Essential Science Indicators. Both Cushman, a professor of medicine and pathology and laboratory medicine, and Tracy, a professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, and biochemistry, conduct research and publish as key investigators on a number of longitudinal health studies, including the Reasons for Geographic and Racial Differences in Stroke (REGARDS), Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis (MESA), and Cardiovascular Health Study, among others. Page, the dean of the Larner College of Medicine and a professor of medicine, has extensive research expertise in the areas of cardiac arrhythmias and sudden cardiac arrest and has published more than 200 research articles and book chapters.

VERMONT RANKS FOURTH IN DONATING BODIES TO SCIENCE

4th in nation

According to a recently-released report from MedCure, one of the seven whole-body and non-transplant tissue donation centers nationwide accredited by the American Association of Tissue Banks.





NEARLY HALF A CENTURY OF SERVICE

Pat Alberts has experienced a lot of change in her 48 years running the mail room at the Larner College of Medicine, both in technology and location. But, she says, there’s one aspect of her job that’s kept her here all those years: “The people.” Since she took on managing the mailroom in 1971, she has forged strong relationships with generations of medical students. Playing a part in one milestone in medical students’ lives—Match Day—was a beloved role for Alberts, who inserted Match letters into students’ mailboxes. She remembers the halls surrounding the mailroom filled with students, parents and children as students opened their letters. As she neared her last day before retirement in January, Pat said what she’d miss most is the same thing that anchored her to the College for nearly half a century—the people—and they’ll certainly miss her, too.

Faculty Achievements Recognized by Vermont Medical Society

Four Larner College of Medicine faculty were honored at the Vermont Medical Society 2018 annual meeting.

Stephen Leffler, M.D., a professor of surgery at UVM and chief population health and quality officer for the UVM Health Network, was named president of the Vermont Medical Society (VMS). In his role as president, he is responsible for leading the Society’s public policy efforts in Montpelier and Washington, D.C.



Frank Ittleman, M.D., a UVM professor of surgery in the division of cardiothoracic surgery, was awarded the Distinguished Service Award, the highest award VMS can bestow



the UVM Foundation and is a former director of the UVM division of cardiothoracic surgery.

UVM Professor of Pediatrics **Barbara Frankowski, M.D.**, was

upon one of its members. Well-regarded for his decades of clinical service as an extraordinary cardiothoracic surgeon who saved the lives of countless Vermonters, he also serves as a faculty associate in development for



awarded the Physician of the Year Award for her exemplary service as a pediatrician. She established and led student health initiatives in the Burlington School District for decades, and created school-based health clinics.

UVM Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics **Eliot Nelson, M.D.**, was one of three recipients of a VMS Founders’ Award. He along with



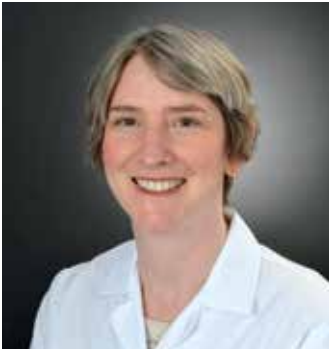
Governor Phil Scott and Senator Philip Baruth were recognized for their role in advancing landmark gun violence prevention legislation in Vermont.

CELEBRATING PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADS

On December 12, 2018, the University of Vermont celebrated the newest graduates of the Master of Public Health program and Master of Science in Medical Science program during a ceremony in Ira Allen Chapel. Master of Public Health graduates included: **Dana Bourne, Rajan Chawla, Kelly Clements, Valarie Devlin, Hannah Frering, Ashley Greenfield, Megan Healy, Jillian Leikauskas, and Ian McHale.** Master of Science in Medical Sciences graduates included **Rachel Carpenter** and **Nathan Dow.**



NOTABLES



Anne Dougherty, M.D.

DOUGHERTY APPOINTED GENDER EQUITY LIAISON

UVM Assistant Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences **Anne Dougherty, M.D.**, has been appointed Gender Equity Liaison in the UVM Larner College of Medicine’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion. In this new role, Dougherty

is responsible for improving the experiences of women faculty. She will have oversight for the development and implementation of programs aimed at increasing the number of women faculty hired and promoted, as well as supporting retention and improving job satisfaction among women faculty. She will work closely with Faculty

Affairs, the UVM Office of Institutional Research, and the national Association of American Medical Colleges to gather accurate data, and develop research to identify barriers to promotion, retention and promotion of women faculty.



CVMC LIC Coordinator Sarah Child (left) and Site Director Christine Payne, M.D.

PAYNE TO SERVE AS SITE DIRECTOR FOR NEW LONGITUDINAL INTEGRATED CLERKSHIP PILOT

Christine Payne, M.D., has been appointed as the first site director for the new Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship pilot at Central Vermont Medical Center (CVMC LIC), slated to launch in March of 2019. A clinical assistant professor of family medicine, Payne received her medical degree from Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College and completed a family medicine residency at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. The CVMC LIC pilot follows the successful launch of a similar program at Hudson Headwaters Health Network, through which medical students meet all of the requirements of their clerkship year over the course of one year—with primary care physicians as preceptors and a primary care health center as a home base—as opposed to blocks of time dedicated to each specialty.



Nicholas Heintz, M.S., Ph.D.

HEINTZ AWARDED 2018 DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE ALUMNI AWARD

Nicholas Heintz, M.S. '77, Ph.D. '79, was awarded the 2018 Distinguished Graduate Alumni Award from the Larner College of Medicine. A respected leader in graduate education and within the

Departments of Pathology and Laboratory Science and Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at UVM, he began his career at UVM in 1983, and transitioned to professor emeritus in 2014. His research has been published in over 100 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters and invited reviews, and he’s been an

integral member of the UVM Cancer Center since 1987. In his lab, he has trained more than ten doctoral students, seven postdoctoral fellows and numerous undergraduate students. From 2013 to 2015, he served as the director of the Cellular, Molecular and Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program.



KAMINSKY AND IRVIN CO-EDIT TEXTBOOK

UVM Professor of Medicine and Molecular Physiology and Biophysics **Charles Irvin, Ph.D.**, and UVM Professor of Medicine **David Kaminsky, M.D.**, are co-editors of the new book titled *Pulmonary Function*

Testing: Function and Practice. Published by Springer Nature and Humana Press in 2018, the book “serves as an ideal guide to pulmonary function tests for practicing pulmonologists, residents, fellows, and medical students.”



Charles Irvin, Ph.D.



David Kaminsky, M.D.

Part of the Community

Larner medical students find new insights into patient care through experiences in rural medicine.

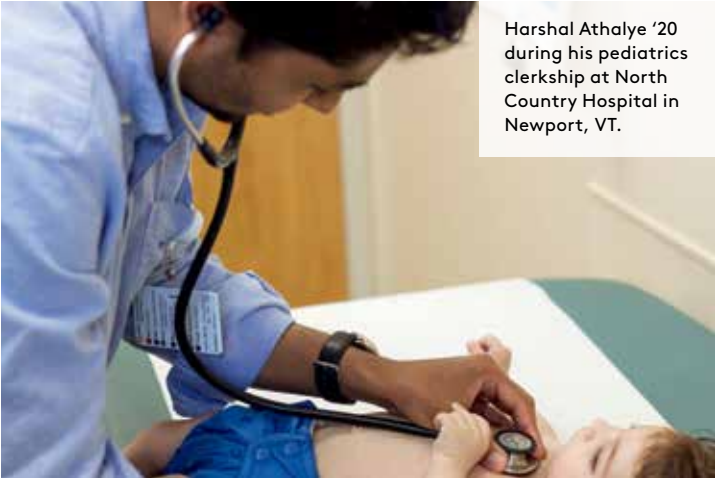
When **Harshal Athalye '20** began a pediatrics rotation at North Country Hospital in Newport, Vt., in the upper reaches of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, he was worried the rural location would make him feel isolated, or that he wouldn't see the diversity of patients he might in a more urban setting.

The two weeks he spent in Newport during his third-year pediatrics clerkship changed his mind. Working alongside Alexandra Bannach, M.D., a clinical assistant professor of pediatrics, he found a complex caseload that required not only clinical skill, but an ability to build relationships with families over time. "It was an amazing experience to see her work," says Athalye. "She has such a calm, optimistic, healing personality. Many of the patients we saw had a troubled history, and Dr. Bannach knew the idiosyncrasies of each patient."

Athalye is not alone: William Raszka, M.D., professor of pediatrics and director of the pediatrics clerkship, says students who spend time in a rural location often walk away with a newfound appreciation for the complexities and rewards of rural practice. During the seven-week pediatrics clerkship, most students have the opportunity to practice in rural settings across Vermont, as well as in northern New York and Connecticut.

"Physicians in rural environments provide home visits; they staff high school football games and school clinics; sometimes they go to hospitals for deliveries as there may not be a hospitalist service," he says. "They learn how a physician is incorporated into the community."

Primary care physicians equipped to practice in rural locations are in dire need across the country. According to the Centers for Disease Control, there's a "striking gap" in health between rural and urban Americans. The causes are complex, but socioeconomic conditions and access to healthcare play a role. Rural Americans have higher rates of cigarette smoking, high blood pressure, and obesity, according to the CDC. They also have higher rates of poverty, and are less likely to have health insurance. All of this translates into patients



Harshal Athalye '20 during his pediatrics clerkship at North Country Hospital in Newport, VT.



Jennifer Boccia '20 with preceptor Sarah Abbot, D.O., during her family medicine clerkship at Mad River Medical Center.

“ IF WE'RE GOING TO INFLUENCE POPULATION HEALTH, WE NEED TO HAVE PHYSICIANS IN THESE LOCATIONS.” — JOHN KING, M.D.

who are more at risk for death from preventable causes as compared to their urban counterparts.

The family medicine clerkship at the Larner College of Medicine is designed to introduce students to these health disparities and prepare them to address unmet needs, says Candace Fraser, M.D., associate professor of family medicine and family medicine clerkship director. More than 50 preceptors across Vermont, northern New York, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Maine ensure students experience what it's like to practice at a rural site without quick access to a tertiary care setting. No matter what specialty a student chooses, they benefit from this experience. But for some, it's the beginning of a career they previously hadn't considered.

"We have students who say 'I had no idea how important the family doctors are to the community and the extent of the care they provide,'" says Martha Seagrave, PA-C, associate professor of family medicine and director of medical student education programs. "If you don't experience rural medicine, you wouldn't necessarily seek it out."

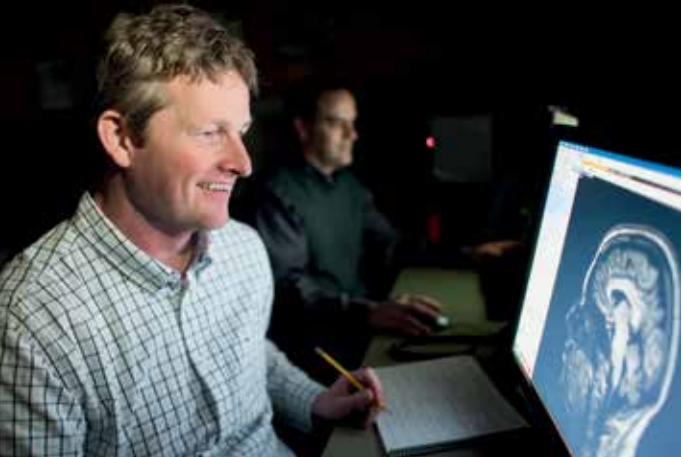
During the six-week family medicine clerkship, along with caring for all age groups and diverse medical conditions, students complete a community health project focused on a range of topics that address a community need. Past topics have included access to dental care, transportation issues, food insecurity, and drug addiction. This work gets them thinking about how they can have an impact if they choose rural primary care.

"If we're going to influence population health, we need to have physicians in these locations," says John King, M.D., professor and vice chair of family medicine.

For **Jennifer Boccia '20**, the call of rural medicine is strong. After completing her family medicine clerkship at Mad River Medical Center in Waitsfield, Vt., just down the road from where she lives in Moretown, she's confident that practice in a rural community is right for her.

"The people I see in the office are neighbors, they work in or own the local businesses that I frequent, they are the relatives of people I know well," she says. "It's a very profound feeling to be trusted with the health and well-being of so many people in such a tight-knit community."

RESEARCH NOTEBOOK



Hugh Garavan, Ph.D.

TEEN BRAIN VOLUME CHANGES WITH SMALL AMOUNT OF CANNABIS USE, STUDY FINDS

A new study, published in *The Journal of Neuroscience*, shows that even a small amount of cannabis use by teenagers is linked to differences in their brains. Senior author and UVM Professor of Psychiatry **Hugh Garavan, Ph.D.**, and first author and former UVM postdoctoral fellow **Catherine Orr, Ph.D.**, say this research is the first to find evidence that an increase in gray matter volume in certain parts of the adolescent brain is a likely consequence of low-level marijuana use. Few studies have looked at the effects of the first few uses of a drug, says Garavan. Most researchers focus on heavy marijuana users later in life and compare them against non-users. These new findings identify an important new area of focus. "Consuming just one or two joints seems to change gray matter volumes in these young adolescents," Garavan says.

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH EVENTS CELEBRATE FACULTY & TRAINEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Researchers from across the Larner College of Medicine were celebrated for their leading-edge work during the annual Dean's Excellence in Research Awards ceremony in October 29-30, 2018. The two-day event was designed to highlight the research being

conducted by junior faculty, senior faculty, postdoctoral trainees, and graduate students at the College. Elaine Ostrander, Ph.D., of the National Institutes of Health, delivered the keynote address.

Faculty who received College awards include:

- *Research Mentorship* **Renee Stapleton, M.D., Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Medicine
- *Rising Star New Investigator* **Thomas Ahern, Ph.D.**,

Assistant Professor of Surgery

- *Mid-Career Investigator* **Brian Sprague, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Surgery

- *Research Laureate* **Jason Bates, Ph.D.**, Professor of Medicine



Drs., Sprague, Stapleton, Ahern, and Bates



Stephen Higgins, Ph.D.

VCBH RECEIVES \$11.7 MILLION GRANT TO CONTINUE WORK

An \$11.7 million Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) grant renewal to the Vermont Center on Behavior and Health (VCBH) at UVM will support another five years of research on addressing the unhealthy behaviors that

negatively impact health and cost the U.S. healthcare system billions of dollars. The funding comes from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences and National Institute on Drug Abuse. Led by **Stephen Higgins, Ph.D.**, director of the VCBH and professor of psychiatry and psychological science, the grant focuses on understanding the

mechanisms underpinning vulnerability to unhealthy behavior patterns and developing effective behavior-change interventions. The VCBH has already made considerable progress in this area during its first five years, publishing an impressive 185 peer-reviewed publications and garnering nearly \$60 million in additional external grant funding.

GRADUATE STUDENT POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED DEGREE, PUBLISHED IN LEADING JOURNAL

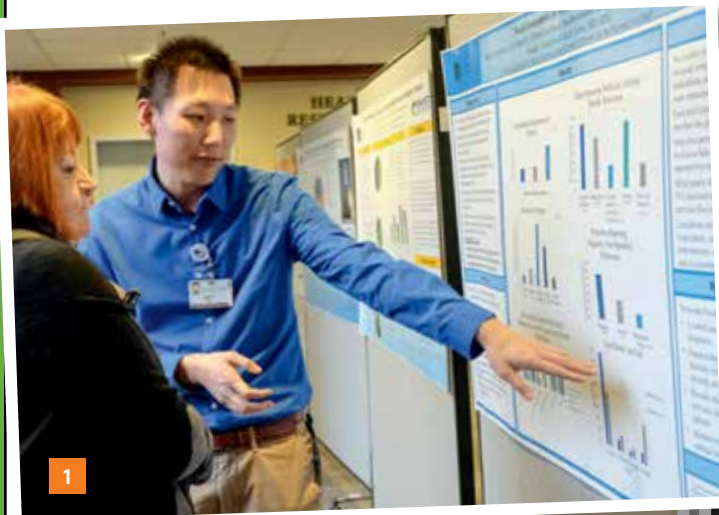
Edward "Ed" J. Burgess was a doctoral candidate in the Cellular, Molecular and Biomedical Sciences Program

whose life was taken by malignant mesothelioma on September 20, 2015. He was posthumously awarded the Ph.D. from the University of Vermont in 2017 for his research in the lab of UVM Professor of Medicine **Matt Poynter, Ph.D.**, which was focused on better

THE RESEARCH TEAM FOLLOWED 1,420 PARTICIPANTS THROUGH CHILDHOOD AND INTO ADULTHOOD, FROM 1993 TO 2015.

understanding the pro-inflammatory effects of Serum Amyloid A. In August of 2018, he was published as first author for a paper in

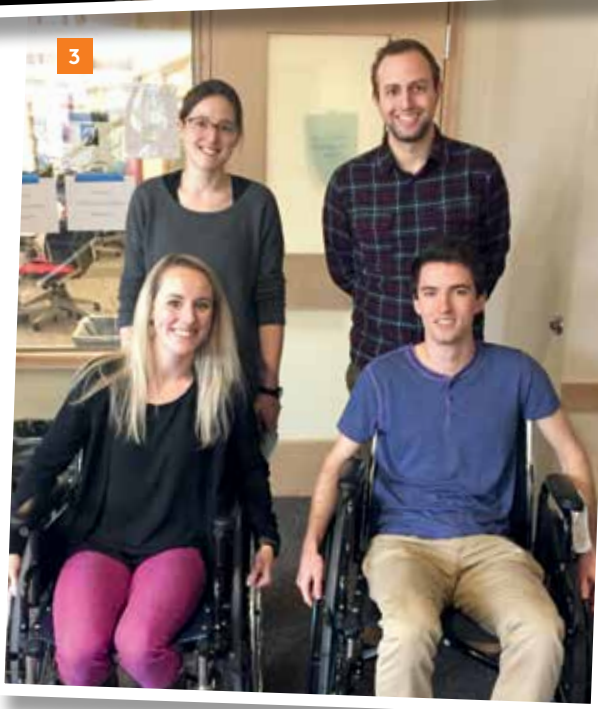
the *Journal of Immunology* titled "Bacterial Lipoproteins Constitute the TLR2-Stimulating Activity of Serum Amyloid A."



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It's always bustling for students and faculty at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. Catch a few moments of the activity over the past several months:

- 1 Matt Tsai '21 discusses his public health project during the poster session in the Hoehl Gallery.
- 2 Francis Mtuke '22 shadows UVM Assistant Professor of Surgery Peter Holoch, M.D.'06, for a skills clinic hosted by the Department of Surgery and the Surgical Subspecialty Shadowing Program.
- 3 Katrina Thornburgh '21, Georges Tahhan '21, Samantha Bissonette '21, and Ian McClain '21 participate in Disability Awareness Day.
- 4 The Class of 2021 team scored an overtime 4-5 win against the Class of 2022 during the UVM intramural soccer championships.
- 5 Joy Benner '21 practices her clinical exam skills during a session in the Cardiovascular, Renal and Respiratory Systems course.
- 6 Cardiovascular surgeon turned political satirist Bassem Youssef leads a talk with Larner medical students in January.

A Holistic Approach to Medical Education

As a third-year student, **Sunit Misra '19** completed the Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship at Hudson Headwaters Health Network. He wrote this blog post about his experiences for *Aspiring Docs Diaries*, a blog from the Association of American Medical Colleges. In March of 2019, the Larner College of Medicine launches a second LIC at Central Vermont Medical Center.

Medical school is a journey of self-discovery. Between studying, clinical duties, and many long tests, it can be easy to lose sight of the bigger picture. I often pause to think about what I hoped to gain from becoming a doctor, and I always return to the physician-patient relationship. We care for patients when they are in their most vulnerable state, and knowing patients trust me this way is what inspires me to be my best.

As I entered my third year at the University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine, I discovered the Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC). This program, developed with Hudson Headwaters Health Network, places an emphasis on building lasting connections



with the patients we encounter. For 12 months, we serve as part of a healthcare team in one location, with a primary care practice as a home base, and we follow a panel of patients through all of their appointments and procedures. This allows us to see medicine from the patient's point of view. We learn about our patients' social struggles, ailments, and coping skills, seeing them as people, not just the disease they have that day.

Getting to know a patient over the course of an entire year changed my perspective. In the beginning of third year, my clerkship year, nearly every patient was a new face, but following my panel

Student Viewpoint Sunit Misra '19



allowed me to engage with people in a more intimate fashion. An example that comes to mind includes a particular patient struggling with depression. While medical references spell out first line treatment for depression, it fails to address unique environmental factors contributing to this patient's problem. My familiarity with his situation allowed me to offer him more than medication and a therapy referral. We were able to integrate his values while considering his physical and mental limitations,

“WE LEARN ABOUT OUR PATIENTS' SOCIAL STRUGGLES, AILMENTS, AND COPING SKILLS, SEEING THEM AS PEOPLE, NOT JUST THE DISEASE THEY HAVE THAT DAY.” — SUNIT MISRA '19

and his family, to create a more complete treatment plan. I felt like I was more than an interpreter of medical terminology; I felt I was becoming an important part of his life. It became clear to me that caring for someone in this manner sets them up for long term success. Adapting this holistic approach allows us to provide more comprehensive care to our patients, and as a LIC student I feel fortunate that I was able to have this experience.

I was also able to build valuable relationships with my educators through this program. We were directly observed, allowing our teachers to know where we struggle and our strengths. Personally, I struggled with presenting patients in an organized manner after seeing a patient. After understanding where I struggled, my mentor and I worked together to come up with a specific strategy to organize my thoughts while talking to a patient by changing the structure of my notes. A few months of persistent work got me compliments when presenting patients to physicians I just met. This is a feat that would be difficult to identify, let alone master, if I hadn't had so much time with a mentor.

The LIC fosters an indescribable community that feels like home. Our commitment to the upstate New York area served by Hudson Headwaters allows us to root into our environment, build strong relationships with our healthcare team, and care for the patients in our community. This is not something that can be taught in any medical school lecture. It comes as a result of our values and goals changing throughout our education, shaping the kinds of physicians we will be one day. Participating in the LIC has allowed me to preserve and embrace the passion that inspired me to become a doctor.



MEET A SCIENTIST

“My work explores the relationship between thyroid cancer and breast cancer. Both cancers predominantly affect women and a link between the two diseases is emerging; women with breast cancer are at increased risk of developing thyroid cancer and vice versa. Thyroid hormone signaling plays a role in cancer risk and development, and may be an important contributing factor to the relationship between thyroid and breast cancer. My project focuses on thyroid hormone receptor beta, a tumor suppressor, and uncovering the molecular mechanism by which it blocks tumor development in both tissue types. I hope to reveal common features that will provide therapeutic targets for both diseases.”

—Eric Bolf, Cellular, Molecular and Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. student in the lab of Frances Carr, Ph.D., professor of pharmacology

Service to the Cancer Community

The community impact of two local businesses, Leunig’s Bistro & Café (led by owners **Bob and Betsy Conlon**) and **Farrell Distributing**, extends far beyond excellent service. The UVM Cancer Center, and the patients and families it serves, have been the grateful beneficiaries of decades-long fundraising efforts by these businesses whose leaders, employees, and patrons consistently strive to give back to their communities. Recognizing many personal and community ties to cancer, the two organizations initiated fundraising efforts over 17 years ago for breast cancer research and patient care at the UVM Cancer Center. In total, the two organizations and their many partners, through wine and beverage sales and successful events, such as Wine, Wellness and Song, have raised nearly \$500,000 for ongoing cancer prevention and screening programs, cancer patient support, and research initiatives that include projects on advanced targeted breast cancer research.

Honoring Parents with Professorships

In honor of her parents, Elmer R. Huber and Blodwen S. Huber, **Dr. Sally Huber**, professor emerita of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, has given an estate gift of \$5 million to fund two endowed professorships for junior researchers in her department. In September 2018, Dr. Huber provided the funds to establish the Blodwen S. Huber Green and Gold Professorship which can be awarded to an assistant professor in 2019. These early career professorships support a promising assistant professor who in Dr. Huber’s words, is “likely to develop into a successful independent physician-scientist or basic scientist; thus alleviating some stress associated with finding grant support for themselves or their research project during this crucial time period of their career development.” Both of Dr. Huber’s parents were very involved with helping young people succeed. The gift continues Elmer and Blodwen Huber’s “spirit for the love of learning and knowledge and the love of helping others to make a success of their lives.”



Sally Huber, Ph.D. '68

Larner College of Medicine Fund Fueled by Alumni

The Larner College of Medicine Fund began as a grassroots effort led by alums: In the 1950s and ‘60s, **John Tampas, M.D. '54**, and **John Mazuzan, M.D. '54**, traversed the country rallying support for their medical alma mater. More than 60 years later alumni support is still strong, and the fund has blossomed into a key driver of excellence. Gifts to this fund have the most flexibility in helping the College fulfill its education and research missions, with a central focus on students. Every year, the Larner College of Medicine Fund provides important support for scholarships, wellness initiatives, and travel grants for medical and graduate students. The goal is to have a broad base of alumni support from across the class years. To contribute to the fund, visit go.uvm.edu/givemed

Campaign News



Children’s Hospital Receives \$1 Million Gift

A \$1 million donation from **New England Federal Credit Union** (NEFCU) has helped to launch a project to renovate the UVM Children’s Hospital’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). “We’ve come to understand the exceptional work that all of the professionals here perform, which has an impact that lasts the entire lives of these tiny patients,” said **John Dwyer**, president and CEO of NEFCU, at the Dec. 11 event announcing the gift. “When we heard that they were preparing to renovate their NICU, we wanted to kick off the fundraising for the project in a significant way.”



New England Federal Credit Union CEO John Dwyer (far right) presents a \$1 million check to UVM Children’s Hospital Chief Lewis First.

While still in the early planning stages, the renovation aims to improve efficiency of the NICU by moving it from two floors onto one floor, and provide a more welcoming environment for families.

In Loving Memory of Kathryn Tampas

Kathryn Tampas was beloved by many in the alumni community who knew her and her husband, John, Class of 1954 alumnus, emeritus professor of radiology, and longtime Alumni Executive Committee member. During Kathryn’s final battle with terminal cancer, a serious fall sent her to the UVM Medical Center. John recalls how hard the caregivers worked to get Kathryn well enough to leave the hospital. In the end, Kathryn’s wish was fulfilled:



John Tampas, M.D. '54, and his wife, Kathryn.

She died at home, surrounded by loved ones. The Kathryn H. Tampas room on the oncology floor of the new Robert E. and Holly D. Miller Building was named with a gift from her family, in her memory. Watch a video with Dr. Tampas titled “In Loving Memory of Kathryn Tampas”: <http://go.uvm.edu/tampas>

FIRST TAKE

DEAN RICHARD L. PAGE, M.D.,
OFFERS HIS INITIAL THOUGHTS
AS HE BEGINS HIS LEADERSHIP
OF THE UVM LARNER
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE.



In January 2019, Vermont Medicine sat down with Dean Richard L. Page, M.D., to hear firsthand his experiences and impressions as he entered his fourth month as dean of the Larner College of Medicine. Dr. Page formally began work as the 18th dean of the College on October 1, 2018. This interview has been edited for space.

VERMONT MEDICINE:

When did you first learn that the deanship was open at the Larner College of Medicine?

RICHARD PAGE:

I had been at the University of Wisconsin for about eight years when I first heard about this opportunity. I had loved my time in Madison, leading the Department of Medicine. At the same time, my wife and I were beginning to wonder what was next, what new adventure might be out there, what further impact we might have. I had already worked with Dr. Parsons [Larner Department of Medicine Chair Polly Parsons, M.D.]. We were both leaders in the Association of Professors of Medicine, the national group of chairs of medicine. I contacted her and, as she always had in the past, she spoke very highly of the institution. I had already learned about the exciting things going on here in education, through a piece on NPR. The news of UVM's extraordinary innovation traveled throughout the country a year or so before I ever dreamed I'd be considered for this job, and I found the idea of being part of it intriguing.

Any decision like this is made in partnership with my wife of 33 years, Jeannie. She looked into the cultural and lifestyle opportunities in Burlington and became enthusiastic about the idea. She's from North Carolina, and I had originally never thought I would take her to a place as cold as Wisconsin! But over our nine years there, she came to appreciate living in a place with four seasons; so she gave the green light for Vermont. Given our living in New England for three years together when I was in training in Boston, and my growing up in New England, there seemed to be a natural connection to explore.

VM Where in New England did you grow up?

RP I grew up in Storrs, Connecticut. It's a college town. My father was an educational psychologist at the University of Connecticut until about 1979. He retired from that state institution and then taught for the rest of his career, another 15 years or so, at Duke University. So coming back to a New England college town was kind of coming full circle for me.

VM How has settling into this community been for you?

RP My days have been filled with excitement, new experiences, new people. Just moving the household, when you've been in a place for close to nine years, is a big endeavor. We still have some boxes in the basement, but we like to tell ourselves that at least we've looked inside all of them by now! We have three grown children, ages 28, 30 and 32, who all have significant others. We were lucky enough to find a house with enough room to fit everyone at holiday times.

Arriving at the College was exciting from the very beginning. The White Coat Ceremony for our Class of 2022 stands out as a highlight of my very first week. It was a truly moving experience. I received my own first Larner white coat that same day. To wear that and be part of that event was tremendously meaningful.

I've made a point of listening to as many people as possible since I arrived. This has been done through town halls and through ongoing interactions with the chairs of our departments—both clinical and basic sciences. I've had the privilege of hearing from many different groups: students, staff, residents, fellows, faculty of all sorts, clinicians, educators, scientists, and all in different combinations. We're very fortunate to have

such an enthusiastic, talented group of people here at the Larner College of Medicine.

What I've especially enjoyed is the people I meet while walking around the campus. I've gotten lost many, many times, and even that is fun, because when I'm lost, I knock on the nearest door. I get to introduce myself to the person in the office or the person in the lab. I ask directions and, more often than not, end up chatting with that person about what they do.

VM Any other standout moments so far?

RP Oh yes. High points have included meeting members of our local community, such as the chamber of commerce; and I've had the opportunity to meet Lieutenant Governor Zuckerman and our whole Vermont congressional delegation. I was honored to spend time with Senator Leahy at a reception at the Washington, D.C., home of our alumnus, Dr. David Reines, from the Class of 1972, and his wife, Nina Totenberg.

I'm very impressed by the enthusiasm of the alumni of UVM and its College of Medicine. People have a palpable love for this place. They give back in terms of their efforts on behalf of the College, their talking to prospective students, and their philanthropy. I've been inspired by the generosity and the way people stay in touch. The number of alumni who give back to the Larner College of Medicine, I believe, is among the top in the country. Our alumni recognize that their careers were launched by the opportunities they had here.

A high point in these first weeks was hosting a 100th birthday celebration for Dr. Gordie Page—no relation—a member of the Class of 1945, and a prominent surgeon and emeritus professor. To hear his stories from



THE PAGE FILE

RICHARD L. PAGE, M.D.
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
LARNER COLLEGE
OF MEDICINE
DEAN
ASSUMED OCTOBER 1, 2018
PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE
(CARDIOLOGY)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- » Duke University, B.S., Zoology, 1980
- » Duke University School of Medicine, M.D., 1984
- » Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Stanley J. Sarnoff Fellow in the Department of Pharmacology, 1982-1983
- » Residency in Medicine, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston
- » Research and Clinical Fellowships in Cardiology and Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology, Duke University Medical Center
- » Certificate in Medical Management, University of Washington School of Medicine, 2007

PRIOR ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- » George R. and Elaine Love Professor and Chair, Department of Medicine, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, 2009-2018
- » Robert A. Bruce Endowed Chair in Cardiovascular Research and Head of the Division of Cardiology, University of Washington School of Medicine, 2002-2009
- » Assistant, Associate and Full Professor of Internal Medicine and Dallas Heart Ball Chair in Cardiac Arrhythmia Research, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, 1992-2002
- » Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of Cardiology, Duke University Medical Center, 1990-1992

NATIONAL SERVICE

- » American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Guidelines Task Force
- » Chair, Circulatory Devices Panel, U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- » Fellow of the American Heart Association
- » Chair, American Heart Association Council on Clinical Cardiology
- » Fellow, Heart Rhythm Society: President, 2009-2010; Board Member, 2001-2012
- » Past-President, Association of Professors of Cardiology
- » Councilor, Association of Professors of Medicine
- » Member, Association of University Cardiologists
- » Member, American Clinical and Climatological Association
- » Member, Association of American Physicians

across 70 years of practice was a special experience. [Editor's note: see page 32 for more about this meeting.]

And, by chance, Jeannie and I had plans to be in New York City in December and we attended President Sullivan's annual holiday reception at the Penn Club. I loved feeling the excitement in the room from alumni, including a number of the more recent graduates who are just starting their first jobs in the New York City area and already are developing an ongoing relationship with UVM.

I've also been to North Carolina to visit with alumni, Dr. Farrell Collins, and his wife Dr. Ellen Andrews. Dr. Collins was the first UVM alum to congratulate me. The day my appointment as dean was announced, I received a call via the page operator in Wisconsin. The operator told me, "It's a doctor from North Carolina who said he needed to talk to the new dean." I got on the phone, and Dr. Collins said he wanted to make a point of being the first to congratulate me. He also was very proud of the fact that someone else with a Duke connection was now part of his alma mater. I found out later that he made a financial gift in my honor that he had asked to specifically be awarded on October 1st, to correspond with my first day at UVM. So that was a memorable beginning.

VM *By now you've probably also met many people across the University.*

RP Yes, and I've certainly learned to bring boots for my trek to the Waterman Building! I really enjoy walking across campus by Ira Allen's statue. I have regular meetings with the president and the provost. And President Sullivan has been good enough to come over and visit with me at my office on a couple of occasions.

I've enjoyed getting to know my fellow deans. We have our unique challenges, but we have great opportunities for interaction.

I'm currently looking into how we might collaborate further with the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, the Grossman School of Business, and with other groups throughout the University.

VM *What has impressed you most about this place?*

RP I'm impressed by the tremendous spirit of collaboration. And I'm impressed by the quality of clinical care. As I was being recruited, I emphasized that I would only want a position where I could truly be a "three-mission dean." By that I mean committed to, and directly involved in partnership with the clinical operations, in addition to education and research. In medicine, we use the analogy to a three-legged stool with those three missions supporting the academic medicine enterprise. The clinical operation is very strong, and we're tremendously fortunate to have an excellent relationship with the UVM Medical Center and Health Network, as well as the medical group. Dr. John Brumsted and Dr. Claude Deschamps have welcomed me and embraced the idea of my being a partner with them in the clinical mission.

And as an aside, I am already seeing patients in clinic, and very much enjoy that. I've only been a dean for a little over three months, but I've been a practicing cardiologist for closer to 30 years. I never want to stop practicing and have come to look forward to my Tuesday mornings, where I spend my time in a completely different way from the rest of the week.

VM *It was important to you to hold on to that dimension of your profession?*

RP It was critical.

VM *Because there are many deans who are M.D.s who step away from clinical practice.*

RP Right. Even some chairs of medicine don't stay clinically involved. Earlier in my career, I did invasive procedures that included ablations and implantation of pacemakers and defibrillators. Those are procedures that you must perform regularly or you can't do them well. A number of years back, I took myself out of an invasive practice. So now mine is purely outpatient, noninvasive practice, specializing in heart rhythm disturbances. For me, in addition to the rewards of patient interaction, there are other advantages to maintaining my clinical practice. For example, as I'm talking with our clinical faculty, I can better understand their day-to-day challenges.

VM *What are your thoughts about our education and research missions?*

RP Because of the commitment to active learning that has been undertaken at UVM, the education mission is internationally famous here. I find that to be very exciting. The Larner gift specifically focused on support of the College for medical education. It is a remarkable and unique gift, and it's given us a unique opportunity. As Dr. Larner said, we want our college to be second to none, and we are educational pioneers. At the same time, we're continuing to strengthen our clinical education partnerships throughout the UVM Health Network and at our branch campus in Connecticut and through Hudson Headwaters Health Network in New York.

And in my first few months, I've been delighted to meet and hear from graduate students. These are talented individuals who are critical to the College. No medical school can be excellent without excellent basic science, and basic science departments

cannot be excellent unless they have excellent graduate programs that attract excellent graduate and postdoctoral students.

I'm learning more every day about our research portfolio. Not unlike many other institutions, money is tight and support of science has been constrained by financial realities. That being said, already there are crucial investments being made here. We have approval from the Board of Trustees to continue to explore building a new medical research building here on campus, and combining that project with the renovation of the Given building is going to be tremendously important for the College. We'll be creating a state-of-the-art, open floor plan research space that will enhance collaboration and cross-disciplinary research. That's a very exciting opportunity. We have some terrific basic science and terrific translational research. We also have areas of excellence in clinical, in health services research, in outcomes research, and in population health. Regarding population health, we can learn better how to provide first-rate primary and specialty care to Vermonters, ideally where they are in both heavily populated and the more rural areas, and we can share these lessons throughout the country.

VM *You also have a keen focus on professionalism. What does professionalism mean to you, and how do you see it as a part of the culture here at Larner?*

RP Everyone should feel that they are in an environment where they can do a job, be respected, and be around others who are committed to treating each other—our colleagues and collaborators, our patients, people who work for us, and the people we work for—in a professional manner. It makes patient care better when individuals are setting a fully realized example for others.

This is an area that first became a focus for me when I was chief of cardiology at the University of Washington; I carried this priority with me to Wisconsin as well. Professionalism has to be a core value of educators, scientists, and caregivers. Because of medicine's great importance in people's lives—in literally sustaining people—that power has to be handled responsibly, and with humility. It's what we have to expect of ourselves, and it has to be the environment we provide for each other. I've been delighted with the resonance that I've found here for this emphasis, and appreciative of the work of our Professionalism Statement Task Force and many other members of our community on this issue.

VM *You've talked about the three core missions of the College. What about what many consider the fourth mission—community engagement?*

RP For any school of medicine, partnership with the community is critical. That's only amplified here in Burlington and Vermont, where the community is especially tight-knit. There are issues in every community that need attention—disparities in terms of food, housing, and health care—that we need to be aware of so that we might advocate for solutions. While we can't fix all those problems within the College, we need to be part of the discussion and part of the resolution. We need to help educate our students to the importance of the health of the community, and we need to continue to



Dr. Page and Jeannie Page at the 2018 White Coat Ceremony reception.

work to build the most diverse community we can in an environment where everyone can feel welcomed and primed for success.

I've been deeply impressed by our students' commitment to social medicine and social justice in medicine. We have an obligation: I consider health care a right, and inclusive, culturally humble health care is mandatory. We want all patients to feel comfortable and welcome here, and we need to know how to provide the best possible environment for each and every individual who looks to us for care, and who comes here to learn. That has to do with all of us being aware. That work is ongoing, though a good deal has already occurred, including curricular enhancements and modifications to address social issues. I've been encouraged by the commitment of the faculty to community engagement. It's our obligation. We are embedded here, and we need to make a difference in the community in every way we can. **VM**

After Jasmine Robinson '20 experienced homelessness as a child, she turned her empathy for this population into action. ▶ Navigating the healthcare system as a transgender individual helped Eli Goldberg '20 arrive at medicine as a career. ▶ Juan Conde '21 came to the U.S. from Mexico as a child; now he wants to give back by treating patients with cancer.

Thanks in part to these diverse life experiences—and a hefty dose of passion for their chosen field—these students bring to the UVM Larner College of Medicine a deep-seated sense of social responsibility. They want to shine light on the systemic inequality that affects human health, and the physician's role in addressing it. They question how we practice medicine and how we can do it better. ▶

Larner medical student Juan Conde '21 speaks at a 2017 press conference led by U.S. Representative Peter Welch, at right. Conde is a member of the DACA "Dreamer" program.

**LARNER
STUDENTS
SPEAK UP**

BE CAUSE

BY ERIN POST



THE DREAMERS

ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2017, with U.S. Representative Peter Welch and UVM President Thomas Sullivan at his side, **Juan Conde '21** talked about coming to the United States from Mexico with his mother when he was 9 years old. He told the crowd gathered for the press conference at the Larner College of Medicine that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program—created by President Obama in 2012—allowed him to apply for medical school and pursue his dream to become an oncologist and cancer researcher. In the wake of President Trump's announcement that the program would be rescinded, Conde pushed lawmakers for a solution that would allow the young people known as “Dreamers” to stay in the country and thrive.

“My story is not yet complete,” Conde said, flanked on both sides by classmates in their white coats, “but I rest with confidence knowing that it is the American people who will get to decide how it ends.”

Conde's decision to speak out was rooted in a sense of kinship with his fellow Dreamers: Since the program began, he had been volunteering to help undocumented youth navigate the application process. As a medical student, he saw an opportunity to bring a human face to a politicized issue.

“When you think this is an issue that doesn't affect you, it's easy to put it at the back of your mind and not pay attention to it,” he says. “But when you start finding out that these are people who grew up here, that these are friends and family members, then we become more empathetic.”

His influence reached the floor of the U.S. Congress when House of Representatives Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi invoked his words during her hours-long filibuster demanding action on immigration policy in February of 2018.

She read a letter from Conde, in which he talked about his mother's death from cancer his senior year of college. His decision to pursue a Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology stemmed from his desire to “dedicate his life to fight the disease.” When the door to medical school opened, he saw the chance to achieve all of his highest aspirations.

“This is an American issue,” says Conde. “This is an issue of our values, about who we are as a country. [The Dreamers] cannot vote, but what we can do is tell our stories.”

#PUSHFOR PRONOUNS



AS AN UNDERGRADUATE at Appalachian State University, **Alden Sacco '20** co-founded TransAction, a student organization through which transgender-identified students could find community and engage in activism and education. That led to a successful petition to add accessible all-gender restrooms in every building, as well as a Trans101 training and other educational events. Sacco sees a line straight from this advocacy work to medical school.

“This early community organizing blossomed into a desire to practice person-centered medicine, to create safe and accessible healthcare spaces, and to work with other healthcare professionals to provide trans-sensitive care,” says Sacco, who identifies as gender queer and nonbinary and uses the personal pronouns “they,” “them,” and “theirs.”

As a medical student, Sacco continues to advocate and educate. They co-founded a campaign called #PushforPronouns, which harnessed social media to raise awareness about personal pronouns. A reported 70 percent of trans patients experience discrimination when accessing medical care; as a result, this population suffers from higher rates of preventable illness. Asking for personal pronouns as a routine part of visits would create a welcoming, safe environment and lead to improved health outcomes.

Sacco also founded the TransForm Project through a Schweitzer Fellowship, in cooperation with the Pride Center of Vermont. With a goal to reduce the number of transgender Vermonters who transition in isolation, the project features a peer mentorship program, a website, and online educational modules. TransForm has received grant funding to maintain its activities, something Sacco is particularly proud of.

“This work is, and always has been, deeply personal for me. Regardless of the specialty that I choose, I know that my practice will be tailored toward trans-specific care as much as possible, and that time in my career will be reserved for community advocacy work and medical education reform.”



WHITE COATS 4 BLACK LIVES

AFTER ALTON STERLING was shot by police in July of 2016, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, **Desiree DiBella '19** remembers feeling numb. Also hurt. Although his death hit particularly close to home—her father's side of the family is from Louisiana—she had already been struggling through emotions brought up by a series of police shootings of black men in 2015 and 2016. The demands of medical school left little time to process current events.

“When I'm with my family, I can grieve with them, and I can say what's on my mind,” she says. “But I have to be able to grow and share with my colleagues in the medical community as well.”

With support from the College's Office of Diversity and Inclusion and chapter of the Student National Medical Association, DiBella plugged into a growing national movement of medical students—called White Coats 4 Black Lives—to organize a public forum focused on the shootings and broader issues related to race, health and inequality. That event made waves: Students, faculty, and staff from across UVM filled the Hoehl Gallery, some of whom spoke poignantly about institutionalized violence as a public health issue. Moving forward, DiBella sees a need to focus on the health disparities people of color experience, whether it's through lack of access to healthcare or providers' implicit bias.

“We need to actively address racial inequality and bias in medicine,” she says. “What can we do as training physicians to bridge this gap? How can the people who are already out of their training question their practices and say, ‘where can we improve?’”

After graduating from the University of Tennessee, DiBella spent two years as a Teach for America kindergarten teacher working with children new to the English language. In a classroom filled with students from Ethiopia, Egypt, Guatemala and Honduras, she found inspiration for her future work as a physician.

“I want to have the privilege to bring my then students and now patients to the table and say, ‘What do you need from the medical community to succeed in life and reach your highest potential?’”



ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN

MOLLY MARKOWITZ, M.D. '18, harnesses social media as a force for positive change. As a medical student, she served as executive coordinator of medical student initiatives for the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Section on Pediatric Trainees, and joined the AAP's Vermont chapter as a medical student representative. This work helped develop her voice as an advocate: She supported AAP campaigns on a range of issues affecting children's health, and also wrote blog posts for the organization. It was clear early on that she had found her niche.

“[AAP officials] were my mentors. They were my friends,” she says. “I would say probably one of the most transformative parts of my education was working with them on advocacy.”

Now, although she's well into her first year as a pediatrics resident at Yale-New Haven Hospital, the pace has not slowed. In the lead-up to the 2018 mid-term elections, she supported through Twitter and blog posts an AAP campaign called #VoteKids, which included position statements on issues affecting children's health. She's currently focused on a project called Street Cred, which brings tax preparation specialists into Yale's pediatric clinic to help families sign up for the Earned Income Tax Credit, which she describes as “one of the most powerful anti-poverty programs our government has.” She'll be conducting research on how free tax preparation in a medical home impacts families.

Growing up in rural Maine as the daughter of a pediatrician, Markowitz came to medical school with a deep understanding of the myriad factors affecting children's health. One of her first online essays for the AAP was about how the opioid epidemic changed her hometown, highlighting the power of medical students to make a positive impact. She sees social media as part of the solution as it now plays an important role in homes, schools and communities.

“We have to talk about how to use it with kids, how to use it safely, how to use it kindly, and effectively in the sense of advocacy,” she says.



SEE VIDEOS,
BLOG POSTS AND
ADDITIONAL
STORIES ABOUT
THESE LARNER
COLLEGE
OF MEDICINE
STUDENTS IN
ACTION AT:
MED.UVM.EDU/
VTMEDICINE/
WEB-EXTRAS

SOCIAL JUSTICE

From left: Class of '21 students Katrina Thornburgh, Christina Dawson, Raghav Goyal, Reed Hausser, and Sam Epstein.

THE DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS of these student leaders belie a common purpose: Before medical school, **Christina Dawson '21** worked on indigenous policy for a think tank, while **Raghav Goyal '21** spent five years working for the National Park Service. **Reed Hausser '21** and **Sam Epstein '21** earned degrees in molecular genetics and public health respectively. **Elizabeth Lynch '21** studied traditional healing in Chile. **Katrina Thornburgh '21** worked in social services, providing needle exchange and safer sex education. They came together through a reading group in their first year as medical students, where they discussed social issues like preventive medicine, racial justice, queer justice, and women's health. Now, they're bringing these issues forward as leaders for the College's new Social Justice Coalition.

The coalition, now 60-plus members strong, wants to ensure physicians-in-training have a "deep understanding of the social structures of health," says Goyal. This means grappling with issues like racial and socioeconomic inequality and their impact on health. For many students in the group, their desire to tackle these challenges is what drew them to medicine.

"When I think of medicine and health, these issues are it," says Epstein. "There's no separating out this work from what a doctor should be doing."

The group is focused on several projects with support from the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Office of Medical Student Education. They're working with faculty members to weave social justice and health equity issues into the Vermont Integrated Curriculum through the Social Medicine Theme of the Week. Some examples: A discussion on access to rural health care has been added to a session on primary care; race is brought up during a class on genetics. Students dive deeper into these conversations during Professionalism, Communication and Reflection.

"If we're doing a case study, we can talk about some of the socio-economic determinants within it," says Dawson. "We've activated a lot of the first-year students who are super interested in the social theme of the week."

The coalition is also working with the Teaching Academy to analyze admissions and academic success data with a goal to identify intervention points to better support underrepresented minorities. They plan to publish research and present findings nationally.

For Hausser, medicine is most effective when it encompasses the big picture.

"Being a physician is about healing people, but it's also about healing communities," he says.



TRANSGENDER HEALTH

DURING A PRESENTATION at the Lerner College of Medicine's Community Medical School in April of 2018, **Eli Goldberg '20** deftly explained to an auditorium filled with an audience of Vermont community members, the nuances of hormone therapy and transmasculine and transfeminine surgery as part of a panel presentation on transgender health.

He also highlighted some alarming statistics: 29 percent of trans people in Vermont reported at least one negative experience with a healthcare provider within the previous 12 months, according to the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. Twelve percent had not sought needed care because they feared mistreatment. Goldberg wants to change those numbers.

"I wouldn't have ended up going into medicine were it not for the experiences that I'd had as a trans person trying to access care, and seeing friends, and loved ones who are trans, struggling to access appropriate care," he says.

Goldberg seeks opportunities to connect and engage: In addition to Community Medical School, he's hosted presentations at the annual Translating Identity Conference, New England's largest conference focused on transgender issues. He also worked with the Pride Center of Vermont to develop a mentoring network for Vermonters in transition as part of the TransForm Project, which fellow medical student Alden Sacco '20 founded through a Schweitzer Fellowship in 2016. Now TransForm is self-sustaining; the center recently hired its first transgender program coordinator.

A native of Shelburne, Vt., Goldberg double majored in archaeology and ancient Greek at Oberlin College. While working on his senior thesis about ancient Roman ceramic tile, he realized that his greatest enthusiasm was actually rooted in the volunteer work he was doing with the college's sexual health counseling center and HIV testing program. His goal is to practice primary care in a rural setting because there's both a need for providers and an opportunity to make an impact.

"I think there's room for rural primary care practices to set a model for how to deliver care to trans patients," he says. "The relationships that you develop with your patients are really unique."



ENGAGING THE HOMELESS COMMUNITY

JASMINE ROBINSON '20 (above, left) started the Here to Help Clinic as a way to help meet the needs of the homeless population in Burlington. A shower, toiletries, hot food, a haircut, and along the way, connections to community agencies offering services. What participants valued the most surprised her.

"They said that the best part about the clinic was getting to talk to people," she says. "I wasn't expecting this to have as powerful an impact as it did."

Founding the Here to Help Clinic was personal: As a child, Robinson experienced homelessness. After suffering a job-related disability, her mom had trouble finding an affordable place to live with Robinson and her brother, who has autism. The family of three moved many times, and eventually settled in a hotel for a year and a half before finally securing an apartment. When she had the opportunity in high school to shadow a primary care physician who offered a free clinic, the seed for Here to Help was planted.

Initially supported by a Schweitzer Fellowship, the clinic launched in July of 2016. It now regularly attracts upwards of 80 attendees, and has been designated a Student Interest Group by the College. **Shae Rowlandson '21** (above, right) has taken over where Robinson and two students from the Class of 2020—Erin Hunt and Russell Himmelstein—left off. A graduate of UVM, Rowlandson earned a master's degree in health sciences at Johns Hopkins and worked as a medical assistant at a free clinic in Baltimore. Here, he found his passion, rooted in engagement and advocacy.

"If we're going to tackle a lot of these problems, it's going to take us actually going out in the community and doing something about it," he says.

He's not alone. As of last count, over two dozen students are SIG members, which is music to Robinson's ears.

"The great thing about the Here to Help clinic is it gives a lot of students who may not have had any exposure to this type of population the opportunity to engage," she says. "It creates a bond that I think otherwise wouldn't happen."



ON HER TOES

AS A RESEARCHER,
CLINICIAN, MENTOR,
AND EDUCATOR,
RENEE STAPLETON,
M.D., PH.D., IS
ALWAYS IN ACTION.

BY SARAH ZOBEL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDY DUBACK

Renee Stapleton, M.D., Ph.D., keeps a treadmill desk in the corner of her office. But her colleagues, research collaborators, medical students and residents know that she hardly needs a machine to augment the effort she puts into all the dimensions of her daily work.

“People can’t really be triple threats any more—it’s just too hard,” says Polly Parsons, M.D., E.L. Amidon Professor and Chair of Medicine. To Parsons, who is also the current president of the American Thoracic Society (ATS), a “triple threat” is someone who is simultaneously at the top of their field as clinician, teacher, and researcher. “It would seem impossible to be truly exceptional in all three areas. But Renee is.”

Marc Moss, M.D., Roger S. Mitchell Professor of Medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and immediate past president of the ATS, goes one notch further. “Renee Stapleton is a quadruple threat. She’s a great clinician, teacher, researcher—and a great person. You would want Renee to care for your relative, teach the person who will be your future doctor, and perform studies that are funded with precious research dollars,” Moss says.

There are plenty of accolades in support of that praise. Stapleton—a pulmonologist and critical care physician at UVM Medical Center and associate professor in the Department of Medicine—won the 2014 Jo Rae Wright Award for Outstanding Science from the ATS, which recognizes a rising star in academic pulmonary and critical care medicine. She was also presented with the 2018 Larner College of Medicine Faculty Award in Research Mentorship. She has been named vice-chair of the ATS’s scientific advisory committee and chair-elect of its critical care assembly, the largest among its 13 assemblies. Outgoing assembly chair John Kress, M.D., professor of medicine, University of Chicago Medicine, says Stapleton’s track record was a significant factor in her selection: “She is already one of the leaders in

the field of respiratory failure and Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), and I think she’s just getting started.”

Although the division of her work favors research, Stapleton, who is certified in both pulmonary medicine and critical care medicine, dedicates roughly 15-20 percent of her time to seeing patients in the pulmonary clinic and the medical intensive care unit. She also puts in time on the pulmonary consult service and as an attending physician.

Her teaching duties are twofold: in addition to bedside instruction in the context of clinical rotations, Stapleton created and directs a special research emphasis for doctor of medicine and doctor of nursing practice students. It’s made up of a longitudinal series of seminars and workshops, and arose during Stapleton’s time as head of the resident and fellow research committee for the Department of Medicine.

“When I took that role, I very quickly started getting asked a lot of questions from medical students who weren’t formally in the department of medicine. They wanted to know how they could find a research mentor, what kind of projects were available—soup to nuts—and it became obvious there was a gap in those kinds of opportunities and organization for students,” she says. She brought her concern to medical education leaders; they agreed that having a point person for research activities would be beneficial. Stapleton also suggested more formal research education was needed and, partnering with Amy O’Meara, D.N.P., applied for and received a 2016 Frymoyer Scholar Award that allowed them to design and implement a research education project.

The research emphasis has proven popular as it has evolved over the last two years from a monthly in-person seminar, to a prerecorded online model, to take into

“IT WOULD SEEM IMPOSSIBLE TO BE TRULY EXCEPTIONAL IN ALL THREE AREAS. BUT RENEE IS.”

— POLLY PARSONS, M.D., E.L. AMIDON PROFESSOR AND CHAIR OF MEDICINE

account the many demands on the students’ time. Eventually, Stapleton says, incoming students may have the option to choose one or more tracks, such as rural or global health or a self-designed focus that will include an independent mentored research project, and will receive a certificate of completion.

Presently, Stapleton oversees students’ summer research training, helping them find mentors, and submit applications and reports. That program has also grown significantly—when Stapleton became involved four years ago, 15 students had summer projects; this year, 31 did.

“She’s committed to nurturing medical students, residents, and fellows, and is actively involved in the education of those groups,” says Parsons. That commitment



extended in a unique way to a special short-term course Stapleton and Parsons developed, an elective for fourth-year students called “How the Hospital Works.” It offers experiential learning in all aspects of a hospital’s functioning—administration, nutrition, pharmacy, central supply, and social work. “Renee saw an area of need, and put together an opportunity. She just looks for novel ways, and people benefit at multiple levels,” says Parsons. “At the same time, she is approachable and compassionate, totally down-to-earth. In unlimited ways, she gives back. She’s an incredible role model, just by being here.”

Although Stapleton has mentored both men and women, she keeps a special eye out for the latter. A 2013 paper she co-authored

with Stanford University’s Ann Weinacker, M.D., titled “Still a Man’s World, But Why?” and published in *Critical Care*, stated, “[W]omen who have achieved promotion and leadership roles must take active and inclusive roles as role-models, mentors, and advocates for junior women in academic medicine. Women early in their careers need proof that there is light at the end of the academic tunnel.”

“She’s a fantastic mentor,” says Jacqueline O’Toole, D.O., now a pulmonary and critical care fellow at Johns Hopkins University, who joined Stapleton in a study on the presence of attendings in the medical ICU overnight, and how that influences the perceived educational value of overnight shifts for medical residents and fellows, as well as how the nursing staff view their presence. Stapleton’s guidance was

Above: Renee Stapleton, M.D., Ph.D., is researching how a cycle ergometer may help reduce inflammation in patients in the ICU.

invaluable to O’Toole. “It takes a lot of patience when you’re working with a novice researcher, and she was always wonderful—I never felt like I was wasting her time, and I know she has a lot of demands on it,” says O’Toole. The paper was published in the *Medical Science Educator* in 2018.

Radhika Parikh, M.B.B.S., M.D., chose Stapleton to be her mentor throughout the three years of her fellowship at UVM in part to focus on her medical literature writing skills.

“She is really a meticulous and wonderful person to work with,” says Parikh (now a

THE STAPLETON FILE»

EDUCATION

- » Doctor of Medicine, with honors, University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, Wash., 1998. Elected to Alpha Omega Alpha in junior year.
- » Doctor of Philosophy, University of Washington Department of Epidemiology, 2010.

- » Master of Science, University of Washington Department of Epidemiology, 2005.
- » Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, Rice University, Houston, Texas, 1994. Majors: Biochemistry and Biology. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa, 1994.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- » Teacher of the Year, Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine, 2009
- » E.L. Amidon Award for Teaching Excellence, Department of Medicine, University of Vermont Larner College of

- Medicine, 2009
- » Recipient of travel grant to attend the National Institute of Aging (NIA) Bedside to Bench Conference “Inflammation and nutrient Metabolism,” Bethesda, Md., September 2009
- » University of Vermont Medical Group Junior Researcher of the Year, 2012

- » 2014 American Thoracic Society Jo Rae Wright Award for Outstanding Science. This award recognizes demonstrated potential for significant scientific achievement and contributions and is aimed at the rising generation of individuals who will be tomorrow’s leaders in science.

- » 2016 Department of Medicine Resident and Fellow Research Mentor of the Year
- » Selected to attend the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) Mid-Career Women Faculty Leadership Development Seminar in Scottsdale, Ariz., in December 2017.

- » Recipient of the Research Mentor Award at the 2018 Annual UVM Larner College of Medicine Dean’s Excellence in Research Award Ceremony

CLINICAL INTERESTS

- » Acute Lung Injury
- » Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- » Sepsis
- » Survivors of Critical Illness

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- » Critical Care Outcomes and Epidemiology
- » Nutrition and Micronutrients in Critical Care
- » Acute Lung Injury and Sepsis
- » In-hospital CPR
- » End-of-life Care

senior associate consultant in the Mayo Clinic Health System). “Whether I was doing a very small or a very important presentation, she would take time out to sit down with me a week in advance and again one day ahead to have practice sessions and not only focus on whether I would finish in time, but also on small details like spelling errors and slide formatting.” At least as important to Parikh at the time, Stapleton helped her personally. Raising her daughter solo while her husband was in Connecticut, Parikh was at times overwhelmed by her commitments. Without saying a word, Stapleton worked behind the scenes to get the date of Parikh’s scheduled presentation to the Vermont Lung Conference moved so Parikh could focus on preparing for her boards. “I don’t think I could have done all this without her,” says Parikh, adding that she’s as indebted to Stapleton for the career and research exposure as she is her parenting and life wisdom, and that she became committed to staying active by observing her mentor’s model.

Vermont is a natural fit for Montana native Stapleton. “We feel like we hit the jackpot—it’s a great place to live and work,” she says of moving to Chittenden County, “and the culture of our institution is a really nice work-life balance.” With her family, she gardens, taps trees to make maple syrup, and has in the past raised chickens and shared eggs with her colleagues. In addition to working at the treadmill desk that her husband, Jonathan, a high school physics teacher, built for her, Stapleton enjoys skiing, kayaking, canoeing, and fishing with the couple’s three children, Walker, Emerson, and Orion. Indeed, Stapleton’s role as mother comes up repeatedly, and not in a hackneyed “how does she do it?” way.

“She is actively involved in her kids’ lives, and very open about being a mom,” says Parsons, noting Stapleton serves as a model to all of her mentees and colleagues who, like Parikh, juggle full work lives and parenting.

Stapleton had her own model. “I’ve known since I was 10 that I wanted to go into medicine. That stemmed largely from my love of my childhood pediatrician. She was in her 60s when I was a kid seeing her, and I remember her telling me stories of going to medical school—everybody else in the class was a man,” she says. After earning an undergraduate degree from Rice University, Stapleton took advantage of a reciprocal program for residents of northwestern states to attend the University of Washington School of Medicine. Still convinced she was headed for a career in rural primary care,

at the very end of her intern year Stapleton spent a month in the ICU at Seattle’s Harborview Medical Center, the county hospital. It was there she “completely fell in love with critical care.” Through her work with the pulmonary and critical care faculty, she developed an interest in clinical research.

“I really enjoy clinical work, but the research piece of it is academically stimulating, and it’s what gets me out of bed in the morning,” she says. “My mentors did an excellent job of being my village, and helping me realize that this research career path met my needs for being of service and fulfilling one’s civic duty, of simultaneously being able to take care of patients, which I still love and is the root of everything that we do. But the research piece is really intellectually satisfying. Your brain is never on hold.” She decided to add on a master’s in epidemiology, and then a Ph.D., and joined the faculty in Seattle before being invited by Parsons in 2007 to come to UVM to conduct research in the ICU.

“Renee has been a superstar since she arrived at the University of Vermont in the pulmonary and critical care division,” says Parsons. “She brought her research program with her from Seattle and established a vibrant program in clinical translational research that’s been wildly successful.”

At present, that program, which occupies about 75 percent of Stapleton’s working hours—and will only increase in the spring as additional grants get going—addresses end-of-life issues and communication, novel therapies in critically ill patients including exercise and nutrition, and a new innovative restraint device. Stapleton’s most recent RO1 application scored in the sixth percentile; she collaborates with not only colleagues locally, but researchers nationwide. She is principal or co-principal investigator on three multi-center randomized trials. The just-underway NEXIS trial will look at the use of cycle ergometry and amino acid supplementation in people with acute respiratory failure who are on a ventilator. It’s a collaboration with researchers at Harborview, Johns Hopkins, and Wake Forest School of Medicine. Together with co-PIs Benjamin Suratt, M.D., and Michael Toth, Ph.D., from UVM, and Wake Forest’s Clark Files, M.D., Stapleton has also received a separate RO1 to work through the biologic mechanisms of the intervention,

“MY MENTORS DID AN EXCELLENT JOB OF BEING MY VILLAGE, AND HELPING ME REALIZE THAT THIS RESEARCH CAREER PATH MET MY NEEDS FOR BEING OF SERVICE AND FULFILLING ONE’S CIVIC DUTY.”

— RENEE STAPLETON, M.D., PH.D.

because there’s evidence exercise reduces inflammation not only at the local level, but systemically—even in the lungs. The cycling often happens passively, especially early in the participants’ ICU stays when they tend to be more sedated, on an ergometer that fits around the foot of the bed, but there have been some surprises.

“We have a whole algorithm we go through, and if patients cycle actively during enough of each increment, then we can ramp up the resistance and the speed,” says Stapleton. “If they do it passively, then we follow a separate part of the algorithm. It turns out that a large percentage of folks you think are not awake at all do end up cycling actively a fair number of minutes during a cycling session.” The next step may be a multinational study of four arms: usual care, amino acid supplementation, exercise, and supplementation plus exercise.

In another arena, Stapleton and colleagues at UVM, in addition to two other centers—Harborview and the Medical University of South Carolina—are looking at communication intervention in palliative care for older hospitalized patients and their families. They began recruiting participants in 2016, and are in the process of adding a

fourth site because recruiting participants is challenging.

Somewhat more offbeat for Stapleton is work she’s doing as part of an R42 grant, which supports research and development projects between small businesses and research institutions. Marie Pavini, M.D., F.C.C.P., a Rutland Regional Medical Center intensivist, approached Stapleton with a new restraint she developed for use in the ICU. Because the standard bilateral wrist restraints tend to make patients more agitated and in need of additional sedation, leading to longer ICU stays, Pavini came up with a restraint that uses an adjustable rod and a hand enclosure, so patients can move their arms but not reach their mouths or necks and put them at risk of self-removal of breathing tubes and large intravenous lines. That study has begun with a small pilot program at UVM to test the feasibility of the device; if all goes well, Stapleton, Pavini, and Johns Hopkins’s Dale Needham, M.D., Ph.D., will begin a three-center trial next spring.

Her newest project is an examination of zinc as a potential therapy in the ICU; she’s a co-investigator and is collaborating with principal investigator Rebecca Baron, M.D., at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. Known to

help reduce oxidative stress, zinc also plays a role in inflammatory cytokine production or inhibition and is a co-factor in myriad enzymatic reactions in most organisms, including pathogens. Blood levels of zinc in critically ill patients are ubiquitously low, although the reasons for this deficiency are not well-understood. Stapleton and her team recently completed a phase I dosing study of zinc in the ICU; the next step is a cohort study of some 800 people at four sites to determine which patients would most benefit from therapeutic doses. Baron has data showing that lower zinc levels lead to a higher likelihood of developing ARDS, along with ventilator-induced lung injury, but that in mouse models, supplementation with zinc has resulted in a quicker recovery and better outcomes, including less injury from the ventilator.

Though she’s so often the one in charge, Stapleton is quick to credit others. “Research like this takes a massive collaborative effort involving hard-working folks all over the campus including the IRB, the fiscal managers who help us budget our grants and manage funds correctly, the amazing research coordinators and lab staff who make

Above L to R: Members of the research team working on the ergometer. Sara Ardren, Sebastian Ventrone, Renee Stapleton, M.D., Ph.D., and Stephanie Burns.

day-to-day operations run smoothly, the fantastic ICU and ward nurses who care for our hospitalized research participants, the research pharmacy, my incredibly supportive colleagues, and so many others,” she says earnestly. “I’ve also been blessed with an outstanding group of mentors, including Dr. Parsons, which is key to success. I have a phenomenal group of people with whom I’m privileged to work. They are so amazing—they come to work every day excited about what they do and everybody works to get the job done—at other institutions with whom we collaborate, too. Our division is such a great group of people—just really fun people of the highest integrity who keep me on my toes every day. It’s a great job to have.” VM

TO WATCH A VIDEO OF THE DEVICE STAPLETON IS STUDYING AND READ AN ARTICLE SHE CO-AUTHORED, VISIT: MED.UVM.EDU/VTMEDICINE/WEB-EXTRAS

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



“IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO BE THINKING ABOUT MEDICAL REUNION 2019, TO BE HELD THIS YEAR OCTOBER 4-6, 2019.”

At the Alumni Executive Committee meeting in October—my first one as your president—I had the opportunity to welcome Dean Page to the Larner College of Medicine. The gathering, which coincided with UVM's alumni weekend and the Larner College of Medicine's White Coat Ceremony, served as a fitting introduction to the alumni community that makes our institution so strong. Not only was it the largest meeting we've had in recent memory, with many new members and several past presidents in attendance, the group's enthusiasm was contagious as we shared reasons why we continue to stay engaged with our medical alma mater. There were common themes, chief among them: appreciation for the camaraderie of our committee and alumni community, the opportunity to stay connected to the inspirational mission of the institution, and the amazing chance to give back to current students. We are truly lucky to be counted among Larner College of Medicine alumni!

Although here in Vermont the snow is still flying, we're gearing up for a busy spring. Mark your calendars for several alumni receptions with Dean Page in locations across the country, including Park City, Utah, New York City, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Boston. If you're in the area, we'd love to see you there. And it's not too early to start thinking about Medical Reunion 2019, to be held this year October 4-6, 2019. Area hotels are offering discounts,

so make your reservations early to take advantage of those good deals. Visit med.uvm.edu/alumni/reunion for more information about hotel discounts and reunion details. In the meantime, stay connected to UVM via your class agent(s). You've received information about this year's Match Challenge, and how to make an annual gift, and to share your news for class notes to be featured in the next issue of *Vermont Medicine*.

As we get ready to wrap up the successful Move Mountains campaign, I want to highlight the continued importance of alumni giving. I hope you will consider a gift to the Larner College of Medicine Fund this year. Gifts made by March 15 will count towards this year's Match Challenge. The Larner College of Medicine Fund provides key funding for student scholarships, student groups like the Wellness Committee, and education opportunity grants that allow students to present their research at prestigious conferences nationwide. You can learn more about annual giving at the College on page 11.

Thank you for all you do for the Larner College of Medicine!

BETSY SUSSMAN, M.D.'81
President
UVM Medical Alumni Association

MEDICAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

**Alumni Executive Committee
Fiscal Year 2019**
OFFICERS (TWO-YEAR TERMS)

PRESIDENT
Betsy L. Sussman, M.D.'81 (2018-2020)

PRESIDENT-ELECT
Omar A. Khan, M.D.'03 (2018-2020)

SECRETARY
Mary Cushman, M.D.'89 (2018-2020)

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

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE (SIX-YEAR TERMS)

Annie Coates, M.D.'07	(2018-2024)
Sean Diehl, Ph.D.'03	(2016-2022)
Seth Dorsky, M.D.'10	(2014-2020)
Janice M. Gallant, M.D.'89	(2015-2021)
Albert J. Hebert, Jr., M.D.'74	(2015-2021)
Christopher J. Hebert, M.D.'02	(2015-2021)
Danie Leahy, M.D.'17	(2018-2024)
Gus Papadakis, M.D.'92	(2018-2024)
Suzanne R. Parker, M.D.'73	(2016-2022)
Heidi Schumacher, M.D.'10	(2015-2021)
Michael D. Upton, M.D.'94	(2016-2022)
Pramila Yadav, M.D.'99	(2015-2021)

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

Richard L. Page M.D., Dean
Kevin P. McAteer



Dean Richard L. Page, M.D. (seated, third from left), with members of the Alumni Executive Committee

If you have news to share, or updated contact information, you may submit it at go.uvm.edu/infoupdate. You may also contact your class agent or the Development & Alumni Relations office at medalumni.relations@uvm.edu or (802) 656-4014.

1950s

REUNION 2019: 1954 + 1959

'59 James Danigelis writes: "We have been living on a beautiful sea island called Dataw just outside of Beaufort, South Carolina, for 18 years. My wife, Cec and I, celebrated our 54th anniversary this year. We enjoy good health and I play lots of golf. Cec does volunteer work and gardening. Our sons and families live in the San Francisco area and coastal Oregon, which we frequently visit. Matthew is an ER physician (MD'97) in Oregon.

1970s

REUNION 2019: 1974 + 1979

'70 John F. Beamis writes: "Received the 2017 Frank H. Lahey Award from Lahey Hospital & Medical Center for years of service to Lahey Clinic and commitment to values of Dr. Lahey. Also, the JF Beamis Honor Lecture was established at Lahey to be given during the annual interventional pulmonology course. I am retired in Santa Barbara, California, keeping busy with non-medical volunteering."

'79 Thomas Francis Boduch says: "I'm still in solo private practice in Kingston, Tennessee. On February 1, 2019, I will have been in practice for 30 years! I am also starting my fifth year as our county's medical examiner, averaging over 300 cases yearly.

1980s

REUNION 2019: 1984 + 1989

'80 Stephen Shea reports that after retiring in 2015 as a deputy director for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, he returned to direct patient care and now works part-time at a clinic on Skid Row in Los Angeles, delivering mental health services to the homeless mentally ill. In April of 2018, he was named one of Los Angeles' top doctors by *Los Angeles Magazine*.

'82 Anthony Arthur Salerni, a neurological spine surgeon, joined Littleton Regional Healthcare in December of 2018. Dr. Salerni provides minimally invasive spine surgeries service. He joined LRH with more than 30 years of experience in this specialized field. Most recently Dr. Salerni served on the medical staff at Lakes Region General Hospital as an advanced orthopedic specialist in orthopedics, spine surgery, and neurosurgery.

'84 Dean L. Bloch has taken a new role as chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, in which he oversees the Family Birth Place childbirth center at HealthAlliance Hospital: Broadway Campus, and sees patients at WMCHHealth Advanced OB-GYN's Kingston location.

'84 Susan Pories is delighted to announce the publication of her second compilation of Harvard Medical School student essays: *The Soul of a Patient; Lessons in Healing for Harvard Medical Students*.

'86 Mizin Park Kawasaki writes: "Arnold and I are proud that our daughter, Megan Kawasaki, is a member of the Class of 2020 at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. She is enjoying her experience at UVM."

1990s

REUNION 2019: 1994 + 1999

'90 Stephen Leffler was named president of the Vermont Medical Society at the society's annual meeting in October 2018. Steve is a professor of surgery at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. In January 2019 it was announced that he will assume another role in June 2019: interim president of the University of Vermont Medical Center, upon the retirement of current UVMCMC president Eileen Whalen. He is currently chief population health and quality officer for the UVM Health Network, and is the former chief medical officer at UVMCMC and a current board member for OneCare Vermont.

'92 The Foundation of Fulton-Montgomery Community College honored **Robert Kruger** for his lifetime of achievement at their 12th annual Distinguished Alumni

Awards Dinner in November of 2018. Dr. Kruger graduated from Fulton-Montgomery Community College in 1972 before earning a bachelor's degree from SUNY Plattsburgh. He then joined the U.S. Air Force as a medical laboratory technician and laboratory officer. After medical school and residency, Kruger served as a geriatric internal medicine subspecialist at the Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center in Texas and deployed twice to Bahrain.

'92 Stephen O'Donnell has been promoted to associate professor of anesthesiology at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. During the nearly 20 years he has

been on the faculty, he has taught over 100 anesthesia residents, along with countless medical students, respiratory therapists and first responders. He has authored nine abstracts or posters for national meetings and is currently co-investigator on an IRB/FDA-approved study.

'94 Mark Hamlin has been promoted to professor of anesthesiology and surgery at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. The vice chair for clinical affairs and the director of quality and safety for the Department of Anesthesiology, he practices anesthesia care while teaching medical students and residents.

'99 Christa Zehle has assumed the role of interim senior associate dean for medical

The 2018 UVM Larner College of Medicine Donor Recognition List honors the many alumni who support their medical alma mater through philanthropic giving. View the list at: med.uvm.edu/vtmedicine/web-extras



COLLEGE EVENTS

MARCH 15, 2019

Match Day/Match Challenge
Noon
UVM Campus—Hoehl Gallery

MARCH 9, 2019

Alumni reception in Park City, Utah, hosted by Karen and Scott Adelman, M.D.'90
4-6 p.m.
Waldorf-Astoria Presidential Suite

APRIL 3, 2019

Alumni reception hosted by John Healey, M.D.'78
6-8 p.m.
Roger Smith Hotel
501 Lexington Ave, New York, NY

MAY 19, 2019

Medical Commencement, 3 p.m.
UVM Campus—Ira Allen Chapel

MAY 29, 2019

Alumni reception hosted by Pramila Yadav, M.D.'99 and Frederick Mandell, M.D.'64
5:30-8 p.m.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass. (special guided tour with Michelle Finamore of *Gender Bending Fashion* exhibition from 5:30-6:30 p.m.)

MAY 30, 2019

Alumni reception in Philadelphia, hosted by Omar Khan, M.D.'03 and Salma Khan, M.D.'05
Location TBA

JUNE 12, 2019

Alumni reception at the home of Vito Imbasciani, M.D.'85
Los Angeles, Calif.

JUNE 13, 2019

Alumni reception in San Francisco, Calif.
Location and host TBD

OCTOBER 4-6, 2019

Medical Reunion
UVM Campus

For updates on events, visit: med.uvm.edu/alumni
Larner College of Medicine graduates are also members of the UVM Alumni Association. See those events at: www.alumni.uvm.edu

education at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. She is the associate dean for students at the College and an associate professor of pediatrics.

2000s

REUNION 2019: 2004 + 2009

00 Maria Azizian, a general surgeon in private practice in Cape Cod, has created a philanthropy organization to address medical needs in rural Armenia, her birthplace. The long-term project, approved by the Armenian Ministry of Health, seeks to provide a continuous rotation of American physicians at the medical center in Vardenis. Her first medical mission was last year; the second mission begins in April. Dr. Azizian welcomes physicians from all specialties to participate, including mid-level providers. Email maria.azizian@yahoo.com for further info.

'00 David Lisle has been promoted to associate professor of orthopaedics and rehabilitation family medicine at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. Dr. Lisle serves as head team physician

and athletic medical director for St. Michael's College Athletics, provides care for UVM athletes, and is team physician for the Vermont Lake Monsters. He has ten published articles and has participated in 38 regional and three national lectures.

01 **Brian Irwin** has been promoted to associate professor of surgery at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. Dr. Irwin, along with his team, performed the first single site robotic-assisted laparoscopic procedure in New England. He has also developed a core curriculum in urology for surgery, and has published 20 manuscripts.

'04 Julie K. Phillips has been promoted to associate professor of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences at the UVM Larner College of Medicine. One of only six maternal-fetal medicine specialists in Vermont, she primarily sees high-risk patients in the obstetrics clinic. She has published 13 manuscripts many of which focus on pregnancy-associated behavior issues, including weight management and smoking cessation.

2010s

REUNION 2019: 2014

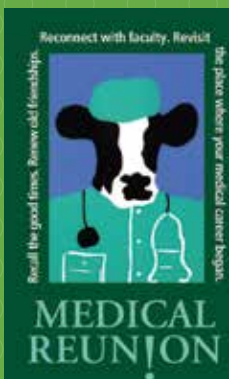
'10 **Meghan Elizabeth Gunn** says:
 "I am in my fifth year at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington, Vermont, doing both inpatient, outpatient and newborn nursery care. I was recently appointed chair of pediatrics and medical director of SVMC Pediatrics. When not working, I enjoy spending time with my husband, Greg, and two children James, age 5, and Sarah, age 2. I am hoping to get back to Burlington for a reunion at some point in the near future!"

15 **David Harari** has been named a 2019 Laughlin Fellow of the American College of Psychiatrists. One of twelve residents selected from the United States and Canada, fellows are “deemed likely to make a significant contribution to the field of psychiatry. Each candidate is considered on the following criteria: demonstrated leadership and unique qualities, clinical excellence, dedication to teaching, community service and research and scholarly attainment.” Dr. Harari is currently a psychiatry resident at UVM Medical Center.

**REUNION IS MOOOVING
TO THE FALL!**
MEDICAL REUNION
OCTOBER 4-6, 2019

Plan now to spend a long, glorious autumn weekend in Vermont catching up with old friends and faculty members.

For more information see the Medical Development and Alumni Relations website at:
www.med.uvm.edu/alumni



UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

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15

A group of people are gathered in a hallway. In the foreground, a person is wearing a large, white and black cow costume with a green stethoscope around their neck. To their right, a man is wearing a black suit, a white shirt, a black tie, and a black kilt. Other people are visible in the background, some looking towards the camera.

Join the Match Day celebration by sharing your photos, memories, and words of encouragement on    #uvmmedmatch



Friendship

Mohammad Mertaban, M.D.'17, and **Melanie Ma, M.D.'17**, were classmates for their four years at the Lerner College of Medicine. They recently reunited when they found themselves on call together at Kaiser-Permanente San Francisco, and posted the moment to Instagram. Said Mertaban: "Full circle! From first year of #medicalscool, to being on call together in the same hospital with the cutest Melania ever." Mertaban matched into pediatrics at UC San Francisco. Ma went to Kaiser-Permanente San Francisco for OB/GYN.

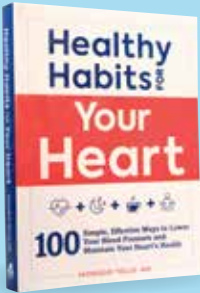
Leavitt Selected for UMaine Alumni Achievement Award

Bruce J. Leavitt, M.D. '81, has been selected by the University of Maine Alumni Association to receive the Bernard Lown '42 Humanitarian Award at the annual Alumni Achievement Awards dinner and recognition ceremony on April 5, 2019 at the UMaine campus in Orono. The award recognizes dedication to outstanding service and impact at the regional, national or global level through active engagement in saving lives, relieving suffering, and promoting human dignity.



Bruce Leavitt, M.D. '81, in Rwanda with Team Heart.

A professor of surgery and division chief of cardiothoracic surgery at the Larner College of Medicine and University of Vermont Medical Center, Leavitt has traveled to Rwanda, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Panama, Russia, and China to perform heart surgeries as a member of Team Heart, Doctors Without Borders, and other humanitarian aid organizations. He graduated from the UMaine in 1977.



Alum Publishes Book on Heart Health

Monique Tello, M.D. '01, is the author of a new book titled *Healthy Habits for Your Heart: 100 Simple, Effective Ways to Lower Your Blood Pressure and Maintain Your Heart's Health*. Published by Adams Media in December of 2018, the book focus on practical advice, and includes heart-related habits, exercises, and strategies to improve heart health and prevent disease.

Tello is a practicing primary care physician at Massachusetts General Hospital and an instructor at Harvard Medical School. She is a regular contributor for the Harvard Health Blog, reporting on clinical research, with a focus on diet and lifestyle studies. She also writes for MothersinMedicine.com and her own blog, GenerallyMedicine.

Alum Promotes Healing through Art Donation

In recognition of the healing power of art, and their long connection to UVM Medical Center, **Howard Schapiro, M.D. '80**, and his wife, **Jan Carroll, MSN, MPH, FACHE**, have donated two sculptures now displayed on the UVM campus and outside of the hospital. Schapiro, an anesthesiologist, has worked at the UVM Medical Center for over 35 years and is currently UVM Health Network Chief Clinical Integration Officer. Jan is the former UVM Medical Center Administrative Director of Nursing and current chief



"Clean Sweep," a sculpture donated by Howard Schapiro, M.D. '80 and his wife, Jan Carroll, MSN, MPH, FACHE

nursing officer of the St. Lawrence Health System in northern New York. Both sculptures, created by Vermont artist David Stromeyer, show the couple's commitment to UVM and to patients. "It is

really important to have art around. It draws your attention away from daily humdrum and makes you think in different ways," Schapiro says. "It is also great for patients and families to have that distraction and

to have something that makes them look up and think. That's helpful and, in some respects, healing." "Clean Sweep" is located on the Hilton Wick Plaza; "Fugue" is outside of the Central Campus Residence Hall.



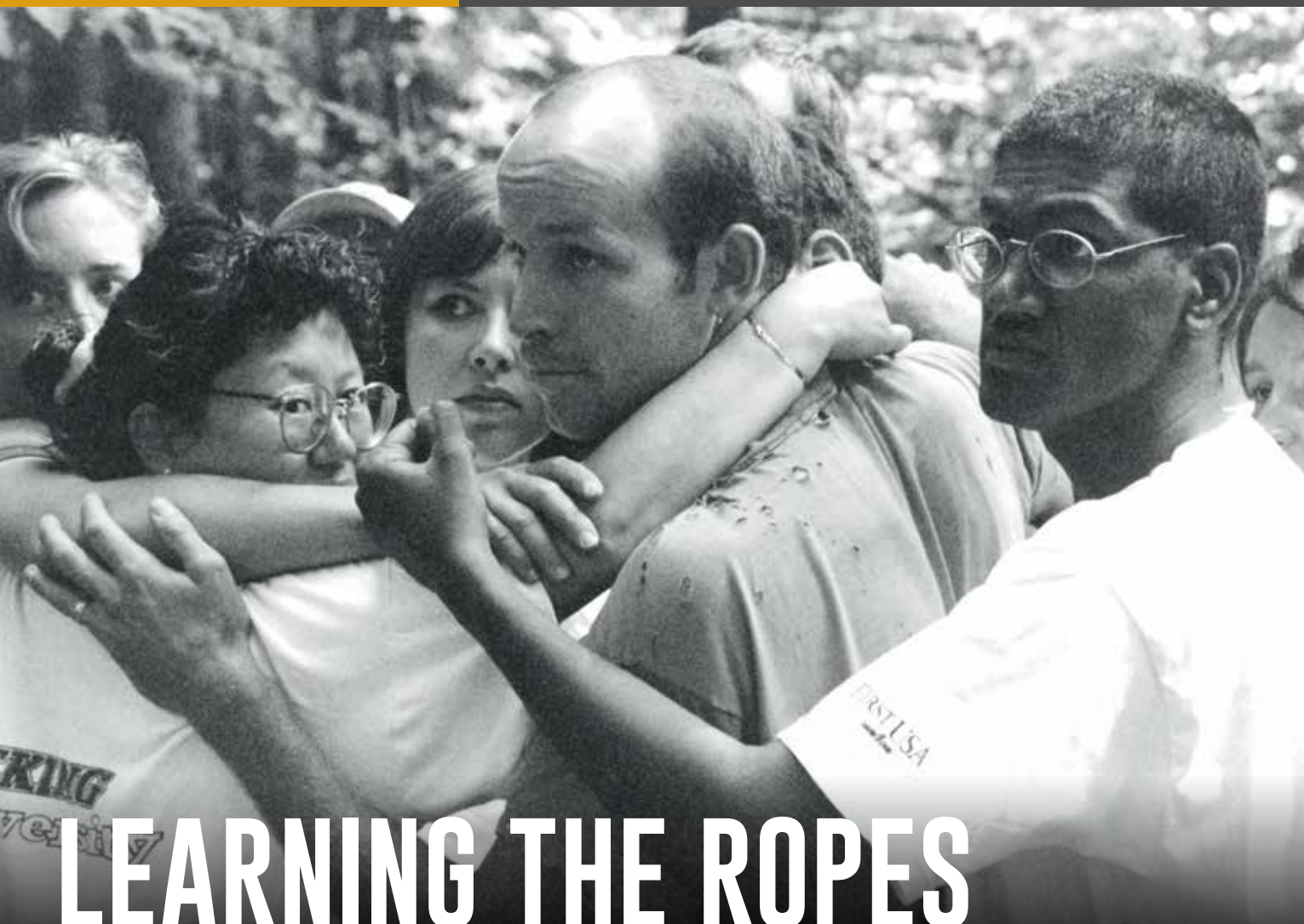
Milestone

Celebrating 100 Years

On November 26, 2018, the Larner College of Medicine celebrated UVM Emeritus Professor of Surgery **H. Gordon Page, M.D. '45** on the occasion of his 100th birthday. Page, a native of Groton, Vermont, earned an undergraduate degree in 1940 from UVM before going on to earn his M.D. in 1945. He completed his internship and residency at the former Mary Fletcher Hospital in Burlington. After serving as a U.S. Army Surgeon during the Korean conflict, Page returned to Vermont and practiced general surgery at the Medical Center Hospital of Vermont, now UVM Medical Center, and served as a professor of surgery, retiring in 1991. A longtime supporter of his medical alma mater, in 2005 Dr. Page established the Albert G. Mackay '32 and H. Gordon Page '45 Professorship in Surgical Education to further the academic mission of the Department of Surgery.



Larner College of Medicine Dean Richard L. Page, M.D., chats with H. Gordon Page, M.D. '45 (no relation), at his birthday celebration.



LEARNING THE ROPES

Some traditions at an academic institution are planned from the beginning. Others, like the ropes course new first-year medical students take part in during their orientation week, grow into being a regular component of life at the College. Since sometime in the 1990s the entering class, within their first few days of arriving on campus, are bused out to a local facility for a day of arduous team-building. This unlabeled photo shows just such a group, probably from the 90s or early “aughts,” huddling during the course.

Do you recognize your own intense face in this photo, or those of your classmates? Share your memories of climbing, shimmying, and bonding with erin.post@uvm.edu and we'll include them in the next issue of *Vermont Medicine*.



FROM THE PREVIOUS ISSUE ▲

One of the subjects of last issue's Flashback, Colette Ozarowski, wrote in to share her thoughts on her photo with fellow Office of Student Affairs staffer Ann Chauncey: “We were a team, Ann and I, and will always consider it a privilege to have supported the challenging journey our UVMCOM students were on learning to provide THE BEST medical care, wherever life took them!”

Obituaries

'55 George Frank Higgins, M.D.
Dr. Higgins, 88, died at his home in Presque Isle, Maine, on April 23, 2016. He was a Presque Isle native. He did his residency in OB/Gyn at Columbia University Medical Center in New York City. He then returned to Presque Isle to practice medicine for 30 years. He was an avid pilot and also served as an FAA Aviation Medical Examiner for 56 years.

'57 William M. Soybel, M.D.
Dr. Soybel, who during his life was a Colonel in the Army, Commander in the Navy, internist, and lecturer in medicine, died November 11, 2018. He was 86. He attended the University of Chicago before earning his medical degree at UVM. He completed 25 years of active service and reserve duty in the medical corps of the Navy and the Army, eventually assuming command of the 309th Reserve Field Hospital at Hanscom Field and at Fort Devens, Mass. During his life he earned his pilot's license and lived his fantasy of flying a World War I biplane. In retirement, he lectured at Boston University School of Medicine.

'57 Donald N. Zehl, M.D.
Dr. Zehl, age 88, died on October 10, 2018. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Connecticut, his Master's Degree from Yale University, in addition to his M.D. from UVM. He spent two years in the Public Health Service in Washington, D.C. and then did an Ophthalmology residency at the University of Rochester. He practiced medicine and surgery and was also chief resident and professor emeritus at the University of Rochester from 1963 until 1989.

'62 Edward M. Austin, M.D.
Dr. Austin, of Mt. Lebanon, Pa., died on October 6, 2018. He was born in 1936 in Brattleboro, Vt. He graduated from the College of Medicine in 1962. After serving as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps, he did a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, N.Y. He began his private practice in Hyannis, Mass. in 1968 before moving to Pittsburgh in 1972, where he was a respected physician for 46 years.

'62 Christos A. Hasiotis, M.D.
Dr. Hasiotis died at his home on Cape Cod on October 28, 2018. After earning his medical degree, he completed his surgical residency at Boston City Hospital where he served as Chief Resident. Dr. Hasiotis served as surgeon emeritus at Mount Auburn Hospital, chief of surgery at Sancta Maria Hospital, assistant clinical professor of surgery at Tufts Medical School, and clinical instructor at Harvard Medical School. He was a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and member of the Boston Surgical Society, American Medical Association, and Massachusetts Medical Society, as well as past president of the New England Hellenic Medical Society and past President of the Order of Ahepa Chapter 24.

'77 Scott Jay MacDonald, M.D.
Dr. MacDonald died on October 30, 2018 at UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles after a brief illness. He was 66. He was born in Barre, Vt., and attended Spaulding High School before earning his bachelor's degree at UVM before entering the College of Medicine. He completed his medical internship, residency and cardiology fellowships in Massachusetts. He first practiced as a cardiologist in Melrose/Wakefield Massachusetts from 1982 to 1986. He and his wife then moved to Las Vegas, Nevada, where he practiced as a cardiologist from 1987 to 2016.

'78 James Douglas Kindl, M.D.
Dr. Kindl died on October 26, 2018 in Greensboro, N.C., from a rare cerebral vascular condition. He received his undergraduate degree from UVM and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa before entering the College of Medicine. He did a residency in family practice at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro. Upon completing his residency, he worked in the Emergency Room at Wesley Long Hospital, also in Greensboro. He later went into private practice from 1988 to 2010. Additionally, he spent over 30 years providing medical care to the employees of Syngenta. In 2010, he left private practice and worked at Moses Cone Urgent Care until 2018.

Faculty

Carol Lee Phillips, M.D.

Dr. Phillips died on December 28, 2018. She was professor emerita of pediatrics and was chair of the Department of Pediatrics from 1983 to 1993. She also served as associate dean for admissions from 1977 to 1983, and then associate dean for academic affairs of this College of Medicine from 1985 to 1994.

Dr. Phillips came to Vermont in 1959 after earning her bachelor's degree at Douglass College in New Jersey and her M.D. degree at Yale Medical School, where she also completed her internship in pediatrics prior to coming to Vermont. She left Vermont in 1963 to do training in pediatric virology at Baylor University in Houston, and returned in 1966, when she joined Drs. James McKay and Jerold Lucey as the third member of the Department of Pediatrics. She went on to contribute actively to the growth and development of UVM's pediatrics department, rising to professor in 1976. She was Vermont's only board-certified pediatric infectious disease specialist for many years, publishing over thirty peer-review manuscripts related to immunization and virology. At a national level, Dr. Phillips served on the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Committee on Infectious Diseases (1985-1991) and was the associate editor for the 1988 and 1991 editions of the Red Book, the definitive infectious disease manual published by the AAP and used nationally and internationally by all pediatricians.

Dr. Phillips was the recipient of the Vermont State Chapter of the AAP's Green Mountain Pediatrician of the Year award as outstanding pediatrician in our state and received the “Heart of the Community Award” in 2014 from the Lund Center in recognition of her 20 years of dedicated service as the consulting pediatrician and as a board member to that organization. She also served as an epidemiologist for the Vermont Department of Health after her retirement as chair and senior associate dean.



Leon Mann, M.D.

Dr. Mann died on December 28, 2018 at the Mandrin House of the Hospice of the Chesapeake near Annapolis, Md. He was 83. He joined the faculty at the University of Vermont in 1976 as chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and as professor with tenure. Dr. Mann was born and raised in Albany, New York. After obtaining his Bachelor of Science at Dartmouth College, he attended medical school at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, completed his rotating internship at Long Island Jewish Hospital, and then returned to Albert Einstein College of Medicine, for his Ob/Gyn residency. Subsequently, Dr. Mann undertook research training within the Department of Physiology at Yale University, and at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, where he performed research within the fetal physiology section-behavioral biology branch. Before coming to UVM, Dr. Mann held positions at Cornell University Medical College, was an attending obstetrician-gynecologist at New York Hospital, and Director of the Laboratory of Perinatal Medicine at Cornell University. From 1973 to 1976 he was chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Nassau County Medical Center and chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the State University of New York Medical School Health Sciences Center in Stonybrook, New York.

After his time at UVM, Dr. Mann worked at Lilly research Laboratories, Indiana University School of Medicine, and Cleveland Metropolitan General/Highland View Hospital. Dr. Mann was an avid researcher, with over 100 peer-reviewed publications and a focus on fetal behavioral development and metabolism related to sleep cycles, hypoxia and acidosis.

In Memoriam

Denise Jeanne Lheureux, M.D. '80





December 12, 2018

10:24 A.M.

Ian McHale celebrates his graduation from the master of public health program during the UVM Graduate College hooding ceremony in Ira Allen Chapel. Nine students were the first to receive their MPH degrees from the UVM program, preparing them for a range of careers in public policy, advocacy, clinical fields, and research.

PHOTO: DAVID SEAYER



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RALLY YOUR CLASSMATES

Medical alumni have two ways to connect online with classmates: A password protected, searchable alumni directory is available to alumni and current students of the UVM Larner College of Medicine. To access the new directory, you will need your 10-digit alumni ID. You can get your ID by emailing the alumni office at medalumni.relations@uvm.edu or calling (802) 656-4014.

Pairing nicely with the Medical Alumni Directory is UVM's mentoring platform: UVM Connect. Everyone you interact with on UVM Connect has the unique experience of being a part of the UVM family. The UVM Larner College of Medicine has its own group within UVM Connect, making it the perfect place to network. Join UVM Connect today at: uvmconnect.org and be sure to join the College's group once you've logged in.

Reunion 2019 is Moo-ving!

**SAVE THE DATE FOR MEDICAL REUNION
OCTOBER 4-6, 2019**

You'll experience special class celebrations, medical alumni awards, tours of the College and Clinical Simulation Lab, Nostalgia Hour, and the kind of autumn beauty that only Vermont offers!

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It's foliage season, and rooms fill quickly. But the alumni association has reserved special blocks for you and your medical classmates. Visit med.uvm.edu/alumni for more information.



1974 classmates Cajsa Schumacher, M.D., and Kathleen Meyer, M.D. (above), reconnect at reunion 2009. They hope to see each other and many more classmates in October for their 45th reunion.