

the Bulletin

Spring 2025

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Thomas Jefferson University



Medical Genetics

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New Cardiovascular Institute
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Join Us for Upcoming Jefferson Alumni Events!

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

An Evening with Dr. Said Ibrahim

Dean of Sidney Kimmel Medical College
and President of Jefferson University Physicians
Waverly, Pennsylvania

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

An Evening with Dr. Said Ibrahim

Dean of Sidney Kimmel Medical College
and President of Jefferson University Physicians
Wilmington, Delaware

Saturday, August 2, 2025

Jeff at the Beach: An Evening with Dr. Said Ibrahim

Dean of Sidney Kimmel Medical College
and President of Jefferson University Physicians
Avalon, New Jersey

Saturday, August 16, 2025

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Laguna Beach, California



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Dean's Column

Earlier this year at a gathering in Florida, I spoke to Jefferson alumni, trustees, donors, and friends about some of the challenges facing medical education, and medical schools specifically. They are myriad: the cost of a medical education, national physician workforce shortages, funding for research, and more.

Yet, if there is one thing I've learned in my first year as dean, Jefferson is a place that finds solutions and always rises to the occasion.

As I reflect on the past year here, it has been one of remarkable progress, measured not just in numbers but also in impact. The growth we've experienced isn't simply a matter of expansion; it's a reflection of deeper commitments fulfilled: to our students, to research, and to the patients and communities we serve.

Consider what we accomplished in 2024:

- We received a record-breaking 12,000 applications for our medical school. Behind each number is a student eager to join our mission, a future physician who sees Jefferson as the place to learn, to grow, and to make a difference. Our challenge now is to ensure that we are selecting, training, and mentoring these students to be the kind of doctors our world needs.
- Our faculty's influence continues to expand. Over the past year, we quadrupled our representation in the National Academy of Medicine. The Academy is more than an honor roll — it's a forum where the most pressing issues in healthcare are shaped. Having more of our voices in that conversation means we are helping set the agenda for medicine's future.
- Our Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center achieved the highest distinction from the National Cancer Institute, earning comprehensive status. This recognition isn't just an accolade — it means broader access to cutting-edge



treatments, deeper collaboration, and a firm commitment to pushing the boundaries of cancer care.

- Our research enterprise saw an 8% increase in NIH funding, a testament to the strength of our investigators and the importance of the questions they're asking. Funding alone isn't the goal; it's a means to discovery and to answering the challenges that patients face every day.
- In recognition of this growing research footprint, we improved our standing in the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research rankings, moving from 66th to 65th. These rankings are imperfect markers, but they signal something real: We are becoming a stronger engine for scientific advancement.
- And the Jefferson Health system itself doubled in size, from 17 to 32 hospital campuses. Growth alone is not an achievement.

What matters is what we do with it: how we integrate care, how we ensure that a larger system means better outcomes for patients and more expansive educational opportunities for trainees, not just bigger numbers.

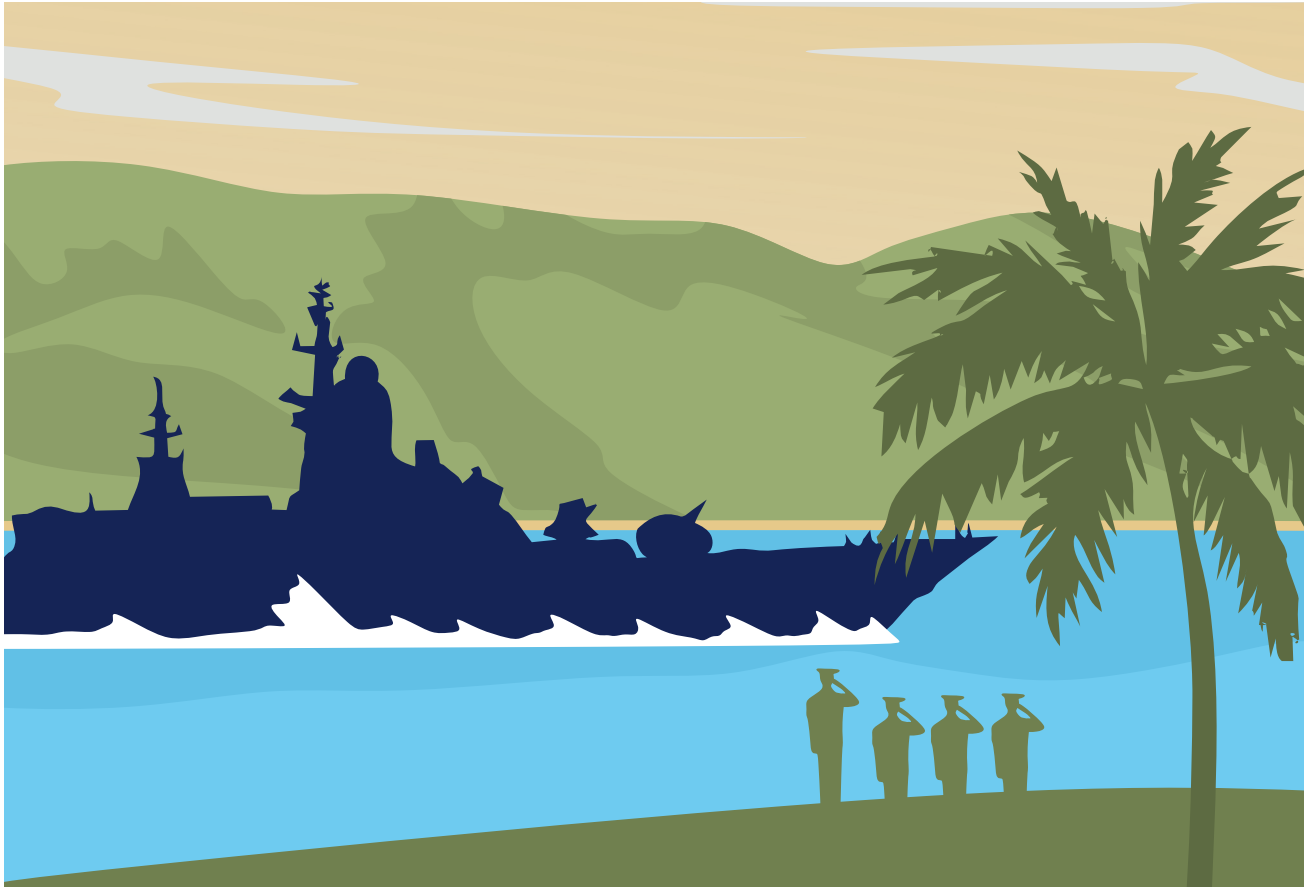
These successes are not endpoints. They are foundations. The coming year is an opportunity to build on them: to translate research into cures, to train the next generation not just in science but also in service, to turn scale into strength.

Progress in medicine isn't about a single breakthrough or expansion — it's about steady, relentless improvement. And at Jefferson, that is exactly what we intend to keep doing. 🍀

Said Ibrahim, MD, MBA, MPH

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

Time Machine



Rear Adm. Cecil H. Coggins, MD '30, MC, USN

Adventurer Extraordinaire and Counterespionage Agent

BY JAMES F. LALLY, MD '65, FORMER LT. MC, USNR

In 1921, 19-year-old Cecil Coggins was working as a merchant mariner when he jumped ship in Salonika, Greece.

The daring young man soon found himself entangled in the Greco-Turkish War, and he was imprisoned as a spy. Yet about a year later, he was overseeing a banana plantation in Honduras. He worked his way back to the U.S., seeking a formal education to inform his insatiable curiosity and wanderlust, and matriculated at the University of Missouri. Medicine was in his genes, and he went on to medical school at

Jefferson, graduating in 1930.

All this adventure and experience, and he wasn't even 30.

Coggins was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1902. The son of a preacher and a schoolteacher, his forefathers included John Coggins, the first colonial physician to practice south of Philadelphia. After Jefferson, Coggins joined the Navy and settled into an obstetrics and gynecology residency at the Naval Dispensary in Long Beach, California.

A keen observer and natural skeptic, he began monitoring suspicious radio transmissions

between the large Japanese tuna fleet off the coast of California during his downtime between delivering babies and hospital calls. Over many months, he meticulously organized his data and presented it to the staff of the 11th Naval District. As Japan sought hegemony in the Pacific and with war on the horizon, Coggins' insights were of particular value to those monitoring the potential for war with Japan — namely, the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI). Now a lieutenant, Coggins was subsequently recruited by the ONI to assist in its intelligence-gathering operations.

In 1940, Coggins relocated to Hawaii and was placed in charge of counterespionage, with a direct report to then Rear Adm. Chester Nimitz. During the following year, Coggins recruited and trained over 100 counterespionage agents. Many were Nisei (those of Japanese ancestry who were born in the territory of Hawaii or on the mainland, as contrasted with the Issei, those who were born in Japan, immigrated to Hawaii, and often maintained dual citizenship). Coggins' training and investigation techniques were codified and became the first training manual for the ONI.

There was unease in the Hawaiian Islands both before the attack on Pearl Harbor and in the months thereafter, when martial law was declared. Anti-Japanese sentiment was at a fever pitch, and the U.S. government questioned their loyalty. There were calls for the relocation or internment of most of those with Japanese ancestry. Out of a Hawaiian population of 423,000, 158,000 were of Japanese ancestry (one-third with dual Japanese and American citizenship). The Nisei were torn between their allegiance to the land of their fathers and their Shinto beliefs, and to their newfound culture and language.

Looming in the background were events on the U.S. mainland. In 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, resulting in the removal of 122,000 Japanese-Americans on the West Coast to "relocation centers." (Roosevelt's order was upheld in 1944 in the Supreme Court case of *Korematsu v. United States*, a case that historians later viewed as an egregious abuse of executive and judicial power.)

Fear was now a grim reality for the Nisei. However, there were practical economic factors that complicated the issue of the internment of Japanese-Americans in Hawaii. Back then, Hawaii's large sugar

and pineapple plantations were a major part of the economy. Over 80% of the world's pineapples came from Hawaii, and a majority of the workers on the plantations were of Japanese ancestry. The internment of Japanese-Americans would have crippled the Hawaiian economy.

The Nisei found a champion to plead their case and affirm that they were loyal to the U.S. in the unlikely "spymaster of Hawaii," Cecil Coggins. He helped draft a statement that declared, "To deprive us (Nisei) of the sacred rights to bear arms is contrary to the principles upon which American democracy is founded."

In addition, Coggins brought the plight of the Nisei to a national audience through an article that he penned for Harper's Magazine in June 1943, titled "The Japanese Americans in Hawaii." With the petition submitted to the joint military commanders Gen. Delos Emmons and Adm. Nimitz, and with fears mollified, restrictions were loosened.

The Nisei's 100th and 442nd regiments later fought with distinction in Italy, France, and Germany, and near the end of the war liberated the concentration camp at Dachau. Coggins considered his efforts on behalf of the Nisei as one of the highlights of his naval career.

In 1942, Coggins was assigned to the psychological warfare section at ONI headquarters in Washington, DC. He conducted research and worked on operational projects with Commander Ian Fleming of the Royal Navy Intelligence Department, years before he rose to fame as the author of the James Bond novels.

Restless at his desk job and ever seeking new challenges, Coggins requested an assignment in the field, and was sent to the Far East. In 1943, he served as chief field surgeon for U.S. Naval Group China, known affectionately as the "Rice Paddy Navy." This top-secret,

shadowy outfit collaborated with the nationalist Chinese in Japanese-occupied Western China. They rescued downed Allied aviators and engaged in guerrilla warfare — a small war within a wider war. Their undercover work was described as one of the best-kept secrets of WWII.

While Coggins primarily functioned as a physician, his instincts and interest in intelligence did not wane. He suspected that the Japanese were engaging in biological warfare, and while he sought evidence, he was unable to find confirmation. However, years later, Japan disclosed the existence of its Unit 731, which did conduct lethal experiments on Chinese civilians in the 1930s and '40s as it sought to develop chemical and biological weapons.

For his service when his unit was under fire, Coggins was awarded the Bronze Star.



| Rear Admiral Cecil Coggins, MD

Time Machine

After World War II, from 1947 to 1949, he was assigned to the hospital ship USS Repose, where he served as a full-time physician. During subsequent years, he served as chief of atomic, biological, and chemical warfare at NATO headquarters in Paris. After 31 years of service, Coggins retired in 1959 with the rank of rear admiral. In his post-Navy career, he spent seven years as medical chief of civil defense for the state of California.

Coggins died on May 1, 1987, at the age of 85, in Monterey, California. Buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery, he was survived by his wife, Dorothy, and his three sons. [J](#)

Author's Notes



What is it about a Jefferson education in the late 1920s (and even now) that allows a graduate such as Lt. Coggins to effortlessly transition from postgraduate residency training to being a skilled and highly valued naval intelligence officer?

Keen observational skills and data interpretation skills are common to both medicine and naval intelligence. In medicine, such skills frequently lead to an accurate diagnosis, and in the clash of naval armadas, they may give one side a clear advantage. No better example exists than the "miracle" of the Battle of Midway in June 1942, when



| Three rear admirals from the Class of 1930 at their 50th reunion (left to right, Francis J. Braceland, Cecil H. Coggins, and Charles W. Letcher)

Cmdr. J.J. Rochefort and his staff broke the Japanese naval code and predicted a battle at Midway Island. The ensuing battle led to a decisive victory for the U.S. Navy that turned the tide of the war in the Pacific.

An ONI historian lauded Coggins as "a man who is considered one of the most colorful and unique personalities in the history of the Office of Naval Intelligence." Yet although Coggins left an oral history, his definitive biography was never written.

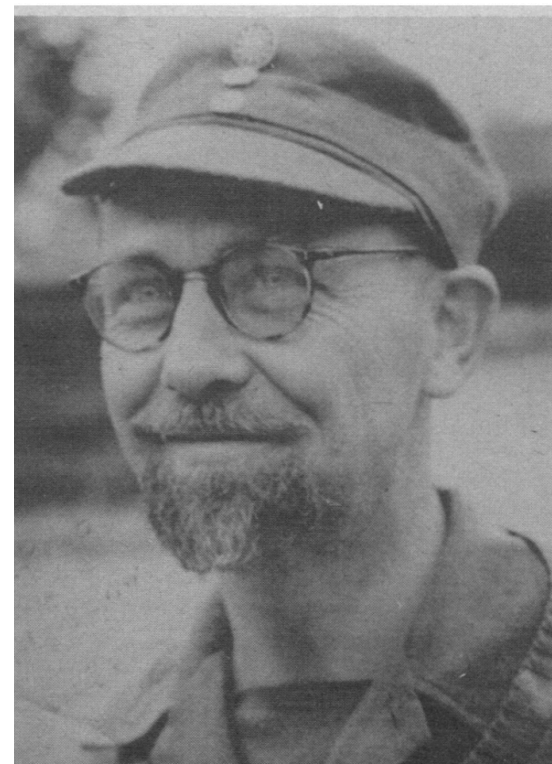
A number of sources were of value in the writing of this article. "Ghosts of Honolulu," a recently published book written by Mark Harmon and Leon Carroll, tells of the spies and counterspies present in Hawaii before and after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Two articles deserve mention: "Cecil Coggins and the War in the Shadows," by Eugene Laforet, MD, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association on April 25, 1980, and Coggins' June 1943 article in Harper's Magazine.

I did not have access to Cecil Coggins' papers and correspondence; however, five boxes are kept at the Archives Branch, Naval History and Heritage Command.


I owe a special thanks to Fritz Ruccius, former senior vice president for development at Thomas Jefferson University, for his

editing skills and encouragement. His idea was the impetus for this article.

James F. Lally, MD '65, served as a Navy medical officer during the Vietnam War with the Marine Corps' 3rd Medical Battalion and 9th Marine Regiment. [J](#)



| Coggins during his time with the U.S. Naval Group China




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July 28–August 5, 2025
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JEFFERSON'S

Bicentennial Time Capsule



Imagine stepping into the year 2074: Cities hum with a symphony of innovation and imagination. Fusion-powered buildings stretch skyward, their design inspired by nature's fractals. Laboratories brim with breakthroughs in quantum computing and regenerative medicine.

On December 4, 2024, Jefferson leadership sealed a Bicentennial Time Capsule at the Marion J. Siegman, PhD, FAPS Archives on the Center City campus.


Alumni, students, faculty, and staff were asked to submit items for inclusion to represent today's Jefferson in 50 years. They will be preserved within a stainless steel and gasket time capsule designed to protect virtually any material for centuries. Initially housed in an archives display, it will be opened in 2074 during Jefferson's semiquincentennial.



Here's a look at what was included:



- 2024 issues of Jefferson Innovator Magazine, Jefferson Research Magazine, and The Bulletin
- 2024 program books from the University's Convocation, Commencements, and Inauguration of Dr. Susan C. Aldridge

-
- Abington Dixon School of Nursing cape (circa 1960s)
 - Empty vial of coronavirus vaccine and 3D printed nasal testing swab used during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and a report outlining Jefferson's response to the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Apple iPhone 12 with bicentennial videos
 - Article from the Chronicle of Higher Education describing the success of the merger of Thomas Jefferson University and Philadelphia University in 2019 and a 2024 article celebrating the University's bicentennial and Dr. Aldridge's vision
 - Autobiography of Arlen Specter, the namesake of the Arlen Specter Center, a nonpartisan forum for transdisciplinary education, research, and scholarship promoting civic engagement
 - Banner displayed on August 1, 2024, at Jefferson's closing event with Lehigh Valley Health Network when the merger was finalized
 - Catalogue for Posters Against Ebola, a collection created in response to the 2013–14 Ebola epidemic
 - "Cities Under Climate Threat," a fifth-year undergraduate architecture student project
 - Historical books about Jefferson
 - Iconography Committee video interview with Jefferson professor Dr. Marcella McCoy-Deh and Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings' fifth great-grandson, Rev. W. Douglas Banks
 - Jefferson Medical College centennial yearbook from 1924 and Sidney Kimmel Medical College yearbook from 2024
 - Jefferson Urology Centennial booklet that summarizes 100 years of Thomas Jefferson University's Urology Department, from 1904–2004
 - "Jefferson 200" T-shirt, pin, and signed banner
 - Jefferson-branded brain "stress ball," a popular giveaway at events during the Philadelphia Science Festival
 - Letter from Sidney Kimmel, a longtime benefactor of Jefferson for whom the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center and Sidney Kimmel Medical College are named
 - Letter from the president of Washington and Jefferson College (Jefferson's mother institution)
 - Letters from leadership of Jefferson Health, Thomas Jefferson University, Jefferson Health Plans, and the board of trustees
 - McClellan Honor Society pin created by the Department of Surgery to recognize third-year medical students who demonstrate clinical and academic excellence during their surgical clerkship
 - Pamphlet of "Jefferson Then & Now, a Historical Walking Tour of Center City Campus"
 - Philadelphia College of Textiles and Science Centennial Analysis from 1984
 - Philadelphia Inquirer from December 4, 2024
 - Proclamations from elected officials
 - Promotional items from Jefferson Health Plans, formerly known as Health Partners Plans
 - Rally flag distributed at the Philadelphia Eagles vs. Cleveland Browns "Intercept Cancer" game in 2024
 - Ribbon from the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Honickman Center on March 13, 2024, renderings of the facility, and replica textiles created by students, which are on display in the building
 - "Swell Surf Foot," a low-cost, waterproof prosthetic increasing ankle mobility for adaptive surfers designed by two industrial design students
 - Seminal textbook in the field of population health written by Jefferson leaders who formed the nation's first College of Population Health
 - Serenity Submerged jumpsuit by Vanessa Fath, Class of 2019, Fashion Design program (original prints created with textile design major Olivia Manning '19, inspired by photographs by industrial design major John Cecil '19). Awarded Best of Show at annual Jefferson Fashion Show
 - Signed mini basketball from retired Hall of Fame coach Herb Magee
 - White coat used by Jefferson Health physicians 

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Feature



Medicine on a Cellular Level

Medical Geneticists, Though Few and Far Between, Are Passionate About Their Work

BY CINDY LEFLER

Peter Hulick's mantra is printed on his oversized mug: "Medical Genetics: The Future is Now! (But first, coffee.)"

Hulick, who earned his MD at Jefferson in 2001, is medical director of the Mark R. Neaman Center for Personalized Medicine and division head of the Center for Medical Genetics at Endeavor Health (formerly NorthShore University HealthSystem) in Chicago. The mug, a freebie from the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics, holds both a generous amount of caffeine and the prospect of an exciting new chapter in modern medicine.

"It really is a new frontier," says Hulick, who also serves as a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Human Genetics at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine. He likens medical genetics to past inflection points in medicine, such as the development of antibiotics and vaccines, and advances in radiology, including CAT scans. "We're now into the genomics era of medicine, and physicians who aren't prepared for that are going to struggle over their careers."

Gerard Berry, MD '75, agrees. "In the next 10 years, every medical student will have to become a geneticist from day one."

Berry, professor of pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, and the Harvey Levy Chair in Metabolism and director of the metabolism program at Boston Children's Hospital, calls the current time period "the Renaissance for genetics."

"It's an exciting time because we're learning so many new things every day to improve medicine," says Berry,

who served as vice dean of research and professor of pediatrics and biochemistry at Jefferson from 2003 to 2006.

"The options for those who go into genetics are endless," says Angela Elizabeth Lin, MD '80, a clinical geneticist, part-time professor of pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, and co-director of the MGH Turner Syndrome and Myhre Syndrome clinics. "Genetics is everywhere and in nearly every patient."

"Cardiology needs genetics, neurology needs genetics, hepatology needs genetics, pulmonary needs genetics, psychiatry needs genetics, because there are so many genetic diseases associated with them," says Huda Al-Kouatly, MD, associate professor of maternal-fetal medicine and medical genetics and genomics at Jefferson. "There is no medical specialty that does not have a genetics component."

Genetics can provide diagnoses for patients who need answers, while at the same time giving physicians the satisfaction of helping those patients, says Andrea Seeley, MD, '09, director of pediatrics genetics at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania.

Yet, for all its progress and promise, medical genetics is still not a highly sought specialty for physicians.

"We are essential, but few and far between," Lin says.

In fact, in 2020, the Government Accountability Office estimated that there were only about 1,240 board-certified medical geneticists in the U.S. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), there are more than 100 vacancies for board-certified medical geneticists across the nation, but

Feature

training programs are not enrolling sufficient trainees to meet the current and future demand.

Genetics — Past, Present, and Future

The geneticists say there are many reasons for the lack of interest in genetics, including low awareness of the growing importance and potential of genetics in medicine, insufficient exposure in medical school, few available training programs, a perceived dearth of job opportunities, and lower compensation than other specialties.

"In the past, genetics was once considered esoteric," Hulick says. "We could diagnose (a condition), but because we didn't have therapies, we couldn't do anything about it. It was frustrating."

But times have changed.

Today, genetics can help diagnose hereditary diseases in people of all ages, including fetuses and newborns. It can also help identify genetic predispositions to disease and allow for earlier detection and possible intervention; predict the risk of developing both genetic and nongenetic diseases; aid physicians in finding the most effective treatment for a patient, including the proper medication and dosage; determine parents' risk of passing on a disease to their children; and facilitate the development of new treatments and more effective vaccines.

"We're starting to have targeted therapies that can actually intervene in the biology for various conditions," Hulick says. Diseases that were once considered incurable are now treatable.

For example, Hulick has a patient with Fabry disease, a rare, inherited disorder that causes a buildup of fat in the body's cells, which can lead to a number of complications, including heart disease.

"During my early training, there was nothing that could be done for her. But now I have a chaperone therapy treatment to help halt the progression of this woman's



Peter Hulick, MD '01

cardiomyopathy," he says.

Over the past few years, there has also been an explosion in targeted therapies, such as gene transfer protocols, primarily used to introduce new genetic material into cells. This has enabled researchers to study gene function, develop new treatments for diseases through gene therapy, and produce recombinant proteins for research or medical applications.

In addition, RNA interference (RNAi) technologies have the potential to change the way diseases are treated. RNAi technologies are used to create phenotypes that help researchers understand gene function and therapeutic intervention, and can be used to target and degrade disease-causing proteins. For example, RNAi could be used to treat cancer by disabling protein synthesis in cancer cells.

Berry attributes the rapid advances in the study of genetics to the Human Genome Project, considered one of the greatest scientific feats in history. The project, led by an international group of researchers, was completed in 2003, and generated the first sequence of the human genome, providing fundamental information about the human blueprint.



Andrea Seeley, MD, '09; Gerard Berry, MD '75; and Angela Elizabeth Lin, MD '80

This opened the door to being able to not just identify new diseases, but also to better understand and even treat them.

On the horizon, says Berry, is the potential to diagnose a disease in a fetus, then administer the proper gene that would cure that disease. Researchers are currently working on in-utero gene therapy for conditions such as sickle cell anemia, beta-thalassemia, cystic fibrosis, and metabolic and neurogenetic disorders.

There's much more to learn in regard to fetal research, he says, but "it's just a matter of time before in-utero treatments are perfected."

Another challenge in attracting specialists to genetics is that medical students aren't exposed to it as early in their careers as they are to other fields.

Lin's journey into genetics was a bit of a long and winding road.

"I didn't get into this field by saying, 'When I grow up I want to be a geneticist,'" she says.

Her original plan of entering the field of plastic surgery veered off into pediatrics with a residency at the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. She then became interested in congenital heart defects associated with genetic syndromes and completed a pediatric cardiology

fellowship at UCLA, supplemented by five months at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Returning to Pittsburgh, Lin recalls, "I really wanted to do a fellowship in genetics, and since there were no programs in 1986, I created my own at Western Penn Hospital (now affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh)."

After two years of genetics, she knew it was clearly where she wanted to be.

In 1990, she relocated to Boston for a position with the National Birth Defect Center, and later moved to Massachusetts General Hospital. As a medical geneticist, she specializes in the diagnosis and care coordination of several rare disorders, with the hope of providing genetic therapy for one disorder.

Hulick's initial interest was sparked early on, during his high school AP Biology class.

"We had a big genetics unit, and I loved it," he says. From there, he took his interest to Northwestern University as a biology major with a concentration in molecular and cellular biology.

He then followed in his family's footsteps and entered the medical field — and Jefferson. His grandfather (class of '36) and father (class of '73) were also alumni of the medical college, and his mother graduated from the Diploma Nurse program with her RN in 1972.

Hulick admits the specialty was a gamble when he first entered the field because he was unsure of the job prospects, but with the guidance of his Jefferson professors, he chose the path that most excited him, and he has never regretted it.

"I wanted a field that would unfold over the course of my career, something that would ignite my passions," he says. "I found it."

Berry's interest in genetics was piqued during medical school at Jefferson. He took an elective one-month rotation at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children with Angelo DiGeorge, MD, who completed a fellowship in endocrinology at Jefferson in 1954. DiGeorge

was a renowned geneticist who discovered the disorder that was named for him. Berry was also inspired by Laird Jackson, MD, a physician-scientist who was one of the country's earliest practicing geneticists and who went on to advocate genetic counseling,

Jackson, who did his residency at Jefferson in 1959 and went on to become a professor of medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology, ran the Division of Medical Genetics from 1969 to 1998. He helped to discover the "Philadelphia chromosome," which proved for the first time that a defective chromosome is consistently present in any kind of malignancy.

"All of a sudden, I learned about the world of genetics and metabolic diseases, and I said, 'This is what I have to do!'" Berry says. He has now spent almost a half-century doing it.

For Al-Kouatly, who is triple board certified in maternal-fetal medicine, medical genetics and genomics, and obstetrics and gynecology, genetics offers constant challenges — and rewards.

"What keeps me going is the discoveries," she says. "I want to be able to give parents the answers as to why the child has a fetal abnormality."

She says she became a geneticist at the perfect time, because "a revolution happened after 2012."

When Al-Kouatly began her fellowship in the late 1990s, the only technology available was the karyotype, which provided a picture of the chromosomes in a person's cells that identified genetic abnormalities.

"It was very basic. But in 2012, microarray (which makes it possible to detect the expression of thousands of genes at the same time) became available. Then, after 2013, there was an explosion of technology that opened up so many possibilities," she says.

All the geneticists admit that taking on the specialty can be intimidating.

"It is a complex and difficult discipline," says Al-Kouatly.

Although complex, Seeley says it's the only thing she ever wanted to do.

"I became interested in genetics in seventh grade," she says. "For me, it was a problem-solving and mystery challenge that I could apply in a real-world setting."

Although Jefferson didn't have a genetics specialty, Seeley was fortunate that Gerard Berry's son was a year ahead of her in medical school and introduced her to the renowned geneticist, who then took her under his wing.

During medical school, she attended lectures in genetics, and completed a rotation in genetics at Boston Children's Hospital and a pediatric elective in genetics at Nemours Children's Hospital in Delaware. She also researched and wrote a report on the impact and importance of genetic training for physicians for Jefferson's then-Dean Thomas Nasca.

The report included a concept on which all the geneticists agree — that genetics is the future of medicine.

"Every academic center should have geneticists on staff, and medical school should offer genetics (coursework) because there is a great and growing need," Al-Kouatly says. "If you belong to an institution that doesn't have a geneticist, it's like having a blind spot; you are not going to see what you need to see."

Limitless Possibilities

Hulick is optimistic that genetics is quickly moving from the background of medicine into the spotlight, and that a growing awareness, interest, and demand on the part of patients could propel the field further faster.

His Neaman Center for Personalized Medicine recently held an informational event that drew more people than expected. "People were engaged in it; they wanted the information."

Seeley notes that the population is becoming more aware of how genetics impacts their health and

Feature

their lives. They are doing their own research, forming social network groups to exchange information, and communicating with each other to discuss research.

"The awareness [of patients] is really helpful," Seeley says. "There are a majority of referrals that are patient initiated versus physician initiated."

Also helpful in propelling genetics into the public eye is the faster turnaround time for results and the lowering costs of tests.

"When I started my pediatric and genetics training, we were just starting to be able to offer exome sequencing, and the turnaround time was close to six months," Seeley says. Now, she can get a rapid genome test result in five days. "And the cost has come down dramatically, making it easier to justify to insurance companies."

An example, says Hulick, is the test for two very common genes — BRCA1 and BRCA2 — which cost about \$4,000 per patient if insurance didn't cover it. However, in the mid-2000s, the new technology and next-generation sequencing technology brought that price down to just a few hundred dollars.

While many genetic tests are still expensive, Hulick notes that they are a cost-effective health measure, as it costs less to discover and treat a condition earlier in life rather than later.



| Huda Al-Kouatly, MD

Privacy was another contributing factor in the hesitancy in using genetic testing. Until the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act was passed in 2008, patients were concerned that their genetic testing could be used against them by employers and insurance companies.

And an ongoing consideration, says Berry, is ethics — what to do with the information once you have it.

"For example, if a baby tests positive for the BRCA gene mutation, at what point in her life do you tell her? And if someone has the gene for Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS) that might surface later in life, do you tell them and have them suffer with that knowledge for five decades?"

While some patients might prefer to not know their risk factor, Berry says that "knowledge is power and part of being able to make informed decisions about health."

Hulick says he hopes the explosion of data, the new understandings of diseases, the ability to treat conditions, and the public's interest will encourage more medical students to enter the field.

For those who choose to do so, he says, the options are endless.

"One of the beauties of genomics and genetics is that it opens the door to any field; you can run the gamut — be a general geneticist or have more specialized clinics," Hulick says. Some of those clinics include rare syndromes, oncology, cardiology — even pharmacology, as pain medications have pharmacogenomic implications that can affect recovery and length of stay in the hospital.

Genetics has grown to the point it's difficult to find an occasion where it doesn't have an impact on a patient's care, he says, noting that it is the future of new treatments and cures for all types of diseases, including cancer, multiple sclerosis, sickle cell anemia, and more.

"It could be direct targets for therapies or being better able to predict who may or may not respond to therapies," Hulick says, explaining that genetics plays a part in who will respond to certain treatments and who will not.

The geneticists agree that genomics is a part of the practice of medicine, and over the next decade, it will be increasingly incorporated into care, especially since the technology is expanding at a rapid rate and the costs are coming down.

The question is whether there will be enough medical geneticists to keep up with the demand.

At Jefferson, Al-Kouatly is doing her part to engage students in the field. She is a passionate mentor to her trainees, some of whom have gone on to pursue maternal-fetal medicine and genetics fellowships at the nation's top institutions.

She says a key aspect of attracting medical students to the field lies in funding.

"If I had more funding, I could take more medical students under my wing," she says. "Funding would help me conduct more research, and send more students to conferences."

She believes that funding residencies and fellowships would be particularly beneficial, as "it is during that time that trainees get the exposure." In addition, sponsorship for lecture series would also help to bring the field to light for students, particularly lectures tailored to every specialty.

Seeley believes that sparking interest in genetics while students are still in medical school doing rotations is the key to attracting more to the specialty—a specialty she says is very satisfying.

"If you want a field that you can grow with, one that will excite you from the day you start to the day you retire, this is the field," Hulick says.

"When you pick a specialty, it's easy to get excited about the very unusual patient or case, but you also have to get excited about what's considered mundane in your field. There's nothing mundane about genetics."

Berry calls genetics the future of medicine — one that any physician would find fulfilling.

"If you like to know why things are the way they are and how things happen, if you want to try to cure diseases, if you want to make life better, go into genetics!" 🧬

It's in Their DNA to Improve Lives

Jefferson's Master's Program Prepares Students for the Future

They bridge the gap between the medical professional and the patient; assist in laboratories; support physicians; serve as advocates; and work in academia, public health, government; and other areas of industry.

They are genetic counselors, and they are in growing demand.

A world of opportunities exists for genetic counselors, says Zohra Ali-Khan Catts, MS, co-director of the master's degree in Human Genetics and Genetic Counseling program at Thomas Jefferson University. "There are so many venues where they have a role, and the field is continually growing."

"Genetics touches every aspect of a patient's care, including which medical tests to perform, medication choices, and disease management choices," adds Rachael Brandt, PhD, co-director of the program. It also runs the gamut of medical specialties, including prenatal, cancer, pediatrics, cardiology, neurology, metabolic disorders, infertility, and more.

It's a profession that offers a little bit of everything, blending scientific information with clinical, ethical, psychological, social, and legal implications.

The master's program, which matriculated its first class in fall 2017, is a 21-month program grounded in basic science and diversified through psychosocial education and clinical and research opportunities. Accredited by the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling, the program currently accepts 10 students per year from across the country and beyond.

According to U.S. News & World Report, the field is expected to continue to expand throughout

the rest of the decade, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates there will be about 300 openings for genetic counselors over the next decade.

Huda Al-Koatly, MD, associate professor of maternal-fetal medicine and medical genetics and genomics at Jefferson, says the genetic counselors she works with are essential in providing her patients with outstanding care.

"They work with the patients, they work very hard with the insurance companies ... they are vital to what we do," says Al-Koatly, who serves as medical director of the master's program.

Andrea Seeley, MD, '09, director of pediatrics genetics at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania, calls the master's program "a great asset to Jefferson."

"Having a genetic counseling program at an institution really broadens the knowledge and availability of testing to providers who practice there," she says, noting that Geisinger has welcomed several of Jefferson's students through rotations there and has hired one of its graduates.

Brandt predicts "genetic testing is going to become an integrated part of care on multiple levels."

"There is a growing array of genetic testing that is available to help identify diseases early and offer personalized risk assessment," Ali-Khan Catts says. "Screening, management, and treatments provide opportunities to delay the onset of a disease, catch it at an early stage, with a goal of trying to prevent it from happening."

Brandt says there was an initial boom in the field with next-generation sequencing. "But now, as we're expanding into these different options of pharmacogenomics, cell-free DNA screening, and genome becoming more widely available, there are many more opportunities to further extend the genetic counseling skill set. And

there's going to be another wave of industry that's going to drive that."


As crucial as the scientific side of the geneticist's training is, there is also another consideration — the human side of the job.

"When a patient has just received a diagnosis, it's a critical moment in their life. The way we deliver the news is crucial. We aim to ensure that the approach is sensitive and compassionate," Ali-Khan Catts says.

Genetic counselors play an essential role in discussing genetic conditions, the various types of testing available, and the benefits and limitations of testing. They facilitate decision-making through informed consent. When a patient is found to have a genetic alteration, genetic counselors explain its implications and help guide them on how to screen and manage care so the patients can have the best outcome possible.

Brandt says the field is not only satisfying, but exciting and rewarding, too.

"Every family is different. Every patient is different. Every clinical scenario and every result is different," she says. "And clinically, you have the opportunity to spend more time with the patients."

While being a genetic counselor has many facets, there is only one ultimate goal, says Ali-Khan Catts: "To always get the best care for the patient." 

A DAUGHTER'S LOVE



Hannah Clarke, SKMC Class of 2026

BY IRISA GOLD

Citing a 2020 report by AARP and the National Alliance for Caregiving, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America states that millennials account for nearly a quarter of all family caregivers in the U.S. (23%). Specifically, these individuals care for a parent or grandparent with a long-term physical condition such as a dementia-related illness.

This statistic hits close to home for Sidney Kimmel Medical College third-year student Hannah Clarke, who in December 2024 was featured in Philadelphia PBS station WHYY's news story, "How one Philadelphia medical student is learning to be a young caregiver to a parent with dementia."

Hannah's mother, Claudine Clarke, MD, was a geriatrician when, at age 56, she was diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia, a rare

progressive brain disorder primarily affecting behavior, language, personality, and communication. Symptoms of this disease characteristically strike before age 65.

Claudine is no longer able to practice medicine. Suddenly, Hannah and her older brother, both only in their 20s, became the sole caregivers for their mother. "You're slowly watching someone you love deteriorate, and that is just gut-wrenching," Hannah told WHYY.

Hannah remembers her mother, who immigrated to the U.S. from the Bahamas many years ago, as extremely intelligent, with a gift for words. "It was impossible to beat her at Scrabble," she shared in the story. "She would play every night, and her friends would be like, 'Claudine, you're still playing Scrabble?!' And she'd be like, 'It's so I don't get dementia when I'm older.' And now I

look back, and I'm like, oh my gosh, the universe is so cruel."

When her mother began to stumble over her words and to mismanage her money and make extravagant purchases, Hannah and her brother suspected that something was wrong. After they helped to sell her house, Claudine lived with both Hannah's brother and his wife in Philadelphia, and with Hannah and her roommates in an apartment for her first two years of medical school at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio.

As she shared with WHYY, while this experience was complex, stressful, and obviously very different from what her classmates were going through, Hannah could only look back on those two years with love. "I got to spend time with my mom, which was all I wanted," she said.

Transferring medical schools is



Hannah Clarke and her mother, Claudine Clarke, MD

challenging, to say the least. But as her mother's disease progressed and she went to live in a nursing home in Philadelphia, Hannah enrolled at Jefferson, moving to be closer to home and to her beloved mother.

Today, while Hannah's brother handles the legal and financial aspects of their mother's care, when she isn't studying or going through her clinical rounds, Hannah spends 10 to 20 hours a week with her, "making sure her laundry is done, making sure her hygiene is taken care of, all those sorts of things."

The siblings not only had to learn to be caregivers at such young ages, they also had to combat their ever-present feelings of grief. As Hannah told WHYY, "There are so many things I haven't been able to do to take care of my mom just because I'm in school, I don't have an income. My brother, too. This has been his whole post-college life."

While she has been able to locate resources and programs specifically geared to young adult caregivers and to forge connections with others in similar circumstances both online and at national conferences, Hannah and her brother must still figure out how to plan for a future for themselves even as the next few years of their mother's life still feel so uncertain.

Her mother's diagnosis has changed the way Hannah wants to live her life. "I'm going to live my life with an intentionality that maybe I wouldn't have had before," she shared with WHYY. "I am not going to spend a whole lot of time in spaces or doing things that I don't necessarily want to do long term."

Hannah carries two employee ID badges as she moves through the halls of Jefferson Einstein Philadelphia Hospital. One is her own. The second, slightly worn

and faded, displays her mother's name and picture. "I found this in her things when my brother and I were moving her out of her home, and I kept it because it's very special to me," Hannah told WHYY. "As I'm going around the halls in the hospital, I'm like, oh my goodness, she was literally doing rounds on these same floors." 📺

On Campus



PERFECT MATCH

The Class of 2025 found out where they will complete their residencies in a jubilant ceremony

BY MIKE BEDERKA

At the stroke of noon on March 21, nervous energy exploded into hugs, high fives and handshakes as the Sidney Kimmel Medical College Class of 2025 tore open their envelopes to reveal where they would complete their residencies.

Surrounded by loved ones, Julien Aoyama had tears in his eyes as he read that he matched at Jefferson Einstein Philadelphia Hospital for orthopedic surgery.

"It has been a long road," he says. "My wife and family have been so supportive. Dreams come true. This is a pinch-me moment."

The Match Day ceremony — held at medical schools nationwide —

represented the culmination of four years of late nights, hard work and unbridled determination, says Said Ibrahim, MD, the Anthony F. and Gertrude M. DePalma Dean of Sidney Kimmel Medical College.

"Match Day is the beginning of a new chapter in your journey in medicine," he told the Class of 2025 in the Hamilton Building. "It's an opportunity to join new communities, practice clinical skills and represent Jefferson all over the country. We're so proud of you and confident of your abilities to care for patients with passion and empathy, regardless of social status or where they come from. Those are the values of our 200-year-old medical

school, and we know those values will follow with you."

Of 269 Sidney Kimmel Medical College students, 256 participated in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP), says Charles Pohl, MD '87, the vice dean for student affairs. The remaining 13 students didn't take part in the NRMP because of a commitment to one of the Armed Services, the ophthalmology match, the urology match, or deferment of residency.

The specialties receiving the highest number of matches included internal medicine, orthopedics and psychiatry. Over 40% chose a primary care residency, including internal medicine, family medicine, pediatrics,

medicine-pediatrics and obstetrics/gynecology.

More than one-third of students will do their PGY-1 year at Pennsylvania hospitals, and 25% matched to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital or an affiliate. "We're over the moon for that," says Pohl.

Bridget Cichon will be among those continuing her journey here. She matched at Sidney Kimmel Medical College/Nemours Children's Hospital for pediatric neurology.

"I get to stay with my support system and continue to build on the connections I've already made," she says. "It's really exciting. I'm passionate about working with people with disabilities, and I thought pediatric neurology would be the best field to do that."

Ryan Sholes will stay locally, too. He matched at Jefferson for anesthesiology. "I'm happy to spend another four years at Jefferson," he says. "My family is here, and I got so comfortable with the faculty, hospital and system. I felt at home here."

Heading to the University of Chicago Medical Center, classmate Arsalan Farooqi will pursue anesthesiology as well. The acute impact anesthesiologists can have on patient care drew him to the field.

Each member of the Class of 2025 had a story to tell on why they chose their specialty. For example, Alisha Goyal will head across the country to attend Cedars-Sinai Medical Center for internal medicine. She likes the mix of hospital and outpatient medicine, and with an interest in gastroenterology, Goyal says internal medicine will help build her clinical foundation.

Tomisola Onafowokan will attend the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania for emergency medicine.

"I never want to be in a situation—inside or outside of a hospital—where someone is facing a life-threatening illness, and I'm not

able to act," she shares. "I feel like emergency medicine doctors are best equipped to handle anything anywhere."

Also matching at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Christopher Garrick chose family medicine with an eye on preventative care and supporting the community.

"Being Puerto Rican, I want to bridge some of the barriers many patients have with accessing care," he says

In one of the day's most emotional moments, Darren Drittel matched with her brother, Brian, at NYU Grossman School of Medicine. He doesn't attend Jefferson, so their parents split up to watch both Match Day ceremonies. The siblings FaceTimed each other to share the news.

"I cannot think of anything more comforting than going to the cafeteria next year and seeing my brother," says Drittel, noting she chose internal medicine for her love of caring for the whole person. "I felt like internal medicine allowed me to do that to the best of my abilities."

Among the early matches, Shreya Swaminathan will go to Mayo Clinic College of Medicine for ophthalmology. She likes the specialty's mix of clinic and OR and the opportunity to build the patient-provider relationship over time.

The fact Swaminathan matched in February didn't diminish her excitement either, she says. "It's really special to see all my friends' dreams come true."

"It's great to see everyone's reaction," agrees Taehwan Yoo, who participated in the early match with the military. He will go to Camp Pendleton Naval Hospital for family medicine. "It was the most versatile specialty I could choose to have the greatest contribution to our military."

Classmate Victor Diaz also matched early with the military. He will attend his No. 1 choice, Keesler Air Force Base, for internal medicine.

"It's a blessing and a curse to have an interest in a little bit of

everything," he says. "Internal medicine is this great touchpoint where we get to interface with all sides of medicine in an acute and dynamic way in the inpatient setting."

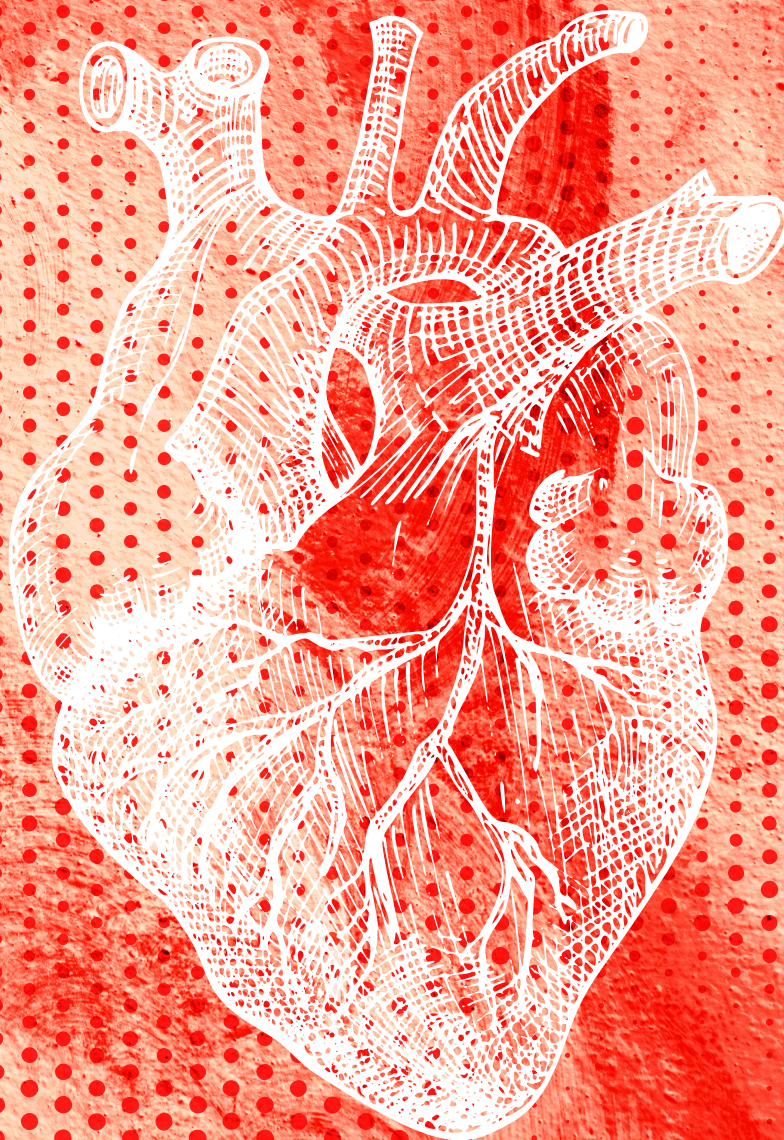
With the early matches (i.e., the military, ophthalmology, and urology), Jefferson boasted one of the highest match rates nationally, Pohl says. Of students participating in the NRMP, the University's match rate was 3% higher compared to all U.S. allopathic graduating seniors.

"You, the Class of 2025, will be forever etched in our minds," he told them in the Connelly Auditorium. "Most of you started in the middle of the pandemic and your education overlapped with Jefferson's Bicentennial. Unsurprisingly, you hit the ground running and exceeded all expectations with resolve and spirit. You made an impact on our patients, community and all of us at Sidney Kimmel Medical College. On behalf of Jefferson, we couldn't be prouder of this class." 🎓



| Drs. Charles Pohl and Said Ibrahim congratulated the Class of 2025 at the Match Day ceremony

Feature



Leading Cardiovascular Care Into Our Third Century

BY IRISA GOLD

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one person dies every 33 seconds from cardiovascular disease, which is the leading cause of death for men and women.

Jefferson has a storied history of pioneering advancements in cardiovascular medicine. From the earliest days of the specialty, cardiologists at Jefferson have provided the gold standard of cardiovascular care, remaining at the forefront of advancing research, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

In 1953, Jefferson alumnus and faculty member John H. Gibbon Jr. MD '27, developed the heart-lung machine, performing subsequent open-heart surgeries that revolutionized heart surgery in the 20th century. In addition, Jefferson was one of the first centers in the U.S. to use stents for blocked arteries and is a leader in minimally invasive procedures like transcatheter aortic valve replacement.

Today, Jefferson is ranked as a leader in cardiology and heart surgery by U.S. News & World Report, designated as a Top Hospital for Heart by Philadelphia magazine, and recognized as having one of the best cardiology and heart surgery programs in the country.

In just the last year, two exciting new developments have further advanced the future of

cardiovascular care not only regionally, but also nationally and across the globe.

In June 2024, Jefferson Health received a transformational gift from the Bruce and Robbi Toll Foundation to establish the Bruce & Robbi Toll Heart and Vascular Institute, a comprehensive program designed to bring high-quality cardiovascular care directly to the patients and communities that Jefferson serves.

The Toll Institute integrates all cardiac and vascular services across Jefferson, encompassing the divisions of Cardiology, Cardiac Surgery, Vascular Medicine, and Vascular Surgery, and establishing an infrastructure that will attract the best and brightest, boost clinical capabilities, enrich academic programs, and propel research to new heights.

The Institute's unified structure significantly enhances collaboration among care teams, streamlining the patient experience and expanding access to promising clinical trials, and catalyzing cross-disciplinary research and education across divisions, disciplines, and clinical sites.

"The Toll family's incredibly generous commitment will provide robust support for Jefferson's cardiac physicians, researchers, and staff, and will help advance important work on cardiovascular disease," says Joseph G. Cacchione, MD, CEO of Jefferson. "I'm deeply grateful to Bruce and Robbi for their decades of giving to Jefferson

Abington Hospital and for their investment in this key area of our strategic plan. The impact of their generosity will be felt across our region for generations to come."

The Toll Institute has changed the face of cardiovascular care across the region. Home to nearly 400 cardiac practitioners and with one of the highest-volume vascular programs on the East Coast, completing nearly 100,000 procedures in 2024, the Institute offers the broadest and most advanced diagnostic and treatment options for heart conditions in the Greater Philadelphia and South Jersey region.

"At a time when heart disease continues to be a leading cause of death locally, in the U.S. and around the world, it is imperative that we increase access to cardiovascular care across Jefferson's growing health system," says Baligh R. Yehia, MD, president of Jefferson Health. "The Bruce and Robbi Toll Heart and Vascular Institute is an opportunity to do just that. By uniting our exceptional cardiac and vascular services, we can ensure that a patient receives the right intervention at the right time, whether in the hospital, the community clinic, the home, or anywhere in between."

"Robbi and I believe that investing in research and increasing access to excellent heart care will make a real difference for our community, now and in the future," says Bruce Toll. "We are honored to partner



with Jefferson Health to launch this new, world-class institute, which we hope will not only save lives, but inspire others to support this vital cause."

An institute of this caliber needs a strong, eminent leader at the helm. To this end, Jefferson has further strengthened its commitment to cardiovascular care by appointing esteemed physician Joseph E. Bavaria, MD, to serve as executive director of the Bruce and Robbi Toll Heart and Vascular Institute.

Bavaria joined Jefferson Health and the University's Sidney Kimmel Medical College in January 2025. He brings a wealth of leadership and surgical expertise to Jefferson, bolstering its ability to advance the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of heart and vascular conditions.

"This key appointment underscores Jefferson's dedication to providing the highest-quality cardiovascular care to our communities and across all of our campuses, including all Jefferson Health locations and the newly integrated Lehigh Valley Health Network," says Yehia. "Dr. Bavaria's leadership will ensure that we continue to provide the highest-quality cardiovascular

Dr. Bavaria's leadership will ensure that we continue to provide the highest quality cardiovascular care, improving outcomes for our patients.

care, improving outcomes for our patients."

In addition, Bavaria serves as chair of the newly established Department of Cardiac Surgery, where his groundbreaking contributions to cardiovascular medicine will undoubtedly inspire and shape future generation of surgeons, elevating cardiac surgery instruction to new heights.

"Dr. Bavaria's unparalleled expertise brings immense value to Jefferson and the College," says Said Ibrahim, MD, the Anthony F. and Gertrude M. DePalma Dean of Sidney Kimmel Medical College and president of Jefferson University Physicians. "His deep knowledge and experience will ensure our learners are exceptionally prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of modern cardiac surgery with confidence and skill."

"We are honored to welcome Dr. Bavaria to the Sidney Kimmel Medical College," says Susan C. Aldridge, PhD, president of Thomas Jefferson University. "With a legacy of groundbreaking contributions to cardiovascular medicine, Dr. Bavaria brings unparalleled expertise that will undoubtedly inspire and shape the future generation of surgeons here at Thomas Jefferson University."

After earning his bachelor's degree and medical degree from Tulane University in New Orleans, Bavaria completed his surgical internship and residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, and completed additional residencies in thoracic and cardiovascular surgery at the Hospital of the University of

Pennsylvania and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

He joins Jefferson from Penn Medicine, where he served as vice chief of the Division of Cardiovascular Surgery, director of the Thoracic Aortic Surgery Program, co-director of the Transcatheter Valve Program, and founder and co-director of the Penn Aorta Center.

He has performed more than 10,000 open-heart procedures during his distinguished career. In particular, he is an expert in treating thoracic aortic aneurysms and repairing and replacing aortic valves.

A skilled leader, lecturer, and educator, Bavaria has held national and international leadership positions, including president of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, president of the Thoracic Surgery Foundation, board member of the Heart Valve Society, and executive committee member of the European Association of CardioThoracic Surgery. He has also played a pivotal role in helping to establish national treatment guidelines.

"I am honored to join Jefferson Health and Thomas Jefferson University at this pivotal time of growth and innovation," Bavaria says. "I see tremendous opportunity to advance cardiovascular care across the system. The organization's focus on integrating cardiovascular services presents a unique opportunity to enhance patient care. I look forward to contributing to Jefferson's mission of bringing world-class care to those most in need." 📌

Among the Recognitions That Distinguish the Bruce & Robbi Toll Heart and Vascular Institute:

- First in the U.S. to be certified in acute heart attack-ready hospital by The Joint Commission
- One of the few medical centers in the U.S. that can offer minimally invasive alternatives to open-heart bypass graft surgery
- One of the first in the U.S. to use coronary stents and drug-eluting stents to prevent heart attacks
- Jefferson Abington Hospital; Jefferson Einstein Philadelphia Hospital; Jefferson Health's Cherry Hill, Stratford, and Washington Township hospitals; Jefferson Torresdale Hospital; and Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals are recognized as high performing in heart failure by U.S. News & World Report
- Jefferson Abington Hospital; Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital; Jefferson Einstein Philadelphia Hospital; Jefferson Health's Cherry Hill, Stratford, and Washington Township hospitals; Jefferson Health Torresdale Hospital; and Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals are among high-performing hospitals for abdominal aortic aneurysm repair in the region
- Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals received Advanced Certification in Advanced Heart Failure, VAD Destination Therapy, and Heart Transplant from The Joint Commission
- Jefferson Abington Hospital, Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital, Jefferson Einstein Philadelphia Hospital, and Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals are each recognized as a Blue Distinction Center+ for Cardiac Care by Independence Blue Cross




Weitz Professorship

On Oct. 15, 2024, the University recognized two acclaimed Jeffersonians with the Investiture of alumnus Gregory D. Marhefka, MD '98, as the Howard H. Weitz, MD, MACP, FRCP (London), FACC Professor of Cardiology, a newly created position. Weitz (class of '78) and Marhefka graduated 20 years apart.

The professorship was made possible by the generosity of numerous benefactors, including grateful patients, trainees, faculty, and friends with a deep appreciation and respect for Weitz.

The professorship commemorates Weitz's leadership and immeasurable impact on Jefferson in his more than five decades of service. Following graduation from Jefferson, he completed his residency as chief medical resident in 1982 and his fellowship in cardiovascular diseases in 1984, both at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. Today, he serves as the Bernard L. Segal Professor in Clinical Cardiology and senior associate dean of Sidney Kimmel Medical College. He is regarded regionally, nationally, and internationally as an innovative clinician and exceptional educator. For almost four decades, he's been committed to ensuring that Jefferson students embrace a patient-centric approach to care.

After earning his undergraduate degree from Penn State University and his medical degree at Jefferson in 1998, Marhefka moved on to an internal medicine internship and residency at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. Marhefka honorably served in the U.S. Navy, then on combat duty in Camp Fallujah, Iraq, before returning to Jefferson in 2005 for fellowship training in cardiovascular diseases. He joined the faculty in 2008 and has served as the director of the Cardiovascular Fellowship Program and director of the medical cardiovascular ICU. His clinical work with critically ill heart patients mirrors his teaching work with students, residents, and fellows.

Both Weitz and Marhefka are devoted to their chosen field of cardiology and are passionate about excellence in care, education, and mentoring the next generation of care providers. They are committed to fostering heart health and to Jefferson's mission to improve lives. 

2024 SIDNEY KIMMEL MEDICAL COLLEGE Alumni Weekend



| Class of 1994 celebrating their 30th reunion



| Alumni enjoying the Alumni Weekend Class Reception held at City Winery

The 2024 Sidney Kimmel Medical College Alumni Weekend was an unforgettable celebration, offering the opportunity for alumni hailing from classes throughout the decades to reconnect and reminisce with classmates. Held October 25-26, 2024, the festivities were especially meaningful, as they were conducted during Jefferson's bicentennial year.

The events offered something for everyone, from networking, tours, award ceremonies, lectures, and more. Alumni class years concluded in 4 and 9 marked milestone reunions, with the Class of 1974 commemorating their 50th reunion. Stay tuned for information on the 2025 Alumni Weekend. We hope to see you there!



| 50-Year Society Induction Ceremony



| Campus tour



| Class of 1999 celebrates 25th reunion



| Exploring the Siegman Archives



| Class of 1974's 50th reunion

Alumni Awards

Alumni Achievement Award



Kevan C. Herold, MD '79

The Alumni Achievement Award was established in 1964 to recognize the outstanding and distinguished professional achievements of medical college alumni. At Alumni Weekend in October 2024, the award honored Kevan C. Herold, MD '79.

Herold attended the Penn State and Jefferson Accelerated BS/MD program. He completed his residency in internal medicine at Temple University Hospital in 1982, his fellowship in endocrinology in 1984, and post-doc in immunology at the University of Chicago in 1986.

After joining the Hagedorn Research Laboratory in Denmark, he became a member of the faculty at the University of Chicago, where he rose to the rank of associate professor of medicine. He then moved to Columbia University in the role of associate professor of medicine before joining Yale University, where he currently holds the title of the CNH Long Professor of Immunobiology and Internal Medicine.

Herold has built a program in translational immunology focused on applying mechanistic discoveries to treat autoimmune diseases, including Type 1 diabetes (T1D). "Much of my career has been involved in studying autoimmune diabetes," he says. "This led to the approval of a drug called teplizumab, which is the first drug that's been approved by the FDA to delay the onset of Type 1 diabetes in individuals who are at risk."

Herold's studies have bridged

immunology, cell biology, and metabolism, and have identified relationships between immune and endocrine cells. "We're continuing work to try to figure out ways to improve on the efficacy that we've seen so far with that drug and to figure out sort of combination therapies that might lead to an actual true reversal of the disease," he says.

Since June 2021, Herold has served as chair of NIDDK TrialNet, the premier network for testing therapies to prevent and delay T1D.

Herold credits Gonzalo E. Aponte, MD '52, the posthumous recipient of the 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award, for influencing and inspiring him during his time at Jefferson. Aponte, a beloved physician, pathologist, and teacher, served as professor of pathology and chair of the department until his tragic death in 1979.

"I think he is the best teacher I ever had," Herold says. "You were definitely drinking from a fire hose when you took his course. There was just so much information that you learned, and you were really learning what doctors had to know about medicine. You felt like you knew more about medicine when you finished that course than you ever had known in your life."

Herold says Jefferson's curriculum provided a strong foundation for his work. "Back then, immunology was not what it is today, but still the approach to dealing with the basic sciences was really essential to my education."

Herold feels privileged to be the recipient of the 2024 Alumni Achievement Award. "I know that a lot of my colleagues from Jefferson had extraordinary talents," he says. "And to be recognized was quite an honor. Even today, I think about other people I know who went to Jefferson and should get the award. I hope that a lot of those people will get it."

When asked what fuels him every day to probe, explore, and innovate, Herold's dedication to current and future patients is clear. "I get very excited about the science, and the translational science," he says. "You

don't have to pay me to do that. It's discovery that is so motivating, particularly in medicine. I do mouse work in everything, which is also very exciting, but when you make the discovery in patients, you feel like that you've really done something for people."

Early Career Alumni Award



Eric S. Schwenk, MD '08, FASA

The Early Career Alumni Award was established in 2020 and recognizes alumni who are 10-20 years out from graduation for outstanding early career achievements and demonstrated strong potential to be future leaders in their chosen specialty.

2024 recipient Eric S. Schwenk, MD '08, is professor of anesthesiology and perioperative medicine and director of Jefferson's Acute Pain Management Service.

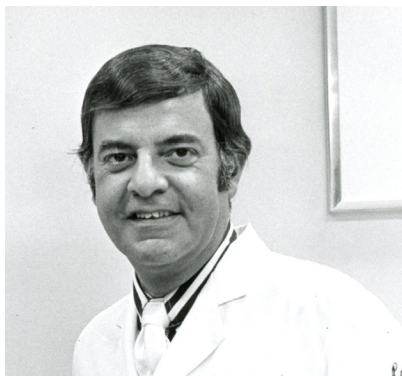
Following graduation in 2008, Schwenk completed his internship in internal medicine at Drexel University School of Medicine, returning to Jefferson for his anesthesiology residency before joining the faculty, where he has remained.

His clinical focuses include opioid-sparing analgesia strategies, orthopedic anesthesia, and challenging populations, such as those with fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva, a very rare genetic disease.

His research interests include subanesthetic ketamine for migraine and acute pain, ketamine's adverse effects, outcomes after orthopedic surgery, and the safety and efficacy of peripheral nerve blocks.

Schwenk finds teaching medical students to be one of the most rewarding aspects of his career and has been named to the medical student honor roll for teaching four times.

Distinguished Alumni Award



**Gonzalo E. Aponte, MD '52
(1929-1979)**

Established in 2017, the Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes alumni posthumously for a lifetime of distinguished and outstanding achievements and contributions to their profession and/or field of interest, and for contributions benefiting their community and humanity.

The 2024 recipient, Gonzalo E. Aponte, MD, '52, was a distinguished physician, pathologist, and teacher. He served as professor and chair of the Department of Pathology at Thomas Jefferson University until his tragic death of a heart attack in 1979 at the age of 50.

Aponte graduated with honors from Georgetown University in 1948 before graduating from Jefferson in 1952. Following the completion of his residency in pathology at Jefferson in 1957, he served for two years in the United States Navy Medical Corps.

He was appointed to Jefferson's Department of Pathology faculty in 1959, served as a Markle Scholar in Academic Medicine in 1960, and was awarded a Lindbach Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching in 1962. He was named department chair and director of clinical laboratories in 1966, serving with distinction until his untimely death.

**SAVE THE
DATE**

**SIDNEY KIMMEL
MEDICAL COLLEGE**

Alumni Weekend

Friday, October 24

Saturday, October 25

Jefferson.edu/AlumniWeekend

Ensuring the Future of Preserving the Past

Robert M. Stein, MD '68, FACC, FAHA Endows University Archivist Position

BY CINDY LEFLER



"The Writing Master," an 1882 oil painting by American painter Thomas Eakins, depicts Eakins' father, Benjamin, at a desk, fully absorbed in his calligraphy, with a quill in his hand and a sheet of parchment on his desk.

"If you look closely at the painting, you'll notice that the document he is writing is a Jefferson diploma," says Robert Stein, MD '68.

The Escondido, California, cardiologist is as passionate about history as he is about medicine, particularly his alma mater's history. He gives lectures on Eakins and the connection with Jefferson, he studies the ties among prominent families associated with the University, and can talk for hours on end, imparting little-known but fascinating facts about the 200-year-old institution.

Because he believes so strongly that history is the heart and soul of Jefferson, Stein has endowed the Robert M. Stein, MD '68, FACC, FAHA Archivist position at Thomas Jefferson University. His goal in

creating the position is to ensure that Jefferson will always have an historian and archivist to preserve its past and to educate and serve as an inspiration to future generations.

"Jefferson is unique and fortunate to have a remarkable history, one that has been 200 years in the making," Stein says, adding that while it's important for the institution to keep moving forward, "the best way to know where it's going is to know where it's been."

Jefferson has selected the current University Archivist and Head of Historic Collections and Teaching Associate F. Michael Angelo, MA, as the inaugural holder of the endowed archivist position.

Angelo, who has served in the position since 2001 and oversees the newly opened Marion J. Siegmán, PhD, FAPS, Archives of Thomas Jefferson University, is the resident expert in all things Jefferson. He prepares historical exhibits; creates the content on the University Archives website; gives tours and lectures; runs

educational programs; and oversees the efforts to acquire, preserve, and make available for research official University records, personal papers, memorabilia, and other materials of enduring historical value to Jefferson.

"Dead records, old photos, extinct reports, noncurrent literature ... How can we today connect to these expired things?" asks Angelo, who quickly answers his own question. "Sometimes they come to life when in the hands of an historian or genealogist."

An avid history buff, Stein shares those sentiments and, during a tour of the new archives last year, decided to make sure the archivist position would be funded in perpetuity by establishing the position.

"It was a monumental gesture," Angelo says. "And we're just so grateful."

A self-described "history nerd," Angelo earned his MA in history at New York University and went on for a certificate in archival management and historical editing. He then embarked on a career that took him from the directorship of the Women in Medicine Archives at the Medical College of Pennsylvania to the archivist positions at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, the Independence Seaport Museum, and finally at Jefferson.

When Angelo arrived at Jefferson in 2001, he was determined to put the archives to work.

"Archives tend to be forgotten, and they get closed down because nobody knows what they provide," he says. So, he set forth to raise the level of the archives — and raise awareness of the benefits they provide.

To that end, he and his team

partnered with other departments, including Institutional Advancement, Alumni Relations, Communications, and various other clinical divisions, to provide important historical information about Jefferson.

That effort got a boost in 2023 when longtime Jefferson professor and researcher Marion J. Siegman, PhD, made a generous gift to lift the archives out of a cramped and dusty room in the Scott Memorial Library and create a spacious new facility on the fourth floor. It opened in April 2024.

The new space features an expanded storage vault with state-of-the-art environmental controls, a commercial-grade digitization station, an expanded exhibition gallery with display cases, and a dedicated lecture room, as well as a reception and exhibit area.

The Siegman Archives holds institutional records dating to its origins in 1824. It consists of 20,000 photographs, thousands of biographical files, museum artifacts, and 8,000 rare medical books. Much of the core collection has been digitized and available online.

The opening of the new facility coincided with Jefferson's bicentennial celebration in 2024, and provided a wealth of information for various events. Today, it continues to collect important historic materials, preserve them, and make them available on the Jefferson Digital Commons.

"We have a community of scholars who are really interested in what we have because it's so unique and so complete," Angelo says. "We also have alums who are interested in learning institutional history."

And it's not just Jefferson alumni, students, faculty, and staff who use the archives. Because Jefferson's medical history is such an important part of medical history overall, scholars from across the country and around the world have visited both in person and online.

Aside from giving tours to alumni and other museum organizations, Angelo has been able to expand the educational aspect of his work

with more hands-on learning with students, who now have the opportunity to co-curate exhibits and participate in fun learning programs.

One of his favorite ongoing programs that he can now expand is "What's in the Box?"

"We get some medical students to work as a team. I preselect objects from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries and let the students discover what they are and what they were used for," Angelo explains. "I then ask them to write a history of it and have them look to the future to see if they could adapt the technology to current technology."

Angelo says it takes the students out of "black-and-white and yes-and-no zone and into creativity" by taking old artifacts and giving them a twist for the next century.

He says he loves seeing the "awe factor" when he shows students the artifacts — especially some of the 8,000 rare medical books, including one dating back to 1460.

"It's remarkable because it's a continuum from the 15th century to the present," he says. "Anatomy hasn't changed. Technology changes, but the human body doesn't; it still has the same ills, and so it's a way to connect the past, the present, and the future."

Another way the archives connect the past with the present is through providing artifacts from the long-gone to the living.

"It can be remarkably moving to witness the descendant of a 19th-century alumnus see a photo of him for the first time, or an unknown letter that a Jeff doctor sent to his wife in World War II read by their now adult child," Angelo says. "These human connections are what I value most about my job."

For Stein, the value of history is priceless — and inspirational.

"History can be remarkably inspiring," he says, noting that "knowing your past helps to influence the choices you make in the future." As an example, he cites the first successful open-heart surgery at Jefferson, performed by

alumnus John H. Gibbon Jr., MD '27, and the use of the heart-lung machine he invented.

"That's very inspiring to a student considering a career in cardiology," he says — a student, for instance, like himself.

A Philadelphia native, Stein graduated from Central High School and was in the first class of the Penn State-Jefferson combined class program in 1963. He went on to train in Boston and New York, finishing his cardiology fellowship at Columbia.


After serving in the U.S. Army, he settled in Escondido, California, joining the Palomar Medical Center in San Diego in 1976, where he served as chair of the department of medicine, medical director of cardiac services, and chief of staff. He is currently a consultant at the Graybill Medical Group's Rehabilitation Institute and directs the Outpatient Cardiac Rehab Program.

Today, Stein, who has also endowed a scholarship fund at the Sidney Kimmel Medical College and a professorship in cardiovascular quality and safety, serves as a volunteer docent at the San Diego Museum of Art and a docent and board member of the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum.

In the future, Stein hopes to see more research into the artifacts in Jefferson's collection, and he'd like to see the collection grow, because "it enriches the whole educational experience to have a piece of it as the history of the institution where you're enrolled."

He reminds us that history never ends. Today's events are tomorrow's history, and someone has to record them for posterity.

Angelo is happy to take on that great responsibility, because for him history is a living thing, something to pass on to future generations.

"Every day I'm in the archives, I discover something that probably nobody else knew," he says. "It's a really exciting place to be, where I can help scholars advance knowledge and help students understand the past." 



SKMC alumnus Dr. Elliot J. Rayfield, Class of 1967 (left), and Jefferson Archivist Michael Angelo (right) examine rare books in the Marion J. Siegman Archives



Jefferson Hospital's electric-powered ambulance in 1909

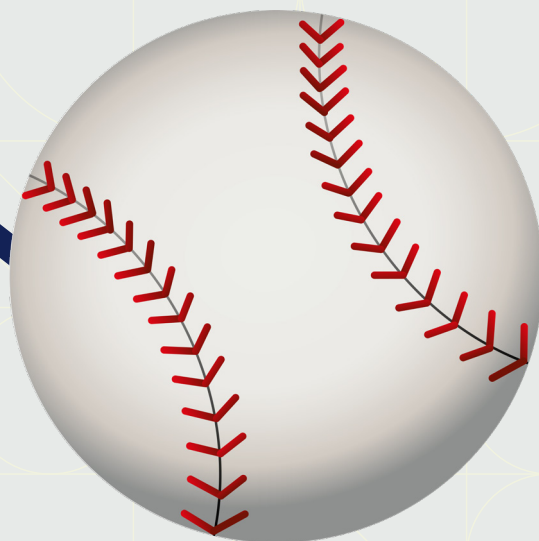
12 Fun Facts from the Files of F. Michael Angelo

Everyone knows (well, every Jeffersonian, that is) that Jefferson was the first medical college in the country to establish a clinic; its William W. Keen, MD 1862, was the first to successfully remove a brain tumor; and Jonathan Letterman, MD 1849, created America's first organized ambulance system. But there are so many other fascinating bits of information just waiting to be discovered in the Marion J. Siegman, PhD, FAPS, Archives of Thomas Jefferson University. Below are just a few fun facts about the University.

1. Jay J. Jacoby, MD, appointed chair of Jefferson's anesthesiology department in 1965, created the hospital "code blue" system, which alerts doctors to patients in respiratory distress. The system is used in hospitals across the country today.
2. In 1826, Jefferson's first professor of chemistry, Franklin Bache, MD, was the first in the U.S. to conduct studies in acupuncture therapy.
3. Charles H. Klieman, MD '67, developed the modern surgical stapler in 1982.
4. In 1864, Jacob da Costa, MD, 1852, was the first to identify and describe what he called "soldier's heart," known today as post-traumatic stress disorder.
5. In 2022, an electric-powered ambulance company claimed to have provided the first such vehicle in Philadelphia. Not true! Jefferson Hospital had the first in 1909, and we have the photo to prove it.
6. Children's Hospital of Pennsylvania, the first pediatric hospital in the U.S., was founded in 1855 by two Jefferson graduates, Francis West Lewis, MD 1846, and Thomas Hewson Bache, MD 1850.
7. William T. Lemmon, MD 1921 introduced the world's first continuous spinal epidural in 1939.
8. Carlos Juan Finlay, MD 1855, was the discoverer of the vector for yellow fever — the mosquito — in 1881.
9. The year of his graduation, Edward R Squibb, MD 1845, who would go on to create a pharmaceutical empire, invented a distiller for producing pure, safe ether. He refused to apply for patent rights to the innovation.
10. Professor of surgery Thomas D. Mutter was the first in Philadelphia to demonstrate the use of sulphuric ether in surgery, on December 9, 1846, at a Jefferson clinic.
11. The nation's first hospital heliport for emergency cases opened in 1971 atop the Foerderer Pavillion, funded by the Jefferson Hospital Women's Board.
12. Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the revered first president of the Republic of China in 1912 after the fall of the Qing Dynasty, was a graduate of the College of Medicine for Chinese in Hong Kong. Sun's main teacher was John Glasgow Kerr, MD, a graduate in the Jefferson class of 1847.

BATTER UP, ALUMNI

JOIN JEFFERSON AT THE PHILLIES!



SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, June 6

Phillies vs Pirates
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Saturday, June 14

Alumni Day at the Phillies
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Wednesday, July 9

Phillies vs Giants
San Francisco, California

Saturday, July 12

Phillies vs Padres
San Diego, California

Saturday, August 16

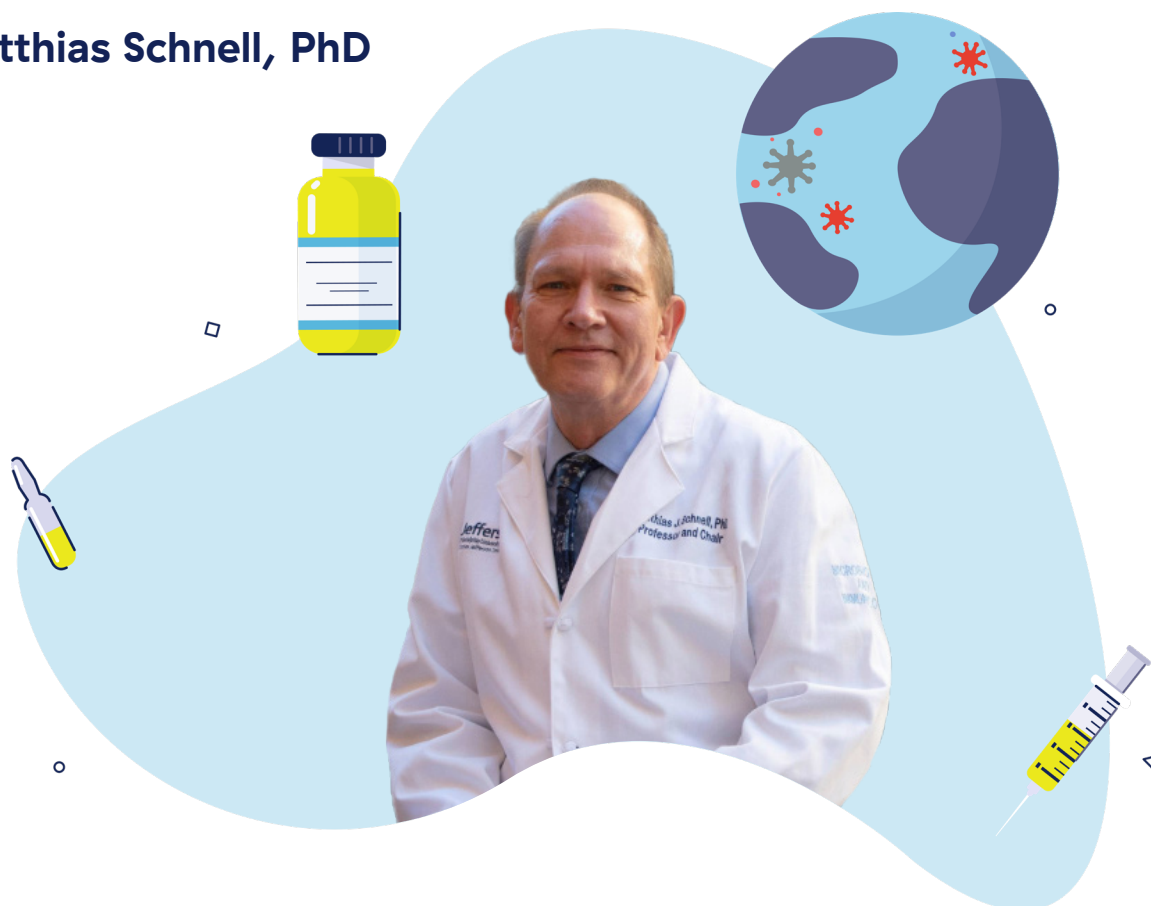
Phillies vs Nationals
Washington, D.C.



Visit Jefferson.edu/AlumniEvents for more information
and as we add more Phillies games to the schedule.

Faculty Profile

Matthias Schnell, PhD



REWIRING RABIES

BY DEBORAH BALTHAZAR

A researcher's journey into understanding a deceptively simple, deadly disease to develop promising vaccines.

In 1990 following the fall of the Berlin Wall, rabies surged in the red fox population in East Germany. Rabid foxes roamed the city as well as the countryside. Reports said that at least 10 people had been bitten, putting them at risk. Researchers restarted a large-scale rabies oral vaccine program to slow the spread. The vaccine was air-dropped throughout the countryside and hand-placed near fox dens in morsels of fox food, like chicken heads.

At the time, Matthias Schnell, PhD, was a young graduate student in the middle of completing his thesis at the Federal Research Centre for Virus Diseases of Animals in Tübingen. The government quickly made research funds for rabies available. While most of the funding was dedicated to vaccine development, some was set aside to help understand the molecular basis of the virus. And Schnell and his team were able to sequence and generate the entire rabies genome, a big accomplishment in the early days of genetic sequencing. Although their molecular breakthrough did not directly contribute to the country's efforts to develop an oral vaccine for

rabies, which eliminated the disease officially in 2008, it did help create a new generation of vaccines for wildlife and domesticated animals and helped make the oral vaccine even safer.

Schnell's early success and path to biology were somewhat unexpected. As a boy, Schnell collected butterflies, raised frogs, and was surrounded by animals, becoming fascinated with the natural world. However, he grew up in the city of Stuttgart, known for the excellent craftsmanship of famous brands like Porsche and Mercedes-Benz. His father was an electrical engineer, and Schnell spent his early years in the company of people who



AS A BASIC SCIENTIST, YOU RARELY SEE THE DIRECT IMPACT OF YOUR WORK, SO IT'S QUITE EXCITING SEEING THE DIFFERENCE IT CAN MAKE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES.



built complex machines. While he respected that work, Schnell wasn't interested in the mechanics of built structures.

"I was more interested in being an engineer of things in nature than an engineer of things made by man," Schnell says.

After deconstructing the rabies genome and finishing his PhD, Schnell went to Yale University as a postdoctoral researcher, where he learned to work with a virus similar to rabies, exploring how it could be used to create vaccines, with the ultimate goal of applying that knowledge back to building a better rabies vaccine.


Rabies had caught his intellectual curiosity because once symptoms develop in an infected individual, it is 100% fatal, making it one of the most deadly diseases in the world, Schnell explains. And although it is a dangerous disease, making animals more aggressive and fearless, and therefore more likely to spread the virus, it is also relatively simple in its makeup. Humans have some 20,000 genes, whereas the rabies virus has just five. "Because it's so small, we know every base and every function, making this virus so versatile as a base for vaccine production," Schnell says. "But we still don't understand the whole thing."

In the summer of 1997, Schnell joined the faculty at Thomas Jefferson University, where he continued his work on rabies, and is the Dr. V. Watson Pugh and Frances Plimpton Pugh Professor of Microbiology and Immunology. He focused on two main areas: the basic pathogenicity and molecular biology of the rabies virus, and the development of rabies-based vaccine platforms. His successful engineering has brought to life vaccines against emerging diseases, such as Ebola and Marburg fever, which are major threats in Africa. These vaccines have the added benefit of protecting against rabies, which continues to be fatal in parts of Africa.

One of Schnell's most recent and promising projects is a vaccine for Lassa fever called LASSARAB, which recently received FDA approval to begin phase one clinical trials. Lassa fever is a severe hemorrhagic disease that is endemic to parts of West Africa, causing up to 500,000 infections and over 5,000 deaths annually. There is no vaccine currently to protect against infection. Schnell's vaccine is one of three candidates in development. It uses a rabies virus modified to be harmless and trains the immune system to recognize and fight Lassa

fever while also providing long-term protection from rabies in a single dose.

Schnell's lab is also currently developing a vaccine against the H5N1 avian flu, intended for cattle, to help prevent transmission of the disease from cows to humans.

"I'm proud of the impact this work has had on rare diseases," he says. "As a basic scientist, you rarely see the direct impact of your work, so it's quite exciting seeing the difference it can make in people's lives." 

A Message From the SKMC Alumni Board President



Irfan Galaria, MD '01, MBA

Riddle Me This!

Here's a riddle: What gets smaller the more you add to it?

I'll give you the real answer in a minute. But first, let me offer this one: Jefferson.

Even as our alma mater grows in size and stature, we strive to maintain the feeling of a small, close-knit community that shares membership in an historic and elite organization.

As Jefferson has expanded across the Delaware Valley, we have continued to grow in prominence for our work in healthcare, education, and research. Much of that is due to the dedication of our alumni, who have always provided strong shoulders to stand on so that the next generation of physicians can reach new heights.

We are now asking more of you to join us in providing guidance and support to our students and our school.

I've heard that as Jefferson has flourished, some graduates feel the medical school has taken a back seat to the enterprise. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are more relevant than ever.

We have created a new committee to act as a liaison between the class agents and

the alumni board to improve communication, and facilitate and promote events and activities.

We are instituting a mentoring program in partnership with Dean Said Ibrahim through the Student Relations Committee. And we have established a new award as part of Alumni Weekend to recognize outstanding professional achievements of postgraduate alumni who have completed their training at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and/or affiliate training programs.

Wheels are in motion to give alumni a more active role on the Academic Affairs Committee of the Thomas Jefferson University board of trustees and the Dean's Advisory Board. In addition, we are in the planning stages of a marketing campaign to promote and highlight the Sidney Kimmel Medical College.

However, none of this happens without the active participation of our alumni. There are so many ways you can become involved, whether you have a few minutes, a few hours, or more to contribute. And it doesn't matter where you live — if you can't come to Jefferson, Jefferson will come to you.

We are planning events across the country for alumni to get together, take part in programs, and meet the dean and other Jefferson leadership.

For example, on August 16, we are sponsoring a meetup at the Pageant of the Masters in Laguna Beach, California, which is one of the top art festivals in the nation.

As an active participant in our Alumni Association, you have the opportunity to help others achieve what you have. You can support students through mentorship and financial aid. You can provide guidance to school leadership. And you can help make our big world a little smaller.

Which brings me to the real answer to the riddle of "What grows smaller the more you add to it?": a hole. But I like my answer better. I invite you to join your fellow alum in becoming a part of Jefferson's growth while bringing us all closer together. [J](#)

SKMC Class Agents

Interested in Mentoring a Student?

The Class Agents are gauging interest among alumni in mentoring current students or speaking to students to share insights about your career or specialization.

If you are interested in learning more, contact Cindy Rowand at 267-226-1254 or cindy.rowand@jefferson.edu.

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Stanton N. Smullens, MD, Class of 1961
William V. Harrer, MD, Class of 1962
William Freeman, MD, Class of 1964
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
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Mary B. White, MD, Class of 2021
Mary Blumenfeld, MD, Class of 2022
Kai Inguito, MD, Class of 2026

Class Notes



'73

Robert Lahita, MD, PhD

Volunteerism captured the heart of alumnus Robert Lahita, MD '73, in 1990, when he was asked to be the medical director of the Volunteer Ambulance Corps for Hudson County, New Jersey's Emergency Services. For the last 35 years, he has trained countless EMTs and paramedics.

"I was the state of New Jersey director of pre-hospital devices," he shares. "My hobby was going to emergencies. In fact, my car still has lights and sirens. I have two-way radios and communicate with everybody. Whenever there's a major fire or a major accident, I usually go."

Following medical school, Lahita completed his residency in internal medicine at New York–Presbyterian Weill Cornell Medical Center, and his fellowship in immunology and rheumatology at Rockefeller University.

"We did bench-to-bedside, so I would go into the hospital to see patients," he says. "I ran the connective tissue disease clinics. That's how I became interested in diseases like lupus, which was not very well known. I became very familiar and very interested in that particular condition and related conditions, like rheumatoid arthritis and Sjogren's syndrome."

Currently professor of medicine at Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, the director of the Institute for Autoimmune and Rheumatic Diseases at Saint Joseph Health in Paterson, New Jersey, and a clinical professor of Medicine at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, Lahita has spent more than 50 years in the field of rheumatology and immunology.

But educating and serving the community has long been his driving force.

Lahita jumped in to help during the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks. "I was there when

everything happened," he says.

"I ran a field hospital on the New Jersey shores of the Hudson River and would ride a tugboat back and forth to Ground Zero. I gathered more paramedics and maybe 50 or 60 EMTs to help me because we had so many patients. We had over 350 people come over from Manhattan on boats, tugboats, barges, all sorts of things."

In addition, he has authored 16 books, including a lupus textbook originally titled "Systemic Lupus," now called "Lahita's Lupus" and in its sixth edition for physicians. He is currently working on his 17th title, a book about epigenetics.

In November 2024, Lahita launched a video podcast, titled "Health Frontiers with Dr. Bob." Already popular, the podcast answers health questions and discusses timely medical topics and research. "My format includes 30 minutes of current news followed by a special guest discussing a specific topic," he explains. Topics covered thus far have included obesity, peripheral neuropathy, foot and ankle injuries, dementia, and the value of vaccines.

Lahita remains committed to answering questions on his podcast, simplifying complex medical issues and enabling listeners to take charge of their own healthcare. "With social media, we are on such an overload of information, much of it wrong," he says. "It is important to talk to patients straightforwardly about their medical problems. Some of them ask very challenging questions about conditions none of us have heard about, but fortunately, I get an education by looking up and doing research on their questions."

To view or listen to the Dr. Bob podcast, visit healthfrontierspod.com.



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Class Notes

'64

Joel S. Bayer, MD, retired from general and trauma surgery in 2000. He now resides with his wife in South Carolina.

'65

Alumni Class Agent **Richard P. Wenzel, MD**, is emeritus chair and professor of the Department of Internal Medicine at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center in Richmond, Virginia. Since 2001, he has been editor-at-large of *The New England Journal of Medicine*. His third novel, "The Writer in Tuscany," released on February 4 and can be found on Amazon.

'66

William R. Collini, MD, is enjoying retired life with his wife of 58 years, his four daughters, and 12 grandchildren.

'68

Mark R. Stein, MD, retired in 2018 and continues to live in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

'69

Richard A King, MD, retired from the University of Minnesota Medical School in 2014 as an emeritus professor of medicine.

'70

Norman Gary Loberant, MD, is celebrating 53 years of marriage, 44 years of living in northern Israel, and 39 years of practicing and teaching radiology at Western Galilee Hospital. He is proud to be a surviving member of the five-year Accelerated Pre-medical-Medical Program between Penn State and Jefferson.

'71



Edwin P. Ewing, Jr., MD, retired in 2000 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where he specialized in infectious disease pathology as a diagnostic consultant, researcher, published author, and teacher of courses for other doctors. In retirement, he has traveled widely, read widely, and taken nonmedical courses every year. He enjoys weekly volunteering as a docent at Fernbank Museum of Natural History, weekly volunteer teaching of English and life skills to adult refugees at the International Rescue Committee, performing frequently with two piano performance groups, oil painting, gardening, serving on two boards, staying politically active, and maintaining walk and gym exercise programs. He is grateful to Jefferson for an excellent medical education that led to a rewarding medical career and many further identities and experiences.

Robert B. Falk, Jr. MD, was inducted into the Franklin and Marshall (F&M) College Athletic Hall of Fame on October 5, 2024, at the College's Homecoming Celebration. A member of the first varsity squash team at F&M (1966–67), he has been a longtime supporter of the teams and has served as a volunteer assistant coach for both the men's and women's teams for over 10 years. He retired as an anesthesiologist in July 2016 and continues to reside in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Carol, serves as president and CEO of the Lancaster International Piano and

Chamber Music Festival, and is also co-chair of the Hamilton Open, a professional women's squash tournament held in Lancaster for the past four years.

'74

Joseph R. Berger, MD, just retired from Penn as an emeritus professor of neurology. This is his third emeritus professorship, following two from the University of Miami and the University of Kentucky. He and his wife Sandy split their time between Philadelphia and Miami, having children, grandchildren, and homes in both metropolitan areas.

John P. Lubicky, MD, has been in the academic practice of pediatric orthopaedic and spine surgery since completing his fellowships. He has been on the medical school faculties of SUNY Upstate, Rush University, Loyola University, University of Illinois, Indiana University, and currently, West Virginia University, where he is professor of orthopaedic surgery and pediatrics. He has had the distinct privilege of training hundreds of medical students, residents, and fellows over the last 45 years and takes great pride in what these men and women have accomplished. He was also involved in the tremendous advances in spinal deformity surgery and limb lengthening and reconstructive surgery. After 45 years, Lubicky retired in December 2024, working full-time until the end. He survived colon cancer that was diagnosed in 2011 but now has been diagnosed with multiple myeloma, for which he is on chemo. Hopefully, after nine cycles of chemo, he will go into remission.

'75

Thomas Henry Scott Jr., MD, came to TJUH as one of 12 medical interns in 1971. He grew up in the segregated Richmond, Virginia, school system and graduated from HBCU schools for both undergraduate and medical degrees (Morehouse College and Meharry Medical College). Jefferson was his

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Class Notes

first experience in an exclusively or predominately non-African American educational institution. Dr. G. William "Bill" Atkinson became a role model and mentor, and Scott went on to complete his medical residency (1973–75). At the end of his second year, Dr. Robert I. Wise, then chairman of the Department of Medicine, asked him to remain as chief medical resident (1975–76). Scott remembers with fondness, appreciation, and gratitude the opportunities afforded him by Jefferson and in particular by Atkinson and Wise. After completing his pulmonary fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, he served two years as a pulmonologist in the Army Medical Corps and then practiced pulmonary medicine in Virginia for 27 years until his retirement as vice president for medical affairs at a health system in 2010. "My career would not have been possible without Jefferson."

'77

Kent VanTuyt Carey, MD, completed a three-year residency in Tucson, Arizona, after graduating, followed by a two-year ER residency in Los Angeles, California. He liked Tucson so much that he returned to practice until his retirement in 2011. After retirement, he volunteered at the Tucson Veterans Hospital ER (not as a doctor, but as a volunteer). One son is an attorney, the younger is an MD, PhD at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee.

'86

Craig Powell, MD, is late in his career, doing vascular surgery locums work at Seacoast Hospital in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Several months ago, sitting in the doctor's lounge, he saw a somewhat familiar face. Powell looked at the man's name tag, which read R. O'Connor, Anesthesiology. He then looked at the staff directory for Seacoast and noted that O'Connor had graduated from Jefferson in 1986 and was, in fact, his former Phi

Chi housemate, scuba certification partner, running partner (preclinical years), and even street-mugging partner (H. Thomas Temple to the rescue!). A strange twist of fate, indeed! "BTW, Dr. O'Connor is doing well here, and he has yet to delay any of my cases."

'93

Douglas T. Corwin, Jr, MD, was re-elected to the East Washington, Pennsylvania, Borough Council for a second four-year term.

'94

Brenda Jane (Rieger) Berry, MD, is now semiretired from internal medicine and dermatology and lives in California with her husband. She is always so grateful and honored to have been bestowed the William Kellow Prize in 1994. "What a surprise and highlight of my professional career! Salutations and best wishes to all my colleagues!"

'99

Alynn Bosshard Alexander, MD, is living in Richmond, Virginia, with her husband of 25 years and their youngest daughter, 15. She left office practice in 2022 to join OB Hospitalist Group, and she is now the site director and OB hospitalist at an HCA facility in Richmond. Her oldest daughter graduated from UVA in 2023 and works in consulting in New York City. Her son is an international law major at Indiana University, Bloomington. She is grateful for the education and clinical experience provided at Jefferson.

'02

Jeannie Hoffman-Censits, MD, associate professor of medical oncology and urology at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins, is a lead investigator on an international clinical trial that tested the novel drug combination enfortumab and pembrolizumab compared to standard platinum chemotherapy. She also was a lead investigator on a trial testing immunotherapy in the

postoperative setting for those with high-risk bladder and upper-tract cancers that led to a significant improvement in disease-free survival compared to standard observation. She is an author on both studies, which were published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in 2024. She lives with her husband and son in Baltimore, Maryland.

'03

Christina A. LeBedis, MD, writes, "Happy Bicentennial, Jefferson! Thank you for all of the opportunities you opened for me! I am forever indebted and grateful."

John Makopoulos, MD, married his high school sweetheart. They live in the suburbs with their two wonderful children and a dog. He has been a practicing emergency department physician in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, since 2006 and loves it.

'07

Karl Kwok, MD, is a complex interventional endoscopist for a major health system in Los Angeles, California. He performs EUS, ERCP, EMR, and ESD in his practice. He is proud to be a fellow of the endoscopic society and even more proud of being asked to write a radiation safety chapter in the field's authoritative ERCP textbook. Additionally, he is the physician co-chair of the obesity medicine service line for his medical area. "Grateful to the outstanding medical residency education I received from Jeff (under the leadership of Dr. Gregory Kanel!)"

'10

Michael Furman, MD, met **Zoe Billinkoff, MD '10** at the White Coat Ceremony on August 4, 2006. They were married a year later (after many study break lunches at Bonte). They now live in Providence, Rhode Island, with their four kids. Zoe is a psychiatrist, and Michael is a radiologist at Rhode Island Medical Imaging. They are both on the faculty at Brown.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Achievements

Class Notes

'61
Robert B. Tesh, MD, has spent most of his career conducting clinical and field research on vector-borne and zoonotic viral diseases. He's worked as a professor of pathology and microbiology and immunology at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston for the past 22 years, and has also worked with NIH/NIAD, Yale University. Dr. Tesh officially retired four years ago and is now an adjunct professor.

'64
Robert McKim, MD, graduated in 1964 and entered a rotating internship at Emanuel Hospital in Portland, Oregon. During the internship he was drafted for military service for the Vietnam War. Dr. McKim entered family practice in 1967 and after 600+ hours of CME, became Family Practice Board Certified. There were no family practice residencies at that time. He has also held positions as army's medical examiner for the FAA, associate teaching professor in the Department of Family Practice at Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, Oregon, and served on the board of trustees for the Oregon Academy of Family Practice and the Oregon Medical Association, and as an Oregon Delegate to the American Medical Association. After over 2,300 deliveries, many tonsilectomies and orthopedic and tendon repairs, and 47 years, Dr. McKim retired in 2013. "Had a great career. Thanks, Jefferson," says McKim.

'67
Steven Fischer, MD, has retired after 45 years of practice as an ENT physician.

'68
Harold A. Yocum, MD, has been an



| Pictured right, Dean Winslow, MD '76, with Anthony Fauci, center

avid birdwatcher since his time as a boy scout during his teenage years; this year he went over 600. He also served as president of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society.

'73
Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS, was inaugurated as the seventh president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore on Friday, Nov. 5, 2021.

Tomas Jose Silber, MD, has been honored by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) with the William G. Bartholome Award for Ethical Excellence, the Academy's highest honor in bioethics. Dr. Silber has dedicated more than 50 years of work to reflecting, writing, teaching, and devoting energy to the divagation of the field of pediatric ethics.

He has been a consultant to the World Health Organization and the Pan-American Health Organization and has been awarded the Adele Hoffman Award by the Section on Adolescence of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Outstanding Achievement in Adolescent Medicine by the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine, the lifetime achievement award by the Cuban Ministry of Health, and the Children's National Mentorship Award. For several decades, Dr.

Silber was the director of the Adolescent Medicine fellowship Program, the director of the Donald Delaney Eating Disorders Program, and director of the Ethics Program at Children's National in Washington, DC.

Dr. Silber is now professor emeritus at George Washington University, Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine. He serves on the executive committee of the Ethics Program and is the editor of *Pediatric Ethics*.

'76
Dean Winslow, MD, a professor of medicine at Stanford University and senior fellow by courtesy at the Center for International Security and Cooperation, is currently on leave from Stanford while serving as senior advisor to the CDC COVID-19 Testing and Diagnostics Working Group based in Washington, DC. He is also back on active duty orders with the California State Guard.

'78
Robert P. Boran, Jr., MD, has retired from active practice in orthopedic surgery. He continues to serve on the board of directors of the Eastern Orthopaedic Association (EOA) and recently received the Outstanding Service award of the EOA.

Stephen I. Kramer, MD, recently retired after 38 years of clinical practice as professor emeritus of psychiatry and behavioral medicine at Wake Forest Baptist Health Sciences in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. During his tenure, he helped develop programs in forensic psychiatry and neuropsychiatry.

Dr. Kramer served the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc. for 25 years, and continues to work for the Joint Commission as field representative/physician surveyor and as a topic editor for *DynaMed*. Currently, he is serving his second term on the board of directors of the Winston-Salem Symphony, and grandparenting with his wife, Rochelle Prague Kramer, who also retired from the medical center as a reference librarian.

'80
Angela E. Lin, MD, is a medical geneticist at MGH who cares for patients with rare syndromes. She has a long-standing interest in art and the portrayal of people with physical differences. Dr. Lin fulfilled a dream as the senior editor of a special issue of the *American Journal of Medical Genetics* titled "Syndromes and Malformations in Art and Antiquity: New Perspectives on a Familiar Theme."

'83
Ruth E. Weissberger, MD, has been named governor of the Connecticut chapter of the American College of Physicians (ACP), the national organization of internists. The board of governors is an advisory board to the board of regents and implements national projects in addition to representing members at the national level.

'85
Suzanne Topalian, MD, has spent the past four decades contributing



Michael Savage, MD '80, FEL '86 (left) and David Fischman, MD, FACP, FEL '91 (right) were recently featured in an article published by *Public Health* as two of the Top 50 Influencers in Cardiology on Twitter. Follow them: @DocSavageTJU and @dfischman_david.

groundbreaking research and opening new avenues of scientific investigation in cancer immunology. Her contributions extend well beyond her lab at Johns Hopkins, establishing immunotherapy as a pillar of oncology around the world. Her research has resulted in the unprecedented development and regulatory approval of drugs for over a dozen different cancers—benefiting countless patients and their families.

Dr. Topalian's research focuses on manipulating immune checkpoints in cancer therapy. She led a team at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center in a global effort that established immunotherapy as a viable method of cancer treatment alongside surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy.

'95
Mya Asato, MD, a pediatric neurologist, has been named vice president of training by the Kennedy Krieger Institute. She also directs the nationally recognized Maternal and Child Health Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities Program (LEND), which provides graduate-level, interdisciplinary training to clinicians with an interest in neurodevelopmental disabilities.

Dr. Asato joined the institute from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine's Department of Pediatrics, where she was a professor of both pediatrics and clinical and translational science at the school.

She has served as the program director of Pitt's neurodevelopmental disabilities residency since 2007.

'06
Madhuri Dholakia, MD, published her debut novel, *The White Coat Diaries*, which highlights a young doctor's struggle to survive residency, love, and life. The book deals with themes of physician burnout, moral injury, high expectations placed on her from culture, and more. She has two more books planned in her deal with Penguin Random House/Berkley.



Accolades

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In Memoriam



REMEMBERING

Michael J. Mastrangelo, MD

October 3, 1938 – December 6, 2024

An esteemed Jeffersonian and pioneer in the field of medical oncology for more than four decades, Michael J. Mastrangelo, MD, passed away on December 6, 2024.

A graduate of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Mastrangelo returned to Philadelphia in 1964 to complete his internship, residency, chief residency, and medical oncology fellowship at Jefferson.

He then served as a postdoctoral research fellow in the laboratory of R.T. Prehn, MD, at the Institute of Cancer Research before he was recruited as an associate physician by the American Oncologic Hospital, later to be known as Fox Chase Cancer Center.

Mastrangelo returned to Jefferson in 1984, where he remained until his retirement. As the third director of the Division of Medical Oncology in the Department of Medicine and professor of medicine, he laid the foundation for the department's growth and was instrumental in advancing and elevating cancer care at Jefferson. He served as the associate clinical director of the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center from 1993 to 2002, championing and promoting Jefferson's national and international reputation for cancer research.

Known nationally as a trailblazer in cancer immunology and immunotherapy and recognized

for his excellence as a clinical investigator, he developed many novel cancer immunotherapy treatments. Under his leadership, Jefferson entered a new era of research and therapy for cancer patients, especially in the field of malignant melanoma. He established a new laboratory program for cancer immunotherapy and developed a hapten-modified autologous melanoma cell vaccine with David Berd and Henry C. Maguire. This approach is a prototype of the personalized cancer vaccine utilizing cancer neoantigens (neo-epitopes) and drew national attention as a new treatment for melanoma patients.

He was the founding editor and co-editor and editor-in-chief from 1994 to 2016 of the journal *Seminars in Oncology*, which provided the latest information on the biology and treatment of various types of cancer to medical oncologists and oncology fellows worldwide.

Beloved by all, Mastrangelo was an outstanding teacher and role model to the many oncology fellows and translational researchers who were privileged to be taught, mentored, and trained by him. As his patients would also attest, his clinical and research skills were surpassed only by his dedication to service, kindness, caring, empathy, and warmth. His impact will be felt for generations to come.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Ann; his brother Vincent Mastrangelo; his three adult children, David, Mark, and Audrey Reynolds; and his four grandchildren, Madison, Michael, and Elizabeth Mastrangelo, and John ("Jack") Reynolds.

'55



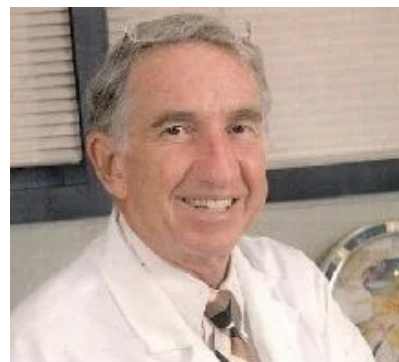
Herbert E. Cohn, MD, passed away on March 10, 2025, at the age of 94. As a medical student at Jefferson, he worked with John H. Gibbon Jr., MD '27, on the bubble oxygenator that served as a key component of the cardiopulmonary bypass machine, and he participated in the famous case of Cecilia Bavolek on May 6, 1953 (closure of an ASD). He interned at Atlantic City Hospital, where, on his first weekend on call, he famously had to scrub in on numerous trauma cases following a multicar pileup on the Black Horse Pike. From 1957–59 he served in the U.S. Air Force in Fort Worth, Texas, and he received an Air Force Commendation Medal. After moving back to Philadelphia, he completed his training and was appointed to the Jefferson faculty in 1962. For the next 50 years, his surgical practice focused on thoracic and endocrine surgery. He became known as the “go-to” surgeon for thyroid disorders in Philadelphia. He was recognized numerous times at Jefferson for his achievements as a surgeon, including being named the first Anthony Narducci, MD, Professor of Surgery and being honored with the Achievement Award in Medicine at the 2009 Jefferson Gala.

'56



William A. Coyle, MD, passed away January 21, 2024. He was born January 2, 1930, in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, to alumnus William V. Coyle, MD 1917, and Margaret (Morollo) Coyle. He was a graduate of St. Gabriel's High School, the University of Scranton, and Jefferson. He married Eleanor “Sandie” (Haas) in 1957. The following year, he was assigned as a captain to the Air Force Medical Corps based in Shiroy, Japan. He and his wife lived there until 1959, when Coyle returned to the states and began his residency in orthopedic surgery at Jefferson. Coyle was a founding partner of Orthopedic Associates Ltd. and practiced medicine in Delaware County for the rest of his career. Known as Bill to his friends, he loved to travel and enjoyed visiting different countries around the world. He equally enjoyed spending time on the beaches of Avalon, New Jersey. He was an avid historian and a voracious reader, and loved spending time with his family above all else.

'61



Jay S. Barnhart Jr., MD, passed away on October 27, 2024. He was born February 27, 1935, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He married Ruth (Kauffman) Barnhart of Landisville, Pennsylvania, on January 26, 1957. He graduated from Mount Joy High School in 1953, Franklin & Marshall College in 1957, and Jefferson in 1961. He served a one-year internship at Lancaster General Hospital, receiving the Intern of the Year Award. He began a general family practice in the town of North East, Maryland, in August 1962 until July 1979. He then began a medical residency in anatomic and clinical pathology at Jefferson. Afterward, he began a one-year residency for forensic pathology at the University of Miami. After 12 years of working as an associate medical examiner and three years as deputy chief medical examiner in Miami-Dade County, Florida, he retired and moved to Rockledge, Florida, where he volunteered his medical expertise at the Fort Pierce Medical Examiner's Department for eight years. His hobby of identifying mushrooms developed, and he gave many presentations at local nature clubs, earning the nickname “Fung Guy.” His love of music continued by playing piano with his violinist friend in the “Dick & Doc Duo” and a local geriatric jazz group. He also played the church organ when the organist needed a day off and sang with the church choir. In 2020, he and his wife moved to Texas to live with their daughter, Jayne, where he found new adventures in learning about nature.

In Memoriam

'63



Phillip Z. Aronow, MD, died on March 9, 2024, in Key West, Florida, where he and his wife, Nila, had spent the winter months since his retirement from private practice. He was born in Camden, New Jersey, on October 20, 1934, to Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. He was a top player on the high school tennis team, took part in musical comedies, and won the school's Public Speaking Contest. He earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Pennsylvania in 1957. At Jefferson, he was elected to the Hare Medical Society. Early in his career, Aronow served in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Indian Health Service Division. In 1968, he was appointed chief of surgery and chief of staff at the Hastings Hospital in Oklahoma. Afterward, he opened offices in Medford and Camden, New Jersey, and served as director of surgical education at Cooper Hospital. In 1979, he became chair of the Division of Surgery at Garden State and, from 1984–86, president of its staff. From 1995–2008, he chaired the Department of Surgery for the Virtua/West Jersey Health System in Voorhees and Marlton. He was recognized in 2003 with the Distinguished Career Award by the Virtua/West Jersey Health System. Aronow retired from the practice of surgery in 2010, but he didn't retire from his medical career, becoming certified in addiction medicine and seeing patients at Naltrexone, an addiction clinic in Merchantville.

'64



Robert Francis Lehman, MD, passed away peacefully in his sleep on November 28, 2024, in Gainesville, Virginia. He graduated from Long Island University in 1960 and then from Jefferson in 1964. He joined the Navy from 1965–67, reporting for duty in Iceland with his new bride, Ann. In Iceland, he developed his signature "work hard, play hard" mentality. He was a practicing orthopedic surgeon in Manassas, Virginia, from 1971–2005. For the first nine years of his practice, he worked out of his home, often taking care of patients who stopped in at all times. As his practice grew, he developed a physical therapy unit. With thousands of surgeries performed, including the first joint replacements in the area, he provided top-notch orthopedic care in Manassas. Most of his nonwork time involved being with his wife and family. From camping, ski, and beach trips, he was happiest on a cold, snowy day on Cupp Run or on a hot "wish there was more wind" sailing day on the Bay.

'66



John Robert Bower, MD, passed away on Friday, July 12, 2024, in Ocean Pines, Maryland. Born in Reading, Pennsylvania. He was a graduate of Reading High School, Haverford College, and Jefferson. His professional life was dedicated to bringing joy into the world in private practice as an OB/GYN in Wyomissing, Pennsylvania. He was the chief of gynecology at the Reading Hospital and Medical Center and a past president of the Berks County Medical Society. In his free time, he was a competitive powerlifter and enjoyed deep sea fishing, golf, bridge, and reading. He was a cherished member of the Wicomico River Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in Salisbury, Maryland.

'67



Charles Aloysius Meyer Jr. died on December 26, 2024. He was born in Philadelphia and lived in Augusta, Georgia, since 1976. He graduated from Villanova University and Jefferson. He was a retired captain

in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps, serving 37 years. He was chief of the Psychiatry Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center Augusta, an associate professor of psychiatry at the Medical College of Georgia, a Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, and a Diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. He served as chair of Correctional Medicine Committee of the Medical Association of Georgia and on the board of directors of the Richmond County Medical Society. A longtime member of the Augusta West Rotary, Meyer was a Will Watt and Paul Harris Fellow. He was a member of the USS Laffey DD-724 Association, having served as its last medical officer. He was an active member of St. Mary on the Hill Catholic Church, a professed member Secular Franciscan Order, and a member of the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus and Ancient Order of Hibernians. He had the honor of being an Olympic torchbearer in Augusta for the 1996 Atlanta games.

day he passed. He also worked with Carroll County Anesthesia from 1997–2015 at Carroll Hospital Center in Westminster, Maryland. He was an alumnus of Juniata College and Central Columbia High School in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, where he was raised. He was an accomplished athlete in high school and in college. He always had a smile to share, a joke to tell, words of wisdom to provide, music to play, and joy to spread to everyone he encountered. He was empathetic, kind, generous, grateful, and down to earth. To many, he was better known as “Captain Fun.”

'90



Scott Christopher Cole, MD, 60, of Bethesda, Maryland, and Havertown, Pennsylvania, died on November 30, 2024. Cole had courageously fought a more than three-year battle with ALS. He was an anesthesiologist at Capital Anesthesia Partners (CAP) in the Washington, D.C., area, where he was assistant chief medical officer since 2015. Most recently, he remained active at CAP and was responsible for scheduling cases and performing consults until the

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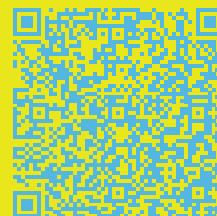


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