

MOTIVATIONS

The Front Line of Philanthropy at Einstein and Montefiore

Image: Justin C. Wheat, M.D./Ph.D. candidate

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MOTIVATIONS

A Message From the Senior Vice President of Development and Chief Philanthropy Officer

KATHLEEN KEARNS



Kathleen Kearns

What motivates philanthropists to give? Throughout my decades-long career, those reasons—from the personal to the visionary and beyond—have always moved me. When I came to Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Health System at the end of 2020 as the new senior vice president of development and chief philanthropy officer, hearing from so many generous and passionate Einstein supporters confirmed what I had long known: Einstein is a special place, made more so by the people who hold it so close to their hearts.

This devotion is evident in the latest issue of *Motivations*. You will read about John Braver, M.D., from Einstein's Class of 1970, who joined forces with fellow alumnus Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D. '82, the Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean at Einstein and executive vice president and chief academic officer at Montefiore, to fund the renovation of the Education Center in the Forchheimer Building (page 54). You'll learn how UJA-Federation of New York has partnered with Einstein to care for Holocaust survivors coping with the COVID-19 pandemic (page 56). And you'll take a look inside the emerging Blood Cancer Institute, where researchers are gaining crucial knowledge about the causes of blood cancers and more-effective treatments for them (page 60).

In this issue we also pay tribute to one of the most inspiring humanitarians I've had the honor of knowing, however briefly: the late Roger W. Einiger (see facing page). A committed chair of the Board of Trustees and notable thought leader, Mr. Einiger created a legacy for Einstein that will forever fill chapters of Einstein's history—and indeed, our future.

The Einstein community is exceptional, composed of dynamic individuals motivated to make the world a better place. That mission binds us all through our vocations, volunteerism, and philanthropy.

As our namesake said, "Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile." That philosophy guided Albert Einstein in his brilliant work and still guides many of us here today. With that, I'll open up the conversation: What motivates you to give?

With gratitude,

Kathy Kearns

Kathleen Kearns

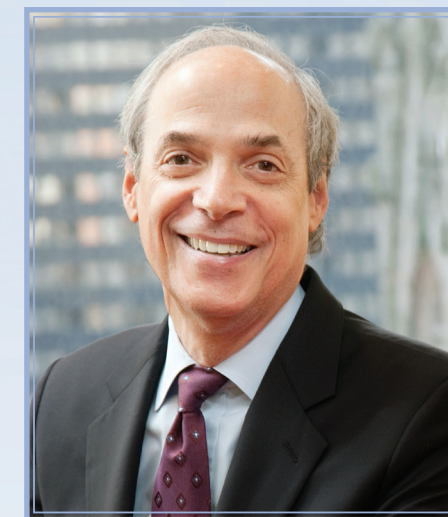
REMEMBERING EINSTEIN BOARD CHAIR ROGER W. EINIGER

The Einstein and Montefiore communities lost a devoted and loyal friend on Dec. 9, 2020. Roger W. Einiger, chair of the Einstein Board of Trustees and trustee of Montefiore Medicine and Montefiore Health System, died peacefully at his home in New York City at age 73 after a courageous, two-and-a-half-year battle with pancreatic cancer.

STEADY LEADERSHIP

"Few people have played a more important role in the recent history of Einstein and Montefiore," says Philip O. Ozuah, M.D., Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of Montefiore. "Over his lifetime, Roger provided important leadership and generous support for all aspects of Einstein's mission, strengthening its position as a research powerhouse, top-ranking academic destination, and force for social good." Mr. Einiger's service continued his family's long relationship with Einstein: His parents, Jack and Glory Einiger, were among the College of Medicine's earliest supporters and were members of the Society of Founders.

Mr. Einiger joined the Einstein Board in 2005 and served in numerous roles, including treasurer, chair of the executive committee, and chair of the budget and finance committee, tapping into three decades of experience in finance and investment banking and providing Einstein's leadership with invaluable strategic and financial advice. He joined the Montefiore Board in 2014 and was instrumental in finalizing the historic partnership between Einstein and Montefiore one year later. Mr. Einiger became Einstein's board chair in 2015, succeeding Ruth L. Gottesman, Ed.D., and



led the recruitment in 2018 of Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D., the Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean at Einstein and executive vice president and chief academic officer at Montefiore.

Among his many other contributions, Mr. Einiger led the Campaign to Transform Einstein, which raised nearly \$200 million for the College of Medicine. In 2020, Mr. Einiger was the trustee lead for the search committee that recruited Edward Chu, M.D., M.M.S., as the new head of the Albert Einstein Cancer Center. Dr. Chu holds the Carol and Roger Einiger Professorship of Cancer Medicine.

"Roger was an unrelenting supporter of the medical school and a stalwart friend and, most recently, he helped steer us through the turbulent challenges

of the COVID-19 pandemic," notes Dr. Tomaselli. "For these and many other reasons, I was privileged to present him with an honorary doctorate of humane letters during our 2020 virtual commencement ceremony."

HIS LIFE AND CAREER

Mr. Einiger spent more than 30 years at Oppenheimer & Co. and its successor companies, ultimately serving as executive vice president, chief administrative officer, and vice chairman. He began a second career in 2001, devoting his time to serving on the boards of numerous nonprofit organizations important to him, helping to advance their missions and strengthen their finances. In addition to Einstein and Montefiore, these included UJA-Federation of New York, Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC, the Anti-Defamation League, the University of Pennsylvania School of Design, and The Washington Institute, among others.

Born in New York City in 1947, Mr. Einiger earned his bachelor's degree in economics from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and his M.B.A. from New York University's Stern School of Business. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Carol; their son, Joshua; their daughter-in-law, Julie; their grandson, Jacob; and Mr. Einiger's sister, Ellen, and brother-in-law, Mitch. **E**

DR. JOHN BRAVER CLASS OF '70

A lifelong physician and educator helps the Einstein Education Center meet the future

BY JOAN LIPPERT

Less than a decade ago, Einstein's Education Center was a state-of-the-art technology hub for learning about everything from anatomy to zoonoses. But 10 years is a lifetime when it comes to today's increasingly wireless teaching spaces.

Low ceilings and cement columns were causing audio and connectivity challenges. Outdated equipment made it harder to project information from newer computers onto large screens. And smartphones, tablets, and laptops were straining the Wi-Fi system. The Education Center needed a reboot.

PAYING IT FORWARD

Fortunately, Einstein alumnus John Braver, M.D. '70, had been thinking for a while of making a gift to his alma mater, to express his gratitude to the College of Medicine. "I got a terrific education and a career for life," he says.

Dr. Braver had retired in 2016 as chief of gastrointestinal radiology and co-director of abdominal imaging at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. He had not, however, retired from his longtime dedication to medical students. A beloved and skilled educator, he was voted Brigham's Teacher of the Year in 1982 and again in 2010. Even after retiring, he still teaches

Brigham residents once or twice a week.

In June 2019, Dr. Braver attended a brunch for Boston-area Einstein alumni hosted by Janina Galler, M.D. '72, and Burton Rabinowitz, M.D. '72. There he met fellow alumnus Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D. '82, Einstein's Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean, who shared campus updates and answered questions about admissions, student life, residency matching statistics, and other details. "We talked about supporting students, and I left impressed by the dean's enthusiasm and vision," Dr. Braver says.

That meetup inspired Dr. Braver to make a generous donation at the end of 2019 to benefit medical students and to support education. "I trusted Einstein's leaders to know how my contribution could best be used to help students learn and engage most effectively," Dr. Braver says.

IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE

Dr. Braver's gift came at a crucial time. Costs for repairing and replacing Education Center equipment were running as high as \$60,000 per year. Plus, the surge in digital communication caused by the COVID-19 pandemic was stressing the aging educational facility. "The pandemic meant that our third-years couldn't see patients in the



John Braver, M.D., standing next to a security robot in Silicon Valley, says he sees great value in new technologies for use in education, medicine, and more.

hospital, so we created a nine-week virtual course with lessons from the clerkship," says Joshua Nosanchuk, M.D., senior associate dean for medical education. Also, all first- and second-year lectures were being delivered virtually. Dependable digital communication with Montefiore and beyond was more essential than ever.

Dr. Braver's donation allowed work on massive technology upgrades to begin quickly. The vastly improved Education Center now offers a new Wi-Fi system, a refined broadcast frequency to prevent outside interference, and improved microphone audio that uses Bose technology. Small tables have replaced large ones to accommodate more test-takers

GUIDING ELDERLY SURVIVORS OF THE HOLOCAUST

With support from UJA-Federation of New York, Montefiore is bringing vital mental health services to those who endured the World War II concentration camps

BY GARY GOLDENBERG



After her husband's death, 90-year-old Sarah L. of Washington Heights* moved to a new apartment to be closer to her children. Sadly, the combined loss of her spouse, home, and neighbors was too much to bear, leaving her depressed and confused. Worse yet, she struggled with nightmares about her childhood in Eastern Europe, where she was deported to Auschwitz, along with her four siblings, all of whom perished in Nazi concentration camps.

Sarah's decline seemed unstoppable—until she connected with an unusual alliance of caregivers from Montefiore and Selfhelp Community Services, a local agency, bolstered by a philanthropic partnership with UJA-Federation of New York.

"It was heartbreaking," says Alessandra Scalmati, M.D., Ph.D., associate director of geriatric psychiatry at Montefiore and associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Einstein, who oversaw Sarah's care. "But with her family's assistance, we got her started on antidepressants and psychotherapy, and arranged for in-home care. After a while, her nightmares and other symptoms began to ease."

The caregiver alliance—dedicated to addressing the mental health of Holocaust survivors and their families—has provided help to hundreds of people like Sarah. "This is our last opportunity to ensure that the survivors can live out their years with dignity," says Briana Hilfer, L.M.S.W., a planning executive with UJA-Federation of New York, the alliance's founder and funder. "By providing this care, along with other critical support services, we can help survivors

remain safely and comfortably in their homes, which is what most prefer."

WHEN THE PAST IS PRESENT

New York City's 36,000 Holocaust survivors are an incredibly resilient group. They've endured the camps, built new lives in a foreign land, and lived well into old age. But their survival has exacted an emotional toll.

"Most Holocaust survivors have been able to cope with the lingering effects of their trauma," says Gary Kennedy, M.D., director of geriatric psychiatry at Montefiore and professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Einstein, who has been involved with the alliance since its inception. "But with aging, they tend to lose their natural filters to contain the horrors they experienced."

Cognitive impairment affects about one in four individuals over age 85 and tends to make matters worse. "With dementia, people can get trapped in their early memories," Dr. Scalmati says. "They might not remember what they had for breakfast, but they

* Some details have been changed to protect the family's privacy.



“If they remember being confined in the camps, that can rekindle nightmares and flashbacks.”

— DR. ALESSANDRA SCALMATI

can usually recall every detail of their childhood. If they remember playing in the fields, fabulous. But if they remember being confined in the camps, that can rekindle nightmares and flashbacks and trigger other symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, increasing their vulnerability and risk of institutionalization.”

Further complicating matters, many survivors are reluctant to seek support. “Some don’t want to be at the mercy of strangers, while others fear being stigmatized by psychiatric care or being forced into a nursing home or hospital,” Dr. Scalmati adds.

AN ALLIANCE IS CREATED

In 2012, the United Jewish Appeal (UJA)—long a sponsor of programs for Holocaust survivors—realized that survivors were declining in number but that their needs, particularly their mental health concerns, were rising. To help address that problem, the UJA found an ideal partner in Montefiore, established more than a century ago to care for

poor Jewish immigrants.

Today, Montefiore’s geriatricians are among a handful of specialists nationwide with expertise in aging and trauma. The third partner in the alliance is Selfhelp, the organization operating the oldest and largest support program for Holocaust survivors in North America.

“UJA, Selfhelp, and Montefiore’s collective goal is to ensure that Holocaust survivors are treated with the utmost dignity, compassion, and respect,” says Alisa Doctoroff, a member of the boards of trustees of Montefiore Medicine, Montefiore Health System, and Einstein, as well as a past president of UJA-Federation of New York.

“Montefiore and Einstein’s caregivers pay attention to all vulnerable people within their community, whether they are aging Holocaust survivors or members of often-overlooked or disadvantaged groups,” she says. “This mission makes Montefiore and Einstein the ideal partners to lead this work.”

The collaborative’s guiding philosophy—person-centered, trauma-informed (PCTI) care—recognizes the impact of violence and trauma and promotes people’s dignity, strength, and empowerment. While PCTI may sound dry in principle, it’s deeply humanistic in practice.

“You need to have extra sensitivity for people who have experienced trauma,” Dr. Kennedy says. “You cannot force people to address their issues. The challenge is to convey the message ‘If you want to talk, I want to listen.’ These patients are naturally cautious about new relationships and can come across as ‘difficult.’ Caregivers need to understand and respect this or they won’t be able to help. But once we earn the patients’ trust, we can help them



Montefiore Medicine trustee Alisa Doctoroff and her husband, Daniel.

36,000 HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

live in the New York area.

SINCE COVID-19 STRUCK ...

36% OF NEW YORKERS

reported symptoms of depression and anxiety, with elderly and Holocaust survivors acutely affected.

HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

are coping with resurfaced trauma from early lives spent in hiding and years of food scarcity.

Source: UJA-Federation of New York



“We can help them understand what is triggering their fears and assure them they are safe.”

— DR. GARY KENNEDY



Both Magda Goodman, above right, and Bernard Igielski, pictured with his daughter and grandson, are Holocaust survivors and program participants. Mr. Igielski often gives talks about his experiences to students.

understand what is triggering their fears and assure them they are safe.”

The program team also offers care to family members, who can feel the effects of a parent’s trauma. “We call this ‘vicarious traumatization,’ in which trauma passes from one generation to the next through a parent’s behaviors,” Dr. Kennedy says.

The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the challenge of caring for Holocaust survivors. “Social isolation is hard on older people,” Dr. Scalmati says. “It can provoke memories of wartime, when survivors had to go into hiding or

were separated from family.”

Adds Ms. Hilfer: “As the pandemic intensified, our partner agencies sprang into action. Social workers were in touch with their clients, some almost daily, when in the past clients would be in touch with social workers only a few times per month. These efforts were not only appreciated, but also crucial to boost mental health. These conversations are an opportunity to adopt telehealth techniques that will have lasting utility after the pandemic has passed.”

A MODEL FOR TREATING OTHERS

While caring for local Holocaust survivors is their primary goal, Drs. Kennedy and Scalmati also want to conduct training programs for Selfhelp’s staffers and caregivers and to share findings with the geriatrics and psychiatry community.

“In a decade or two, there will be no more Holocaust survivors,” Dr. Scalmati says. “But sadly, there is no shortage of people who need this specialized care. Having generous and devoted partners to support communities who need their help gives me hope for these people and for future generations.”

Mrs. Doctoroff has a similar vision. “My hope is that this program will not only improve the lives of Holocaust survivors but also inspire others to reach out to underserved and marginalized populations—and inspire motivated donors to support these efforts through their philanthropy.” **E**



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NEW BLOOD CANCER INSTITUTE TO LEAD THE SEARCH FOR CURES

Einstein's new research center will build on recent successes
to create lifesaving treatments

BY TERESA CARR

In 2010, Amit Verma, M.B.B.S., and Ulrich Steidl, M.D., Ph.D., were spending hours in their Einstein labs studying cellular mechanisms linked to a group of blood cancers called myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS). This cancer of the bone marrow leaves people with too many defective blood cells and too few normal ones, leading to life-threatening anemia. "Treatments at the time could reduce levels of defective blood cells for a while, but we needed therapies that could attack the root cause of MDS," Dr. Verma says.

A few years earlier, these researchers had been among the first to show that MDS arises from abnormalities in hematopoietic stem cells (HSCs)—cells in the bone marrow that produce all of the body's blood cells. Dr. Steidl's lab went on to identify novel targets against these disease-causing malignant stem cells in both MDS and a related disease, acute myeloid leukemia.

Dr. Verma and his team were homing in on a signaling pathway in HSCs that inhibits the cells from developing into mature red blood cells. They discovered that this pathway, known as SMAD2/3, was overactive in MDS patients. "We theorized that blocking the SMAD2/3 pathway with a drug would allow blood cells to develop normally, preventing the debilitating and even deadly anemia that accompanies MDS," says Dr. Verma, now associate director for translational research at Albert Einstein Cancer Center (AECC), professor of medicine and of developmental & molecular biology at Einstein, and director of

hematologic malignancies at Montefiore.

The researchers' hunch proved correct. Scientists across the globe soon began testing potential therapies, first in animals and then in human clinical trials. The payoff came in January 2020 when the *New England Journal of Medicine* published a study they participated in showing that the drug luspatercept significantly reduced the need for blood transfusions to treat anemia in MDS patients.

Three months later, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the drug (brand name Reblozyl)—the first new therapy for MDS in 12 years. "It's gratifying when you can see how the basic science eventually leads to life-changing treatments," Dr. Verma says. "That's the driver for everything we do."

FINDING TREATMENTS FASTER

"Nearly all therapeutic breakthroughs have a similar story—arising from ideas born in labs and then worked on for 10 to 15 years before their use in the clinic,"

“We would like to bring innovative therapies to patients at a rapid pace ... actual fundamental advances.”

— DR. ULRICH STEIDL

says Dr. Steidl, who is associate director for basic science at AECC, professor of cell biology and of medicine, and the Diane and Arthur B. Belfer Faculty Scholar in Cancer Research at Einstein, and associate chair for translational research in oncology at Montefiore. But it can be challenging, he says, to obtain research grants and government funding, “especially for ideas that are outside of the mainstream.”

To speed the development of new therapies, Drs. Verma and Steidl are helping to launch the first-of-its-kind Blood Cancer Institute within AECC, of which they will be the co-directors. “We would like to bring innovative therapies to patients at a rapid pace,” Dr. Steidl says. “And by that, I don’t mean variations on tried-and-true treatments but actual fundamental advances.”

The institute will kick-start the early stages of both basic and translational research, when outcomes are less certain, Dr. Verma says. “We will focus on areas where we can make a unique contribution to the field—basic bench research



AECC Director Edward Chu, M.D.

and also early-phase clinical trials with novel compounds, for instance,” he says. “Then we can take the next step and bring the state-of-the-art science into the clinic.”

Achieving that vision will require a \$6 million-plus philanthropic investment. Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz, both longtime members of Einstein’s Board of Trustees and staunch supporters of AECC, believe in the vision of these researchers and in the powerful role philanthropy plays in elevating influential cancer research. “This is about hitting the home run, finding the cure,” Mr. Katz says. “But to get there, you need enough charitable gifts to get the preliminary work done, so you can land funding for larger-scale investigations.”

COLLABORATION IS KEY

The AECC is ideally suited to take the lead on blood-cancer research, says Edward Chu, M.D., M.M.S., director of the AECC, professor of medicine and of molecular pharmacology, and the Carol and Roger Einiger Professor of Cancer Medicine at Einstein, and vice president for cancer medicine at Montefiore. “Our cancer center is at the forefront both in the lab and in the clinic,” he says. “The



Stanley M. and Marilyn Katz, longtime members of the Einstein Board of Trustees, at the 65th Spirit of Achievement Luncheon in 2019, when the Women’s Division recognized Mrs. Katz as an honoree.



Aditi Shastri, M.D.

synergy between our research scientists and clinicians helps us translate lab findings into clinically applied solutions for changing the course of cancer medicine and to improve the lives of our cancer patients.”

ON THE CUSP OF CURES

The discovery about 20 years ago that genetic mutations in HSCs could lead to cancer “changed everything when it comes to treating blood cancer,” says Aditi Shastri, M.D., assistant professor of medicine and of developmental & molecular biology at Einstein, an oncologist at Montefiore, and a member of AECC. “We realized that we could design treatments that target those mutations and spare healthy cells.”

One prime example is the targeted therapy imatinib (Gleevec) that has transformed chronic myeloid leukemia—once nearly always fatal—into a manageable disease for many patients. And CAR T-cell therapy, which involves reprogramming the immune system’s

T-cells to attack cancer cells, has given new hope to patients with certain forms of leukemia and lymphoma. But further progress is vital.

“Many types of blood cancer remain hard to treat,” Dr. Shastri says. “And older people—the people most likely to develop blood cancers—are often too frail to undergo aggressive blood-cancer therapies, such as stem cell transplants.”

Philanthropic giving will support the people and projects needed to get the state-of-the-art Blood Cancer Institute off the ground. Initial funds will endow a directorship, provide seed funding for research projects, and support the recruitment of junior faculty to conduct research and mentor the next generation of scientists.

For Marilyn Katz, who served as a trustee chairperson for the AECC from 1995 to 2020, the commitment to cancer research and the AECC’s expansive work is personal. She talks of people in her life stricken by cancer—a close friend who recently died from leukemia; her daughter-in-law, who had breast cancer; and her sister, who died of brain cancer at age 52. “My hope for the new institute is that it makes enough progress for more people to live healthy, full lives,” she says.

Dr. Verma says that he is more optimistic about realizing Mrs. Katz’s vision now than at any point in his career. “This new institute will provide resources and access to technologies, but most important, it will foster collaborations,” he says. “That’s how science advances.” **E**



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Below and pictured on the cover of *Motivations* (page 51): Mouse blood-forming stem cells. Colored dots are single RNA molecules corresponding to different cancer-relevant genes.

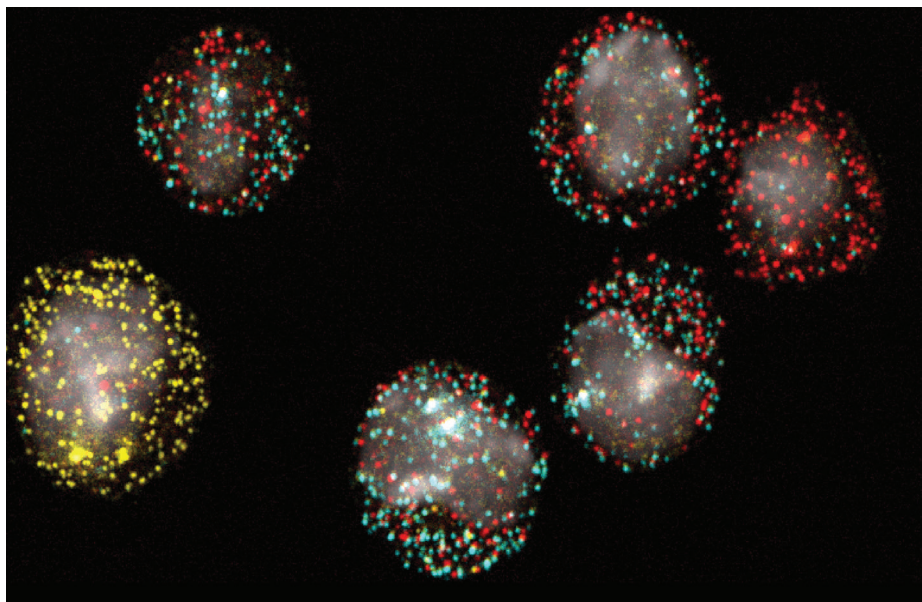
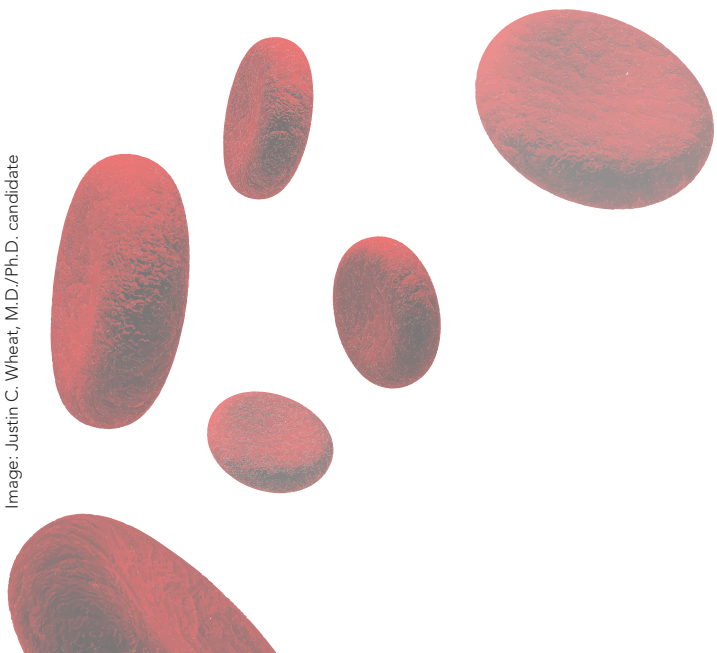


Image: Justin C. Wheat, M.D./Ph.D. candidate



CLASS NOTES

1960s

Mervyn (Bud) Goldstein, M.D. '60, has had a varied career, from providing material assistance to Israel during the 1973 war to treating a man who was gored by an African cape buffalo. He has received numerous honors, including the Montefiore Staff and Alumni Award of Appreciation, the Montefiore President's Award, the Einstein Lifetime Service Award, and the Scarsdale-Edgemont Community Service Award.

Sidney Levitsky, M.D. '60, lives in Boston and is a cardiac surgeon and the senior vice chair of the department of surgery at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and the David W. and David Cheever Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Levitsky has practiced for more than 50 years. He and his wife, Lynne, formerly chief of pediatric endocrinology at Massachusetts General Hospital, have three children and seven grandchildren. He still remembers Bill Metcalfe arranging a surgical elective at Johns Hopkins Hospital for him.

Melvin Scheinman, M.D. '60, and his wife, Margaret, live in San Francisco, where he heads the genetic arrhythmia unit at the University of California. He has received the American College of Cardiology Outstanding Scientist Award and the Distinguished Alumnus Award for his internationally recognized expertise in cardiac arrhythmias. Dr. Scheinman also performs an annual mission to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to care for the indigent and teach at a hospital and medical school. He reports he is the "proud grandpa of three talented children and nine wonderful grandchildren."

Henry H. Wortis, M.D. '60, is still working in the department of immunology

at Tufts. He is engaged in teaching in the graduate programs in immunology and genetics, and he maintains a small research footprint in genetic regulators of aging. He is involved in antiracist workshops, training in implicit bias and passive racism, and increasing diversity among faculty and trainees.

Morton Schatzman, M.D. '62, trained as a psychiatrist at Mount Sinai and Montefiore hospitals in New York and then moved to London. He lives in Highgate with his wife, Vivien. He has two sons: Daniel, who lives in Manhattan, and Gideon, who lives next door to him in London. Each son has three children.

Steve Weissman, M.D. '63, is, he reports, "in good health and happily married." He is still practicing psychiatry in Washington, D.C. He is writing a family history for his grandson, Sam. Sam's mother—Dr. Weissman's daughter Annie—represents the third generation of psychiatrists in their family. He was saddened to learn that his good friend and Einstein classmate **Arnold Goldschlager, M.D. '63**, passed away.

David White, M.D. '63, is living in Eugene, Oregon, with his wife of 56 years. They are "happy to be together and enjoying each other," he reports.

Stanford M. Goldman, M.D. '65, who received the Dominick P. Purpura Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1996, recently had his photo and biography published in the *Marquis Who's Who* magazine millennium second edition. He is a professor of radiology emeritus, a professor of urology at the University of Texas School of Medicine in Houston, a professor of radiology at MD Anderson Medical Center, and an adjunct professor of radiology and urology at Baylor College of Medicine.

Daniel Nussbaum II, M.D. '67, has practiced in Minnesota; Rochester, New York; and Massachusetts. He did a fellowship in developmental pediatrics at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Nussbaum and his wife, Alice, have returned to Rochester, and he's enjoying retirement. Alice is a Judaic needlework designer. His daughter, Yapha, directs a school library in Los Angeles; his son, Joe, is an Emmy-nominated producer/director in Hollywood.

David H. Abramson, M.D. '69, serves as the chief of ophthalmic oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and received a U.S. patent in November 2020 for a bionic ocular prosthesis. Existing prostheses had poor movement and no pupillary response; Dr. Abramson's new one incorporates microelectronics with a screen that mimics ocular motility. His 700th publication appeared this past year, and his work has been cited more than 13,000 times.

Robert Hoffman, M.D. '69, tested positive for COVID-19 last summer. He went to the emergency room at the University of California, Los Angeles, 13 days later; an X-ray revealed COVID-19 pneumonia. Over the next four days he was treated with oxygen until discharge. He received convalescent plasma, monoclonal antibodies, dexamethasone, and Lovinox. Dr. Hoffman was back at work the next week and gradually recovered completely. He has resumed daily exercise with interval training, hikes, and resistance training.

1970s

Douglas Drossman, M.D. '70, is a professor emeritus of medicine and psychiatry in the division of gastroenterology. He has been developing programs that teach communication skills

STAY IN TOUCH

Keep your classmates up to date by submitting your news to *Einstein* magazine. We look forward to including you. Email us at einsteinalumni@einsteinmed.org.

2021. She continues to write jokes and do stand-up comedy, and enjoys acting and writing plays. Dr. Mausner played a psychiatrist on *The Sopranos* (episode 48). Her play *Prescriptions* was published, and she appeared in a documentary called *Vegucated*, available on Amazon Prime.

Judith Lustig, M.D. '82, has retired from practicing neurology. She has been doing volunteer work, including teaching neurology to adults at Bergen Community College. Dr. Lustig has “been blessed with three boys,” and now has three grandchildren. Her passion is cycling. She would love to hear from her classmates.

David Tal, M.D. '85, has continued his geriatrics work at St. Joseph's Health Centre in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and is enjoying his grandchildren. He offers his warmest wishes to all.

Etta May Eskridge, M.D. '86, Ph.D. '95, has been a palliative-care physician, board-certified in internal medicine and palliative and hospice medicine, at Rochester General Hospital since 2013. She has been a board member for the Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance, which organizes trips to Malawi to train medical students and clinical officers in a resource-poor country. She says Einstein prepared her well for her work as we face a rapid increase in the number of elderly patients.

Daniel Hyman, M.D. '86, returned to the Philadelphia area and is serving as

the chief safety and quality officer at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. After he spent 12 years working in Colorado and living apart from his wife, **Martha J. Sack, M.D. '86**, they are happy to be in one home. Martha continues her work as an attending cytopathologist at Abington Hospital in the Jefferson Health system.

Rafael Pelayo, M.D. '88, has been promoted to associate division chief for the sleep medicine division at Stanford University. He has published a new book, *How to Sleep*.

1990s

Barry Kraushaar, M.D. '90, is busy in Nanuet, New York, practicing orthopaedic, sports, and joint medicine. He serves on the National Board of Councilors at the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the board of the New York State Society of Orthopaedic Surgeons. His twin boys are finishing college, focusing on engineering, and his eldest is applying to dental schools. Dr. Kraushaar and his wife, Helene, say they hope their classmates are well, and they would like to hear from their Einstein friends.

Lisa Moreno, M.D. '90, M.S., is a professor of emergency medicine at the Louisiana State University in New Orleans. The American Academy of Emergency Medicine elected Dr. Moreno to be its president; she is the first woman ever to hold that position.

David Rauch, M.D. '91, just published his second book, *Challenging Cases in Pediatric Hospital Medicine*, and has started work on the third edition of *Caring for the Hospitalized Child*. He is happy at Tufts Children's Hospital in Boston with his wife, **Mindy Stimell-Rauch, M.D. '90**.

Jonathan Lewin, M.D. '93, reports that he “is weathering COVID-19” and that in some ways he has gotten stronger. His private orthopaedic/pain/spinal surgery practice in Englewood, New Jersey, and

New York, the Center for Musculoskeletal Disorders, has not closed during the pandemic, which is allowing for a smoother recovery phase. If anyone with those specialties is looking for a change of venue, drop Dr. Lewin a line at drjdlewin@gmail.com; his practice is expanding. He says he'd love to reconnect with fellow alumni.

Hugh Bases, M.D. '94, completed his residency in pediatrics and then did a fellowship in developmental-behavioral pediatrics. He is currently the program director of the fellowship at the NYU Grossman School of Medicine. He also has a small private practice. His wife, Randi Asher, Psy.D., has a busy clinical psychology practice on the Upper West Side.

Justin Greisberg, M.D. '95, is a professor of orthopaedic surgery at Columbia University. He is also the chief of foot and ankle orthopaedics at NewYork-Presbyterian and the chief of orthopaedic trauma at NewYork-Presbyterian Lawrence Hospital. He misses his time at Einstein and his great friends from the Class of 1995, and hopes to reconnect.

Kim Starer Landzberg, M.D. '95, and her husband, **Brian R. Landzberg, M.D. '95**, have been happily married since 1992. They have three children: Zachary (24), Renée (22), and Eddie (18), and an English shepherd named Dash. She has practiced in Riverdale, the Bronx, since completing her glaucoma fellowship in 2000. She enjoys forging relationships with whole families of patients; one spans four generations. She has found implanting trifocal intraocular lenses during cataract surgery tremendously rewarding.

Brian Blaubeux, M.D. '96, was on the panel of a NODE.Health webinar about digital health, telehealth, and primary care post-COVID-19. He was also interviewed by the *Westchester Senior Voice* about telehealth, and conducted a virtual live session to take questions from its readers. Read more at: nodehealth.org/tag/digital-health.

IN MEMORIAM

Chair Emeritus of Medicine, Chief of Cardiology



James Scheuer, M.D., distinguished professor emeritus of medicine (cardiology) and university chair emeritus

of medicine at Einstein, died Feb. 17, 2021, at age 89, following a brief illness.

Since arriving in the Bronx in 1972 and even after retiring in 2011, Dr. Scheuer served Einstein and Montefiore in numerous roles, including vice chair, interim chair, and the Ted and Florence Baumritter Professor and Chair in Medicine; physician-in-chief; chief of cardiology; director of medical service and of the medical house staff program; professor of physiology; and principal investigator.

“Dr. Scheuer was one of the giants of cardiology and a consummate physician, serving as a role model to generations of physicians,” says Yaron Tomer, M.D., chair of medicine at Einstein and Montefiore, and a professor of medicine and of microbiology & immunology and the Anita and Jack Saltz Chair in Diabetes Research at Einstein. “He left an incredible legacy.”

Adds Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D., Einstein’s Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean, “Although I didn’t have the good fortune to train under him directly, Dr. Scheuer was renowned in American cardiology. His colleagues, trainees, and many other physicians would flock to his presentations at national meetings.” Dr. Tomaselli is also a professor of medicine (cardiology) at Einstein and

executive vice president and chief of academic affairs at Montefiore.

In addition to being a highly respected clinician and mentor, Dr. Scheuer was a noted scientist who studied basic aspects of heart muscle function. “He was continuously funded by the NIH [National Institutes of Health] for 40 years, which is unheard of in cardiology,” says Mark Menegus, M.D., Einstein professor of medicine (cardiology) and director of the cardiac catheterization lab at Montefiore. “He ran his lab and trained lots of cardiac researchers, many of whom are leaders in the field today.”

He and his wife established the Ruth and James Scheuer, MD, Endowment in Cardiology to support special training in research for future cardiologists at Montefiore; the division of cardiology on Montefiore’s Moses Campus bears his name. The couple also created the James and Ruth Scheuer Fund at Einstein, which provides an annual award for a graduating M.D. or Ph.D. student whose disciplinary focus will be internal medicine.

A native New Yorker, he earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of Rochester and his medical degree at Yale School of Medicine. He completed his medical internship at Bellevue Hospital in New York and residency at Mount Sinai.

Dr. Scheuer is survived by his wife, Ruth Lucas Scheuer; their children, Kim Scheuer, M.D. (Derek Olsen), Jeff Scheuer, and Greg Scheuer; his grandson James; his brother Robert; and many nieces and nephews. His brother Thomas predeceased him.

Philip Aisen, M.D., age 91, professor emeritus, physiology & biophysics and medicine at Einstein, April 10, 2020, New York City.

Peter Davies, Ph.D., age 72, clinical professor of pathology at Einstein, director of the Litwin-Zucker Center for the Study of Alzheimer’s Disease and Memory Disorders, and a leader in the field of Alzheimer’s disease research, Aug. 26, 2020, Greenwich, Connecticut.

Hiltrud Mueller, M.D., age 94, retired professor of medicine at Einstein, former associate chief of the division of cardiology at Montefiore, and a trailblazing physician-scientist, Dec. 23, 2020, New York City.

L. Juden Reed, M.D., age 86, associate professor of medicine (hematology) at Einstein and an oncologist at Montefiore, Dec. 11, 2020, Pelham, New York.

Bernard “Bern” Slosberg, M.D. ‘67, M.P.H., age 79, retired regional medical director for Aetna Health Insurance, volunteer physician and medical school instructor, Dec. 12, 2020, Silver Spring, Maryland.

Tyr O. Wilbanks, M.D., age 64, assistant professor of surgery and former medical student clerkship director at Einstein and a surgeon at Montefiore, Dec. 3, 2020, Old Greenwich, Connecticut.