

DEAN'S LETTER FOR TUFTS MEDICINE

New medical curriculum to debut in fall 2009

More than 120 faculty members, representing 19 clinical and basic science departments, and students from all four medical school classes will convene as 16 working groups to transform the School of Medicine's strategic plan vision into an innovative new curriculum, targeted for launch in fall 2009, when the Class of 2013 enters Tufts.

The new curriculum will create small "learning communities" within the school to promote advising, active learning, teamwork, professionalism, student-faculty interaction and a stronger sense of community.

The working groups are defining the content, teaching/learning methods and assessment strategies for foundational interdepartmental courses, clerkships and elective experiences. The new curriculum will emphasize problem solving, knowledge management and lifelong learning and will provide students with the skills to apply advances in health sciences research to patient care.

Endings and beginnings

At commencement ceremonies on May 20, Dean **Michael Rosenblatt**, M.D., began on a personal note by observing that "the Class of 2007 is special for me. I started with you four years ago." He also acknowledged students' growing interest in global health. "We are pledged to alleviate human suffering," he said, "and the need is greater in the developing world." Sackler School Dean **Naomi Rosenberg**, Ph.D., noted that "the process of discovery has sustained scientists for centuries, and it should burn brightly and deeply in all of you."

The schools awarded a total of 159 M.D.s (including 15 M.D./M.P.H.s, 13 M.D./MBAs in health management and three M.D./Ph.D.s), 30 Ph.D.s, 15 M.S. in clinical research, seven M.S. in health communication, four M.S. in pain research, and 43 M.P.H. degrees, including four D.V.M./M.P.H. degrees.

Innovative educators

Six proposals that address areas of the medical school's Education Strategic Plan have been selected for Innovations in Education Intramural Grants, which support efforts to enhance education at the medical and Sackler schools and in the M.P.H. program. Four physicians from Baystate Medical Center are among the grant recipients: **Gladys Fernandez**, M.D.; **Mihaela S. Stefan**, M.D.; **Sarah Perez McAdoo**, M.D., M.P.H., and **Carrie Bell**, M.D. Medical school recipients include **Laura Liscum**, Ph.D., professor of physiology; **Ruth Palombo**, M.S., R.D., assistant professor of public health and family medicine; **Henry Wortis**, M.D., professor of pathology; and **Stanley Jacobson**, Ph.D., professor of anatomy. Brief descriptions of the proposals as well as the deadlines for next year's grant cycle are available at <http://www.tufts.edu/med/about/faculty/educationalgrants/overview.html>.

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HERE & THERE

Brien A. Barnewolt, M.D., assistant professor of medicine, was elected president of the Massachusetts College of Emergency Physicians in May. He is the emergency physician-in-chief at Tufts-NEMC and the Floating Hospital.

The Russo Grant Committee has awarded funding to neuroscientists **Michele Jacob**, Ph.D., and **Douglas Vetter**, Ph.D., to support their research on the mechanisms of auditory nicotinic synapses, which function in many parts of the nervous system and also appear to be important in diseases such as Alzheimer's and some types of epilepsy and schizophrenia.

John O'Reilly, M.D., a pediatrician at Baystate Medical Center, received this year's Milton O. and Natalie V. Zucker Clinical Teaching Prize in the innovation category, while **Mark Drapkin**, M.D., associate chief of infectious diseases at Newton-Wellesley Hospital, won the Zucker Clinical Teaching Prize in the accomplishment category.

Elisabeth Wilder, M.D., assistant professor of medicine, received the Mark Aisner, M.D. Award for Excellence in Teaching Physical Diagnosis. The award was established by Aisner's former students, colleagues, patients and friends to recognize his contributions as the physical diagnosis course director from 1946 to 1977.

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ZUCKER PRIZES

Michael Forgac, Ph.D., professor of physiology, is this year's recipient of the Zucker Family Research Prize, which recognizes his contributions to the study of vacuolar ATPase, a large enzyme complex that pumps protons across cell membranes and plays a key role in maintaining the pH in different cellular compartments. **Honorine Ward**, M.B.B.S., research associate professor of medicine, received the Milton O. and Natalie V. Zucker Prize for her contributions to our understanding of *Cryptosporidium*.

NIH GRANT

Debbie Beasley, Ph.D., research associate professor of medicine and director of the Laboratory of Vascular Myocyte Biology at Tufts-NEMC, has been awarded a \$1.6 million NIH grant for her research on vascular disease. Beasley's research team recently discovered that inflammatory pathways and receptors of the innate immune system are expressed by cells within the muscular layer of the arterial wall. The goal of the grant is to determine the roles of these molecules in the development of vascular diseases.

ACADEMY FELLOW

Sean Carroll, who received his Ph.D. in immunology from the Sackler School in 1983, is among the 72 new fellows admitted to the National Academy of Sciences. He is a professor of molecular biology and genetics at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Election to the academy is considered one of the most prestigious honors that can be bestowed upon an American scientist. Carroll studies how genes and genetic regulation drive the evolution of diverse animal forms.

Students head to South Asia

Two Tufts health sciences students will conduct global health research in different parts of South Asia this summer as recipients of the prestigious Fogarty Fellowship from the National Institutes of Health. **Aaron Harris**, M09, MPH09, will work in a Bangladesh hospital on research that may contribute to the development of a vaccine for cholera. Under the mentorship of Dr. Stephen Calderwood, chief of the division of infectious diseases at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harris will study patients' immune response to hyperinfectious strains of cholera. **Elliott Garber**, V09, MPH09—the first veterinary student in history to earn a Fogarty—will do research in India on diseases that are transmitted from animals to humans.

Harris and Garber are two of only 19 in the country selected for the 2007 awards, considered to be the Rhodes Scholarship for students interested in global health.

A homecoming

Nearly 300 alumni and friends returned to campus for their reunions in May. In addition to social events, reunioners got to see a demonstration of the Tufts University Sciences Knowledgebase (TUSK) and participate in CME lectures led by **William F. Owen Jr.**, M.D., M80, the new president of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, and **Gary S. Rogers**, M.D., associate professor of dermatology.

Alumni donated more than \$1.7 million in reunion gifts. Former roommates **Hersh Libo**, A48, M52, and **Paul Chervinsky**, A48, M52, each chose to recognize their 55th reunion by establishing endowed scholarships. The Hersh & Libby Libo Endowed Scholarship Fund will support its first student this fall. The Paul and Elaine Chervinsky Endowed Scholarship Fund will support at least two Chervinsky Scholars throughout their four years of medical school.

Distinguished service

Bernard E. Maney, M.D., A49, M53, was one of seven Tufts alumni to receive a 2007 Distinguished Service Award, the highest honor of the Tufts University Alumni Association. He is the former president of the Falmouth Free Clinic, which provides medical services to the uninsured of Cape Cod, and of the Executive Club of Greater Boston, which built a seminary in Liberia.

FEEDBACK

The *Dean's Letter for Tufts Medicine* is published eight times a year by the Office of the Dean of Tufts University School of Medicine. We welcome comments and story ideas. Contact Editor Jacqueline Mitchell at jacqueline.mitchell@tufts.edu or 617.636.3602.

www.tufts.edu/med/deansletter