

# inTOUCH

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EDUCATION ► RESEARCH ► SERVICE

## Members of the Class of 2015 proudly don their new white coats



Grand Marshal Paul M. Wallach, M.D., vice dean for medical education, preceded White Coat Keynote Speaker, Alan Kadish, M.D., president, in the processional.

The newest members of the School of Medicine gathered in the presence of their families, friends, faculty and administration to formally receive the garb of their future profession—the white coat. The White Coat Ceremony, held under the tent on September 23, marked a milestone in the Class of 2015’s medical education that not even a deluge of rain could dampen. The annual ritual is a rite of passage in which students accept the symbol of the high professional standards for patient care and the practice of medicine.

More than 850 guests hailing from more than 20 states arrived on campus to listen to welcoming remarks offered by Ralph A. O’Connell, M.D., provost and dean of the School of Medicine, and Paul M. Wallach, M.D., vice dean for medical education. Matthew A. Pravetz, O.F.M., Ph.D. ’88, associate professor of cell biology and anatomy, shared

his perspective with parents in a talk entitled “My Child—The Doctor?” He described the new crop of students and some of their trials and tribulations in the first days of medical school. Guests later got to learn first hand about “Life as a Medical Student” at a panel discussion by third- and fourth-year medical students, moderated by Dr. Wallach and Gladys M. Ayala, M.D., M.P.H., senior associate dean for student affairs and minority affairs.

After guests enjoyed lunch the ceremony began with the processional of students proudly passing by their families and friends on their way to the front rows of the audience. Dr. Wallach, serving as Grand Marshal, presided over the ceremony that opened with the national anthem sung by first-year members of the The Arrhythmias, an a cappella group of medical students, an invocation given by Rabbi Moshe D. Krupka,

continued on page 5

### HIGHLIGHTS

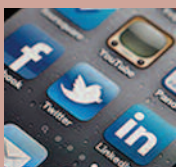


Employees recognized for their years of dedicated service

2

3

Center for Long Term Care Research and Policy tackles tough issues of aging

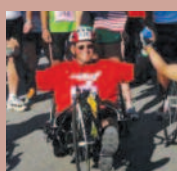


College expands presence and sets policy on social media

4

6

13th Annual Race for Rehab is a winner



New York Medical College  
A member of the Touro College and University System  
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Accolades

■ *Mitchell S. Cairo, M.D.*, professor of pediatrics, medicine, pathology, microbiology and immunology and cell biology and anatomy, and chief, pediatric hematology, oncology and stem cell transplantation, presented the Denis Burkitt Lecture at the International Cancer Conference at Trinity College Dublin in September. The event was held in association with the Irish Cancer Society. Dr. Cairo presented “Burkitt Lymphoma—Treatment, Strategies and Outcomes in Children and Adolescents: A Tribute to Denis Burkitt.” Dr. Burkitt, a graduate of the School of Medicine at Trinity College, discovered the lymphoma named for him 50 years ago in Uganda.

■ *Yan Ding and Victor Garcia, Ph.D.* candidates in the laboratory of *Michal Laniado Schwartzman, Ph.D.*, professor and acting chair of the Department of Pharmacology, received travel awards for the best abstract presentations at the 2011 American Physiological Society Conference, “Physiology of Cardiovascular Disease: Gender Disparities,” held in October at the University of Mississippi.

■ *Janet Dolot, P.T., D.P.T.*, assistant professor of clinical physical therapy, *Sharon Fong, P.T., D.P.T. '11*, and *Jared Ruggieri, P.T., D.P.T. '11*, presented a poster, “An Ergonomic Program Promoting Upper Body Musculoskeletal Health for Office Based New York Medical College Employees,” at the 22nd Annual Symposium on Health Care Services in New York: Research and Practice. The event was held in New York in October and sponsored by the Greater New York Hospital Association Foundation and the United Hospital Fund.

■ *Shoujin Hao, Ph.D.*, a postdoctoral fellow in the laboratory of pharmacology professor *Nicholas R. Ferreri, Ph.D.*, presented a paper, “NKCC2A Regulates NFAT5-dependent TNF Production in Thick Ascending Limb,” at the American Heart Association’s High Blood Pressure Research 2011 Scientific Sessions held in Orlando in September. The abstract was scored in the top 10 percent of all abstracts at the conference, and Dr. Hao was invited to present the paper in a special session at the AHA Scientific Sessions in November 2011.

continued on page 3

## Employees recognized for their years of dedicated service

Nearly 150 employees were honored at the 23rd Annual Employee Recognition Program, held on September 21 under the tent on the Valhalla campus. Awards were presented to faculty and staff celebrating five-year milestone anniversaries of their years of service, ranging from 5 to 45 years. Employees celebrating 25 years of service were officially welcomed to the College’s Quarter Century Club with a proclamation, and retirees were invited back to campus to visit with old friends and colleagues.

Karl P. Adler, M.D., chief executive officer, welcomed a lively audience that attended the morning event. “When New York Medical College joined the Touro College and University System in May, we created one of the largest medical and health science educational institutions in the country. I want to add a personal note of thanks and appreciation, which I will address to every employee of New York Medical College—not just those celebrating milestone anniversaries today, but everyone who has worked here during the long and sometimes arduous process of joining with a new sponsor. And now we have come to this day—a much brighter day in which we look forward to a more secure future with our partner institution, Touro College,” Dr. Adler said.

“I want to personally thank every person here. Thank you for staying the course, for continuing to do your job during times of uncertainty and reduced circumstances, and for believing in the future of this great institution.”

Dr. Adler’s sentiments were echoed by David Raab, chief of staff to the President, who spoke on behalf of President Alan Kadish, M.D. “I must say that it is nothing other than an immense pleasure for me to know and work with all of you. And I know firsthand that you all will continue in this affiliation process and our joint growth with the same enthusiasm and vigor that you’ve demonstrated until now, as will the rest of the Touro administration, faculty and staff,” said Mr. Raab. “Those individuals being honored today, in particular, set a wonderful example for all of us. Your very presence speaks to the values that have been so vital to the success of New York Medical College over the past decades. You represent the proud history of this distinguished institution. You represent stability and continuity even through times of uncertainty. And you represent an unwavering loyalty and commitment to New York Medical College and its mission of excellence in health-care education, delivery and research.” ▲



Talking shop were 25-year honoree Stephen J. Peterson, M.D., professor of medicine and executive vice chair in the Department of Medicine; 10-year honoree Kathryn E. McGoldrick, M.D., professor and chair of the Department of Anesthesiology; and 40-year honoree Albert Lowenfels, M.D., professor of surgery.



The Health Sciences Library was well represented with 10-year honorees Christian Sheridan, library assistant, and Marie Ascher, M.L.S., assistant professor and head of reference, and 5-year honoree Loretta Taylor, M.A., interlibrary loan supervisor.



George Nestler, associate vice president and controller and a 35-year honoree, celebrated with Diane Alexander, university bursar, and Jamie Costello, student account coordinator.



Forty-five years of service earned Mario A. Inchiosa, Ph.D., professor of pharmacology, the honor of saying a few words to the assembly.



Marking three decades of service, these honorees posed on stage: Michal Laniado Schwartzman, Ph.D., professor and acting chair of the Department of Pharmacology; Maynard High, Ph.D., associate professor of radiology; Linda Damiano, administrator in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation; Margaret Astrologo, assistant director of the Office of Continuing Medical Education; and Francis L. Belloni, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences.

# Center for Long Term Care Research and Policy tackles tough issues of aging

**W**hat is it like to grow old in New York, Paris, London or Tokyo? How does caring for your aging parents affect your own earnings and lifetime wealth? How much more does it affect female baby boomers? How much do the top CEOs in the United States contribute to Social Security?

These are just some of the questions being asked and researched at the new Center for Long Term Care Research and Policy, a division of the Institute of Public Health in the School of Health Sciences and Practice (SHSP). Led by center director Peter Arno, Ph.D., professor of health policy and management and director of the Dr.P.H. program, and deputy director of the center and SHSP faculty member Michael Gusmano Ph.D., the center is dedicated to addressing health care disparities, health care needs and caregiving across the lifespan, and to promoting fair and equitable financing of long term care in the United States.

“Long-term care is an issue that eventually touches every family and every community,” said Robert W. Amler, M.D., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president, government affairs. “This center will focus the best talent on exploring novel solutions to bring us better care options and sustainable cost structures.”

On November 4, the center held its inaugural colloquium on long term care, featuring New York state assemblyman Richard N. Gottfried and New York State Health Foundation CEO James R. Knickman, Ph.D., as special guest speakers.

“We are facing a massive demographic transition in our country as baby boomers age. Our overall objective in setting up the center was to examine new ways to improve long term care in this country,” said Dr. Arno, who praised College leaders for demonstrating the institutional will to become involved in the issue. “We have been fortunate to have the support of our leadership at the School of Health Sciences and Practice and New York Medical College to help the center get off the ground. We hope to work with and live up to the expectations of our colleagues.”

Dr. Arno’s recent work includes studies of the economics of informal caregiving and long-term care; social and environmental determinants of obesity and diabetes; regulation and pricing practices of the pharmaceutical industry; access, quality and outcome measures related to HIV disease; and the impact of income support policies on population health. Based on this work, Dr. Arno has testified before numerous U.S. House and Senate committees.

Dr. Gusmano has published widely in the areas of health policy, aging, and comparative welfare state analysis, including his most recent book, *Health Care in World Cities*. He is also a research scholar at



Thanks to the efforts of this group, the Center for Long Term Care Research and Policy is up and running. Seated from left are: director Peter Arno, Ph.D.; Robert W. Amler, M.D., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice; and deputy director Michael Gusmano, Ph.D. Standing from left are: research scholars Qiuhi Shi, Ph.D., and Deborah Viola, Ph.D.; advisory board member Annette Choolfaian, R.N., M.P.A., professor and chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management; and research administrator Kenneth Knapp, Ph.D.

The Hastings Center. His current research includes an investigation of health care equity in the U.S. and other countries, and an examination of the ethical and policy dimensions of care for patients with cancer. Dr. Gusmano is the co-director of the World Cities Project—the first effort to compare the performance of health, social and long-term care systems in the four largest cities among the wealthy nations of the world: New York, London, Paris and Tokyo.

“We are trying to translate our research into practice,” said Dr. Gusmano. “And we are using our partnerships with New York City, Westchester County, and various foundations and NGOs in order to do this.”

Research scholars at the center include Deborah Viola, Ph.D., associate professor of health policy and management and associate director of the doctoral program; and Qiuhi Shi, Ph.D., professor and director of biostatistics in the Department of Epidemiology and Community Health. Kenneth Knapp, Ph.D., assistant professor of health policy and management, serves as the center’s research administrator.

For more information on the Center for Long Term Care Research and Policy, visit [www.nymc.edu/shsp/CLTC/index.html](http://www.nymc.edu/shsp/CLTC/index.html). ▲

## Accolades

continued from page 2

- **Rosa Martinez, D.D.S.**, assistant professor of clinical dental medicine and program director of the general practice residency program, was awarded the Ninth District Dental Association’s 2011 D. Austin Sniffen Medal of Honor Award. The annual award is the most prestigious honor given by the Ninth District, a component of the New York State Dental and American Dental Associations covering Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Dutchess and Orange counties. It is given in recognition of an individual’s time, energy and ability and their contributions to the elevation of the dental profession and the public good.
- **Kathryn E. McGoldrick, M.D.**, professor and chair of the Department of Anesthesiology, was recently named to the editorial board of *Current Reviews in Clinical Anesthesia*. She was also appointed co-chair of the Legacy Society of the Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research (FAER), a foundation whose mission is to advance medicine through education and research in anesthesiology.
- **Joseph F. Morales, D.D.S.**, professor and chairman of the Department of Dental Medicine, was reappointed for one year as a Residency Review Committee Site Visitor consultant for the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation.
- **Esther L. Sabban, Ph.D.**, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, was appointed to the editorial board of the *Journal of Neurochemistry*.

## Michal Laniado Schwartzman, Ph.D., makes her case on Capitol Hill

**M**ichal Laniado Schwartzman, Ph.D., professor and acting chair of the Department of Pharmacology, was part of a delegation of biochemists and molecular biologists visiting Capitol Hill as part of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology “Hill Day” activities in Washington, D.C. in early October. Delegates met with Congressional leaders to discuss how to keep the nation’s scientific research enterprise moving and fuel the pursuit for medical breakthroughs in a time of national economic uncertainty. The delegates were also there to express their concern over the lack of legislative attention and declining funding for the National Institutes of Health. The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology is a nonprofit scientific and educational organization with more than 12,000 members worldwide. ▲



# College inks affiliation agreement with Lenox Hill Hospital

Members of the School of Medicine Classes of 2012 and 2013 will be the first to reap the benefits of the College's newest affiliation with Lenox Hill Hospital. On July 1, 2011, students arrived at the 652-bed, acute care hospital located on Manhattan's Upper East Side to begin fulfilling their core third-year clerkships in medicine, surgery and obstetrics and gynecology, and some fourth-year selectives.

Richard G. McCarrick, M.D., vice dean for graduate medical education and affiliations, explained it was important to continue expanding the College's clinical sites, especially in New York City. "Lenox Hill Hospital really complements our consortium of hospital settings for our undergraduate medical education. It represents an opportunity for our students to be exposed to another patient population and experience the full context of medicine," said Dr. McCarrick. "Our students will also get a glimpse of Lenox Hill's high caliber graduate medical education programs."

This will not be the first time that the College has sent students to Lenox Hill Hospital. In the 1970s when the College introduced a three-year curriculum to help alleviate a physician shortage, arrangements were made with Lenox Hill to set up clinical clerkships to accommodate the increased number of students. The temporary affiliation worked so well it continued longer than originally planned.

Last spring talks of a new affiliation began when William H. Frishman, M.D., the Barbara and William Rosenthal Professor and Chairman of Medicine, and Stephen J. Peterson, M.D., professor and executive vice chair of the

Department of Medicine, reached out to former colleagues at Lenox Hill. One of them was John O'Grady, M.D. '70, director of medical student education, who was honored last spring as an alumni initiate by the College's Iota chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha, the national medical honor society.

Always the quintessential historian, Dr. Frishman was quick to point out the rich history of Lenox Hill Hospital. "It was founded [in 1857] as the German Dispensary, and then was known as the German Hospital. It was renamed Lenox Hill Hospital during World War I for political reasons," Dr. Frishman explained.

Today, Lenox Hill Hospital, which serves more than 325,000 patients annually, is internationally recognized for excellence in cardiovascular care, orthopedic surgery, sports medicine, maternal and child health, bariatric surgery, ophthalmology

and otolaryngology. In May of 2010 Lenox Hill Hospital joined the North Shore-LIJ Health System.

"The health of our school's future relies on the success of our affiliations," said Dr. Frishman. "Our students are fortunate to have the opportunity to study and train at Lenox Hill."

"It was a pleasure to work with the team at Lenox Hill. I especially want to thank Dr. Robin Dibner [M.D.], director of the Internal Medicine Residency training program there for making this happen," added Dr. Peterson. "I am delighted that Lenox Hill will be back in the fold for medical student education at New York Medical College. Their superb educators will be outstanding role models for our students." ▲

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**"The health of our school's future relies on the success of our affiliations. Our students are fortunate to have the opportunity to study and train at Lenox Hill."**

**- William H. Frishman, M.D.**

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## College expands presence and sets policy on social media

If the jargon of social media—tweets, likes, shares, pokes, posts—seems, well, a bit silly, don't lose sight of the simple fact that sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are powerful platforms with an ability to host conversation and supply information to people who have already shown an interest in receiving it.

Walk down a city street, across the NYMC campus, through the hospital affiliates, and you'll notice the majority of people are using all manner of devices to communicate, network and express themselves.

Donna Moriarty, M.P.H. '04, associate vice president of communications, who is the administrator of the College's official Twitter and Facebook accounts, said in recent months she has dialogued with several prospective students who responded to information she tweeted. "Curating and sharing information with an audience of followers on social media is a way to engage people, and get them talking with us about something that is of interest to them," she said. "The institution becomes more real to them, more personal, through social media activity."

Marketing specialists call that "inbound marketing," a strategy in which an organization helps itself to "get found" by people already shopping around in a given industry. Strategies like cold-calling, junk mail, unsolicited email and print advertising have all taken a back seat to creating an authentic presence online. Even if you're not looking to converse with online followers, there are still benefits to sharing information with them.

For higher education, publishing information on the internet is akin to starting a conversation with potential students, current students and alumni who have a demonstrated interest in knowing more about the institution. It is also an effective way to push information out efficiently and effectively. That's why, according to the third annual University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research study of the use of social media in U.S. colleges and universities, 98 percent of colleges and universities are using Facebook, 86 percent are using YouTube, and 84 percent are using Twitter.

The Office of Public Relations is encouraging other departments and groups within the NYMC community to establish a presence of their own in the social media sphere, and recently launched a microsite to provide registration forms, guidelines, policies and links to official pages in one place.

"We're trying to find people who are enthusiastic and see value in being successful with social media, hoping that the initiative will grow and be beneficial to all who use it," said Ms. Moriarty, who posts on Twitter and Facebook about five times per week, using HootSuite, a service that does so simultaneously. "It's a way to spread news to our students and employees about what is happening here, and offers a window for prospective students, parents and alumni to peer through and see what we're up to."

The College's Social Media Policy Task Force, appointed by CEO Karl P. Adler, M.D., in the fall of 2010, has developed a policy to portray,



Follow us on Twitter @NYMC\_tweets.

For Facebook, go to <http://on.fb.me/qRsBO7>.

promote and protect the College in a way that is consistent with its mission and reputation.

For starters, all official (not personal) accounts must register with the Office of Public Relations, include NYMC in their names, and choose a profile image that meets College graphic standards. Links to the College's website and official Facebook and Twitter accounts must be provided on the page.

Each account is required to name one primary administrator and one backup administrator, and should include a disclaimer stating that the opinions and content on the site do not represent NYMC positions. Users are encouraged to form a strategy based on objectives for establishing a social media presence. For more information on the guidelines, see: [www.nymc.edu/OfficesAndServices/PublicRelations/SocialMedia/index.html](http://www.nymc.edu/OfficesAndServices/PublicRelations/SocialMedia/index.html).

"Our presence online could have a significant impact on the reputation of our university," said Ms. Moriarty. "We hope that the whole College will show support by following us online, as we will be following other authorized accounts." ▲

# Two sets of twin Ph.D. students share the spotlight

**T**wo sets of twins sit around a table in Doc's Café reciting the crazy questions people ask them: "Do you feel what she feels?" "Do you have your own language?" "Which one is the good one?" Each of the four—some can relate to each other as they compare notes about birth order, sharing clothes and friends, sibling rivalry, and the fact that neither sets' father could tell them apart for years.

It seems that Chi Hua (Sarah) Lin and Szu Hua (Sharon) Lin have many other things in common with May Rabadi and Seham Rabadi, besides the fact that all four are on their way to earning their doctoral degrees in the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences. But upon sitting down with all of them together, four individual personalities with unique stories are quickly evident.

## Two perceived as one

Sarah Lin and Sharon Lin were born in DeKalb, Illinois, to Taiwanese parents who were graduate students at Northern Illinois University. Their mother was never given an ultrasound during her pregnancy, and the doctor heard only one heartbeat during examination, so the twins were perceived as a single infant. Although their mother said she had dreamed about twins, she bought one crib and one stroller, and picked out one name. The doctor had to call for help when he realized there were two identical babies, coming just three minutes apart—first Sharon and then Sarah.

Within a year, they were back in Taiwan, and spent every year of elementary school in the same class. By junior high and high school, they were enrolled in separate schools, but found they continued to have common likes and dislikes: both disliked history and geography and had an affinity for science.

Both agree that Sharon, the elder, is more shy and serious, while Sarah is always smiling and outgoing. However, it was Sharon who once played a trick on Sarah's friends by pretending to

be her sister. "They actually believed me!" says Sharon. The sisters attended China Medical University in Taiwan, where Sarah studied medical technology and Sharon studied biotechnology.

Upon graduating, Sharon was immediately accepted to NYMC. She traveled to the States where she began work on her Ph.D., studying DNA replication in the laboratory of Marietta Lee, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry and molecular biology.

"I loved being on my own for those two years. I needed that time," said Sharon. But when Sarah finished a master's degree in Taiwan and decided to vacation with her sister in New York, it wasn't long before she found herself working in the lab of Susan Olson, Ph.D., associate professor of biochemistry and molecular biology. In the fall of 2011, Sarah was accepted into the Integrated Ph.D. Program and now studies post traumatic stress disorder in rats, working in the lab of Esther L. Sabban, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry and molecular biology.

The Lin sisters live together on campus and have gone on student exchange trips together to Niagara Falls and Texas during recent holidays.

## No Competition

Although twin May Rabadi had met Sharon before her sister Sarah arrived in the States, she was thrilled when she discovered both sisters would be in the Ph.D. program. "It takes some of the twin focus off of us," she joked.

The Rabadis' mother was very much aware she was having twins, thanks to ultrasound and experience. By that time, she'd already delivered three girls and a boy. The girls arrived eight minutes apart—Seham, the eldest, was given a Jordanian name while May was given a name that her parents hoped would be easier to pronounce.



Some faculty, staff and students may think they are seeing double with two sets of twins in the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences. From left are: Sharon Lin, Sarah Lin, May Rabadi and Seham Rabadi.

The sisters have almost never been apart—they attended the same Yonkers elementary school, middle school and high school. Both went to the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, N.Y., and received their master's degrees in biochemistry from NYMC a year apart. May started the Ph.D. program last June working with a danger signaling molecule, HMGB1, in the lab of Michael Goligorsky, M.D., Ph.D., professor of medicine, pharmacology and physiology.

Seham, an admitted germaphobe, will don a biohazard suit to work in the Biosafety Level-3 Laboratory with stringent levels of biological containment. She'll be studying the immunopathogenesis of *Francisella tularensis* in the laboratory of Chandra Shekhar Bakshi, D.V.M., Ph.D., assistant professor of microbiology and immunology.

"There's no competition between us," both Seham and May say separately, although they admit their frustration when they leave their dorm in the morning, only to discover the other wearing a similar outfit.

"She is my best friend, and my sister," said May of Seham. "We always both liked science. Our father, who is from Jordan, really encouraged us to pursue opportunities he and my mother never had. We always used to study together but now we really can't. I miss that. But I'm happy for her when she does well, and she's happy for me." ▲

## Members of the Class of 2015 proudly don their new white coats

*continued from page 1*

senior vice president for College Affairs at Touro College, and greetings from Karl P. Adler, M.D., chief executive officer.

After a recitation of the Hippocratic Oath, to remind the students of their commitment to humanistic patient care, it was time for the Class of 2015 to don their white coats. Each student was called on stage by Dr. Ayala and then helped on with their white coat by an "investor," a member of the faculty who invested them with the symbol of their shared profession. When it was over a sea of white coats filled the front of the tent as the Class of 2015 listened to John Manning, Class of 2012, president of the Student Senate, reflect on his own experiences in medical school.

The ceremony concluded with the keynote address, "Why I Would Like to Be in the Class

of 2015: A Perspective on 30 Plus Years in Medicine," presented by NYMC President Alan Kadish, M.D. "Early in my career, I was optimistic for the future of the medical profession. This optimism continues today," Dr. Kadish said.

He went on to explore medical education, biomedical research, patient care, and the physician's life, demonstrating how the profession has changed since he took the Hippocratic Oath. "I believe that the medical profession is better today than it was 30 years ago in many significant ways. Among them are greater consistency, enhanced standards, more efficient evaluation, and expanded opportunities for feedback that improve patient outcomes."

Dr. Kadish predicted that new research will produce new understanding of the etiology

and treatments of choice for medical conditions, and that New York Medical College's scientists and physicians will be in the forefront of the far-reaching research that will generate these paradigm shifts in patient evaluation and treatment.

"In wearing your white coats proudly, I hope you will always remember the words of the influential 19th century physician, Sir William Osler, who declared that 'medicine is an art, not a trade.' Dr. Osler championed devotion to medicine as a way of life. He believed that it is not the amount of work that physicians do that creates happiness; it is the amount of meaning derived from the work," said Dr. Kadish. "As you go on in your careers as practitioners or researchers, I wish each of you success in pursuing medicine not only as a high art, but a noble calling." ▲

## 13th Annual Race for Rehab is a winner



These racers were ready to go at the start line.

A crisp autumn Sunday morning brought out nearly 150 runners, walkers, and wheelchair racers, young and old, alone or with the aid of a guide, to the roads of the Valhalla campus on October 16 for the 13th Annual Race for Rehab. The certified 5K and 10K run/walk annually raises awareness and funds for Achilles International, formerly known as the Achilles Track Club, a world-wide organization that encourages people with physical challenges to participate in running events, exercise and physical activity, regardless of speed, level of ability or age.

Off the race course and behind the scenes, it was the efforts of the Doctor of Physical Therapy

(D.P.T.) students in the School of Health Sciences and Practice that made it the most successful Race for Rehab ever. More than \$16,500 was raised for the Achilles International, bringing the total amount donated throughout the race's 13-year history to more than \$78,000.

"It was a pleasure to work with such an amazing group of students," said faculty advisor Anthony M. Sozzo, M.A., M.S.Ed., associate dean for student affairs and director of student activities. "They were organized and ready to go from day one and were able to exceed their goal."

"Our students demonstrated a high level of commitment, motivation and innovation throughout this past year during their planning and implementation process. Their dedication to helping Achilles International is admirable," said faculty advisor Janet Dolot, P.T., D.P.T., assistant professor of clinical physical therapy.

To view photos of the event and official race times, please visit [www.nymc.edu/race\\_for\\_rehab](http://www.nymc.edu/race_for_rehab). ▲



D.P.T. students, Achilles athletes and volunteers posed near the finish line after the race.



These D.P.T. student volunteers made sure race participants had enough carbs to fuel them to the finish line.

## Student leadership groups pledge collaboration

Student leadership groups in the School of Medicine, Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences and the School of Health Sciences and Practice all started the academic year with a common theme and goal: to increase communication among students in the three schools and help foster a stronger united presence, both on campus and in the community.

### Student Senate

An integral part of the College community, the Student Senate participates in decision making that affects not only current students, but also future students and alumni. The Student Senate focuses on the needs of the student body and works to bring about constructive change and broaden the medical school experience. The group is already discussing holding a student-run health fair in the spring that will take advantage of the skills and knowledge of students from all three schools. "It's high time for the allied health fields at New York Medical College to



Student Senate officers are, from left: Nishi Mehta, secretary, John Manning, president, Susan Boisvert, vice president, and Samuel Kim, treasurer.



GSA officers seated from left are: Robert Bednarczyk, treasurer; Andrea Love, vice president, research forum; Erik Trexler, president; and Katisha Gopaul, vice president social affairs. Standing from left: Priyanka Bansod, secretary, Goozy Alaluf, secondary president, and Justin Korn, secondary vice president, research forum

have a stronger mutual presence," said John Manning, Senate president.

### Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) offers activities that include student advocacy, community service, visiting lecturers, social activities and student assistance. Their keynote annual event is the Graduate Student Research Forum, which gives students an opportunity to present their research in poster and oral presentation formats. GSA members are also planning a variety of new social events to appeal to more students and increase the number of community service activities. On the agenda might be helping out at the local soup kitchen and food bank in addition to their traditional holiday toy drive for children and blanket drive for a local animal shelter. "This year the GSA has seven officers instead of five," explained Eric Trexler, president.

"The hope is that the additional officers will be mentored in their respective positions and take over the role next year."

### The Student Healthcare Executives

The mission of the Student Healthcare Executives (StuHE) organization is to prepare tomorrow's public health leaders to preserve, protect and improve the health of individuals, families and communities through education, investigation, practice and service. StuHe coordinates National Public Health Week on campus and promotes community service year-round. The group held a bake sale in October for Breast Cancer Awareness Month, raising more than \$330 for Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. A career mentoring session is planned for November 28. "Our goal for this upcoming year is to create an environment where students can network, share ideas, get involved in their communities, and stay current on healthcare issues," said Soraya Bazile, president. ▲



StuHe officers, are, from left: Hayley Feuerstein, vice president, Alexandra Urman, vice president, Soraya Bazile, president, Julie Williams, treasurer, Michael Shakarjian, Ph.D., faculty advisor, and Arousiag Markarian, medical school liaison. Not pictured are: Miranda Chung, Dr.P.H. liaison, and Elizabeth Wooldridge, distance learning liaison.

## Second-year medical student brings public policy awareness to medicine

“As physicians, we have a tremendous opportunity to make big changes. And no matter what we hear about the new role of government in healthcare, it will be independent physician-leadership that has the most dramatic impact on the form and function of our medical systems.”



Nathaniel Lepp balances his roles as medical student and healthcare advocate.

These are the words of Nathaniel Lepp, a second-year medical student who is forging a national presence as a healthcare advocate. As the northeast representative for the Council of Student Members at the American College of Physicians (ACP), he is one of only 14 Council of Student Members worldwide. The ACP is an international organization of 132,000 members that include internists, internal medicine subspecialists, medical students, residents and fellows. It is the largest medical-specialty organization and second-largest physician group in the United States. Mr. Lepp also sits on the ACP's Ethics, Professionalism and Human Rights Committee.

Earlier this year, his paper, “The Influence of Physician Practice Structure on Healthcare Quality,” was accepted by the American College of Medical Quality for presentation at its Medical Quality 2011 National Conference held in San Antonio in February. He was awarded the National Quality Scholarship for his thesis that medium-sized multi-specialty physician group

practices are instrumental to the implementation of 21st century healthcare initiatives, such as the electronic medical record and continuous quality improvement.

“It's very compelling that the ACP is both helping physicians take a leadership role as practicing physicians and also advocating new public policies,” said Mr. Lepp. “For example, the ACP is providing physicians with the tools to modernize their own practices with ‘population management’ where public health programs are integrated into the medical practice. At the same time, the organization has 30 people in Washington, D.C., helping Congress change the way medical care is financed.”

He says his understanding of public policy making has shaped the way he views medicine. After receiving a B.S. in neuroscience at Brown University, where he also earned a Master of Public Health degree, Mr. Lepp did not immediately apply for medical school but instead remained in Providence for four years, lobbying for various community organizations—including one group of doctors, nurses and social workers committed to the legalization of clean needles to reduce the spread of HIV and hepatitis among intravenous drug users.

He also worked as the coordinator of the Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights at The Miriam Hospital to help preserve the basic rights and medical needs of individuals detained in correctional systems, both in the U.S. and abroad. Mr. Lepp served as an analyst in the office of strategic planning at Lifespan, a health and hospital system in Rhode Island.

“While medical school was in my plans from a very young age,” said Mr. Lepp, “during high school, the directness of the path toward medical school took some twists and turns. I got an education about the social injustice and inequality that exists in the United States, and as I wondered what I could do about it, I became more active in the policy-making process.”

Growing up in New Rochelle, N.Y., Mr. Lepp became concerned when he realized that out of the 840 students with whom he started 9th grade, only 581 graduated from high school. “I saw hundreds of my classmates falter and drop out—we lost almost 300 students, and I started to question why.”

At Brown, he began to work with policy makers who were interested in changing laws to help society. “Like any other citizen, a physician can engage in the democratic process, but without waiting for a law to pass, the physician can go back to the office and directly improve the lives of his or her patients,” he said.

One physician lobbyist that Mr. Lepp worked with observed that many of his patients with HIV and hepatitis were acquiring and transmitting infectious diseases through contaminated needles. The physician gathered information and presented it to the legislature to show that possession of clean needles should not be illegal.

“The relationship between the physician and the patient is the foundation of the physician's ability to contribute to public policy,” said Mr. Lepp. “What I'm focused on now is encouraging medical students and future doctors to stay engaged with systemic issues.” ▲

## U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer visits College flu vaccine lab and announces support for biotechnology training center

With flu season upon us, U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer, took an opportunity to visit the laboratory of Doris J. Bucher, Ph.D., associate professor of microbiology and immunology, on October 18. He observed first hand how Dr. Bucher's lab takes flu strains sent by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), grows them in culture, and produces high-growth vaccine strains by shuffling the gene pieces in a process called reassortment. The reassortant viruses are then sent to pharmaceutical companies that manufacture the vaccines and are distributed around the world.

A few moments later, a short walk down the hallway led Senator Schumer to the Medical Education Center lobby, which was filled with faculty, administration, staff, students and members of the press. There Senator Schumer announced his efforts to secure federal funding to help create a BioHud Valley Training Center, which is among the plans for the Dana Road facility on the New York Medical College campus. A consortium of biotechnology companies hope to develop a training center

that will help local biotechnology firms tackle the economy by creating jobs to train or retrain unemployed workers in the field, train new employees for a specific field, provide management level courses and technical training as well as help unemployed residents of the Hudson Valley learn new skills to transition into a new career or work place.

To accomplish this, the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation is attempting to secure funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). “This EDA investment would be a terrific boost for the plan to establish a BioHud Valley Training Center at the New York Medical College, which has enormous potential to redefine the Hudson Valley and establish it as a hub for biotechnology,” said Senator Schumer. “As the biotechnology industry rapidly expands in future years, this investment will increase the number of individuals trained in biotechnology sector right here in the Empire State, and would provide a critical boost to economic development across the region, bringing jobs, business and economic opportunity to the



Senator Charles E. Schumer announced his support for a new biotechnology training center as Robert W. Amler, M.D., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president, government affairs, looked on.

entire region. These dollars are needed to renovate, furnish, and equip this state-of-the-art training center, and I will fight to ensure that the EDA approves this grant.”

“This program is expected to bring hundreds, even thousands of new jobs to Westchester and the Hudson Valley, as many more top-flight scientists and their research teams relocate here,” said Robert W. Amler, M.D., vice president for government affairs and dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice. “So it will help grow the economy as well as improve public health preparedness.” ▲

## 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 focus.

Please email your comments and inquiries to [lori\\_perrault@nymc.edu](mailto:lori_perrault@nymc.edu).

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## D.P.T. students offer screenings to College community

Members of the **Doctor Physical Therapy (D.P.T.) Class of 2014**, celebrated National Physical Therapy Month in October by offering health and wellness screenings to the College community. More than 50 participants received blood pressure screenings, heart rate and body mass index measurements, and watched demonstrations

on proper ergonomics for the workplace. In exchange for completing a survey, each participant received a pedometer from the students. Sponsored by the American Physical Therapy Association, National Physical Therapy Month is celebrated each October as an opportunity to reach out to consumers and educate them about the benefits of physical therapy. ▲



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