

NEWSWORTHY

Suggestions for story ideas are always welcome. Stories can be about research, curriculum or programs of study, unique or interesting personal achievements, growing trends or patient care with an academic angle.

Please email your comments and inquiries to lori_perrault@nycmc.edu. You can read current and archived issues of *InTouch* by visiting us on the web: www.nycmc.edu/pubs/intouch.asp

inTOUCH

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College affiliate unveils new Centers for Geriatric Care

Metropolitan Hospital Center, a university hospital affiliate, unveiled its new Centers for Geriatric Care at a ribbon-cutting ceremony held on December 8. The Centers for Geriatric Care, comprising the new Acute Care of Elderly inpatient unit and the Geriatric Care Outpatient Center, addresses the healthcare needs of the growing geriatric population with a multidisciplinary approach.

The state-of-the-art Acute Care of Elderly Geriatric Inpatient Center was planned and constructed specifically to fulfill the needs of older adults. For example, planners paid special attention to prevention of falls and pressure ulcers, medication safety and thoughtful discharge planning. The modern Geriatric Outpatient Center offers one-stop patient services with easy access to the on-site pharmacy and ambulette services.

College president **Karl P. Adler, M.D.**, had the honor of cutting the ribbon. He was joined by **Alan D. Aviles**, left, president of

New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, **Lynda Curtis**, second from right, senior vice president, South Manhattan Health Network, and **Meryl Weinberg**, executive director, Metropolitan Hospital Center, as several members of Metropolitan's Community Advisory Board stood by. ▲



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inTOUCH

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EDUCATION ► RESEARCH ► SERVICE

Stephen J. Peterson, M.D., to be honored with Mastership by the American College of Physicians

Stephen J. Peterson, M.D., professor of medicine and executive vice chair in the Department of Medicine, will receive the highest honor given by the American College of Physicians (ACP) when he is advanced to mastership during the organization's annual convocation ceremony, scheduled to be held April 23 in Philadelphia.

The honor recognizes Dr. Peterson for his long career as an innovative medical educator, administrator, researcher and clinician, as well as his service to the ACP. Dr. Peterson has served as both governor of the Hudson Valley chapter and president of the New York Chapter of the ACP, which is the leading national professional organization for internists with a membership of 126,000.

This year the designation Master of the American College of Physicians (MACP) will be bestowed upon Dr. Peterson and 47 other highly accomplished physicians. There are only 700 ACP masterships in the world and New York Medical College is one of a small number of medical schools in the country to have multiple MACPs. William H. Frishman, M.D., the Barbara and William Rosenthal Professor and Chairman of the Department of Medicine, received the designation in 2001 and Valiere Alcena, M.D., adjunct professor of medicine, was awarded the title last year.

"It is truly an honor to be elected by my peers to Mastership of the American College of Physicians," said Dr. Peterson. "I have been blessed with so much support from many friends at New York Medical College since coming here to start my residency in internal medicine at Metropolitan in 1982."

Masters comprise a small group of highly distinguished physicians, selected from among ACP fellows, who have achieved recognition in medicine by exhibiting preeminence in practice or medical research. Masters are noteworthy for holding positions of high honor or making significant contributions to medical science or the art of medicine. The honor lasts a lifetime.



Stephen J. Peterson, M.D., professor of medicine and executive vice chair in the Department of Medicine, has been elected to Mastership in the American College of Physicians (ACP) for his notable contributions in medicine including teaching, clinical medicine, preventive medicine, improvements in the delivery of health care and contributions to medical literature.

"An MACP designation is reserved only for individuals at the very top of their field," said Dr. Frishman. "Dr. Peterson has truly achieved this high status and has demonstrated an outstanding record of scholarly achievement and teaching excellence. He has both national and international recognition and has outstanding clinical and administrative achievements."

Dr. Frishman, who sponsored Dr. Peterson's nomination, characterized him as a role model to countless medical students, residents, fellows, junior faculty and practicing physicians, as well as a catalyst for program development.

"His innovative teaching style, coupled with an encyclopedic knowledge of internal medicine, and his flair for the dramatic in presentation, add up to a very dynamic educator," said Dr. Frishman.

Dr. Peterson has received numerous awards and honors from both the College and professional associations. He is a member of the Robert Goldstein, M.D., Society, an honor reserved for

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Former Health Secretary will speak at AOA lecture



Intramural research awards offered to ten researchers

Ten research projects are getting underway at the College this winter, seeded by grants of \$10,000 each from the university's Intramural Research Support Program. Funded studies will examine Lyme disease, brain and nervous system pathology, pneumonia and antimicrobial resistance, cardiovascular disease, tumors and hearing problems, prostate cancer and premature infancy.

In keeping with the College's mission to foster biomedical, behavioral and other health-related research, the Intramural Research Program was established to provide support for pilot or bridge research conducted by full-time faculty without current funding. The College invests its support in these early promising studies in the hope that the research will later receive funding from outside sources, such as the National Institutes of Health.

"This year the field was quite competitive with 23 applications received—almost twice last year's number," said Lea Emmett, R.N., M.S., director of research information and development and associate director of the Office of Research Administration. "We hope this seed money will enable these talented investigators to compete successfully for extramural funding."

The New York Medical College Fund, a research endowment established by a consortium of parents, faculty, students, staff and members of the Alumni Association, partially underwrites the program. Remaining funding comes from the Castle-Krob Fund, an endowment established by John K. Castle, an honorary member and former chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Following are this year's recipients:

Mary M. Petzke, Ph.D., research assistant professor of microbiology and immunology, is looking to establish which of certain proteins called toll-receptors recognize the Lyme disease bacterium *B. burgdorferi*. It is already known that three toll receptors, or TLRs, are involved in the development of human symptoms. Dr. Petzke will study the levels of two other toll receptors, TLR7 and TLR9, in the cells of patients with Lyme disease, comparing them to those of healthy adults.

Koko Murakami, Ph.D., research assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy, is studying synaptic regulations of protein compositions and productivity in the brain and exploring how abnormal regulation results in a particular pathological state. Recent advances in the field have strongly indicated that remodeling of functional and structural components of synapses supports information processing and storage in the brain.

Abraham M. Brown, Ph.D., research associate professor of cell biology and anatomy, has developed an experimental approach to identify mitochondrial targets of zinc, and is exploring how this leads to cell death in the nervous system. The strategy relies on arsenic compounds that react with sulfur-containing proteins in a manner similar to zinc. The sulfur-containing proteins that will be identified in the approach may be relevant to the zinc toxicity that has been observed after stroke, head trauma and in aging. He also expects his experiments will identify some of the chemotherapeutic targets of arsenic compounds and provide clues to the design of less toxic drugs.

Guiqing Wang, M.D., Ph.D., clinical assistant professor of pathology and research assistant professor of microbiology and immunology,

The College invests its support in these early promising studies in the hope that the research will later receive funding from outside sources, such as the National Institutes of Health.

hopes to determine the phenotypic and genomic characteristics of carbapenem-resistance in *K. pneumoniae*. The study will use several cutting-edge techniques, such as polymerase chain reaction with *in vitro* susceptibility phenotypes and clinical outcomes. The research aims to identify new molecular targets for novel antimicrobial agents and drug therapies, and for development of more rapid and accurate laboratory tests in patients infected with resistant organisms.

Houli Jiang, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor of pharmacology, will investigate the formation, release, hydrolysis and biological activity of red blood cell epoxyeicosatrienoic acids, along with the regulation of this novel mechanism in terms of its impact on cardiovascular diseases. This research may provide the basis for future studies on hypertension, diabetes mellitus, sickle cell anemia and atherogenesis.

John Thomas Pinto, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, will examine the molecular mechanisms that underlie the development of oxidative stress and low-grade vascular inflammation in aging and diabetes. The research will also elucidate endogenous vasoprotective antioxidant pathways that can be controlled by pharmacological agents or managed by diet to reverse cardiovascular alterations in age-related metabolic diseases.

Charles T. Stier, Jr., Ph.D., associate professor of pharmacology, will determine whether niacin, a B-vitamin commonly used to treat high blood levels of triglycerides and cholesterol in humans, will prevent end-organ damage in rats with hypertension and obesity.

Frances Hannan, Ph.D., assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy, will investigate whether Neurofibromatosis Type 2 (NF2)-deficient mice also have hearing defects. Dr. Hannan will look for defects in the localization of proteins within the inner ear.

Tze-chen Hsieh, Ph.D., research associate professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, proposes to advance the knowledge by which resveratrol, a dietary component found in grapes, peanuts and other food items, can protect against prostate cancer.

Govindaiah Vinukonda Ph.D., instructor of pediatrics, is working on a mechanism-based strategy for neuroprotection in premature infants with intraventricular hemorrhage. ▲

Appointments & Promotions

School of Medicine

Appointments:

Abraham M. Brown, Ph.D.
Research Associate Professor of
Cell Biology and Anatomy

Deborah M. Friedman, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics

Promotions:

John M. Abrahams, M.D., M.S.
Associate Professor of Clinical
Neurosurgery

Adele R. Brudnicki, M.D.
Associate Professor of Radiology

Frantz Duffoo, M.D.
Associate Professor of
Clinical Medicine

Usha S. Krishnan, M.D.
Associate Professor of Pediatrics

Carl I. Thompson, Ph.D.
Professor of Physiology

Jinil Yoo, M.D.
Professor of Clinical Medicine

Alumnus returns to campus to deliver research forum keynote

The Thirteenth Annual Medical Student Research Forum (MSRF), to be held on Thursday, February 5, from noon to 5 p.m. in the Medical Education Center's Nevins Auditorium, will feature oral and poster presentations in basic science and clinical categories and a keynote speech by alumnus Shinjiro Hirose, M.D. '97. Considering his career path, the honor is a very apt one.

Dr. Hirose, a pediatric surgeon, is assistant professor of surgery at the Division of Pediatric Surgery and Fetal Treatment Center at the University of California, San Francisco. He earned a B.S. degree in mechanical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and performed research in telerobotics at the SECOM Intelligent Systems laboratory and at the Charles Stark Draper Laboratories in Cambridge, Mass., before realizing that medicine was his true calling.

After earning his medical degree from New York Medical College, Dr. Hirose completed three years of clinical training in surgery at the UC Davis Medical Center. He went on



Pediatric surgeon Shinjiro Hirose, M.D. '97, who specializes in minimally invasive and fetal surgery, will present the keynote lecture at the Thirteenth Annual Medical Student Research Forum.

to a post-doctoral fellowship in the UCSF Fetal Treatment Center, investigating neural regeneration after spinal cord injury and its implications in fetal surgery for myelomeningocele, a type of spina bifida. He completed his specialty training in pediatric surgery at the Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital of New York at Columbia University.

Dr. Hirose's interests and specialties include minimally invasive surgery, fetal and neonatal surgery, bariatric and hepatobiliary surgery, robotics, and surgical education. His research interests include fetal surgery for disorders of twin gestations, congenital diaphragmatic hernia, myelomeningocele, and gastroschisis.

The Medical Student Research Forum is coordinated by the Medical Student Research Committee whose mission is to educate and support medical students and physicians in the discipline of scientific research, recognizing that a fundamental understanding of the relationship between medical research and the practice of medicine enables physician-scientists to more thoroughly serve patients and the community. ▲

GSA announces keynote speaker for the Graduate Student Research Forum

Students in the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences (GSBMS) are gearing up for the twenty-first annual Graduate Student Research Forum (GSRF) set for Tuesday, March 31. The event, sponsored by the Graduate Student Association (GSA), features a full day of activities, including oral and poster presentations of student-conducted research and a keynote by a renowned scientist.

This year's GSRF keynote speaker is Kathleen W. Scotto, Ph.D., vice president of research and interim dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ). She is also professor of pharmacology at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) and a member of the school's Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ).

In her previous position, Dr. Scotto was associate professor of molecular pharmacology and experimental therapeutics at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center



The Graduate Student Association will welcome this year's research forum keynote speaker, Kathleen W. Scotto, Ph.D., vice president of research and interim dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

in New York City and professor of pharmacology at the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia. She received her Ph.D. from the Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Rockefeller University.

In addition to her administrative roles, Dr. Scotto maintains an active NIH-funded laboratory at CINJ. Internationally recognized for her work on the regulation of drug resistance genes that impact sensitivity of cancer cells to therapeutic agents, Dr. Scotto is the author of numerous articles and reviews and holds several patents in this area. She serves on a variety of committees within the cancer field, and is on the editorial board of two cancer journals.

Her involvement in the development of a novel state-wide infrastructure to develop and train the clinical/translational research teams of the future combines her dedication to training young scientists with her passion for the translation of basic science into new disease treatments. ▲

D.P.T. program receives ten-year accreditation

Last fall, the Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.) program in the School of Public Health was awarded full accreditation by the Commission of Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) for its doctorate in physical therapy program. The accreditation will last for ten years—the maximum given to a program of this type.

The doctoral program was granted accreditation based on its accomplishments in education, research and service. Michael J. Majsak, P.T., Ed.D., associate professor and chairman of the Department of Physical Therapy, said the program was commended for its progress in addressing the health and wellness of surrounding communities. The department is one of only two physical therapy programs in the country situated within a school of public health.

“Being part of the School of Public Health is a unique asset for us, and puts us in an unusually strong position to address the current needs of society,” said Dr. Majsak. “More than ever, physical therapy is involved in people’s health and wellness, in addition to traditional areas of patient care, and our department is fully prepared to address those needs.”

Physical therapy education accreditation is a peer review mechanism designed to assure educational quality. CAPTE is the only accreditation agency recognized by the United States Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation to accredit entry-level physical therapist and physical therapist assistant education programs.

During the accreditation process, evaluators were impressed with the department’s well-developed partnerships with local schools and community-based organizations. Students work within community settings on projects or learning opportunities—an exercise program for elementary school children through the City of New Rochelle Department of Education, a health and wellness program for Transportation Security Administration employees at Westchester County Airport and La Guardia Airport, a wellness

program for preschoolers at Roosevelt School in Ossining, and a conditioning program for children with disabilities at a high school in the Bronx. The department also serves as the research arm for the Achilles Track Club, a club for disabled road racers based in New York City.



The diligence and dedication of the Department of Physical Therapy during the accreditation review process paid off in the form of ten-year accreditation by the Commission of Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. Standing from left are: Bobby Belarmino, P.T., D.P.T., assistant professor of clinical physical therapy; Fiona Villate, administrative secretary; and Michael J. Majsak, P.T., Ed.D., chairman and associate professor of physical therapy. Seated from left are: Catherine Curtis, P.T., Ed.D., assistant professor of physical therapy, and Janet Dolot, P.T., D.P.T., assistant professor of clinical physical therapy and director of clinical education in physical therapy. Not pictured: Susan L. Ronan, P.T., D.P.T., assistant professor of clinical physical therapy.

The doctoral program was also praised for its integrative teaching strength, which utilizes faculty in the School of Medicine, the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences and the School of Public Health.

“We really need to acknowledge and thank School of Public Health Deans Amler and O’Brien [Robert W. Amler, M.D., dean, and James J. O’Brien, Ph.D., vice dean] and the faculty from each of our schools for their help in achieving this milestone. We couldn’t run this program without them,” said Dr. Majsak. “Each school contributes to our success, and I believe this collaboration distinguishes us from other schools. We work in tandem with basic science and medical school faculty, physicians and clinicians, and public health professionals to cover our curricular needs. We draw from all those departments to offer a well-structured, problem-based learning format,

which results in a superb educational environment. I think that was obvious to evaluators.”

There are currently 76 students from around the country enrolled in the three-year physical therapy program. Graduates consistently rank in the top tier of state and national passing rates on the National Licensure Examination.

The P.T. department was first accredited for a master’s program in 1995, which was due to be renewed in 2002. In the forefront of what became a trend for programs in physical therapy across the country, the department expanded its curriculum to a doctor of physical therapy degree program and reapplied for accreditation at the doctoral degree level in 2002. The first class of D.P.T. students graduated in 2005.

The transition to a doctor of physical therapy degree as the first professional degree in physical therapy stemmed from a number of factors, which Dr. Majsak enumerated:

“First, the scope of physical therapy practice had become so broad that additional time and coursework were necessary to educate students in the range of care physical therapists provide.

Second, the high levels of clinical proficiency and autonomy, which physical therapists are expected to show immediately upon graduation, required greater clinical education experiences. Last, changes in the practice acts in more than 40 states occurred that allow patients the right to direct access to physical therapists without first attaining a physician referral.”

Dr. Majsak continued, “As early as 2000 we had identified the need to move to a doctoral degree program. We were very proud when we became only the fourth school in New York and the thirty-fourth in the United States to move to a doctoral degree in physical therapy in 2002. Of the 210 programs in physical therapy in the United States, 185 now offer a D.P.T. degree. It’s always nice to be a leader, rather than a follower in professional growth and achievement.” ▲

Stephen J. Peterson, M.D., to be honored with Mastership by the American College of Physicians

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faculty who have received student-voted Excellence in Teaching Awards for more than ten years. He has published numerous studies on multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, metabolic syndrome, obesity and diabetes.

Dr. Peterson is a 1982 graduate of Cebu Doctor’s College of Medicine in Cebu City, Philippines. After completing three years of internal medicine residency training at Metropolitan Hospital Center, he was selected to remain as the administrative chief medical resident. During that time, his chief of medicine was Karl P. Adler, M.D., now president and chief executive officer of the College. Dr. Adler was impressed with Dr. Peterson’s work, and gave

him his first job at the College as associate program director in 1986.

Dr. Peterson still focuses much of his time on the community, serving as a police surgeon for the New York State Troopers and on the foundation board for the Friends of Firefighters. He is also a faculty advisor for La Casita de la Salud, the student-run clinic in East Harlem.

He works tirelessly for the ACP. Another ACP Governor, Joseph J. Fins, M.D., Chief of the Division of Medical Ethics at Weill Cornell Medical College, called Dr. Peterson’s service to the ACP “brilliant.”

“He has displayed the sort of intelligence and good humor that has made him such an effective and highly-regarded leader,” said Dr. Fins. “He is articulate and honest without ever being abrasive and is always sagacious and well-intentioned. I am always amazed how Dr. Peterson balances burdens and benefits and always maintains his integrity and the soundness of the groups that he has been called to lead. If a master of the ACP is one who leads by example and who embodies the virtues that we hold dear in our profession, then Dr. Peterson is especially worthy of this designation.” ▲

Former Health Secretary will speak at AOA lecture

The New York Medical College Iota Chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA), the national honor medical society, will host its 53rd visiting professor lecture and induction ceremony on March 25. The lecture, scheduled for 5 p.m. in the Medical Education Center's Nevins Auditorium, will be followed by an induction ceremony and banquet at Tappan Hill in Tarrytown, N.Y.

Induction into AOA is reserved for the medical school's highest academic performers who exhibit the qualities of good character, leadership and professionalism and a dedication to community service, according to William H. Frishman, M.D., the Barbara and William Rosenthal Professor and Chair of Medicine, who serves as councilor of the Iota chapter. Thirteen students in the Class of 2009 will be inducted into AOA as senior members. Members of the Class of 2010 are still being considered for induction as juniors.

The evening will also honor two faculty members for their roles in the academic community—Gladys M. Ayala, M.D., M.P.H., senior associate dean for student affairs, and Mark Rabiner, M.D., assistant professor of medicine. The 2009 alumni initiates are Peter A. Indelicato, M.D. '69, the Wayne Huizenga Professor and Chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Florida Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine Institute, and head team physician of the University of Florida Gators, and James E. Udelson, M.D. '81, associate chief, Division of Cardiology at Tufts Medical Center in Boston.



Former U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph A. Califano, Jr., will present the AOA Iota chapter's 53rd annual visiting professor lecture.

Ronald H. Weissman, M.D. '77, clinical assistant professor of medicine, will receive the 2009 AOA Volunteer Clinical Faculty Award for his contributions to the College's educational mission.

The AOA visiting professor lecture will be given by Joseph A. Califano, Jr., chairman of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA), an independent non-profit research center affiliated with Columbia University, and a member of the College's Board of Trustees.

He holds faculty appointments at Columbia University and is a member of the Institute of

Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. In the late 1970s Mr. Califano served as the United States Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under President Jimmy Carter. Major initiatives during his tenure included programs to support childhood immunizations and anti-smoking campaigns. Under his leadership the department also began efforts to collect defaulted student loans.

Prior to that, Mr. Califano was special assistant to President Lyndon B. Johnson, serving as the president's top domestic aide in charge of developing the president's legislative program, as well as coordinating economic policies. He worked on a variety of domestic problems, including labor-management relations, balance of payments, health care, education, environmental and urban issues.

Throughout the early 1960s, Mr. Califano held various legal positions in the United States Department of Defense, eventually becoming general counsel for the United States Army. He was awarded the Distinguished Civilian Service Medal, the highest civilian award given by the Army.

In the 1980s Mr. Califano served as special counsel to the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, to head the investigation of allegations of drug use and sexual misconduct involving members of Congress and pages.

Mr. Califano graduated from the College of the Holy Cross and received his law degree from Harvard Law School. ▲

Members of College community sound off on healthcare issues for the Obama-Biden transition project

New York Medical College took part in a grassroots effort toward healthcare reform when it hosted a Health Care Community Discussion on January 6, for the Obama-Biden Transition Project. At the request of Secretary-designate for Health and Human Services, Tom Daschle, these group discussions of representatives from various disciplines were held nationwide to focus on identifying strategies for implementing the new administration's framework for health care reform. Issues include modernizing the health care system to improve quality and reduce costs, expanding coverage to all Americans and improving prevention and public health.

Dean of the School of Public Health **Robert W. Amler, M.D.**, standing far right, facilitated the dialogue among faculty, administration and students. The result was a report submitted to the Obama-Biden transition team.

Participating in the discussion were, seated from left: **Ansley Bacon, Ph.D.**, chair of the Department of Disability and Human Development and professor of public health practice; M.P.H. student and president of Student Healthcare Executives club **Nina Luppino**;

second-year M.D./M.P.H. student **Kellie Faircloth**; **Annette Choolfaian, R.N., M.P.A.**, chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management and professor of public health practice; **Catharine L. Curtis, P.T., Ed.D.**, assistant professor of physical therapy; and **Diane Heck, Ph.D.**, chair and professor in the Department of Environmental Health Science.

Standing from left, were: **James J. O'Brien, Ph.D.**, vice dean of the School of Public Health; **Denise Tahara, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of public health practice; **Marian F. McGowan, M.S., M.Ed.**, assistant dean for admissions in the School of Public Health; **Deborah Del Pino**, administrative assistant in the Department of Health Policy and

Management; M.P.H. student **Eric Li**; **Deborah Viola, M.B.A., Ph.D.**, assistant professor of health policy and management; **Peter Arno, Ph.D.**, professor of health policy and management; **Elizabeth DeLuca**, Dr.P.H. candidate in the Department of Health Policy and Management; **Lydia V. Cavieux, M.P.A.**, assistant professor of public health practice; **Judith A. Ehren, J.D.**, associate provost and university registrar; **Martha S. Grayson, M.D.**, vice dean for medical education and professor of clinical medicine; and **Amy Ansehl, R.N., M.S.N., F.N.P.C.**, assistant professor of public health practice. ▲



Career advising program gets a shout out from AAMC-OSR

Medical students have weighed in: the four-year integrated career advising program at New York Medical College is a standout.

Last fall the Student Affairs Committee of the American Medical Association's Organization of Student Representatives (AAMC-OSR) released "Profiles in Career Advising Documents" (PCAD), which highlight career advising programs considered successful by the schools' medical students. New York Medical College was one of nine medical schools from across the United States—large and small, public and private—to be profiled for its

comprehensive support for career planning, academic progress, specialty and residency program choice, residency applications and the Match and post-Match processes.

While each profile offers a different approach to career advising, all are focused on helping students select the residency program best suited for them. Other schools to appear on the list include Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, University of California, Los Angeles David Geffen School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

New York Medical College was recognized for its efforts to assist students along the path to their goals, beginning at orientation and continuing through the four-year curriculum via a series of self-assessments, workshops and discussions on career exploration. The College's extensive network of faculty advisors and career mentors was also cited.

The Profiles in Career Advising Documents report is meant to foster discussions for enhancing medical school career advising programs at all medical schools. The documents are available at www.aamc.org/members/osr/careeradvising.htm. ▲

Calendar of Events for 2009 Commencement

DAY/TIME/EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
Saturday, May 16		
6:00 p.m.	Annual Alumni Banquet 50 th Reunion Cocktail Reception, Class of 1959 – Awarding of Gold Diplomas 25 th Reunion Cocktail Reception, Class of 1984 – Awarding of Silver Diplomas	The Sheraton Hotel, NYC Tracey Clayworth/594-4648
7:00 p.m.	General Cocktail Reception	
8:00 p.m.	Dinner and Awards Presentation	
Sunday, May 17		
12:30 p.m.	Luncheon for 5-Year Reunion Classes, Campus Tours Alumni Association Annual Meeting	Tent, Administration Building Lawn Tracey Clayworth/594-4648
Thursday, May 21		
11:30 a.m.	Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences Luncheon	Tent, Administration Building Lawn Marge Riley/594-3163
2:00 p.m.	Distribution of Academic Attire (SPH and GSBMS)	Medical Education Center Lobby University Registrar/594-4495
3:00 p.m.	Commencement Rehearsal (SPH and GSBMS)	Nevins Auditorium Marge Riley/594-3163 Stefania Bonanni/594-4843
4:30 p.m.	SPH Physical Therapy Recognition Ceremony SPH Speech-Language Pathology Recognition Ceremony	Nevins Auditorium The Center for Interactive Learning Fiona Villate/594-4917 Liz Carrion/594-4239
5:00 p.m.	School of Public Health Reception	Tent, Administration Building Lawn Jacqueline Jenkins/594-4847
5:30 p.m.	School of Public Health Dinner and Awards	Tent, Administration Building Lawn Jacqueline Jenkins/594-4847
Friday, May 22		
10:00 a.m.	Fifth Pathway Completion Ceremony & Anointing of Graduates' Hands	Tent, Administration Building Lawn Regina Damon/594-4490
11:30 a.m.	Fifth Pathway Reception	Tent, Administration Building Lawn Regina Damon/594-4490
Tuesday, May 26		
8:30 a.m.	Commencement Breakfast & Rehearsal (School of Medicine)	Nevins Auditorium Marissa Casale/594-4609
11:00 a.m.	Distribution of Academic Attire (School of Medicine)	Medical Education Center Lobby University Registrar/594-4495
12:45 p.m.	University Commencement Mass and Anointing of Graduates' Hands	Tent, Administration Building Lawn Deacon Lawrence O'Toole/594-4646
2:30 p.m.	Senior Honors Convocation	Tent, Administration Building Lawn Cathy Pantoja/594-4498
4:30 p.m.	University Reception	Medical Education Center Plaza Faye Seltzer/594-3655
Wednesday, May 27—Commencement Day		
3:00 p.m.	Classes of 2009 Assemble	Carnegie Hall Pat Travis/594-3045/4575
5:00 p.m.	150th Commencement Ceremony	Carnegie Hall Pat Travis/594-3045/4575

Almost like housecalls: the WIHD dental van travels to the people it serves

“It’s the best thing to ever happen for disabled children.” That’s what one director at a school for developmentally disabled children in Yonkers, N.Y., called the Westchester Institute for Human Development’s (WIHD) dental van.

“It allows our entire disciplinary team to participate in a child’s experience at the dentist,” said Susan Moon, the aforementioned director of nursing services at the School for Integrative and Adaptive Learning (SAIL) at Ferncliff Manor in Yonkers. “The result is that our kids love going to the dentist, and visit the dental van and the van driver even on days when they don’t have a scheduled visit.”

Demand for the van became so great this year that the institute began dispatching the vehicle five days a week to agencies and group homes that serve people with developmental disabilities. The mobile dental van outreach program utilizes two dental suites, a dentist, dental assistant and dental hygienist to treat up to 20 patients a day.

“We’re not just doing cleanings and screenings,” said Patricia Seagriff-Curtin, D.D.S., assistant professor of clinical dental medicine at NYMC and director of dental services at WIHD. “We provide all the services that you would receive in a regular dental office, except those that require general anesthesia.”

At Ferncliff Manor, where 55 students between the ages of 5 and 21 learn to live with disabilities like autism and behavioral issues, a visit to the dentist could be traumatic. In the past, it required scheduling an ambulette, as well as sending out one staff member to accompany the child to the visit and manage any difficulties in the waiting room and the new environment. The 35-foot dental van, which visits the school once a month, has changed all that.

“We can now send the occupational therapist with the child to help them learn to brush their teeth,” said Ms. Moon. “The psychologist might accompany a child who is learning not to hit, so the lesson can be continued in the dental chair. A speech therapist can go out with a child to help them ask questions, or say things like ‘toothbrush,’ or ‘Stop please,’ or ‘I’m scared.’”

Ms. Moon said the school never could have afforded to pay these specialists to go with a child to an off-site visit. “The quality of the dental care is just so much better now. Our teachers and specialists can participate with the students and it isn’t a completely overwhelming experience,” she said. “We can also introduce the children to the dentists before the appointment. Many of our kids think of the dentist and the van driver as their friends.”

Some of the children need to be mildly sedated just to be able to handle the dental visit, she said.



The Westchester Institute for Human Development dental van allows agencies to make dental visits a learning experience for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Having the van on-site allows better monitoring of those students.

“Sometimes we even have parents come visit children here at the school and then go outside and accompany them to their dental visit. In every way, the visit to the dentist is enhanced because of the van,” said Ms. Moon.

“The dental van helps us circumvent the whole issue of access to care faced by individuals with developmental disabilities.”

Patricia Seagriff-Curtin, D.D.S.

The dental van was purchased in 2004 with a \$200,000 grant secured with the help of former state Senator Nick Spano. The goal was to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities in the Hudson Valley region receive quality oral health services. The van makes scheduled visits as far south as Yonkers, and as far north as Millbrook, N.Y.

WIHD dentists rotate which days they’ll spend in the van, working from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., accompanied by a dental assistant and dental hygienist. One retired dentist also works two days a week in the van.

“The dental van helps us circumvent the whole issue of access to care faced by individuals with developmental disabilities. Many dentists in the community do not feel adequately trained or comfortable treating this population,” said Dr. Seagriff. “Another barrier is financial. Many dentists do not participate in the Medicaid program, which happens to be the primary dental insurance for our special needs patients.”

“The dental van enables us to reach out into the community to provide dental education and services to a population that otherwise would have difficulty receiving care, if at all,” said Joseph F. Morales, D.D.S., chairman of the Department of Dental Medicine and professor of clinical dental medicine. “Dr. Seagriff continues to be a champion of special needs dental care and the implementation of the van is just another example of her commitment and leadership in our profession.”

Dr. Morales added that Rosa Martinez, D.D.S., assistant professor of clinical dental medicine and program director of the College’s general practice residency, is considering resident involvement in this endeavor to fulfill the required residency experience, which must include community education and service. ▲

Robert W. Amler, M.D., is appointed vice president of government affairs

At press time, Karl P. Adler, M.D., president and chief executive officer, announced that Robert W. Amler, M.D., dean of the School of Public Health, has been named vice president of government affairs. Dr. Amler’s expanded role reflects the major strides he has made in developing relationships with government entities at the local, state and federal level since joining the College in January 2005.