t was chartered as the Graduate School of Medical Sciences in 1963, changing its name to the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences (GSBMS) in 1969. Half a century and more than 1,100 M.S. and Ph.D. graduates in the basic medical sciences later, the GSBMS is celebrating its storied past in innovative research and education. The 50-year milestone was celebrated on October 3 with a symposium and banquet. Scientific presentations, a poster session, a panel discussion and the Inaugural Gabor Káley Ph.D. Memorial Lecture filled the day and guests gathered for more celebration at the evening banquet.

Francis L. Belloni, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences, welcomed more than 100 guests to the event. In his opening remarks, he set the stage by recalling 1963, when Beatlemania struck the U.S., President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, a loaf of bread cost 22 cents, and a gallon of gas cost 30 cents. It was also an era in which leadership at New York Medical College recognized the growing need for post-graduate education in medical science. A highlight of the day was a presentation of the history of the GSBMS, given by Edward J. Messina, Ph.D. ’73, professor of physiology; William C. Sessa, M.S. ’88, Ph.D. ’89, professor of pharmacology, Yale University School of Medicine; and Anton Bennett, Ph.D. ’93, associate professor of pharmacology and comparative medicine, Yale University School of Medicine.

A number of alumni returned to campus, some of whom presented scientific papers: Jun Xu, Ph.D. ’05, professor of regenerative medicine, Tongji University; Joseph Hanig, M.S. ’65, Ph.D. ’68, associate director for research policy, Office of Testing and Research, OP/S/CDER, FDA; Edward J. Messina, Ph.D. ’73, professor of physiology; William C. Sessa, M.S. ’88, Ph.D. ’89, professor of pharmacology, Yale University School of Medicine; and Anton Bennett, Ph.D. ’93, associate professor of pharmacology and comparative medicine, Yale University School of Medicine.
New division chief of cardiology delivers expertise in research, education and clinical practice

Julio A. Panza, M.D., has been named chief of cardiology at New York Medical College and Westchester Medical Center. He succeeds William H. Frishman, M.D., the Barbara and William Rosenthal Professor and Chairman of Medicine and professor of pharmacology, who had been serving as acting chief of cardiology for the past two and one half years.

“There is a lot of momentum and energy and support for growth in the division of cardiology,” said Dr. Panza, who has already charted out plans for division growth, outreach efforts, and cardiology facilities upgrades.

Dr. Panza will lead the Division of Cardiology in the Department of Medicine with a solid foundation of experience in patient care, research and education. A leader in the field of endothelial dysfunction, he is co-editor of the book *Endothelium, Nitric Oxide, and Atherosclerosis*.

His plans include reaching out to tri-state area cardiologists through continuing medical education programs, and expanding education and training by seeking to accredit new sub-specialties in heart failure and electrophysiology. He also plans to recruit new faculty and will lead the redesign of the cardiac catheterization and diagnostic laboratories, as well as the cardiology inpatient care units. His vision includes the formation of the Westchester Medical Center Heart and Vascular Institute as “the vehicle for joining the forces of cardiology, cardiac surgery, vascular surgery, and pediatric cardiology.”

“There’s a lot of know-how and expertise here—and tremendous support from administration—to consolidate our position as the premier academic tertiary care center for cardiovascular disease in the region.”

Julio A. Panza, M.D., is the new director of the Division of Cardiology in the Department of Medicine.

Dr. Panza is certified in internal medicine and cardiovascular disease by the American Board of Internal Medicine. He is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association, and is a member of the American Society of Echocardiography and the Association of Specialty Professors.

“It’s important to point out that our fellows and residents here have excellent publication records, which I hope to further enhance and highlight,” he said, noting that the academic division of cardiology pioneered the use of coronary balloon angioplasty and stenting, and establishing the first 24/7 coverage facility for the emergency treatment of acute myocardial infarction in patients in the Hudson Valley Region. The discovery of the cardiac stem cell and the birth of the field of cardiac regeneration began here at New York Medical College with Piero Anversa, M.D., who was a member of the faculty for nearly 30 years.

Dr. Frishman, who directed the search committee said, “Dr. Panza is a nationally recognized cardiologist and is the best candidate to serve as chief of cardiology. He is a skilled researcher, an outstanding teacher and a superb clinician and I am looking forward to working with him.”

“What attracted me to this position was the chance to apply my previous experience to grow and enhance a cardiology division,” said Dr. Panza. “There’s a lot of know-how and expertise here—and tremendous support from administration—to consolidate our position as the premier academic tertiary care center for cardiovascular disease in the region.”
Marietta Lee Ph.D., is named the 2013 Dean’s Research Award recipient

Marietta Lee, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, recalls two key expressions from long ago that are at the core of her 35-year career as one of the discoverers and trail blazing researchers of DNA polymerase δ (pol delta), a key enzyme in eukaryotic DNA replication and repair. The assertion, “We’re going to find the cure for cancer,” was first uttered in 1976 by the late Antero G. So, M.D., Ph.D., professor of medicine and of biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, after he, Dr. Lee and other researchers had discovered pol delta. Based on that notion, Dr. Lee abandoned all other research topic possibilities despite warnings and skepticism from the scientific community about the existence of the enzyme. Her second aphorism came in the form of a review by the NIH when she received her first funding as an independent investigator with an Established Investigator Award from the American Heart Association. The agency conveyed its faith that she could “prove once and for all that the enzyme pol delta really exists.” It exists indeed, and her seminal research has shown that pol delta and its associated proteins affect genomic stability and either contribute directly or predispose cells to cancer.

To honor her groundbreaking research on pol delta, Dr. Lee has been named the 2013 Dean’s Research Award recipient. The award acknowledges a noteworthy body of scientific work, the initiation of a significant scientific discipline and exceptional leadership in the scientific community. On March 12, Dr. Lee will discuss her research in a lecture, “DNA Polymerase Delta—A Journey of Scientific Discovery,” and will be presented with the award.

Displaying dogged persistence, ignoring naysayers and maintaining an intense passion for her work have led Dr. Lee every step of the way since those early years. While the role of pol delta in replication and fidelity of genomic maintenance is now making headlines—it is believed to be involved in endometrial and colorectal cancers—she knows there is still much work to be done. She humbly acknowledges her role in the forefront of research, but says, “We are only at the beginning of understanding how genetic changes in pol delta and its associated proteins affect genomic stability and contribute to cancer.”

Scientists now know that pol delta is involved in every aspect of DNA repair, from mismatch, base excision, nucleotide excision, double strand break, homologous recombination and translesion DNA synthesis. The maintenance of “genomic integrity” is essential for the avoidance of mutations and chromosome alterations that can lead to the development of cancer. As she has continued to do for 35 years, Dr. Lee hopes that her research will help investigators understand precisely how mutations and defects in the DNA system contribute to the development of human cancers. The research also could lead to the discovery of novel compounds that may help prevent and treat cancer.

“Dr. Lee has made significant contributions to New York Medical College—her research has raised the institution’s profile in the area of DNA replication and DNA repair, and she has anchored a critical mass of investigators with common interests in DNA metabolism at the College since her recruitment in 1997,” wrote Zbigniew Darzynkiewicz, M.D., Ph.D., professor of pathology, medicine, and microbiology and immunology, and director of the College’s Brander Cancer Research Institute, in his letter nominating Dr. Lee for the Dean’s Research Award. Dr. Darzynkiewicz noted that Dr. Lee’s seminal contributions to the biochemistry and cell biology of the human enzyme. She has made seminal contributions to this area, and our understanding of the properties of pol delta owes much to her research.”

Dr. Lee has served on grant peer review committees for the NIH, American Cancer Society and DOD Breast Cancer programs. She has recently accepted an invitation to join the editorial board of the Journal of Biological Chemistry published by the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

Dr. Darzynkiewicz said Dr. Lee constantly seeks to extend the boundaries of her research, and her work is driven by the pursuit of excellence. Her dedication and passion for research is manifest to those who know her.

Dr. Lee received a bachelor of science in chemistry and biology from Nazareth College in Louisville, a master of science from New York University, a doctorate in quantitative biology from the University of Miami, and a post doctorate in DNA Replication at the University of Miami School of Medicine.

Dr. Lee is quick to credit her success to the efforts of a long list of talented colleagues, students, post-doctoral fellows and other collaborators at NYMC and elsewhere.

“I’ve been very lucky. There were not too many women in science when I started out, and I’ve been lucky to find research I really believe in and am passionate about,” said Dr. Lee, reflecting on her research and career. “One time a student wrote on a review that I always seem like I’m having such a good time. To that student I would say ‘Right on!’”
The William Cullen Bryant Award recipient, Nicholas F. LaRusso, M.D. ’69, was greeted by Chancellor Edward H. Gar pec, M.D., M.A.

Daniel G. Gallagher, M.Ed., is named associate dean for admissions and enrollment management in the SHSP

Daniel G. Gallagher, M.Ed., has been named associate dean for admissions and enrollment management in the School of Health Sciences and Practice (SHSP). He will be responsible for directing all SHSP recruitment and admissions activities, introducing short- and long-term marketing strategies, and creating new and innovative communication channels to prospective and newly enrolled students.

Mr. Gallagher has more than 20 years of experience in higher education, the last ten as dean of university admissions at Stevens Institute of Technology in N.J., where he helped increase graduate student enrollment to record numbers while overseeing graduate and undergraduate admissions as well as summer programming. Prior to that, he served as dean for undergraduate admissions there.

He is excited by the opportunity to recruit students to the public health field during a time when practitioners face new challenges to the nation’s health. “Whether they are confronting bioterrorism attacks, emerging infections, lifestyle behaviors, disparities in health status or increases in chronic disease and injury rates, our students will become the professionals that help strengthen the infrastructure of the public health community,” said Mr. Gallagher. “The field is growing as it needs to gain capacity to respond to acute and chronic threats to our national health. There will be opportunities for our students to support the public health system in government, health care, private and public partnerships, education, finance and research.”

Through a comprehensive enrollment strategy, Mr. Gallagher plans to expand the SHSP population and draw students regionally, nationally and internationally. He said the growth of online learning and the school’s commitment to offer more online programs will support that.

“Understanding the busy lives of our adult learners, we realize that fully online learning offers them flexibility,” he said. In order to reach those learners, he will look for unique ways to disseminate the advantages of a NYMC education. Those advantages include talented and dedicated faculty, a rigorous but nurturing environment, and a blend of theory and practice.

Additionally, we will continue to recruit and enroll students into the speech-language pathology and physical therapy programs that have excellent reputations and strong foundations in both science and medicine. Every year students in these programs enjoy positive outcomes on exams, and post graduate placements are very strong,” he said.

“It is critical that we have a mix of marketing, branding, advertising and communications in place, so we can attract the adult learner who is interested in advancing his or her academic career, whether they live in the next town or halfway around the world,” said Mr. Gallagher. “Students in our School of Health Sciences and Practice are pursuing careers in health care throughout the country and around the world. We are a destination for bright, talented and highly motivated students—the kind that make working in admissions rewarding.”

In his new role as associate dean for admissions and enrollment management in the School of Health Sciences and Practice, Daniel G. Gallagher, M.Ed., will direct the school’s recruitment and admissions activities.

Michael Gewitz, M.D., professor and vice chair of the Department of Pediatrics and physician-in-chief at Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital, congratulated Norman Levine, Ph.D., on receiving the Distinguished Service Award.

The Jackson E. Spears Community Service award recipient Dan Morhaim, M.D. ’75, center, was flanked by Francis L. Belloni, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences, Sherlita Amler, M.D., Westchester County Health Commissioner and member of the College faculty; Maggie Ciarcia; and Robert W. Amler, M.D., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president for government affairs.

The Jackson E. Spears Community Service award recipient Dan Morhaim, M.D. ’75, center, was flanked by Francis L. Belloni, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences, Sherlita Amler, M.D., Westchester County Health Commissioner and member of the College faculty; Maggie Ciarcia; and Robert W. Amler, M.D., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president for government affairs.
In October, a group of New York Medical College medical students gathered in a room with about 20 residents of a homeless shelter to play cards and board games and to share information about hepatitis and diabetes. According to one second-year medical student, the Grasslands residents were full of questions and felt relaxed enough in the casual setting to ask them.

“Many of them are not visiting a doctor regularly, and just seemed more comfortable asking students for information,” said Misha Romashko, another second-year.

The gathering at the homeless shelter was just one of seven outreach events that took place as part of the NYMC chapter of the Gold Humanism Honor Society’s (GHHS) first annual NYMC Cares Week, October 6 – 12. The series of events was designed to involve medical students in all four classes to facilitate a school-wide community effort and to encourage camaraderie, said fourth-year medical student Izuuchuwu Ibe, who organized the week with classmate Rima Bishar, both members of the GHHS.

“We’re hoping this creates a domino effect, and that students will begin to recognize needs and opportunities and act upon them,” said Mr. Ibe.

Events during the week also included playing games with youthful residents at the Woodfield Cottage Juvenile Detention Center, bagging groceries for hungry families at the Food Bank of Westchester, touring the Children’s Village of Dobbs Ferry, cooking dinner for families staying at the Ronald McDonald House while their children were patients at the Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital at Westchester Medical Center, and baking post-quiz cookies for first- and second-year medical students.

“The beauty of this week was that we made everything practical and sustainable for the future by offering the students the opportunity to be together doing service anyone can do. It had a homegrown, organic sense of community.”

— Rima Bishar

we made everything practical and sustainable for the future by offering the students the opportunity to be together doing service anyone can do. It had a homegrown, organic sense of community. We hope this becomes tradition.” Both she and Mr. Ibe acknowledged that medical student focus groups had recently listed community service as an important experience to have during their medical school years.

First-year Christopher Monson said his visit to the homeless shelter during NYMC Cares Week helped remind him why he was working so hard to get through medical school. “The highlight of the day for me was prefaced by an awkward moment where two residents of the shelter asked questions at the same time,” reported Mr. Monson. “The more deferential of the two waited and was eventually forgotten after the continued discussion. After the presentation was over, I approached the man to say that I had not forgotten his question, which was actually a really good one. He had asked if potassium was good to take for the cramps he developed in his legs while exercising, because he had also heard that salt could help, too.” Mr. Monson knew that salt is actually physiologically paired with potassium throughout the body. He also knew that, unlike potassium, which can deplete in the body, most Americans are never deficient in sodium thanks to over-consumption of salty foods.

“So, could sodium deficiency cause the cramps? Yes. Is that likely? Not really. Try a banana and some water first,” was Mr. Monson’s advice to the resident. “The man was incredibly thankful for both our time in general and for my extra effort to answer his question. It was the first time I made a connection and established a professional trust with someone. This is why I went into medicine.”

Misha Romashko said he enjoyed watching and learning from third- and fourth-year students at the homeless shelter event. “It was a great experience for me as a medical student because it wasn’t like our typical preceptor sessions where we just practice asking the patients all the right questions and then go through a checklist when performing their physicals,” he said. “At the shelter, we were able to teach the patients about their health, something that our preceptors do—since they are the ones prescribing the medicine and explaining the treatment options. I felt that our knowledge from the first two years of medical school was put to good use!”

He also enjoyed interacting with fellow medical students from all four classes. “I was impressed with how well the fourth-years were able to simplify and explain difficult medical concepts to the shelter residents and with how well they remembered their drugs from pharm class! That made them role models for me when I get to my clerkships.”

At another event, student volunteers stocked food, packed orders and loaded about 400 packages onto a delivery truck at the Food Bank of Westchester. “It was just a few hours on a weekend, and yet we saw a tangible need and experienced being part of the solution,” said Mr. Ibe.

At the end of the week, students toured and talked with teens at Children’s Village in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., which provides a safe haven, services and a caring community for troubled children and their families. Amin Esfahani, a fourth-year medical student and president of the Student Senate, said the day served as a reminder that within a few miles of the greatest institutions for higher education are people who lack access to something as simple as education.

“As we indulge ourselves in the world of high expectations and entitlement, much like the tragic figure Narcissus, we become entrapped by the figure we see in the mirror and fail to see the ruins that surround it,” reflected Mr. Esfahani. “Indeed, my day at the Children’s Village served as a reminder to reflect and remember that there is still a lifetime worth of work and dedication ahead if I ever wish to help make this world a better place.”

Medical students sorted through donations and packed boxes of food at the Westchester Food Bank.

**NYMC Cares Week encourages camaraderie and outreach**
D.P.T. students host 15th Annual Race for Rehab

Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.) students in the School of Health Sciences and Practice pulled off another successful Race for Rehab on Sunday, October 13, that included 199 race participants, the most ever. The 15th Annual Race for Rehab, a certified 5K and 10K run/walk, raised more than $10,200 for Achilles International, formerly known as the Achilles Track Club, a worldwide organization that encourages people with physical challenges to participate in running events, exercise and physical activity, regardless of speed, level of ability or age. Since its inception in 1999, the Race for Rehab has raised more than $102,000 for Achilles International.

The starter gun sounded and the first wave of participants took off.

Renowned trauma surgeon set to deliver Eleventh Annual Louis R.M. DelGuercio, M.D., Distinguished Visiting Professor Lecture

The Eleventh Annual Louis R.M. DelGuercio, M.D., Distinguished Visiting Professor Lecture and Research Day is set for Wednesday, December 18. The day’s events will feature moderated poster rounds and presentations of scientific papers in basic science, educational, translational and/or clinical research by students, residents, fellows and faculty, culminating in a lecture by a renowned trauma surgeon. The event was established to honor the late Dr. DelGuercio, who served as chairman of the Department of Surgery from 1976 to 2001, as well as to promote research in surgical basic science, clinical surgery and surgical education. Dr. DelGuercio died in March 2013 at the age of 84.

This year’s Distinguished Visiting Professor is Thomas M. Scalea, M.D., FACS, FCCM. Dr. Scalea is the Francis X. Kelly Professor of Trauma Surgery and Director, Program in Trauma at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Physician-in-Chief at R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center and System Chief for Critical Care Services for the University of Maryland Medical System. He will present “Endovascular Treatment in Trauma Patients—Past, Present and Future.”

Dr. Scalea received a B.A. with distinction from the University of Virginia and his M.D. from the Medical College of Virginia. He did his residency at Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, and his Trauma Critical Care Fellowship at New York Medical College. Following his fellowship, Dr. Scalea began his career at the Kings County Hospital/Downstate Medical Center, where he became chief of trauma and critical care and rose to the rank of full professor. He also founded the Department of Emergency Medicine at Downstate. In 1997, Dr. Scalea became the physician-in-chief at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland, the nation’s only freestanding trauma hospital. Several years later, he became the first medical school endowed professor of trauma, when he was appointed the Honorable Senator Francis X. Kelly Professor in Trauma Surgery. He also serves as System Chief for Critical Care Services at the University of Maryland Medical System.
The Inaugural Gabor Kaley Ph.D. Memorial Lecture, “Inflammation, Immunity and Hypertension” was presented by David G. Harrison, M.D., professor of medicine and pharmacology, Vanderbilt University. Dr. Kaley, who passed away in December 2011, served as chairman of the Department of Physiology for 37 years. Thomas H. Hintze, Ph.D. ’80, professor and chairman of the Department of Physiology, moderated the panel discussion, “The Promise of Translational Medicine: Of Mice and Men.”

In honor of the occasion the Health Sciences Library published a bibliography of doctoral theses of GSBMS graduates from 1968 through 2013. View the GSBMS anniversary website and photo gallery at www.nymc.edu/GBSMS/celebrate/index.html.

Speaker Jun Xu, Ph.D.’95, caught up with his mentor Jian Kang, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor of cell biology and anatomy.

From left: Dean Belloni; Dr. Messina; Thomas H. Hintze, Ph.D. ’80, professor and chairman of the Department of Physiology; Harriette Kaley, Ph.D.; Michael S. Wolin, Ph.D., professor of physiology; and the inaugural Gabor Kaley Ph.D. Memorial lecturer David G. Harrison, M.D. (Photo by Roy Greething)

Joining the GSBMS celebration were Joseph D. Etlinger, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy; Chancellor Edward C. Halperin, M.D., M.A.; Michal Laniado Schwitzman, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Pharmacology; Dean Belloni; Ernest Y.C. Lee, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; and Ira Schwartz, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology. (Photo by Roy Greething)

Enjoying the celebration banquet were from left: Libor Velíšek, M.D., Ph.D., professor of cell biology and anatomy; Jana Velíšková, M.D., Ph.D., professor of cell biology and anatomy and of obstetrics and gynecology; Felipe C. Cabello, M.D., professor of microbiology and immunology; Tamuna (Tamar) Chachua, Ph.D., research fellow in the Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy; Stuart A. Newman, Ph.D., professor of cell biology and anatomy; Kenneth M. Lerea, Ph.D., associate professor of cell biology and anatomy; M.S. student Margaret B. Daniel; and Carl V. Hamby, Ph.D., associate professor of microbiology and immunology. (Photo by Roy Greething)

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Mark your calendar for the following events!

**Wednesday, December 18, 2013**

Eleventh Annual Louis R.M. DelGuercio Distinguished Visiting Professorship and Research Day

Distinguished Visiting Professor Lecture by Thomas M. Scalea, M.D., FACS, FCCM

Physician-in-Chief, R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center; System Chief for Critical Care Services, University of Maryland Medical System, and Francis X. Kelly Professor in Trauma Surgery, University of Maryland School of Medicine

“Endovascular Treatment in Trauma Patients—Past, Present, and Future”

Medical Education Center

**Wednesday, January 8, 2014**

Twentieth Annual Author Recognition Event

Health Sciences Library

**Tuesday, February 4, 2014**

Second Annual Saul A. Schwartz, M.D. ’30, History of Medicine Visiting Professor Lecture

Visiting Professor Lecture Presented by Barron Lerner, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Medicine and Population Health, New York University School of Medicine

“Two Doctors, Two Generations: Comparing a Father’s and Son’s Medical Ethics”

Medical Education Center

**Thursday, February 13, 2014**

17th Annual Medical Student Research Forum

Medical Education Center

**Wednesday, March 12, 2014**

Dean’s Research Award Presentation and Lecture

Marietta Lee, Ph.D.

Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

“DNA Polymerase—A Journey of Scientific Discovery”

Medical Education Center

**Thursday, March 20, 2014**

Twenty-Sixth Annual Graduate Student Research Forum

Medical Education Center

**Friday, March 21, 2014**

Match Day

Medical Education Center and Plaza

**Thursday, May 22, 2014**

155th Commencement Exercises

Carnegie Hall, New York City
NYMC makes strides against breast cancer

An NYMC team of students, faculty, staff and their families and friends, organized by the Student Healthcare Executives (StuHe) Club in the School of Health Sciences and Practice, was happy to pose at the finish line of the 16th Annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer at Manhattanville College in nearby Purchase N.Y., on October 20. Sporting their distinctive pink garb, the team trekked five miles and raised more than $1,300 for the American Cancer Society.

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