



# MOTIVATIONS

The Front Line of Philanthropy at Einstein and Montefiore



## IN THIS ISSUE

- 48 A Message from the President of the Alumni Association Board of Governors
- 49 Continued Connection
- 52 Spotlight
- 56 Your Impact
- 61 Class Notes

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## MOTIVATIONS

A Message from the President of the  
Alumni Association Board of Governors:

### JANINA R. GALLER, M.D. '72



The road to a medical career is long, as Lagu Androga, M.D. '16, can attest. Born in Sudan, Africa, he escaped to Kenya after civil war broke out in his homeland, lived in a Nairobi slum, and studied in Wales and Connecticut before eventually coming to Einstein and Montefiore. I feel a connection to him because of my own journey: I was born in Sweden to two Holocaust survivors from Poland, attended high school

and college in New Orleans, and came to the Bronx when I matriculated at Einstein. This medical school offered me not only a warm welcome but also academic and research excellence, along with a strong emphasis on humanism and social justice, and it became my lifelong home.

Dr. Androga, whom we profile in this edition of *Motivations*, has found a home here too. And we are not alone. Many people feel this sense of belonging for many reasons. We see it in our Children's Hospital Innovation Lab (CHILZone). Its team members work every day—thanks in large part to two donors who facilitated a corporate gift—to turn customized virtual-reality experiences into pain-management solutions (see page 56). We see it also in the Einstein Student Mental Health Center, which opened in September 2018 to provide students with an on-site hub for mental health services (see page 52). You can read more about these topics in this issue of *Motivations*—or, better yet, visit the Einstein campus and engage with the faculty, students, and programs that make Einstein and Montefiore the world-class academic medical centers they are today.

Whether you're from Sudan, Sweden, or the South Bronx, you came to Einstein because you believe that empathy and humanism are essential parts of being a physician. I encourage you to join me in strengthening the institution that has educated and shaped us, in turn reinforcing the compassion that drew so many of us to the medical profession—and to the vibrancy of the Bronx, an amazing borough tucked into one of the best cities in the world.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janina R. Galler M.D.".

# DR. LAGU ANDROGA CLASS OF '16

BY TERESA CARR

A determination to serve others led him across three continents to Einstein and Montefiore

Dr. Androga's family escaped to the United Nations Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya when he was a child. Below, the camp as it looks today.

As he finishes his final year of residency in internal medicine at Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital, Lagu Androga is realizing a childhood dream that began in a refugee camp in Kenya.

"I was sick a lot as a child, always getting malaria and typhoid, and so would frequent the clinics at the refugee camp," Dr. Androga says. He remembers the facilities as rudimentary—one or two doctors in a tent with few resources—but the staff as highly skilled and compassionate. "People loved the doctors," he says. "Parents told their children, 'You can grow up to be a doctor and help your people.' I knew then that's what I wanted to be."

Looking back, Dr. Androga recognizes that time as a gift to both doctor and patient. "We changed each other's lives," he says. "I'm sure those doctors could attest to how the experience enriched their lives. And I'm now caring for others just as they once cared for me." That determination to serve others has led Dr. Androga across three continents to



Einstein and Montefiore.

"The way Lagu has overcome his unique challenges has left an imprint on everyone around him," says Steven M. Safyer, M.D., president and CEO of Montefiore Medicine. The two first met when Dr. Androga was an Einstein medical student. "Lagu doesn't give up. Once he sets his mind to something, he's going to make it happen." That has been true for Dr. Androga his whole life.

## ESCAPE FROM A WAR ZONE

Dr. Androga was born in a region of Sudan, Africa, that has since split off into the independent country of South Sudan. By the time he turned 3, his family was caught in the middle of a civil war. His parents' role as educators





## MOTIVATIONS | CONTINUED CONNECTION

and his father's outspoken support of human rights put them at odds with the ruling government. "They started arresting intellectuals," Dr. Androga says. "And once you got arrested, you just disappeared." Dr. Androga pauses to draw a breath: "So we started running. There wasn't even time to pack a bag."

It would take the family more than a year to make the harrowing journey south through rebel-controlled areas before they found passage on a United Nations cargo plane that was flying to a refugee camp in nearby Kenya. Dr. Androga describes his shock at the squalor: "It was huge—hundreds of thousands of people crowded together with no infrastructure, living in shelters made of plastic bags." Even worse, he says, "camp personnel treated us like dogs, like we were less than human."

A nun saw great promise in the four Androga children and sponsored their attendance at a public school, which allowed the family to relocate. "The school, in Nairobi, was in the biggest slum in Kenya, but it was known for achieving top marks in national exams," he says. Dr. Androga realized that education would be his only way out. He poured himself into his studies.

### DRIVEN TO BE A DOCTOR

In Kenya, medical education starts after high school. Dr. Androga earned the high marks he needed to qualify, but his family couldn't afford the tuition. He politely declined an offer from a nonprofit organization to sponsor a less-expensive course of study, telling the director: "I want to be a doctor; that's all I want to do."

Back in the refugee camp, Dr. Androga was frustrated, but he wrote letters—"to schools, nonprofits,

supermarket chains, any place I could think of, telling them of my hopes and dreams." Eventually he won a scholarship to study at the United World College of the Atlantic in Wales, part of a network of elite boarding schools. Another full scholarship led him to Wesleyan University in Connecticut, where he double-majored in chemistry and molecular biology/biochemistry.

What drew Dr. Androga to Einstein was the college's mission of caring for underserved communities. "As a refugee, I've experienced a lot of discrimination, so the idea that everyone should get good care regardless of who they are or where they come from appeals to me," he says. But he needed to surmount one more barrier to complete his education.

### BUILDING CONNECTIONS

An accident with a bamboo stick coupled with poor access to medical care had left Dr. Androga blind in his right eye. That disability didn't limit him until medical school, when he found that his reading speed and subsequent headaches caused serious problems.

Catherine C. Skae, M.D., associate dean for graduate medical education, says she recognized Dr. Androga's determination while arranging for him to have the extra time he needed to take board exams without straining his eyesight. "He's tenacious and works so hard," she says. "It was an honor and privilege to help him."

That hard work has paid off. Dr. Androga received an award for excellence from the Harold and Muriel Block Institute for Clinical and Translational Research and graduated from Einstein with distinction. Recently he passed the last of his three required licensing exams and matched for a nephrology

**"As a refugee, I've experienced a lot of discrimination, so the idea that everyone should get good care regardless of who they are or where they come from appeals to me."**

— DR. LAGU ANDROGA



Dr. Steven M. Safyer, president and CEO of Montefiore Medicine, with Dr. Lagu Androga on graduation day in May 2016.



fellowship at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

He continues to be connected to Einstein through clinical research on chronic kidney disease with Matthew K. Abramowitz, M.D., associate professor of medicine (nephrology). For Dr. Androga, the work is personal: “I was inspired to learn more about nephrology because my mother has kidney disease,” he says. He also instructs the next generation of medical students and has received a Teaching Star commendation for his efforts. (See article, page 6.)

Dr. Androga still maintains his connection to Kenya, returning there to care for his ailing mother. He says he

would like to develop an expertise in global health to help improve health systems in places like South Sudan.

Although their backgrounds are vastly different, Dr. Safyer says that he identifies with Dr. Androga: Both were drawn to Einstein and Montefiore for the same reasons.

“The world would be a better place if everyone had access to healthcare as a fundamental right. That is the ethos that drew me here,” Dr. Safyer says. “Similarly, Lagu worked hard to become a physician as a way of giving back to his community and his country. I know we will stay connected in the future because he is going to do amazing things.” **E**

**He also instructs the next generation of medical students and has received a Teaching Star commendation for his efforts.**

Dr. Lagu Androga and a student look over a scientific poster in the Forchheimer Building.



# MENTAL HEALTH CARE COMES TO THE HEART OF CAMPUS

Einstein's new center makes drop-in visits easier for students

BY TERESA CARR

Just getting into medical school is tough enough. Then classes begin—along with the seemingly endless work. All that can take a toll on students' emotional health.

"Students may think that once they reach medical school, their problems will be behind them, but the statistics show that just isn't true," says Joseph Battaglia, M.D., assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences. Research suggests that at least one of every four students will develop anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues over the course of his or her training—and that few students take steps to manage their mental health.

To reverse that trend, Einstein has developed a comprehensive mental

health and wellness program for medical and graduate students. At the program's heart is the new Einstein Student Mental Health Center, which opened on the fourth floor of the Van Etten Building last September.

Dr. Battaglia, the new center's director, wants to break down barriers that have traditionally kept students from seeking mental health care. One of the highest hurdles is lack of time; students get so caught up in caring for others that they have few opportunities to attend to their own health and well-being. "Having a clinic conveniently onsite where you can just drop by means students are more likely to come," Dr. Battaglia says. "We've designed the center with student input

From left: Bruce Schwartz, M.D.; Jonathan Alpert, M.D., Ph.D.; Montefiore Medicine CEO Steven M. Safyer, M.D.; Mary Kelly, Ph.D.; Joseph Battaglia, M.D.; Dean Gordon Tomaselli, M.D.; Kristin Williams, Class of 2021; and Allison Ludwig, M.D.





## MOTIVATIONS | SPOTLIGHT

to ensure that it's as easy as possible for them to access care."

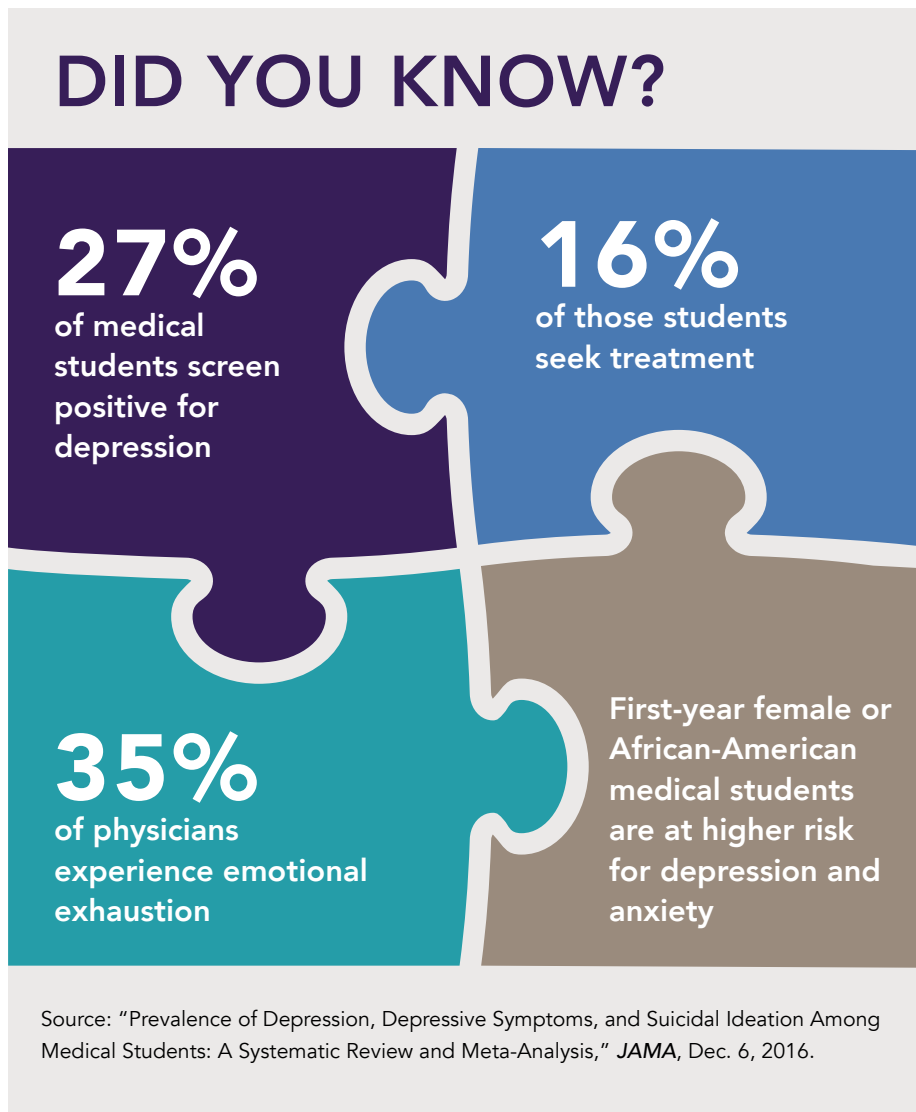
The other major hurdle, Dr. Battaglia says, is the stigma surrounding mental health disorders. "Medical students tend to be stoic and don't want to reveal anything that could be perceived as a weakness," he says. But seeking help, he notes, "is actually a sign of strength."

Einstein Trustee Jay Goldberg agrees. "Opening this center on campus and bringing mental health care into the open is really important," he says. Mr. Goldberg and his wife, Mary Cirillo-Goldberg, say they were inspired to donate to Einstein by the experience of a family member who has mental illness. They found that mental health research and resources were an overlooked aspect of philanthropy. "We're overcoming old-fashioned ideas about mental health to get students the support they need," Mr. Goldberg says.

### A CLINICAL ARM

The new center improves on Einstein's existing mental health resources in a key respect—by providing clinical services to students.

"Our WellMed student wellness program and the office of academic support and counseling provide a broad range of activities as well as evaluation and guidance," says Jonathan Alpert, M.D., Ph.D., the Dorothy and Marty Silverman Chair in Psychiatry and chair of the department of psychiatry and behavioral sciences. "But we can now also offer expert clinical evaluation and treatment for which students previously needed to be referred off campus"—a big hurdle for students working long, irregular hours, he says. Plus, many private mental health providers in the community didn't take students' insurance.



"We realized we needed a clinical arm that provides services near where students live and study," Dr. Alpert says.

For convenience, a student can schedule an appointment with a psychiatrist or psychologist by calling the office or using the online calendar. The center takes all types of insurance and has walk-in hours. "If anyone has a concern, we want to make it easy to just stop by," Dr. Battaglia says. He emphasizes that seeking help won't hurt students' professional standing and that all services are confidential.

**Students get so caught up in caring for others that they have few opportunities to attend to their own health and well-being.**



**“Medical students  
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— DR. JOSEPH BATTAGLIA

Students played a key role in shaping the new mental health center, down to its name. “I fully share their opinion that using words to sanitize mental health care actually perpetuates stigma in a subtle way,” Dr. Alpert says, noting that students objected to less-direct terms such as “wellness” and “behavioral health” when naming the space.

### **A CULTURE OF EMPATHY**

The vision for the Einstein Student Mental Health Center reflects “the growing awareness that student mental health services are vital,” Dr. Alpert says. “If we are going to graduate healthy, well-rounded future physicians and scientists, we need them to recognize the importance of taking good care of their minds and bodies,” he says.

To make that vision a reality, Einstein and Montefiore are seeking philanthropy to cover the operating expenses of the center and endow it.

Mr. Goldberg and Mrs. Cirillo-Goldberg see their investment in mental health as an investment in the future of healthcare. Medical students who learn how to manage stress and get the necessary support will carry that knowledge into their professional lives, becoming more empathetic healers and better role models for patients. “To put it simply, healthier people provide better healthcare,” Mrs. Cirillo-Goldberg says. **E**



### **PREVENTING PHYSICIAN BURNOUT, STARTING IN MEDICAL SCHOOL**

Medical students’ stress and risk of becoming depressed increase significantly over their first three years of training, according to an analysis of yearly surveys of Einstein students published in the journal *BMC Medical Education* in 2015. Lead author Allison Ludwig, M.D., associate dean for student affairs, says that on top of experiencing academic pressure, many students aren’t prepared for the emotional rigors of their clinical years.

“As physicians we are thrust into the middle of people’s suffering. Students will see more darkness in their twenties than most people see in a lifetime,” she says. And for this generation of students, she says, social media can worsen feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Students are particularly vulnerable to mental health issues, says Joseph Battaglia, M.D., director of Einstein’s new Student Mental Health Center. Adolescence through young adulthood is the prime time for anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders to emerge. “Developmentally, we know that the brain continues to mature well into the late twenties,” he says. Stress can affect brain development, increasing the risk of mental health problems.

The good news is that students can learn to seek help early for issues such as anxiety and depression, which can head off burnout and more-serious problems. “Patients benefit as well,” Dr. Ludwig says. “When everything is harmonious in the hospital, patients feel it.”

MOTIVATIONS | YOUR IMPACT

PEDIATRIC PATIENTS USE

# VIRTUAL REALITY

TO FIND REAL COMFORT

BY TERESA CARR AND MANDY WALKER



**O**n some days she hikes deep into the forest, climbing past rushing waterfalls on a carpet of yellow wildflowers as birds chirp overhead. On others she plunges into the ocean, swimming through orange and blue fish as a playful seal tries to get her attention. Chiara Valle, 20, looks forward to these outings—all of them in the Bronx, just down the hall from her hospital room.

These adventures are possible because a virtual-reality (VR) headset transports Chiara to exotic places while she receives chemotherapy for a rare and aggressive cancer called Ewing's sarcoma. Children's Hospital at Montefiore (CHAM) and its Children's Hospital Innovation Lab, also known as the "CHILZone," provide the VR technology. Immersing herself in another space through three-dimensional computer-generated images has helped Chiara deal with months of treatment.

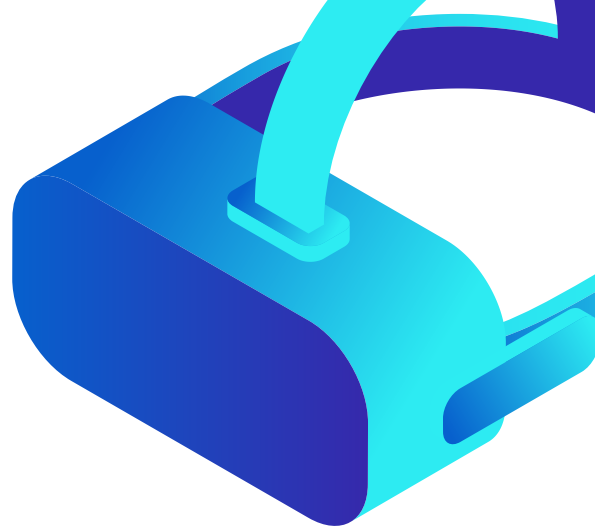
Her favorite VR experience is a

walk among the flowers as she is surrounded by butterflies. "I feel them all around me, fluttering in my face," Chiara says. "They have a special meaning for me since I found out that a yellow butterfly is the symbol of bone cancer," the type of cancer she has.

"Hospitalized children regularly face tests and treatments that are scary or that hurt, so they're naturally anxious about them," says David Loeb, M.D., Ph.D., an associate professor and the chief of the division of pediatric hematology-oncology at CHAM and Einstein. "These digital tools not only help distract them from their illnesses but also ease anxiety and possibly reduce the need for pain medication."

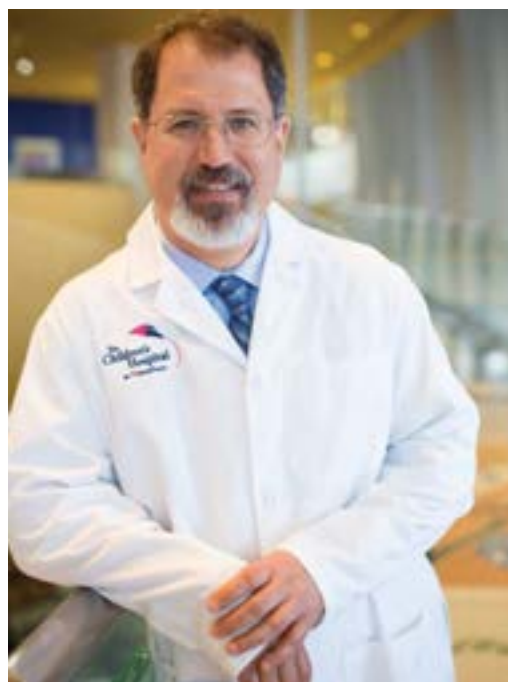
#### CREATING A MAGICAL WORLD

The CHILZone's director, Olivia Davis, who manages the Fine Art Program and Collection at Montefiore and Einstein, wanted to bring art into the hospital that would engage young people. But initially she was stymied by a space



**Immersing themselves in another space through computer-generated images helps hospitalized children deal with months of treatment.**

Below left, CHILZone director Olivia Davis watches a patient try out one of the hospital's virtual-reality headsets. Below, Dr. David Loeb.





## MOTIVATIONS | YOUR IMPACT

that was cluttered with medical equipment and TVs. Then inspiration struck: “I noticed that people were always on their cell phones or iPads,” she says. “I thought we should meld these worlds in a way that makes sense for healthcare.”

Together with Jodi Moise, director of the Fine Art Program and Collection, Davis came up with a plan that would use the joy and energy of well-known Bronx landmarks. “The majority of digital-media programs—even those aimed at healthcare—are violent or employ generic relaxation techniques,” Ms. Davis says. “Through the CHILZone, we wanted to produce experiences both familiar and thrilling.”

She started by commissioning Tom Christopher, an artist known for his expressionist paintings of New York City, to create virtual paintings of the Bronx’s Grand Concourse at Fordham Road and the Holiday Train Show at

the New York Botanical Garden. “We wanted to use spaces that celebrate the community that the children live in,” Ms. Davis says. “It’s a magical world they can walk around or fly over.”

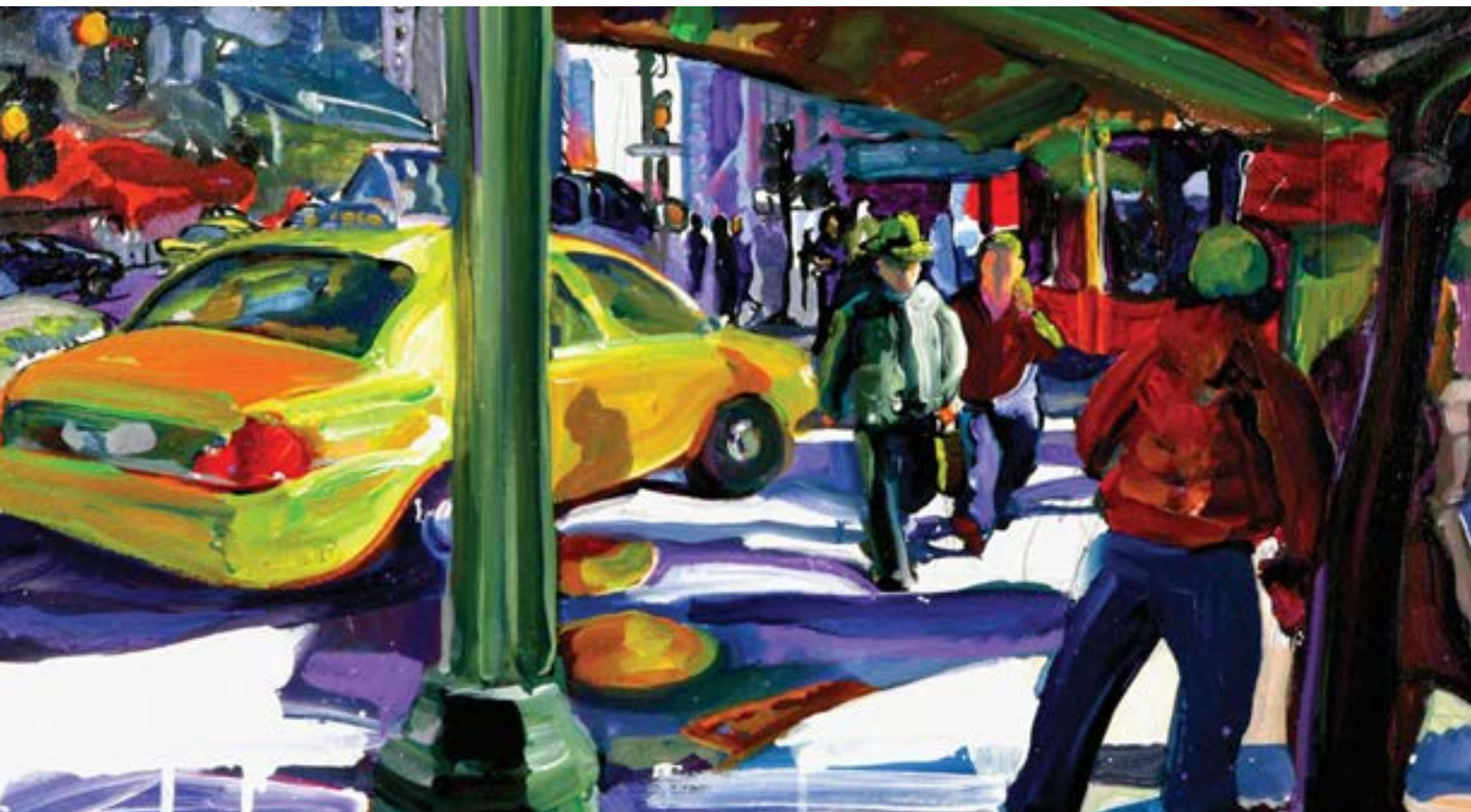
Achieving that vision has required a huge team of collaborators, Ms. Davis says. “There’s a synergy that happens when you bring together diverse talents—information technologists, care teams, clinicians, and therapists at Montefiore and Einstein as well as industry-leading technology consultants, people from academic institutions, and programmers,” she says.

### A MORE-INVITING SPACE

So successful was the VR project that Davis and her collaborators brainstormed ways to use another digital technology: augmented reality (AR). Unlike VR, which immerses users in a different world, AR layers virtual

**“We wanted to use spaces that celebrate the community that the children live in. It’s a magical world they can walk around or fly over.”**

— OLIVIA DAVIS







Above, a child's stuffed animal is photographed so that it can be transformed into a 3-D object that the child can then play with on a tablet. Opposite page, a busy Bronx street scene comes to life when a painting of the Grand Concourse is viewed through virtual-reality goggles.



content onto the real world. The CHILZone collaborators wanted to make the hospital less lonely, dull, and scary by allowing children to interact with digital versions of their favorite toys, animals, and people.

"Kids are often hospitalized for long stretches of time," Dr. Loeb says. "When they are admitted for a bone-marrow transplant, for example, they end up spending about two months with us, in isolation—a tremendous amount of time to be away from their friends and the activities they love."

The CHILZone team devised a solution: the Secret Garden app, which uses AR technology to overlay computer-generated video onto video captured in real time with a smartphone or computer tablet. The result is a completely personalized experience.

"We can take images of a child's pet or stuffed animal and render it as a 3-D object. When she looks through the app, the animal will magically appear at her bedside," Ms. Davis says. "She can play

with it, moving it around and making it large or small." Friends and family members can also send video messages that appear through the app as holograms in the room.

Animals, too, inhabit the Secret Garden, thanks to a developing collaboration with the Bronx Zoo. "The ninth floor of the hospital houses our oncology, sickle-cell, and bone-marrow transplant patients, and will appear as if it's in the zoo," Ms. Davis says. A child moving through the hospital corridor holding a smartphone or tablet might discover a lion sleeping by a door or a giraffe walking around the nurses' station.

## DIGITAL-RESEARCH SUPPORT

When David and Arlene Gaynes first heard about the CHILZone, they knew it fit well with their philanthropic vision. The family supports a variety of activities at local hospitals through *Chillin' With Adam: The Adam Gaynes Foundation*, named in honor of their son, who died of a brain tumor at age 11. The foundation enriches the lives of families with sick kids, providing

## HOW VIRTUAL REALITY MAY REDUCE PAIN

Distraction is a time-honored way to cope with pain. If you fall down during a game of touch football, for example, your immersion in the game may anesthetize the pain from a skinned knee. Distraction works for a reason: Focusing your attention elsewhere shuts down some of the circuits carrying pain signals from the point of injury to your brain.

Virtual reality (VR) works the same way with patients. Brains busy processing the sights and sounds of the New York Botanical Garden, for example, are distracted from noticing incoming pain signals.

A growing body of research suggests that VR experiences can make medical procedures much more comfortable for children. For example, a 2018 study of 143 young people ages 10 to 21, published in the *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, found that those who viewed a VR program while having blood drawn reported significantly less pain and anxiety than those who didn't experience VR. Other studies have shown that VR reduces pain from such procedures as getting flu shots, having burn wounds dressed, and having catheters implanted under the skin.



**“We know firsthand how difficult it is for children and their families to spend time in the hospital undergoing treatments for a life-threatening disease.”**

— DAVID GAYNES

At top, a patient uses the Secret Garden app on his iPad to make a virtual giraffe and lion magically appear in the hospital hallway. Above, Montefiore and Einstein honored the Gaynes family for their support at the annual Taste of Italy event on Montefiore’s Moses Campus in 2018.

assistance ranging from occupational therapy to family days at a local amusement park.

“We know firsthand how difficult it is for children and their families to spend time in the hospital undergoing treatments for a life-threatening disease,” Mr. Gaynes says. He and his wife were drawn to the CHILZone because of AR’s therapeutic potential and VR’s ability to reduce children’s suffering. “Montefiore and Einstein are really at the leading edge with this technology,” he says. “It struck us as something that could have a tremendous impact.”

Mr. Gaynes supports clinical research based on the innovative VR programs at Montefiore. He helped the CHILZone enter a contest run by the NEX Group, a financial-technology firm. After reviewing 19 entries, NEX narrowed the competition to six, and the CHILZone took home the top prize of \$150,000. That award paid for the staff and equipment for two clinical trials, for which data collection has begun.

“We want to see how different virtual-reality experiences help children

at different ages and with different diagnoses,” Dr. Loeb says.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

When the two renovated floors of the pediatric oncology department open this spring, all young cancer patients will have access to headsets and iPads in their hospital rooms as well as in the exam and infusion rooms. The goal is to raise funds to make VR and AR experiences available in all pediatric patient rooms.

The Corporate Art Awards have recognized the CHILZone’s innovative melding of art and technology. And the art magazine *Coda* named a CHILZone entry one of the top 100 design and art projects in the nation.

When Chiara looks ahead, she focuses on adventures “IRL”—in real life. But for now, she’s grateful to slip on the VR goggles and transport herself out of CHAM’s infusion room to another world. “The VR experiences help to ease the nausea I get from my treatments,” she says. “They put me at peace.” **E**

# CLASS NOTES

## 1960s

**Morton Schatzman, M.D. '62**, has a private practice as a psychiatrist/psychotherapist in London. He is the chair of the board of trustees of the Arbours Association, a charity that offers psychotherapy and places to live to people who might otherwise be in mental hospitals. He and his wife, Vivien, co-founded the association in 1970. He has two sons, Daniel and Gideon, and six grandchildren.

**Barbara Barlow, M.D. '63**, received a domestic volunteer award in October from the American College of Surgeons' board of governors for work with the Injury Free Coalition for Kids. She founded that initiative based on her work in Harlem to prevent child injury.

**Fabius N. Fox, M.D. '63, F.A.C.S., F.A.A.P.**, retired from his radiology practice specializing in breast imaging in July 2017. He and his wife, Ziporah, spend time with their son Ari, a psychotherapist specializing in helping children with school adjustment; their daughter-in-law, Sharon; their two grandchildren; and their son Danny, who is a Harvard graduate and a jazz pianist. Dr. Fox attended his class's 55th reunion last year.

**Morris Stampfer, M.D. '63**, is sad to report that his wife of 54 years, Deborah Lewittes Stampfer, died of endometrial cancer in June 2018. He has been working as a noninvasive cardiologist at Jacobi Medical Center since 2006 but is transitioning to part-time status.

**Jacob Barie, M.D. '65**, retired from interventional radiology four years ago, but is active in educating the public on transgender issues. He and his wife are the grandparents of Jazz Jennings, who is a high-profile transgender advocate. The Learning Channel is featuring their story on the *I Am Jazz* reality series.

**Sally Shaywitz, M.D. '66**, and her spouse, Bennett, were featured in *The New York Times* on Sept. 21, 2018, in a science article, "The Couple Who Helped Decode Dyslexia."

**David H. Abramson, M.D. '69, F.A.C.S.**, received the "Cure OM Award" from the Melanoma Research Foundation for his work in melanomas of the uvea, the second-most-common location for melanomas in humans.

**Laurence J. Marton, M.D. '69**, serves on the board of trustees of the American Association for Cancer Research Foundation and on the boards of directors of Cancer Commons, Rapid Science, and the Bay Area American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science. In the for-profit sector, he serves on the boards of Cellsonics, Dategra, Matternet, Microsonic Systems, Pathologica, RenovoRx, TOMA Biosciences, and xCures, and chairs the Scientific Advisory Board of PharmaJet.

## 1970s

**Sterling J. Haidt, M.D. '70**, retired in January 2015 because of a spinal injury.

Since retiring, he has been creating digital art. His website is [www.haidtart.com](http://www.haidtart.com).

**Barry M. Schimmer, M.D. '70**, received the Pennsylvania Hospital Department of Medicine's Edward D. Viner Teaching Award for "Outstanding Teacher of the Year" in June 2018. He has been chief of rheumatology for 40 years and is a clinical professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine.

**Jerry Appel, M.D. '72**, is still a tenured professor of medicine at Columbia University Medical Center in New York, still married to **Alice Sue Friedman Appel, Ph.D. '75**, still running the Glomerular Kidney Center at Columbia, and still doing research studies, traveling, lecturing, and seeing lots of patients. Their older son, Jacob, is a psychiatrist-ethicist-writer on the Mount Sinai faculty, and their younger son, Seth, practices intellectual property law in Chicago. Their grandkids are 12 and 10.

**Walter A. Orenstein, M.D. '72**, has been a vaccinologist since 1974, having directed the U.S. Immunization Program for 16 years at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He has co-edited the last five editions of the standard textbook in the field; the last edition of *Plotkin's Vaccines* (7th edition, 2018) won first prize in the public health category at the British Medical Association Awards in 2018. Dr. Orenstein also saw the birth of his third grandchild in September.



## MOTIVATIONS | CLASS NOTES

**Gary Z. Lotner, M.D. '73**, proudly announces the recent birth of his fourth grandchild to his son and daughter-in-law, Drs. Daniel and Monique Lotner. Both are young physicians in Atlanta.

**Raymond Reich, M.D. '73**, has an active, full-time ophthalmology practice in partnership with his son, Isaac Reich, M.D. In October 2018, the senior Dr. Reich wrote a book in two volumes: *Heaven and Earth: A Real-World View of Jewish Life through the Parashah and the Holidays*. It is available on Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble under Yerucham Reich (Raymond Reich, M.D.).

**David Siegel, M.D. '73**, recently stepped down as chief of medicine for the VA Northern California Health System and vice chair at the University of California, Davis, after 23 years. He will continue to be an inpatient attending. He and his wife, Nancy, recently welcomed two granddaughters, bringing their total to six. Their son, **Leon Siegel, M.D. '17**, is doing a surgical residency at SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Brooklyn.

**Harold Pincus, M.D. '75**, received a \$2.4 million grant from the John A. Hartford Foundation to continue the Health and Aging Policy Fellows Program, which he directs. Dr. Pincus is a professor and the vice chair of psychiatry at Columbia University's Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons and the co-director of Columbia's Irving Institute for Clinical and Translational Research. He is also a senior scientist at the RAND Corporation.

**Karen Lowenstein Kade, M.D. '76**, plans to sell her dermatology practice and retire. She will be moving to Venice,

Florida. She has two grandchildren, one from each of her daughters: a 3-year-old boy and a 7-month-old girl. Both families live in the New York City area.

**Jesse Goodman, M.D. '77**, left leadership positions in government and public health, most recently as chief scientist for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and returned to academic medicine/infectious diseases clinical and public health policy work. He finds that Einstein prepared him well and continues to believe that a person can be scientifically sound and humane/socially engaged. He enjoys his three grandbabies, two in Paris and one in Cambridge, who are important antidotes to these challenging times.

**Marcia Naveh, M.D. '77**, still lives happily in New York City with her husband, Aaron. Their children and three grandchildren are nearby in Brooklyn. After 20 years in primary care, affiliated with Columbia P&S and Roosevelt Hospital, she has become the co-founder and chief medical officer of Matrix Medical Network, a national organization working primarily with Medicare Advantage plans. She continues to enjoy cycling and travel to places such as Patagonia, Mongolia, and India.

**Joyce Davis, M.D. '79**, has been having fun working with Clairol as a hair and scalp expert on its new Nice'n Easy hair-dye formula. She has been interviewed, photographed, and filmed for stories on this product and hair loss.

## 1980s

**Kenneth J. Davis, M.D. '80**, has spent the last 35 years practicing pediatrics in

## STAY IN TOUCH

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Elizabeth, New Jersey. He is now closing his practice to join a pediatric group. All four of the doctors he will work with are people he helped train during his residency. Dr. Davis is still married to Ellen Radin, whom he wed three days after graduation. They have three grown sons who are all doing well.

**David S. Friedman, M.D. '80**, has been retired for the past four years and is enjoying his nine grandchildren.

**Elizabeth H. Rand, M.D. '80**, is in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where she became a tenured full professor and the chair of psychiatry at the branch program of the University of Alabama, Birmingham, which trains medical students and family practice residents. She served as president of the Association for Academic Psychiatry, is a lifetime fellow of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), and has sat on the APA Program Committee for six years. Her photography is on view at [www.elizabethhrand.com](http://www.elizabethhrand.com). She has three married children and four grandchildren.

**Walter Szczupak, M.D. '80**, closed his pulmonary practice of almost 30 years in 2014 and is working for the 911 Health Monitoring Program of Stony Brook University. He and Anna are the proud parents of Larissa, who works for a New York City law firm; Wolodymyr,





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for research that improves  
human health."**

— Trudy F. Schlachter, Co-President,  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Women's Division

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— Terri L. Goldberg, Co-President,  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Women's Division

Leading the way at Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
(clockwise from left): Trudy Schlachter; Ana Maria Cuervo, M.D.,  
Ph.D., Robert and Renée Belfer Chair for the Study of  
Neurodegenerative Diseases; Terri Goldberg; and Chinazo O.  
Cunningham, M.D., M.S., Professor, Department of Medicine

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**Montefiore**

## MOTIVATIONS | CLASS NOTES

who graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and INSEAD (European Institute of Business Administration); and Mikhaylo, who is a third-year ENT resident in Miami. Dr. Szczupak and his wife live in Old Field, New York.

**Lei L. Chen, M.D. '83**, specialized in medical oncology. She was trained at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and served as a faculty member at MD Anderson Cancer Center and at the Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah. Her research focused on targeted therapy and immunotherapy with a special interest in gastrointestinal stromal tumor. She is now retired and recently moved to Seattle to be close to her two children and three grandkids.

**Andrew Blank, M.D. '84**, is in private practice with ENT and Allergy Associates in Bayside, Queens. He is a partner in this group of more than 200 ENTs and allergists in New York and New Jersey. His wife, **Dalit Ashany, M.D. '85**, is a rheumatologist at the Hospital for Special Surgery. They have lived in Scarsdale, New York, for 25 years. Their daughter, Nina, married in May 2018 and will be pursuing a dermatology residency at Cornell. Their son, Daniel, is a software developer for Blackstone in Manhattan.

**Albert T. Quiery Jr., M.D. '84**, and his wife, Donna, relocated to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he is the medical director for the Rogel Cancer Center at the University of Michigan. He continues to practice hematology and is engaged in courses in bioethics and the social determinants of health. He and Donna are expecting their first grandchild in May.

**Simone Kaye Simon, M.D. '89**, née Seimon, reports the passing of her father, Dr. Leonard Seimon. He was a professor of orthopaedics and of pediatrics at Montefiore and Einstein and chief of spine and pediatric orthopaedics services. Dr. Seimon was the father-in-law of **David Bruce Simon, M.D., '89**, and the grandfather of **Rachel Beth Simon, Class of 2021**. An outstanding teacher and mentor, he retired in June 2015 after 37 years on the faculty.

### 1990s

**Lam Do, M.D. '92**, will captain Team SuperMarrow in the Race Across America—"The World's Toughest Bicycle Ride"—in June. The ride from Oceanside, California, to Annapolis, Maryland, covers 3,000 miles and 170,000 feet in elevation in nine days or less. Support Team SuperMarrow at [www.TeamSuperMarrow.org](http://www.TeamSuperMarrow.org).

**Alan Chen, M.D. '93**, keeps busy in Illinois as chief of plastic surgery and hand surgery at Silver Cross Hospital, clinical associate for University of Chicago Medicine & Biological Sciences, and assistant professor of surgery at Midwestern University.

**Sherry C. Huang, M.D. '94**, is looking forward to her 25th reunion. She has been at the University of California, San Diego, since her internship, staying on as a fellow in pediatric gastroenterology and joining the faculty. She now serves as the designated institutional official and associate dean for graduate medical education. She and her husband have a son who plays volleyball at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a daughter who is a high school senior.

**Hanah Polotsky, M.D. '99, M.B.O.E., B.B.L.S.S., and Alex Polotsky, M.D., M.S. '90**, are enjoying life in Denver with their five children (Esti, Avi, Yael, Eli, and Yoshi), ranging in age from 8 to 17. Two children want to follow in their footsteps and attend Einstein. Dr. Alex Polotsky runs a division of reproductive medicine at the University of Colorado, and Dr. Hanah Polotsky oversees a Kaiser Permanente office serving 43,000 patients. Last summer they climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

### 2000s

**Jacob Levitt, M.D. '00**, is the vice chair of dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center and the president of the Periodic Paralysis Association. He trains in martial arts and has six rabbits.

**Joshua Sisser, M.D. '05**, and **Rachel Sisser, M.D. '05**, are pleased to announce the bar mitzvah of their son, Aaron Sisser.

**Christina Gagliardo, M.D. '07**, was graced with the arrival of a baby boy named Stephen in December 2017. She recently accepted a position as a pediatric infectious disease attending at Goryeb Children's Hospital in Morristown, New Jersey.

### 2010s

**Ali Sharma, Ph.D. '11**, serves as a research assistant professor at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

**Esti Hirschhorn, M.D. '16**, and Evan Hirschhorn are proud to announce the birth of their son, Yosef. **E**