

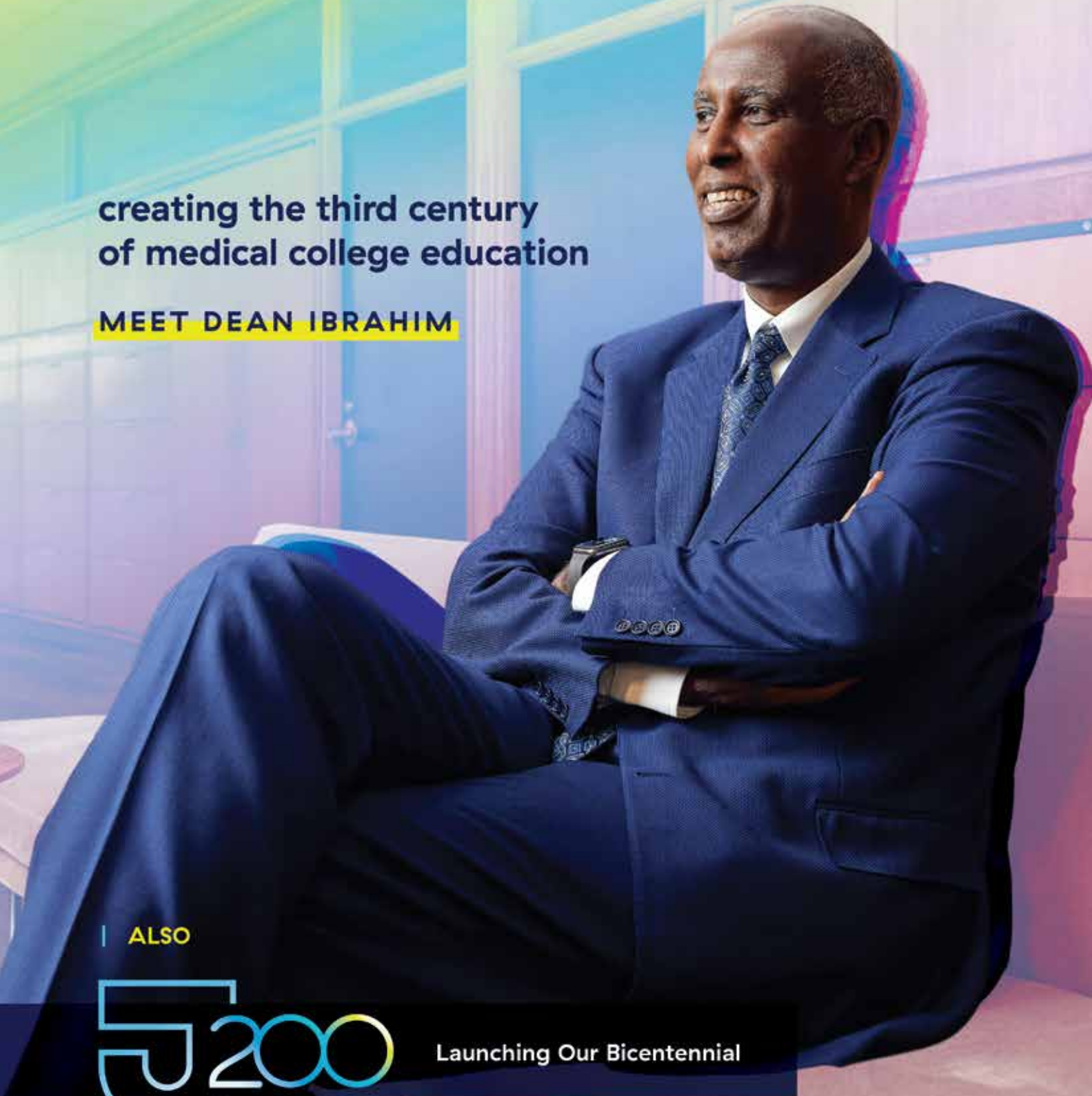
Winter 2024

Sidney Kimmel Medical College
Thomas Jefferson University

the Bulletin

creating the third century
of medical college education

MEET DEAN IBRAHIM



| ALSO



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Let the *Bulletin* community know what you've been up to by sharing your news in Class Notes!

Send us your news: editor@jefferson.edu

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Check out our alumni magazine website for exclusive videos and more!

Dean's Column



With great excitement, I welcome you to the Winter 2024 issue of The Bulletin. As the newly appointed Anthony F. and Gertrude M. DePalma Dean of the Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University, it is an honor and privilege to have this opportunity to connect with students and alumni and to share my vision to add to the medical college's historical record of transformation and legacy. I am equally honored and take seriously the charge of training and preparing the next generation of world-class physicians to shape the future of healthcare to ensure that all populations will have equal opportunity to live long, healthy, and productive lives. In the face of increasingly competitive and complex healthcare options, burgeoning data, and greater acknowledgment of the impact of interdependencies between ecological, social, economic, and cultural factors in complex health challenges, the obligation of Jefferson's mission to improve lives and redefine what's possible is unequivocal.

My ultimate vision is to establish SKMC and Jefferson Health as a leading academic healthcare institution in Philadelphia and beyond. The strategy to accomplish this will build upon the existing collaborative and transdisciplinary values and traditions to cultivate a culture of excellence in clinical care, education, and research. Several key strategic steps are necessary to bring this vision to life.

Achieving Excellence in Clinical Care

To compete as a top-tier healthcare system, clinical excellence is crucial. But it is also about creating an environment that promotes excellence in research and education. Strong partnership between clinical leadership and the academic program is essential. Enhancing the linkage between the health system and academic leadership and working toward shared institutional goals is a priority.

Advancing Research Excellence

In today's 21st-century healthcare landscape, offering exceptional clinical care is no longer enough. A leading health system in a major urban center like Philadelphia must also be at the forefront of groundbreaking scientific research and scholarship. Achieving this ambitious vision will require a concerted effort, expansion of research facilities, commitment of purpose, and an increase of the medical college's NIH/federal funding as well as expansion of philanthropic donations. Strengthening research capacity, establishing a pipeline of skilled investigators and faculty, and forging strong relationships between Jefferson Health departments and surrounding communities to drive population-based research initiatives will also be important steps. One of our first steps in this process is to establish an SKMC Research Executive Council. This council, which will be co-led by clinical and basic science researchers, will consist of seasoned investigators and scientists from across our college and University. This council will help shape and implement SKMC strategic goals for research growth, oversee future locally funded competitive dean's jump-start pilot grants and bridge funding mechanisms, help raise

funds for research growth through philanthropy, and last but not least, lead SKMC strategy to secure National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences funding from the NIH.

Excellence in Education

The success of Jefferson and the nation's healthcare relies on today's learners becoming future faculty and providers. SKMC is already renowned for its exceptional medical education and interprofessional approaches to learning that offer a vibrant and expandable platform for education. An important strategy that will further strengthen the college's educational mission is to foster a culture that appreciates mentoring and recognizes and celebrates teaching excellence. Retention and development of outstanding medical education leaders will be a priority, including supporting faculty members' participation in national leadership development programs focused on quality improvement or medical education.

Inclusion, Belonging, and Community Engagement

As professionals in the field of healthcare, we hold the power to shape the well-being of our society. At SKMC, this is explicit in our values to embrace diversity, be bold and courageous, and to approach our work with integrity and accountability. As dean, I am committed to the recruitment of a diverse student body, faculty, and staff at SKMC and to promoting inclusion and belonging. I will prioritize and work closely with Jefferson enterprise leaders on community engagement to address urgent health challenges and to strengthen the connections between the medical college and the diverse communities that our health system serves.

As a society, we are faced with a

wide array of challenges impacting our local, national, and global communities. Divided national politics, historic conflicts, inflation's impact on household finances, and the continued effects of COVID-19 are just a few of the concerns with implications for our nation's health. To create a healthier future requires respectful dialogue and a dynamic effort to collaboratively develop and drive solutions. At SKMC, we are positioned to lead the way. Leveraging the exponential increase of Jefferson's footprint and our ever-expanding, solution-oriented, and service-minded faculty and staff, we have a great obligation and potential to not only cultivate an inclusive environment for the conduct of leading-edge research and compassionate and exceptional clinical care, but also to train the next generation of physicians with social conscience and a commitment to improving lives and redefining what's possible across the globe. 🌍

Said Ibrahim, MD, MBA, MPH

Anthony F. and Gertrude M. DePalma Dean
Sidney Kimmel Medical College
President, Jefferson University Physicians



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IN 2024 AS WE

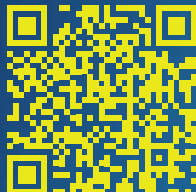
create our third century



In 2024, Jefferson celebrates 200 years of tradition and transformation, discovery and design, and hope and healing.

We look forward to creating our third century with you.

Together, we will fulfill our vital mission to improve lives.



Learn more about our Bicentennial by visiting Jefferson200.org or scanning the QR code.

AT-A-GLANCE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

March

- 13 Honickman Center Opening
- 15 SKMC Match Day
- 20 Thomas Jefferson University
Bicentennial Scholarship Celebration

April

- 4 Investiture Ceremony of Dana Scott as the
William A. Finn '67 Director of the DEC Core
Curriculum
- 9 Siegman Archive Dedication
- 11 Investiture Ceremony of Dr. Tsao-Wei Liang as the
William C. Rowland, Jr. Professor of Neurology
- 12 Department of Family and Community Medicine
50th Reunion
- 18 Jefferson Giving Day

May

- 4 Sigma Pi Phi (Boule) 120th Anniversary Celebration
- 4 Fashion Design Program Fashion Show & Film
- 10–11 Jefferson Dad Vail Regatta
- 15 Investiture of Abdolmohamad Rostami, MD, PhD,
as the Nicholas J. Maiale Distinguished Professor
of Neurology

June

- 10 22nd Annual Robert C. Lockyer '68 Golf Outing

July & August

Check out Alumni at the Phillies games schedule!

September

- 28 Jefferson Homecoming Weekend

October

- 7 JUP Golf Classic
- 25–26 SKMC Alumni Weekend

November

- 21 22nd Annual Jefferson Gala

December

- 2 Giving Tuesday



TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME!

Join fellow alumni for a
Philadelphia Phillies game
at a ballpark near you.

March

- 3 Philadelphia Phillies
Spring Training
in Clearwater, FL

April

- 6 Washington Nationals
- 27 San Diego Padres
- 29 Los Angeles Angels

May

- 25 Colorado Rockies
- 27 San Francisco Giants

June

- 1 Jefferson Alumni Day
at a Philadelphia Phillies
home game!
- 11 Boston Red Sox
- 15 Baltimore Orioles

July

- 20 Pittsburgh Pirates

August

- 3 Seattle Mariners
- 10 Arizona Diamondbacks

September

- 7 Miami Marlins
- 21 New York Mets



21st Annual Jefferson Gala



The 21st Annual Jefferson Gala was an unforgettable, and historic, evening raising more than \$1.5 million to fuel our mission to improve lives. The celebration brought together more than 1,000 members of our amazing Jefferson family—our friends, benefactors, leadership, and partners—and also kicked off Jefferson’s bicentennial celebration.

We were thrilled to pay tribute to our exceptional honorees: Achievement Award in Medicine awardee Dr. Vijay M. Rao; Award of Merit awardees Ann and John P. Silvestri; and Faegre Drinker Healthcare Hero awardee Dr. Cindy Hou. They are all true inspirations through their service, leadership, and generosity.

Photo 1 (left to right): Joseph G. Cacchione, MD; John P. Silvestri; Ann Silvestri; and Patricia D. Wellenbach

Photo 2 (left to right): Susan C. Aldridge, PhD; Dr. Rao; and Baligh R. Yehia, MD, MPP, MSc, FACP

Photo 3 (left to right): Dr. Yehia and Dr. Hou



2024 STFM Foundation Student Scholarship



Kelly McGuigan '24 has been awarded a 2024 STFM Foundation Student Scholarship from the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM). Along with the scholarship, McGuigan has also been invited to the 2024 STFM Conference on Medical Student Education in February and will present her project titled "A Pediatric Engagement Survey for Rapport Building and Patient Satisfaction – A Feasibility Pilot Study."

The STFM Foundation Student Scholarship is a highly competitive scholarship that was only awarded to 23 students in 2024, recognizing some of the best and brightest medical students from across the country.

STFM is a national community of academic leaders committed to developing a family medicine workforce prepared to serve as the foundation of America's healthcare system. STFM members include physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, behavioral health specialists, researchers, nurses, health system executives, administrators, fellows, residents, students, and others involved in the education of family physicians.



Explore, Learn, and Experience the World With Jefferson Alumni!

As part of our commitment to lifelong learning, the Office of Alumni Relations offers opportunities for group travel for Jefferson, Textile, and Philadelphia University alumni, friends, and families. Our varied itinerary of travel destinations combines educational forums, unique adventures, and excursions to places of historical and cultural interest, with opportunities to discover nature's majestic landscapes and incredible wildlife. These trips offer the highest-quality travel experience through our partnerships with experienced travel providers.

- ▶ **Cruise the Heart of Europe**
May 6–21, 2024
- ▶ **Flavors of Provence**
May 28–June 6, 2024
- ▶ **National Parks & Lodges of the Old West**
June 28–July 6, 2024
- ▶ **Canadian Rockies by Rail**
July 24–30, 2024
- ▶ **ACA Enchanting Gems of Austria**
August 21–30, 2024
- ▶ **African Expedition by Train**
August 30–September 13, 2024
- ▶ **Northern Lights and Wildlife of Northern Manitoba**
September 7–12, 2024
- ▶ **Paris: Featuring the African American Experience**
September 7–15, 2024

For detailed trip information and to join our Travel Interest List, visit jefferson.edu/AlumniTravel or contact Alumni Relations at 215-955-7750 or alumni@jefferson.edu.

JEFFERSON RESEARCHER RECEIVES **CANCER MOONSHOT AWARD**

Q&A with Hien Dang, PhD, one of 11 people recognized with the prestigious award aimed at finding therapies for tough-to-treat cancers in patients who have been historically disadvantaged.

BY EDYTA ZIELINSKA



When cancer researcher, Hien Dang, PhD, got the call from the awards office for the National Cancer Institute's Biden Cancer Moonshot Award, she caught her breath. In a very calm and matter-of-fact tone, the program officer told her it was all but certain she'd get the award. "I told him, 'I'm so excited I don't even know what to say to you,'" Dang recalls. "I'm going to get off the phone now so I can yell and scream." She put down the phone, walked out of her office into her lab group, and did just that. "And then we celebrated. We all had put so much work into this award. I'm so honored that we are part of this incredible cohort of researchers."

The Cancer Moonshot Award specifically aims to fund a diverse group of early-career researchers working on cancers that affect socially disadvantaged populations most. This first group of 11 awardees will receive funding for a five-year project.

Dang studies liver cancer, which is notoriously difficult to treat and is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide. The rate of death for this cancer has increased more than 40% in the past 50 years and is more common in Hispanic and Black people and Asian Pacific Islanders.

Dang's ambitious research goes after a white whale of cancer biology: a gene called MYC that is involved in 70% of all cancers and in 80% of liver cancers. Despite being so critical, no one has been able to develop a successful drug against it. In part because the gene, when it's working right, is involved in many normal, healthy processes in our bodies. "They call MYC 'undruggable,'" says Dang, a

researcher with the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center–Jefferson Health. "But our lab discovered a molecule that seems to control MYC when it leads to cancer in the liver. It's called NELFE (pronounced "nelfie"). We're hoping we can use NELFE to entrap MYC and stop cancer growth, but we have a lot more to learn, which is what this award is all about."

Learn more about Dang's project, why she decided to focus on liver cancer, and her tricks for staying motivated in a line of work that regularly kicks up obstacles.

Q What do you hope to accomplish with this award?

We hope we'll get one step closer to treating liver cancer. It's a disease that disproportionately affects socioeconomically disadvantaged people. Liver cancer develops from hepatitis infections and can also develop from scarring and fatty liver disease, which is on the rise. Most people discover they have liver cancer after the cancer has spread and is much more difficult to treat. My lab is working really hard to understand how we could use NELFE to get at MYC. We think that reducing NELFE in liver cancer cells might slow or even stop the liver cancer's growth, but we have a lot of work to do before we can prove that's the case. Right now, we need to learn more about how NELFE works in normal cells and in liver cancer.

But while we work on the basics, we're already looking at the end goal, which is a new therapy for people with this disease. At the end of five years, we hope to have

a new therapy to test that is transferrable to humans. We're interested in collaborating with other Jefferson researchers to package our therapy in microbubbles. These microbubbles would build up in the cancer, and once they do, we can pop them with ultrasound so that a potent dose of the therapy is delivered directly to the cancers. This approach should help reduce the possibility of side effects.

Q What connects you to this work?

Where I come from, a lot of people have liver cancer, and they don't see the doctor until it's too late. My family fled Vietnam when I was 7. We were in a Philippine refugee camp for a year before moving to Michigan. I only remember good things from that time: climbing cherry trees, a really great teacher, a group of friends I remember playing with. I also remember being really cold when we got to Michigan. We only had the clothes with us that you'd wear in a tropical climate.

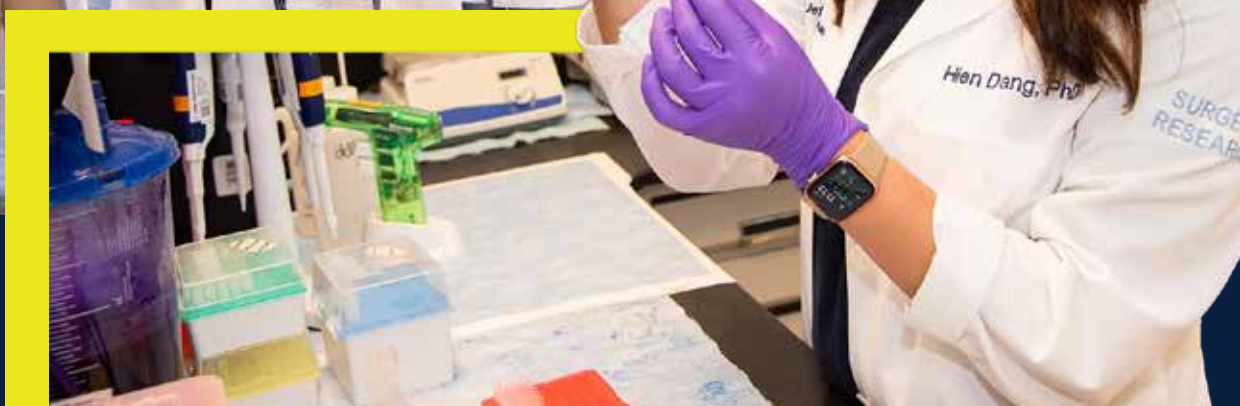
I didn't always know I wanted to work on liver cancer though. Growing up in Michigan, I was just a nerd who enjoyed science, and whenever anyone gave me an opportunity, I jumped on it. When I went to grad school, one of my mentors was studying cancer stem cells and liver cancer, and I thought, this is probably one of those cancers that I should study. It's giving back to the community.

Q Research is challenging. How do you keep your team motivated?

My labs are separated into two sections, and we've named them the Batman section, where I have my office, and the Robin section, where all of the graduate, master's and other "trainees" work. Just like Batman trained Robin to be a superhero, we train our students to be the next great researchers.

I also draw on quotes a lot. There's a favorite one from Mike Tyson that I probably use once a week. It goes, "Everyone always has a plan until they get punched in the mouth." That's what it feels like when you do science. We do these experiments and have elaborate plans, but a lot of the time, they just fail, and that's exactly how it feels. It's part of the process.

We also like to say "trust but verify," which is a translation of a Russian rhyming proverb that Ronald Reagan often quoted during negotiations with Mikhail Gorbachev. Everything we observe in the lab, every time we think we have good news, we take the time to verify and test from a different angle to make sure we're right. This is another really important part of research — you always have to take that extra step. ↴





SKMC STUDENT BLENDS THE MEDICAL FIELD WITH THE SPORTS FIELD

Bringing Diversity in Sports Medicine With a Pipeline Initiative

BY KERRY O'CONNOR



Growing up, Azra Dees enjoyed dancing, playing basketball, building things, and volunteering at the hospital where her dad worked as an anesthesiologist. All these interests, she realized as she got older, merged in orthopaedic surgery—a career path she felt destined to follow.

“I was introduced to orthopaedic surgeons and discovered they took care of professional dancers,” says the Sidney Kimmel Medical College student who will graduate this May. “And when an orthopaedic trauma surgeon I worked with in medical school let me use a drill and place some screws in a patient’s radius and ulna, it took me back to those crafty memories as a kid. Add the

with, and under the supervision of, the team’s orthopaedic physicians, primary care physicians, and athletic trainers.

“Jefferson recognizes the paramount significance of the NFL Diversity in Sports Medicine Pipeline Initiative,” says Ronald V. Hall, MD, associate professor of emergency medicine and assistant dean of diversity and student diversity programs at SKMC. “This program serves as a pivotal catalyst in offering invaluable exposure to the fields of sports medicine and orthopaedic surgery in professional sports.”

Hall says that expanding the pool of students interested in pursuing sports medicine careers fosters diversity and contributes to the

when it comes to trainers and medical staff, even with some of the top medical professionals in the country looking after them, she is no stranger to how a lack of diversity and representation in medical professionals can impact the health of a community. As co-president of JeffHOPE and as the clinical coordinator at Prevention Point, a harm reduction group in Philadelphia’s Kensington neighborhood, Dees sees firsthand how a mix of religions, culture, and race can become obstacles to getting good care if community members can’t see themselves in their care providers.

She got involved with the organization because of her passion for community service. She knew

Being aware of our differences and values as individuals is important to provide patient-centered care.

satisfaction of watching patients improve after surgery, and that confirmed it all.”

However, sports medicine—and orthopaedic surgery, in particular—is a highly competitive specialty, and there’s a historic lack of diversity in the field, especially when it comes to Black women like Dees. Only 0.6% of orthopaedic surgeons in the United States are Black women, according to Black Women Orthopaedic Surgeons.

The NFL Diversity in Sports Medicine Pipeline Initiative encourages a career in sports medicine, providing an opportunity for students to participate in clinical rotation with an NFL team’s medical staff.

When the Sidney Kimmel Medical College was chosen to be part of the program, Dees immediately applied and was one of only 30 medical students from diverse backgrounds in the country chosen.

Recently, she completed her clinical rotation with the New York Jets, observing and participating in the care of players and working

advancement of the medical field. He notes the dichotomy between the substantial number of African American athletes in the NFL and the low number of Black physicians and athletic trainers within the organization.

Dees notes the diversity in Philadelphia’s population in terms of religion, culture, race, and more and explains that it is sometimes an obstacle to getting good care.

“Being aware of our differences and values as individuals is important to provide patient-centered care.

There are even studies showing that patients who are treated by doctors who look like them or understand their culture have better outcomes,” she says. “While it definitely applies to medicine, diversity is important to our entire society because our differences make us stronger when embraced. Diversity feeds innovation and discussion, which are crucial for progression.”

While her time roaming the sidelines with the Jets may have shown Dees how important representation was to NFL players

that there was a great need to address housing insecurity and opioid addiction in Philadelphia and spent most of her time working with residents in Kensington.

She says that working with these patients has been instrumental in learning more about the diverse populations she will serve as a practicing physician.

When speaking about the patients in Kensington who inject drugs, Dees says, “Being out there every Saturday helped me learn more about opioid addiction and harm reduction principles. Addiction is a disease, and it is not easily treated. So many of our patients are misunderstood and treated unfairly within the healthcare system. JeffHOPE is an opportunity to give these patients a positive experience with healthcare and hopefully bridge the gap for patients to feel safe, respected, and ultimately, connected back to insurance and primary care physicians.”

Dees is currently interviewing for residency positions in orthopaedic surgery. 📍



Leading Medicine's Next Generation Into a New Century

WELCOMING SAID IBRAHIM, MD, MBA, MPH

Anthony F. and Gertrude M. DePalma Dean
Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University
President, Jefferson University Physicians

BY BULLETIN STAFF

AT 6'8", THE FIRST THING you notice about Said Ibrahim, MD, is that he's big.

Then you talk to him, and you see what's really big is his vision for educating the next generation of doctors. "Science and technology are advancing [and] artificial intelligence is coming, while health disparities are widening," he says. "How do we teach these new tools to physicians? How do we use them in a responsible way that helps everyone in the community? We want to be ahead of the game and be at the forefront of this new frontier."

In December 2023, Ibrahim became the 25th dean of Sidney Kimmel Medical College, charged with extending—and enhancing—a 200-year legacy of hands-on, humanistic clinical education.

"Dr. Ibrahim has demonstrated

a strong commitment to fostering innovation, collaboration, and inclusivity within the medical community," says Susan Aldridge, PhD, interim president of Thomas Jefferson University. "He brings

**If we can't do it
in Philadelphia
and at Jefferson,
no one else can.**

not only a deep understanding of the evolving landscape of medical education, but also a vision for furthering our medical school's reputation as a hub for academic excellence, cutting-edge research, compassionate patient care, and diversity and inclusion."

An internal medicine physician and health equity researcher, Ibrahim grasps the historical import of his appointment at this moment in time: the first Black dean of the medical college, the Bicentennial, unprecedented headwinds in healthcare. Yet he believes he is in the right place at the right time to make a meaningful difference.

"Jefferson has a 200-year-old medical school, with esteemed alumni across the United States and around the world," Ibrahim says. "Our combination of a historic institution academically with a clinically expanding healthcare system in one of the most diverse cities in the country is fascinating to me. We must figure out how to bring the clinical mission closer to the academic mission. If we can't do it in Philadelphia and at Jefferson, no one else can."

Medicine is growing in so many ways, and we're coming up with new cures and new treatments—but they're too expensive for most people and not available to a lot of people. ... How do we make or help the new cures [be] available to more people? That's what the community is interested in and what we must do.

SOMALIA HAS BEEN CALLED a nation of poets for its people's felicity of expression, love of song, and capacity to dream.

As a young boy growing up on the Somali-Ethiopian border, Ibrahim dreamed of becoming a doctor.

One of 10 children of a police officer earning about \$100 a month, he recalls watching neighbors, friends, and family members suffering from preventable illnesses. There was only one doctor for the entire town, and he was admired by everyone. It left a deep impression on Ibrahim.

"My family was not an upper-class family, so I didn't have an opportunity to go to medical school in Somalia," he says. "I had to wait until the opportunity came."

Ibrahim's first big break came when he was recruited from high school to join Somalia's national basketball team.

In 1984, that exposure earned him a shot at a scholarship as a Division I college basketball player in the United States. But things didn't go as planned. "My basketball career in the U.S. lasted just hours because I wasn't good enough," he says with a philosophical air.

But now he had a foot in the door for a U.S. education, putting him a step closer to his dream. He earned entry into Oberlin College in Ohio, where he met his future wife of 40 years, Lee Erickson, who hailed from Philadelphia.

While he wasn't a blue-chip talent on the court, he became an all-star in the classroom.

After college, the couple moved to Philadelphia, where Ibrahim became a lab tech at the Wistar Institute and Lee worked as a paralegal. Together, they applied to medical schools and were both accepted to Case Western School of Medicine. From there, Ibrahim completed his residency in internal medicine at Harvard's Brigham and Women's Hospital and joined University Hospitals of Cleveland as a faculty member.

His star continued to rise, as he went on to serve at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the University of Pennsylvania, and Cornell Medical School. He then became chair of the department of medicine and senior vice president for the medical service line for Northwell Health in Long Island, New York, before joining Jefferson.

HEALTH EQUITY AND HEALTHCARE disparities have been central to Ibrahim's personal mission as a physician.

His first major study looked at how socioeconomic factors affect knee and hip replacement surgery. "No one was studying this at the time," he says. These are elective treatments, and as such, Ibrahim found a marked difference by gender, status, race, ethnicity, and geography. He began to understand how social settings shape healthcare realities. His first grant on the issue was funded by the NIH, and he's been continuously funded on it for 25 years.

"Healthcare disparities are very complex because they combine social issues with health system issues," Ibrahim explains. "Jefferson wants to provide value to the community. But the community is much more than just those who come to our hospitals."

Determining how to design healthcare delivery to address the community's needs is a unique challenge. The solutions have to involve not just how systems deliver care but also how physicians engage the community about health, build community ties, and find ways to impact health and wellbeing.

There's also the issue of access to healthcare. "Medicine is growing in so many ways, and we're coming up with new cures and new treatments—but they're too expensive for most people and not available to a lot of people," he says. "How do we make or help the new cures be available to more people? That's what the community is interested in and what we must do."

Ibrahim says the reality is that most of health is what happens outside of healthcare—his mission is to figure out how to bridge that.

"It's a new way of thinking about the relationship between health and the social setting—social determinants of health," he says. "We need to go outside of the health system and get to the community."

JEFFERSON WAS FOUNDED 200 years ago by George McClellan, who believed that society needed a different kind of doctor, which meant devising a new way of teaching medicine.

Back then, medical students learned in classrooms, through books and lectures and diagrams. Only after earning a degree was a newly minted doctor sent out into the world to see patients.

McClellan realized the best way to learn medicine was to actually see patients. Jefferson became one of the first schools in the world where students interacted with patients, thereby revolutionizing medical education.

Today, Ibrahim sees a similar need to reframe how we train physicians in order to meet the changing demands of society as well as the radically shifting healthcare climate.

Healthcare as an industry was in the midst of seismic changes to its model before 2020. Then came COVID-19, which Jefferson's David Nash, MD, MBA, the Dr. Raymond C. and Doris N. Grandon Professor in Health Policy, says "crashed the system." The pandemic, public health failures, poor communication, racism, and calls for social justice eroded trust in healthcare. Hospitals and practices funded by the fee-for-service model collapsed, while insurance companies banked payment from policyholders and posted windfall profits.

"Healthcare is at a crossroads," Ibrahim asserts. "There's an eroding sense of trust between the patient and the physician, which is essential for good care. It's a good time to reenergize the scientific community to make the case that science is good, and something that we should really get behind. It's time for us to train physicians who embody the importance of trust between the doctor and the patient."

Ibrahim sees hope—and a solution—to these issues in tomorrow's medical students. Often, it's hard for physicians and healthcare leaders rooted in the current system to ideate outside of



Here's an institution that's getting ready to shape the next 200 years of its mission, and that includes education, research, and clinical care...To be part of that conversation is fantastic.

that system, but new students can be taught and encouraged to see things differently and follow novel paths.

"It is a very important and exciting time to be a medical student," Ibrahim says. "Medicine provides many opportunities to do all kinds of different things. You could see patients as a caregiver; you could also be a teacher in medicine. You could be a computer specialist and perform research. You could be a doctor of informatics. You

can run health systems. You could even be in business. Medicine allows people to do what they're passionate about in more ways than one."

Ibrahim is intrigued by SKMC's groundbreaking JeffMD curriculum, as well as opportunities to leverage Thomas Jefferson University's strengths in science, design, and engineering. "I'm excited about the possibility of building teams of researchers and teachers who come from different backgrounds—engineering, design, medicine, nursing, medical school—and seeing if we can work together in a way that enhances how we deliver care."

Providing mentorship opportunities is also top of mind for Ibrahim. "That's how we sustain the scientific workforce and build the future community of investigators and physicians," he says.

"Traditionally, minority students and trainees and women did not receive the same mentoring as others, and that undermined our ability to build a more diverse community of scientists and physicians."

Promoting diversity—and understanding diversity—will be a priority. Ibrahim sees that many communities, and the future generation in general, want a healthcare team that reflects the community they serve. "In order for

us to address health equity, we have to diversify the people who provide care," Ibrahim says.

Jefferson has a long reputation for producing clinically superb physicians. Ibrahim shares, "Throughout my career in many different academic programs, every time that we got a medical student who came to us for residency from Jefferson, it was a big win."


Now, Ibrahim hopes to add to that clinical expertise the human skills that build trust in the patient-physician relationship. Because ultimately, it's all about taking care of patients.

The organization of Jefferson today—which includes 17 hospitals, a national university, the medical college, and an insurance arm—provides a unique framework for uniting, or reuniting, the business of healthcare with the academic and scientific base, which Ibrahim believes will enhance medical education as well as community impact. "To separate the patient care from the science and the academic work is, in my opinion, a problem," he says. "I want to understand the challenges as well as the opportunities that exist that bridge that."

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES facing healthcare today, Ibrahim is excited about the road ahead for Jefferson.

"Here's an institution that's getting ready to shape the next 200 years of its mission, and that includes education, research, and clinical care," he says. "To be part of that conversation is fantastic."

Ibrahim has never lost sight of why he got into medicine in the first place. All those years ago, against an impoverished backdrop, he saw firsthand the impact one doctor could have on a community, on a people, and on a person.

"Anything that I can do to advance human wellbeing, even if it's a small thing, like training a young medical student to become a doctor, that's what matters," Ibrahim says. "That's what gets me out of bed each day." 



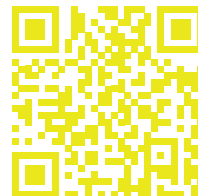
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Healthcare Quality *and* Patient Safety

BY IRISA GOLD

Intellectuals solve problems, geniuses prevent them.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

This sage observation is an obvious, appropriate fit when characterizing healthcare today. As medicine grows more multifaceted and complex, the field of healthcare quality and safety (HQS) and the prevention of adverse events and substandard care is critical—now more than ever before.

Frank Colangelo, MD, MS, FACP, an assistant director for the Healthcare Quality and Safety Program at Jefferson's College of Population Health, began his Jefferson career as a 1984 graduate of SKMC. He served his residency in internal medicine at the University of Pittsburgh and has practiced since 1987 as a member of the Allegheny Health Network. "Around 2005, when local insurers began offering bonuses to practices that delivered high-value, high-quality care, I offered to assist the executives of my practice in their efforts at transformation," he says.

It was a keynote address by

the founding dean of Jefferson's College of Population Health, David Nash, MD, MBA at the annual AMGA (formerly American Medical Group Association) meeting that inspired him to take the next step in his leadership journey. "He discussed sobering facts about preventable deaths and hospital-acquired conditions that occur in the U.S. each year," he shares. "I immediately sent in my application for admission to Jefferson's College of Population Health to obtain a master's degree in healthcare quality and safety, since I realized that getting involved in such a program would enhance my leadership abilities."

After earning a master's in HQS at Jefferson in 2017, Colangelo was recruited to join the HQS Program faculty in 2018. "I became an active member, teaching many classes," he says. "Since I have multiple physician and other quality improvement specialist contacts nationwide through the work I have done with AMGA, I was asked to assist with the external-facing efforts—the marketing and recruitment for the program."

The Jefferson College of Population Health originally created the Quality Improvement & Patient Safety (QIPS) Leadership Development Program to develop physician faculty leaders in quality improvement and patient safety.

The pioneering program was the brainchild of Billy Oglesby, PhD,

MBA, Jefferson's Humana Dean of the College of Population Health. "He had joined the college and put together an idea for the project," says Ellen L. Guarnieri, associate program director of external programs for HQS. "We had our first cohort in 2018. The idea was to utilize this type of external program as a way to reach out and spread our mission further."

While initially the concept was to develop a group of physician faculty empowered to utilize quality improvement and patient safety to heighten their leadership skills, the program has grown to include leaders from across the healthcare team. "Even though we have a heavy preponderance of physicians in all our programs, we love the fact that we're able to draw from all different clinical disciplines," says program director Mary Reich Cooper, MD, JD.

"It is not only clinicians who join this program," explains Colangelo. "We have physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physical and respiratory therapists, social workers, and healthcare operational support staff. The interdisciplinary aspect enriches the nature of the interactive discussion experiences that occur during the program."

"We draw from across the United States," Cooper says. "These are people who want to fix healthcare's broken process and are looking for a way to do that so it's sustainable. We are an applied practice program.

Our faculty are all working faculty in the field, and we teach people practical applications and how to make it happen in their own organizations.”

September 2023 marked the seventh cohort of QIPS students. “Over the last six years, there have been more than 100 QIPS students who want to get an introductory experience with graduate-level work in healthcare quality and safety,” Colangelo says. “They take the first three courses of the master’s program, experience monthly live webinars led by expert faculty on healthcare quality and safety topics, and complete a mentored quality improvement project at their place of work.”

Upon completing the three graduate-level courses, participants receive an Advanced Practice Certificate—and, if they choose, either complete a graduate certificate or master’s degree in HQS, or use the transferable courses for further education. Colangelo shares that approximately 40% of the QIPS students enjoy and value

the work, education, and experience so much they complete the full master’s program.

“The nine-month QIPS program consists of three online asynchronous graduate-level courses that are each seven weeks long,” Guarnieri says. “Students also attend nine monthly live virtual sessions designed to enrich their learning. At the start of the program, they choose an improvement project to work on, and they receive mentorship through the nine months to develop that study and implement a change. Students demonstrate improvement project success in a poster presentation session at the end of the program. Because this is a cohort model, the same instructor follows them through the three courses and mentors them in their projects. Developing a close relationship with their instructor/mentor and QIPS program leadership enhances student support. Frank Colangelo was essential in creating this delivery model, which has proven successful for the students and the program.”

“One of the things that differentiates this program from others is that we focus on the leadership aspect of quality and safety improvement,” says Guarnieri. “We thought it essential for students to learn the nuts and bolts of improvement science and how to apply their learnings in a real setting. We also thought it vital to train leaders to work within their departments to effect change and make improvements immediately. We encourage students to develop teams and mentor team members through the improvement process.”

She continues, “From the first cohort, students have participated in a pre- and post-program confidence survey. The survey assesses students’ ability to lead teams and use the tools and methods of improvement. We have seen some remarkable increases in confidence scores. So far, over 100 people have participated in the program, and we’ve been able to measure six cohorts. It’s encouraging in many ways.”

On a 100-point scale, confidence



| 2019 QIPS cohort



A lot of our students are identified by their bosses as people who have something they can take and mold into leadership.



increased, on average, from 40.00 to 82.78 in using dashboards and scorecards to optimize learning and care delivery, on average from 41.70 to 85.29 for analyzing practice using Donabedian's quality framework, increased on average from 40.6 to 78.04 in being able to explain techniques such as benchmarking and risk adjustment; and rose from 68.63 to 92.89 in role-modeling quality improvement and patient safety techniques as part of their routine work.

This is just one example of the power of the QIPS program at work. Most students continued to develop their QIPS improvement projects into their graduate capstone projects. Several have formally published and presented their work, expanding the influence of their leadership nationally. A 2018 graduate of QIPS, Jefferson's James S. Harrop, MD, professor of neurological surgery and orthopaedic surgery and division chief for Spine and Peripheral Nerve Surgery, published his capstone project "Are Guidelines Important? Results of a Prospective Quality Improvement Lumbar Fusion Project" in 2022. Neurosurgery chose his paper as the 2022 Paper of the Year, and he presented the work at the 2022 Congress of Neurological Surgeons Annual Meeting. Patrick C. Hanley, MD's capstone, "Reducing Diabetic Ketoacidosis Readmissions with a Hospital-School-Based Improvement Partnership," was published by the American Journal of Medical Quality in 2023.

"Many of our QIPS students get promoted within a year after they finish the program," says Cooper. "Participants become more valuable to their departments and to their bosses because they know how to fix things. Once you know how, it's a replicable approach that you can do over and over again. A lot of our students are identified by their bosses as people who have an attribute they can take and mold into greater leadership potential."

For residents and fellows, obtaining background in quality

and safety is an immeasurable opportunity to showcase when interviewing for jobs. "They can say, 'I did a project that had this outcome,'" shares Cooper. "They can talk about their project succinctly and demonstrate that not only do they have the tools to achieve differences, but they've been able to do it and show those differences."

"Healthcare is really in crisis right now," Cooper continues. "When we look at the data over the past 20 years, we expected to be at a different place than we are. We expected outcomes to be better. We expected safety events to have decreased. We expected with all the hard work over the past 20 years that we would be in a different situation. But I think the pandemic unfortunately uncovered a lot of the processes that still are so flawed. This program gives people not only the skills but the courage to speak up and say, 'We can do better at this.'"

Colangelo is proud of Jefferson's leadership in the field. "Jefferson is noted for building future leaders of healthcare quality and safety and helping with the effort to reduce risk, errors, and harm that patients experience in healthcare in the U.S. today," he says. "We hold the distinction of being the first to offer a master's degree program in quality and safety."

Jefferson's enterprise-wide investment in quality and patient safety will continue to have far-reaching implications for years to come. "I am rewarded by the knowledge that I am creating an impact far beyond the patients that I care for clinically by helping to create a new generation of healthcare providers who are passionate about improving healthcare quality and safety," he shares. 📌



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My First Mentee

Robert M. Stein, MD '68

BY IRISA GOLD

American entrepreneur and philanthropist Charles “Chuck” Feeney (April 23, 1931–October 9, 2023) coined the phrase “Giving While Living.” Cardiologist and alumnus Robert M. Stein, MD '68, subscribes to the same values, and his philanthropic legacy is changing—and saving—lives. In addition to establishing the Robert M. Stein, MD '68 Scholarship Fund at Sidney Kimmel Medical College, this past fall, he endowed the Robert M. Stein, MD '68, FACC, FAHA, Professorship in Cardiovascular Quality and Safety. His generosity was commemorated at the investiture of Ileana Piña, MD, as the first holder of the Stein professorship.

“I’m trying to do my bit to help the medical school that gave me my education,” he says. “There is a joy in giving a donation during one’s life. A legacy gift in a will is wonderful, but to actually see the results of one’s donation is even better.”

The Stein professorship reflects his long-standing passion for quality improvement and patient safety. As Jefferson’s third position dedicated to quality and safety, and the first for a service line within the enterprise, the new role serves

as a powerful catalyst for patient-focused cardiovascular quality and safety innovations that will improve countless lives for generations to come.

“There are guidelines for virtually every aspect of care,” he says. “They are based on science, and evidence-based. Closing the gap between science and practice is important, yet the idea of trying to produce ideal care is very difficult. Your medical group and hospital need systems for quality. Dr. Piña is a brilliant cardiologist. Safety and quality are one of her passions, so it is a great fit.”

Stein’s dreams of a medical career began at age 6. “My uncle in Philadelphia, Charles Kravitz, was always my inspiration to be a doctor,” he says. “He was an internist at Temple and Albert Einstein Medical Center, which is now a Jefferson affiliate. He was a wonderful man and very kind to his patients. He used to get up at 4 a.m. and study internal medicine before he started his rounds and would work all hours of the day and night. I think there’s a prize named after him at graduation.”

Stein was in the first of the Penn State-Jefferson combined

classes back in 1963. He shares, “There was a newspaper article in the Philadelphia Inquirer about the combined program—and I applied. I thought it was going to be a wonderful program, and it is. Jefferson creates an excellent medical student who’s ready to practice almost any specialty.”

Stein’s love for cardiology began in medical school, fostered by a life-changing experience courtesy of an intern he met during clinic who would change his life. “He took me under his wing and brought me to see a patient of his to hear an S3 gallop,” Stein says. “He was busy yet still spent an enormous amount of time with me talking about heart failure when he didn’t have to.”

The intern said he was going to be a cardiologist, Stein remembers. Inspired by the encounter, Stein wrote the intern’s name down and put it in his wallet. Stein still has that piece of paper.

“His name was Dr. Carl Pepine,” he shares. “After about 20 years, I looked him up. Today, he is a professor of cardiology at the University of Florida College of Medicine and a former president of the American College of Cardiology. I still see him at medical meetings,

There is a joy in giving a donation during one's life. A legacy gift in a will is wonderful, but to actually see the results of one's donation is even better.



Stephen T. Smith; Joseph G. Cacchione, MD, FACC; Robert M. Stein, MD; Ileana Piña, MD, MPH; Susan Aldridge, PhD; and Baligh R. Yehia, MD, MPP, MSc, FACP

and when I do, I always take a picture of the two of us, and he always says, 'My first mentee.'"

After receiving his medical degree from Jefferson in 1968, Stein completed his residency at Tufts Medical Center/Boston Medical Center, and NewYork-Presbyterian Columbia University Irving Medical Center, in 1971, as well as a cardiology residency at NewYork-Presbyterian Columbia University Irving Medical Center, in 1975.

Following time as a cardiologist in the U.S. Army, he moved and settled in Escondido, California. He joined Palomar Medical Center in San Diego in 1976, where in ensuing years he served as chairman of the department of medicine; medical director, cardiac services; and chief of staff. Today, Stein provides cardiology consultation for the Graybill Medical Group's

Rehabilitation Institute and directs the Outpatient Cardiac Rehab Program.

A diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) and the ABIM, Cardiovascular Diseases, Stein is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association and a member of the San Diego County Medical Society, the American Medical Association, and the American College of Physicians. Additionally, he served as a board member and is former president of the San Diego affiliate of the American Heart Association and continues to speak on cardiovascular topics throughout the country.

When contemplating his proudest career moment, Stein says, "It's just what I do every day. I once shared an elevator in the hospital with a

young woman. She said, 'Dr. Stein, you treat my grandmother. You've admitted her to the hospital more than once. Whenever I see you, I always know everything's going to be OK.'"

Stein is grateful for his Jefferson education and wants to give back. "Jefferson takes a gamble. They had to select high school kids for my program," he says. "They took me in and educated me. I am more than happy to repay them the best I can."

"As you age, you think about your mortality, you think about the legacy that you want to leave, you think about how you would like the world to be, and you try to do your little bit to shape that world," he shares. "I feel we all have an obligation. We all leave a legacy. It's the least I can do. Pay it forward, right?" 🙏

SKMC Alumni Board President

Galicano F. Inguito Jr., MD, MBA, FAAFP, Class of 1990



Memories of Jefferson

I am proud to report that the impact of the tight-knit Jefferson community does not stop once you graduate, a sentiment shared by my fellow Sidney Kimmel Medical College alumni.

In recounting their medical school memories, my fellow alumni have made it clear that not only will you receive a well-rounded medical education that provides the skills needed to become a top-of-the-line physician—you will also walk away with long-lasting relationships that can have a positive impact on your career.

One of the major benefits of Jefferson is its large alumni network. If utilized appropriately and effectively, this is a very helpful tool in preparing for a residency application. During my clinical rotations, I was extremely surprised at how many attendings I met who turned out to be Jefferson alumni.

They were always willing and ready to help me and the other Jefferson students rotating with them. We had that Jefferson connection from the very start.

Jefferson has always cultivated an environment of support for its students. My Jefferson professors were outstanding, and they encouraged me to push myself and to believe in my abilities. I received a fabulous education at Jefferson, and my desire to learn and succeed is still with me today.


Many memories come to mind when I think of my time as a Jefferson medical student. Throughout my clerkships, I encountered many obstacles that challenged my clinical judgment and knowledge from preclinicals. However, gaining experience in various rotations strengthened my confidence in employing these learned clinical skills.

During my internal medicine rotation, I was responsible for presenting the history and physical examination of a patient who was recently admitted to the hospital. After conducting my examination, I believed the patient's prostate was abnormal. The intern and resident then met with the patient to conduct the same clinical examination, yet both concluded that the patient presented with a normal prostate.

I did not know how to proceed. While I was unsure if I should stay true to my concerns against the

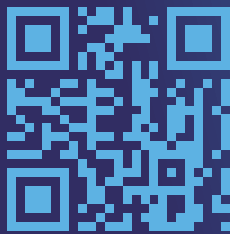
opposing conclusions of my senior doctors, I was adamant that this examination greatly differed from the normal prostate examinations I had observed in previous rotations. After finally meeting with the attending, he confirmed that the patient had prostate cancer, validating my clinical findings.

It was this experience that taught me to trust my training and believe in myself going forward.

My stories and experiences greatly influenced my career, teaching me a lesson that I hope other students can learn from. I strongly encourage all Jefferson alumni to do the same—reflect on your experiences, and tell others your story. The lessons we learned through our education have the potential to inspire future medical students. In sharing our stories, we may greatly motivate those on this path. 

Galicano F. Inguito Jr., MD '90, MBA, FAAFP, is board certified in family medicine by the American Board of Family Medicine and in medical management by the American College of Physician Executives and is a fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians. He is president of Delaware Family Medicine LLC, and in addition to private practice, he works in a 24-hour urgent care practice. Inguito has served on numerous national boards, including the Federation of State Medical Boards, the United States Medical Licensing Examination Step 3 Committee, and the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education. He was honored by the Delaware Academy of Family Physicians as the 2008–09 Family Physician of the Year. Inguito has been named a "Top Doctor," as voted by his peers, in "Delaware Today" magazine.

Tell Us Your Story



Do you have a great story about a unique SKMC faculty member, colleague, or alum? We want to hear it! In 2024, we celebrate our institution's 200th anniversary, and we're gathering stories—a new collection of "legends and lore," if you will—about what makes the University and its people so special.

To submit your story, recollection, or connection, scan the QR code with your smartphone, visit us at **[Jefferson.edu/Story200](https://jefferson.edu/Story200)**, or email us at editor@jefferson.edu.



| Class of 1998 celebrating their 25th Reunion at the Welcome Reception

The Sidney Kimmel Medical College Alumni Weekend 2023 left a lasting impression on many alumni. Those whose class years concluded in 3 and 8 marked milestone reunions, with the Class of 1973 commemorating their 50th reunion. Throughout the weekend, alumni relished the opportunity to reconnect, revisit cherished memories, and indulge in moments of reminiscence with classmates. Anticipation is building for the upcoming 2024 Alumni Weekend, set to be a highlight among our signature Bicentennial events. We hope to see you there!



| Class of 1988 Reunion Happy Hour at Moriarity's Pub on Chestnut Street



| Class of 2008 celebrates 15 years



| Robert M. Stein, MD '68, presents on the history of the Gross Clinic



| Campus tour



| SKMC student representatives enjoyed interacting with alumni from reunion years



| Class of 1973's 50th reunion

Alumni Awards

Early Career Alumni Award Recipient

Established in 2020, the Early Career Alumni Award recognizes medical college alumni who are 10-20 years post-graduation for their outstanding early-career achievements and strong, demonstrated potential for future leadership in their chosen specialties.



Stavropoula I. Tjoumakaris, MD '03, FAANS, FACS, FAHA

Stavropoula I. Tjoumakaris, MD, is a dual-appointed professor in neurological surgery and radiology at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. She also serves as the chair of Thomas Jefferson University Faculty Affairs, Director of the Open Cerebrovascular and Endovascular Neurosurgery Fellowship, and Director for the Neurosurgery Clerkship. Tjoumakaris holds the distinction of being the first female dual-trained cerebrovascular and endovascular neurosurgeon in the U.S. She is an active member with leadership positions in organized neurosurgery and currently serves as the chair-elect of the AANS/CNS Cerebrovascular Section, scientific program chair for the Society of Neurointerventional Surgery, and editorial board member for the *Journal of Neurological Surgery*. She serves as an officer for the FDA New Device Committee, Guidelines Committee for the American Heart/Stroke Association,

Neuroendovascular Surgery Accreditation Committee for Advanced Subspecialty Training for the Society of Neurological Surgeons, and American Board of Neurological Surgeons.

Tjoumakaris has been the recipient of numerous academic, educational, and clinical awards throughout her career, including Exceptional Women in Medicine for Neurological Surgery and Philadelphia Top Doctors by Castle Connolly, Dean's Award In Excellence in Education, William Buchheit Neurosurgery Resident Teacher of the Year Award, Excellence in Surgical Teaching Award, and Dean's Award in Faculty Mentoring. She is a fellow of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, American College of Surgeons, and American Heart and Stroke Association. She received her undergraduate degree in biology, physics and chemistry from Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, where she graduated summa cum laude and was honored as class salutatorian. Tjoumakaris attended medical school at Jefferson, where she graduated with distinction. She was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society and received numerous awards for academic excellence. Tjoumakaris subsequently completed her neurosurgical residency at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, where she also completed a fellowship in endovascular and cerebrovascular neurosurgery. She is currently completing her Executive MBA at Villanova University.

Tjoumakaris has authored over 400 peer-reviewed articles in the field of cerebrovascular neurosurgery and has served as an invited speaker for 200 lectures, both nationally and internationally. She has a particular interest in evolving techniques in the endovascular management of stroke, cerebral aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations, and intra-arterial chemotherapy for retinoblastoma and is currently involved in numerous clinical trials.

Distinguished Alumni Award

The Distinguished Alumni Award was established in 2017 to recognize alumni posthumously for a lifetime of distinguished and outstanding achievements and contributions to their professions and/or fields of interest and for contributions benefitting their communities and humanity.



Ernest L. (Gary) Rosato, MD '90 (1964-2021)

Ernest Rosato, MD, passed away on March 17, 2021, at age 57 after a courageous battle with glioblastoma. His career and life were remarkable in many ways, as he represented the best in the medical field and in humanity.

Born on Jan. 10, 1964, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Gertrude and Francis Rosato, MD, Ernest was the oldest of five siblings. He attended Episcopal Academy ('82), where he served as senior class president, and received his bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania ('86) and his medical degree from Jefferson. Ernest completed his surgical residency at the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in 1996 and subsequently joined the faculty in the Department of Surgery. During his 25 years at Thomas Jefferson, he assumed multiple leadership roles, including chief of the Division of General Surgery. He held leadership positions in numerous professional

societies, published over 85 peer-reviewed publications, and received grant funding for a dozen clinical trials. Ernest was renowned by those who knew and worked with him for his calm demeanor, modesty, competence, skill, kindness, and sense of humor.

Ernest was an exceptional teacher and responsible for the training of scores of surgical residents and medical students. Multiple teaching and mentoring awards have been bestowed upon him, including the Dean's Citation for Advancement of Education, the Dean's Citation for Faculty Mentoring, the Thomas Jefferson University Outstanding Clinician Award, and the Department of Surgery Faculty Teaching Award twice.

In addition to his passion for surgery, Ernest was a devoted friend, father, and husband.

He lived life to the fullest and loved nothing more than spending time with his family. He was happiest skiing on the slopes of Alta, boating on the Chesapeake Bay, or playing tennis with family and friends.

Ernest is survived by his wife, Jeannette (née Kolmen), his son Francis Ernest, MD (Alexa Dessy), his son Ernest Lancelot (Gary) Jr., and his daughter Madeline Claire.

He is also survived by siblings Anne V. Rosato MD, Gertrude M. Rosato (James Simpson), Francis E. Rosato, Jr., MD (Kimberly), and Aimée Ainslie (Jeffrey).

Alumni Achievement Award

The Alumni Achievement Award was established in 1964 to recognize the outstanding and distinguished professional achievements of medical college alumni.



David L. Reich, MD '82

David L. Reich, MD, is president of The Mount Sinai Hospital and Mount Sinai Queens (New York City). Reich joined Mount Sinai in 1984. He is the Horace W. Goldsmith Professor of Anesthesiology, Professor of Artificial Intelligence, and Professor of Pathology and was chair of the anesthesiology department prior to assuming his current positions in 2013. Reich was chair of the Department of Anesthesiology from 2004-2014 and served as president of the Medical Board in 2011-2012. An academic cardiac anesthesiologist, he has published more than 200 articles, editorials, and book chapters. As a hospital executive, he has enhanced safety and quality by forming an institute for critical care medicine; rapidly deploying digital innovation tools, including AI-enhanced clinical decision support; and leading in COVID-19 care and diagnostics. He is the executive sponsor of the Mount Sinai Center for Transgender Medicine and Surgery.

Prior to his anesthesiology training, Reich completed two years of residency in general surgery at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance, California. He received

his bachelor's degree with highest distinction from Pennsylvania State University and his medical degree from Jefferson.

After arriving at Mount Sinai in 1984, Reich completed a residency in anesthesiology and a fellowship in cardiothoracic anesthesia. His honors include the 2011 Physician of the Year from Mount Sinai Nursing, the Mount Sinai Alumni Association Jacobi Medallion in 2014, the 2021 Heart of Gold Award from the New York Heart Association, the 2021 August Heckscher Founder Award for Community Service from CIVITAS, the 2021 Empire Whole Health Heroes Award from Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield and Crain's New York Business, and Pace University's 2022 Changemakers in Healthcare Award. Reich's research interests include neurocognitive outcomes following cardiac surgery, medical informatics, and hemodynamic monitoring. An academic cardiac anesthesiologist, he has published more than 200 articles, editorials, and book chapters.



| Above: Galicano F. Inguito Jr., MD '90, MBA; Roosevelt McCorvey, MD; Susan Aldridge, PhD, at 50-Year Society Pinning Ceremony
Below: Class of 2003 reunion



SAVE
THE
DATE



2024
SIDNEY KIMMEL MEDICAL COLLEGE
Alumni Weekend

Friday, October 25
Saturday, October 26



Class Agent

Lawrence R. Schiller, MD, FACP, MACG, Class of 1972

Clinical Professor, Department of Medical Education, Texas A&M University School of Medicine Dallas Campus
Chair, Institutional Review Boards for Human Subject Protection, Baylor Scott & White Research Institute, Dallas, Texas



Reviving Memories *Reflecting on Our 50th Reunion*

A couple of years ago, I was asked to serve as Class Agent for the Jefferson Class of 1972 and to help organize our 50th reunion. Like most of us, I had given little thought to Jefferson over the decades—other than when reading this Bulletin or the annual letter soliciting funds for our alma mater. I had time to devote to this project and decided to do it with the help of a small committee and the University's Office of Institutional Advancement.

Within a few days, I had received a roster of classmates, now spread

across the country. Looking over that list reminded me that I was once part of a vibrant community of aspiring physicians—friends whose mutual support got us through four demanding years of medical school and launched almost 200 of us into the challenging, intense, and rewarding world of medicine. What had become of everyone? How had we changed, and more importantly, how had we stayed the same?

The list also stirred memories of those bygone days—hours spent in lectures and labs in the then brand-new Jefferson (Alumni) Hall, inspiring preclinical professors, our first exposures to patients in the clinics and hospitals affiliated with Jefferson, working with skilled clinicians who shared their experiences and served as role models for the doctors that we wanted to become, and all the ephemeral experiences of those days—lunches, gatherings, card games, and clubs. We were members of a learning community that provided strong emotional support to one another and were embedded in an institution that offered a web of support for our learning—the facilities and faculty that enabled our development as proto-physicians.

Reaching out to my classmates only added to these memories; each shared their own significant experiences, creating a rich tapestry of remembrance. When we finally got together in person at the reunion or virtually, we had much to share and much to be grateful for. Our community was reborn.

These discussions also went in a different direction. Early on, we decided to raise money toward a scholarship to support deserving Jefferson students. This led to the realization that most of our classmates benefited from the generosity of others—donors who

contributed to building the campus, to endowing the professorships, and to funding the scholarships that financed our Jefferson educations. None of my classmates did it all on their own.

One sad result of looking over the class roster was the realization that about 20% of the class had passed away in the half-century since graduation. Some tragically died while young, others later in life, but all too soon. It proves that each of us only has a limited time to do good here on Earth.

One way around this conundrum is to give to institutions, like Jefferson, which—unlike us—live in perpetuity. The contributions that we make today will continue to do good for years after we are gone. Some medical students 50 years from now will benefit from the Class of 1972 Scholarship that we funded last year.

To sum up, this is what I learned from being a Class Agent: Our vibrant community of 50 years ago lives on in our collective memories. We ought to be humble when taking credit for whatever success we've had in life; it depended on the efforts of many others. We must be thankful for the ecosystem developed at Jefferson to produce physicians over the past 200 years. We can build on that heritage—and touch the future—by supporting Jefferson today. 🍷

SKMC Class Agents

Gerald Marks, MD, Class of 1949
Herbert E. Cohn, MD, Class of 1955
Eugene F. Bonacci, MD, Class of 1956
Phillip J. Marone, MD, MSPH, Class of 1957
Stanton N. Smullens, MD, Class of 1961
William V. Harrer, MD, Class of 1962
Richard P. Wenzel, MD, MSc, Class of 1965
Michael P. Dolan, MD, Class of 1966
Elliot J. Rayfield, MD, Class of 1967
Harold A. Yocum, MD, Class of 1968
M. Dean Kinsey, MD, Class of 1969
Peter V. Scoles, MD, Class of 1970
Edward B. Ruby, MD, Class of 1971
Lawrence R. Schiller, MD, Class of 1972
Lynne E. Porter, MD, Class of 1973
Steven R. Peikin, MD, Class of 1974
Richard H. Bennett, MD, Class of 1975
Lorraine King, MD, RES '75, FEL '77, Class of 1975
Postgraduate representative
Robert L. Goldberg, MD, Class of 1976
Robert Boova, MD, Class of 1977
Frank DeLone, MD, Class of 1977
Duncan Salmon, MD, Class of 1978
Joseph R. Spiegel, MD, Class of 1979
Martin J. Carney, MD, Class of 1980
Richard F. Spaide, MD, Class of 1981
Russell Breish, MD, Class of 1982
Bruce J. Gould, MD, Class of 1983
John J. Kelly, III MD, Class of 1984
Robert A. Ball, MD, Class of 1985
Bernard L. Lopez, MD, Class of 1986
Maria Scott, MD, Class of 1987
Patricia Curtin White, MD, FACP, Class of 1988
Sharon Gould, MD, Class of 1988
John H. Marks, MD, Class of 1989
Laurie Sangimino, MD, Class of 1990
Galicano F. Inguito Jr., MD, Class of 1990
Polly J. Krupnick, MD, Class of 1991
Nita S. Schwartz, MD, Class of 1991
Corina Graziani, MD, Class of 1992
Douglas T. Corwin Jr., MD, PhD, Class of 1993

Minesh C. Patel, MD, Class of 1993
Mahesh Krishnan, MD, Class of 1994
Suken A. Shah, MD, Class of 1994
James S. Harrop Jr., MD, Class of 1995
Edward W. Kiggundu, MD, Class of 1996
David H. Finkelstein, MD, Class of 1997
Vicki H. Rapaport, MD, Class of 1998
Karen Ravin, MD, Class of 1998
Joseph Manfredi, MD, Class of 1999
Eddie Chang, MD, Class of 2000
Harris Cohen, MD, Class of 2000
John R. Manfredi, Class of 2001
Danielle M. DeHoratius, MD, Class of 2002
Alexander P. Sah, MD, Class of 2002
Matthew Eichenbaum, MD, Class of 2003
Brian Kucer, MD, Class of 2004
Matthew Keller, MD, Class of 2005
Jeremy D. Close, MD, Class of 2006
Kristine Swartz, MD, Class of 2006
Joshua Marks, MD, Class of 2007
Brian Oliviera, MD, Class of 2008
Patricia C. Henwood, MD, Class of 2009
Franklin Lee, MD, Class of 2010
Tony Anene-Maidoh, MD, Class of 2011
Sarah J. Fuzesi, MD, Class of 2013
Madeline E. Carroll, MD, Class of 2014
Zinta L. Zapp, MD, Class of 2015
Tejal U. Naik, MD, Class of 2016
Mai Tsukikawa, MD, Class of 2017
Phillip S. Gordon, MD, Class of 2018
Lea C. Matthews, MD, Class of 2018
Michelle M. Ponder, MD, Class of 2018
Kaitlyn Votta, MD, Class of 2019
Tayoot Chengsupanimit, MD, Class of 2020
Nathan L'Etoile, MD, Class of 2020
George Titomihelakis, MD, Class of 2021
Sage Vincent, MD, Class of 2021
Mary B. White, MD, Class of 2021
Mary Blumenfeld, MD, Class of 2022
Kai Inguito, MD, Class of 2022

SKMC Class Agent Program

SKMC Class Agents serve as liaisons to the medical college, working in conjunction with Annual Giving and Alumni Relations programming and reunions to enhance alumni engagement, participation, and overall annual support of Jefferson.

Interested in becoming a Class Agent?

Contact Shelby Palmer at shelby.palmer@jefferson.edu or 215-301-8831.

meet cute

SKMC Graduates Find
Their Happily Ever After
in Philadelphia



BY CINDY LEFLER

In May 2014, Jonathan Corsini and Laura Odorizzi Corsini earned their medical degrees—and the “cutest couple” award—from Jefferson. The two say that the medical college, is and always will be near and dear to their hearts.

“The first word that comes to mind when I hear Jefferson is ‘Laura,’” Jon says. “That’s where we met, spent the majority of four years together, and fell in love.”

Laura agrees: “For me, Jefferson will always have a very special place in my heart because it is where I met Jonathan.”

The couple met on the second day of orientation. She was living in an apartment on South Street, and he was sharing a house with three other students on Rodman Street. She knocked on the door of that house to meet up with one of the housemates she had met earlier, and Jon answered.

“He gave me a lengthy tour around the house and didn’t leave my side the rest of the night. I’m pretty sure I knew that very first night that Jonathan would always be by my side,” she says.

“There was immediate chemistry between us, and within a few

months, I started thinking about marriage,” Jon says. “I couldn’t picture my life without Laura.”

The couple wed just a few weeks before graduation. A month later they started a new chapter of their professional—and personal—lives in Texas, where Jon was stationed with the U.S. Air Force.

Jon participated in the Health Professions Scholarship Program, which provides military scholarships to help cover civilian medical school tuition. He entered active duty service with the Air Force upon graduation and matched for residency in ophthalmology at the San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium.

“Miraculously, even though we could not couples match, since I was military and Laura was a civilian, she was able to match with the only dermatology residency program in San Antonio at the University of Texas Health Science Center,” Jon says. “We feel incredibly blessed that we were able to match our dream specialties in the same city.”

Four years later, they both completed their respective residencies, and Jon was sent to his next assignment at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, just outside

of Washington, D.C. He was now a captain but was quickly promoted to major. Laura secured a position as a comprehensive dermatologist in Alexandria, Virginia.

In February 2020, the couple welcomed a daughter, Adeline Rose. And then the pandemic hit.

“We managed to telework [and] learned how to parent, and how to stay healthy during those trying first few months,” says Jon.

While cooped up at home and waiting to return to in-person care, Laura read a 13-book fantasy series, and Jon fulfilled a long-lived dream of writing one.

“I’ve always loved escaping into fantasy stories—Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, Star Wars—and the idea of writing my own novel had floated in the back of my thoughts for a while. I realized that I would regret it if I never sat down and gave writing a chance. As soon as I started, I couldn’t stop,” he says.

“Level Up Charlie” is a young adult fiction novel set in a near-future world where the discovery of Atlantis unlocks superpowers for most—but not all—of humanity. Sixteen-year-old Charlie Turner has to put his rare power of invisibility to use to rescue his kidnapped mother,

triumph over terrorists, secure the Fountain of Youth, and save the world.

The book is finished, and he is now pitching it to agents “to see if it has a shot at being published.”

If not, well, he always has his day job—ophthalmology.

“I fell in love with ophthalmology when I realized how happy ophthalmologists and their patients were,” he says. “LASIK and cataract surgery are quick, safe procedures that have [an] immediate and lasting impact on patients’ lives.”

Although Laura initially planned on a neurosurgery specialty, after a few clinical rotations, she became interested in dermatology due to the “great education and mentorship at Jefferson.”

“I ended up loving dermatology,” she says. “And ultimately, with an outpatient, clinic-based setting, I would get to follow the majority of my patients and their families for their whole lives. Building that patient relationship is without a doubt the most special aspect of medicine to me.”

Jon separated honorably from the Air Force in July 2022, and two months later, the couple moved to West Chester, Pennsylvania, to be closer to family—he is from Wilmington, Delaware; she is from Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Laura is now practicing at John Wildemore Dermatology in Wayne, Pennsylvania, and Jon recently opened the Corsini Laser Eye Center right down the street from her office. A few months ago, they welcomed a son, Declan James, to the family.

“Looking back at our years at Jefferson feels slightly surreal, and a touch magical,” Laura says. “When I think about the life it helped us build, it’s hard to believe it was a decade ago!”

Jon adds, “These past nine years have been an exciting journey, and we are thrilled to be back where it all started.” 🍷



Class Notes

'70

Harvey Lefton, MD, received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pennsylvania Society of Gastroenterology for his contributions to Philadelphia and Pennsylvania gastroenterology.

'73

Dean Leis, MD, did a family medicine residency in 1973–1976, finishing as chief resident. Leis later joined a family practice in Hershey, Pennsylvania. He helped grow the practice and finally became part of a system. Since retirement in 2019, Leis and his wife, Lynne, have traveled a bit and have enjoyed spending time with their family. He has become a Red Cross volunteer, making several deployments to work in emergency shelters after various disasters. Leis joined the board of the local Jewish Family Service organization and serves on the Finance Committee. He has developed several bad habits, the worst being boating. He enjoys a 1989 Carver aft cabin boat on the Northern Chesapeake. He finds that he can still do almost anything he once did, but it takes longer and hurts more afterwards.

'76

Dean L. Winslow, MD, took a leave of absence from Stanford from March 2021 until July 2022 to direct the COVID-19 Testing and Diagnostic Working Group for the U.S. government, reporting directly to the White House. He was just honored by the surgeon general with the U.S. Public Health Service Outstanding Service Medal.

'87

Jocelyn Jolbitado Sivalingam, MD, will be moving in 2024 to a position as a senior physician advisor at ChristianaCare in Delaware! She is ready to embark on a new adventure, learning new skills and bringing her her unique experience to such a vibrant and dynamic healthcare system. She keeps busy as the proud grandmother of four, soon to be five, still biking and ice

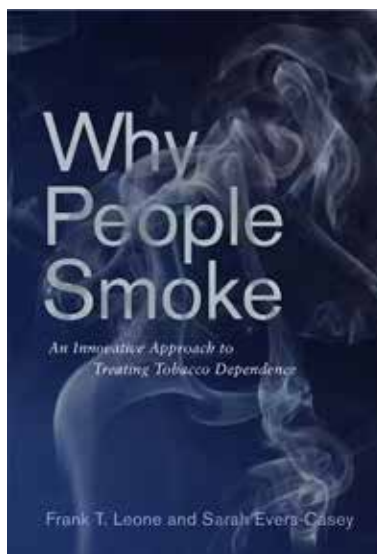
skating. Her eldest daughter, Meera (MD '17), is now an eye surgeon at Wills, like her grandfather and dad. Her younger daughter, Priya ('26), is currently attending SKMC.

'93

Daniel Meyer, MD, has been appointed medical director for the Comprehensive Health Services Program at Lehigh Valley Health Network, where he directs programs in HIV treatment and prevention, sexual health, LGBT health, and gender-affirming medical care. He most recently was at the University of Pennsylvania focusing on LGBT health and sexual health for university students.

'94

Frank Leone, MD, wrote "Why People Smoke: An Innovative Approach to Treating Tobacco Dependence," a first-



of-its-kind clinical guide to treating tobacco dependence. The book helps readers make meaningful connections between tobacco's effects at the cellular level, the predictable behavioral manifestations of the disorder, and the social science and systems requirements necessary to make a fundamental impact on this disorder. Unlike previous publications like self-help books, step-by-step curricula, or clinical guidelines, "Why People Smoke" puts practical

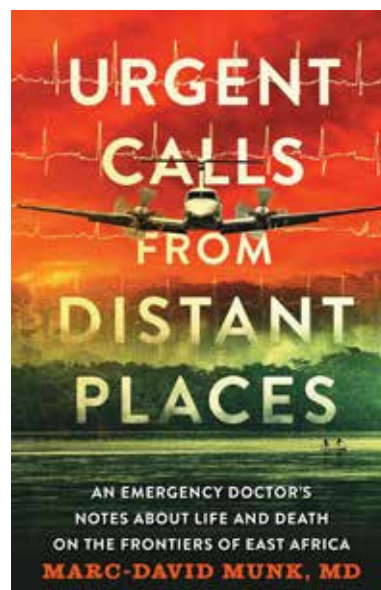
clinical insights—gained from 25 years of practice—into perspective, helping the reader understand how "brain change" translates into "mind change" and the persistent compulsion to smoke—despite a person's desperate desire to stop.

'97

Dana Ger, MD, serves as deputy chief medical officer of North Country HealthCare in Arizona. His clinical work is based at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and in Williams, Arizona. He works in conjunction with the National Park Service seeing anyone who may require care. North Country HealthCare is responsible for northern Arizona's Federally Qualified Health Centers; in his position, he oversees the northwestern region. This is rewarding and satisfying work in beautiful country with fantastic hiking, kayaking, and adventuring.

'99

Marc-David Munk, MD, wrote "Urgent Calls From Distant Places: An Emergency Doctor's Notes About Life and Death on the Frontiers of East Africa," which was released on Jan. 30, 2024. The book is a collection of medical essays based on Munk's missions as a volunteer flight surgeon in East Africa.





Remembering

Dr. Edith Peterson Mitchell

Physician, Researcher, Civil Rights Leader, Trailblazer

Jefferson mourns the loss

of healthcare trailblazer and civil rights pioneer Edith Peterson Mitchell, MD, FACP, FCPP, retired U.S. Air Force brigadier general.

After joining Jefferson in 1995, Mitchell, who dedicated her life to helping the medically underserved, held numerous leadership positions and was the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center's principal investigator for the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Lead Academic Participating Site (LAPS) Program, one of 32 program recipients throughout the United States. Most recently, she served as professor of medicine and medical oncology, director of the Center to Eliminate Cancer Disparities, and enterprise vice president for cancer disparities.

A true pioneer, Mitchell was the first woman physician in history to attain the rank of brigadier general in the U.S. Air Force and was awarded more than 15 military service medals and ribbons, including the Legion of Merit, the Air Force Achievement and Commendation Medals, and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

In addition to her leadership roles at Jefferson, Mitchell served as the 116th president of the National Medical Association and was an appointed member of the President's Cancer Panel from 2019 to 2023. She was selected for the NCI's Blue Ribbon Panel to advise the National Cancer Advisory Board on the National Cancer Moonshot Initiative and to advise the NIH Council of Councils.

Mitchell's achievements have been recognized through many honors, including the Tree of Life Award, which recognizes health professionals who have made extraordinary contributions to health management in both the local and global community; The American Society of Clinical Oncology's Humanitarian Award; and the Octavius Valentine Catto Award for community service in the city of Philadelphia, just to name a few. In 2018, she received the Achievement Award in Medicine, Jefferson's highest honor. Her portrait graces the University's walls.

Mitchell received a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from

Tennessee State University and her medical degree from the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond. In 1973, while attending medical school, she entered the Air Force and received a commission through the Health Professions Scholarship Program.

She traveled nationally and internationally, teaching and lecturing on the treatment of gastrointestinal malignancies, and she authored and co-authored more than 100 articles and book chapters, as well as many abstracts on cancer treatment, prevention, and cancer control.

"Dr. Mitchell had a life full of accomplishments and trailblazing," said Joseph G. Cacchione, MD, Jefferson's chief executive officer. "She leaves a legacy of dedication and selflessness, and we will continue to honor her memory by continuing her work to eliminate health disparities."

When she was not working, Mitchell enjoyed gardening, quilting, listening to jazz and rock music, and spending time with her family.

In Memoriam



**“Roses are red. Violets are blue.
And the long thoracic nerve
innervates the serratus anterior.”**

- RICHARD R. SCHMIDT

Longtime faculty member Richard Ralph Schmidt, PhD, passed away on September 26, 2023.

Schmidt dedicated his life to the pursuit of knowledge and medical education. An alumnus of the University of Wisconsin, where he received his bachelor's and doctorate, he was one of the first members of Jefferson's Department of Medical Education and its first emeritus professor. He joined the faculty in 1974 and earned tenured professor in the Department of Anatomy in 1982. He moved into the Department of Pathology, Anatomy and Cell Biology in 1994 and was appointed vice chair in 1996.

Schmidt was a lifelong advocate for educational innovation. Known for his lively lectures in embryology, gross anatomy, histology, and neuroscience, he also taught students in nursing, physical therapy, and physician assistant programs. Over the years, he received numerous awards, including the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching, which recognizes outstanding faculty at colleges and universities in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He was twice guest of honor at the student-run Black and Blue Ball and a three-time recipient of the Dean's Award for Distinguished Teaching in Basic Science. He was the proud recipient of the Senior Portrait, bestowed by the Class of 1996.

In addition to his dedication to teaching, Schmidt had a deep passion for fishing, aviary photography, and snowboarding, finding solace and inspiration in nature.

Donations in his memory can be made to JeffHOPE at jefferson.edu/JeffHOPE

'55

John A. Marchesani, MD, passed away on Jan. 3, 2024, at the age of 94. John apprenticed in his father's tailor shop, acquiring skills that would elevate a future, very different profession. John enrolled in Jefferson Medical College in 1951, studying and working in his father's shop. After marrying his wife, Marie, in 1954, he graduated from medical school, completed the inaugural internship at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, and spent two years in the Army in Virginia as base surgeon general. Honorably discharged in 1959, he returned to New Jersey with his family and opened a pediatrics practice out of their new home, with Marie doing his accounting. John gained a reputation as a kind and sensitive pediatrician. He was also an intuitive diagnostician who could resolve complex symptoms in children too small to describe what they felt. Drawing on his early apprenticeship, he also was known for his precise and sturdy sutures. He was chairman of the pediatrics department at West Jersey (now Virtua) Hospital for 12 years and earned its lifetime achievement award in 2004. He was the first two-term president of the Haddonfield Lions Club and initiated a program for in-school amblyopia testing. He was a fourth Degree Knight of Columbus, the Knights' highest rank, and a Eucharistic minister. After retiring from private practice, he taught at TJU one day a week for five years. John loved fishing the trout streams of Pennsylvania, New York, and Vermont. He taught all his children and grandchildren the art, which meant they got to fish while he untangled line and dislodged snagged lures. He crafted intricate model railroad layouts. He enjoyed bridge, chess, and crosswords, adding a sudoku phase later. He and Marie held friendly but spirited contests of Scrabble and gin rummy. He rediscovered golf, getting closer to shooting his age with each passing year.

'70

Barbara Blofstein Berniker, MD, died on Aug. 1, 2023, at home in California. Her father owned Dettrey's Pharmacy

in Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania. She is survived by husband Kenneth Berniker, son Isaac, daughter Abigail, grandson Alexander, brother Joseph Blofstein, extended family, and beloved dog Maggie.

'75

Paul M. Wall, MD, passed away in 2022 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, after practicing emergency medical services for 30 years in the Centura Healthcare hospital system and practicing as an urgent care physician for 10 years. During those years, he was medical director of the city ambulance service, president of the El Paso County Medical Society, physician advisor to two fire departments, and director of the emergency department. During COVID-19, he served as one of two directors of the Medical Reserve Corps of El Paso County, where he assisted staff in homeless shelters to make decisions regarding the care and treatment of people who might be dealing with COVID-19. He not only organized volunteers to help with care at the converted city auditorium for the homeless during the pandemic but also worked as a volunteer, taking 24-hour shifts and filling in when no other volunteers were. Even with all that, he was able to extensively travel (including two hiking trips to Nepal), ski, bike, and enjoy the Colorado outdoors with his wife of 48 years, Doris Donahue Wall.

'77

Jan Stanley Glowacki, MD, peacefully closed his eyes on life on September 1, 2023, with the compassionate assistance of hospice after a brief battle with pancreatic cancer. Raised in Saddle Brook, New Jersey, Glowacki was the first in his family to attend university. He earned an academic scholarship to Seton Hall University along with being a walk-on pitcher on the baseball team, graduating summa cum laude. He obtained his medical degree from Jefferson in internal medicine.

You have the power to change the course of the future, one student at a time.

Scholarships allow talented and creative students from all backgrounds to attend Thomas Jefferson University. Your support enables these bright scholars to start their careers with less debt so they can focus on becoming the global leaders in business, industry, and medicine who will create a brighter tomorrow.

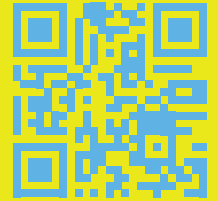
To learn more, please contact:

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