Weill Cornell is pleased to announce the new Campaign for Education, an ambitious $50 million initiative devoted to bolstering its already distinguished reputation as a leader in medical education by enhancing its training of the next generation of physicians and scientists. As technological advances transform science and medicine and the healthcare industry continues to evolve, these new healthcare leaders will be empowered to tackle our 21st century health challenges, deliver the finest patient care and make groundbreaking research discoveries.

“We at Weill Cornell pride ourselves on providing exceptional medical education and training to our aspiring physicians and scientists, and our Campaign for Education will take Weill Cornell to the next level of excellence,” says Laurie H. Glimcher, M.D., the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Weill Cornell Medical College. “The campaign will support our extraordinary efforts to transform our curriculum and ensure that we shape the best doctors who are dedicated to improving the lives of patients.”

Three longtime supporters of the Medical College, Board of Overseers Vice Chair Jeffrey Feil (through the Feil Family Foundation), Overseer Sandy Ehrenkranz and the Louis and Rachel Rudin Foundation have already made generous gifts of $1 million or more to spearhead these efforts, establishing the Gertrude Feil Associate Deanship of Curricular Affairs, the Ehrenkranz Associate Deanship for Academic Affairs and the Louis and Rachel Rudin Foundation Education Scholar Award in Neurology, respectively.

Continued on page 2
In August, after years of thoughtful planning, we began to roll out the new medical school curriculum to the first year students at Weill Cornell. It was an exciting moment for all of us – and also one filled with great anticipation. Weill Cornell students are the healthcare leaders of tomorrow, and our curriculum is designed to instill in them the skills necessary to succeed in this new era of medicine. I am confident that our students will continue to become the world-class physicians and scientists of the future.

The new curriculum is only one vital piece of the Weill Cornell Campaign for Education – other crucial elements, such as building our scholarship endowment and providing support for our faculty members, are also central to this initiative. And, this campaign goes hand-in-hand with the other areas of our mission. With the ongoing support of our leadership, donors and friends, we can strengthen our academic program, expand and accelerate our research enterprise, encourage innovation and discovery and continue to provide the best possible care to our patients, our driving force behind all that we do here at the Medical College.

Laurie H. Glimcher, M.D.
Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean
Provost for Medical Affairs
Jill and Ken Iscol Establish Center for Trauma and Addiction

Trauma endured overseas by military veterans often has a profound psychological influence on their lives, leading, in many cases, to medical intervention. With their lead gift of $500,000 through the IF Hummingbird Foundation, Jill and Ken Iscol, dedicated philanthropists and social advocates, established the Center for Trauma and Addiction at Weill Cornell to help these veterans adapt to life back at home. The center will be led by Ann Beeder, M.D., the Jeanette and Jeffrey Lasdon Professor of Clinical Public Health and Psychiatry.

“Jill and Ken Iscol have been longtime supporters of clinicians at Weill Cornell,” says Dr. Beeder. “They are remarkable people who care deeply about others. We have tremendous gratitude for their generous gift aimed at providing integrated treatment for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.”

The gift has sparked an initiative to raise enough funds to fully endow the center, providing support for research, faculty recruitment and subsidized costs for patients.

The Iscols have a longstanding connection to Cornell – Mr. Iscol, their son Zachary and their daughter Kiva all attended Cornell University as undergraduates. Zachary – a decorated former combat Marine officer with two tours of duty in Iraq – is currently Executive Director of the Headstrong Project at Weill Cornell. This project is a collaboration with Dr. Beeder and Headstrong Program Director Gerard Ilaria that provides cost-free, bureaucracy-free care to veterans. “They’re the best of the best,” says Ken Iscol of American military veterans. “The people who serve their country and are ready to give their lives to their country – they come home, and they’re suffering.”

The center will serve as an umbrella entity for the four existing programs currently overseen by Dr. Beeder: the Vincent P. Dole Treatment and Research Institute for Opiate Dependency; the Midtown Center for Treatment and Research; the Employee Assistance Program Consortium; and the Headstrong Project. Under the center, the four programs will work collaboratively to provide quality care to patients while conducting extensive research on addiction and traumatic stress.

“Weill Cornell sets the standard for how best to train professionals in treating PTSD,” says Ken Iscol. “Our hope for the Center for Trauma and Addiction is that practitioners will train professionals to travel all over the country to help veterans adapt to life after war.”

Accomplished Immunologist David Artis to Lead Jill Roberts Institute

Thanks to a generous gift from longtime donor Jill Roberts and the Jill Roberts Charitable Foundation, Dr. David Artis, one of the world’s leading immunologists, has been recruited from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine to direct the new Jill Roberts Institute for Research in Inflammatory Bowel Disease. The mission of the research institute is to establish a multidisciplinary center of excellence that will accelerate new scientific discoveries, enabling personalized translational medicine to better prevent and treat inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) in patients.

Mrs. Roberts’ gift will also enable Dr. Artis to recruit a team of top-flight investigators from multiple fields to focus on basic discovery efforts, translate findings into patient-based studies and train the next generation of researchers in this field.

Dr. David Artis

“These are very complex diseases and there are a lot of differences between individual patients,” says Dr. Artis. “I think the challenge for both basic researchers and physicians is to have a much deeper understanding of an individual’s disease and how it is characterized. That way we can better tailor therapies to either limit the symptoms of active disease or prevent the occurrence of the disease in the first place. This institute will allow us to revolutionize the way we approach IBD.”

The institute will work closely with the Jill Roberts Center for Inflammatory Bowel Disease at Weill Cornell and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, established by Mrs. Roberts in 2006, which provides clinical care to patients with IBD under the leadership of Ellen Scherl, M.D., the Jill Roberts Professor of Inflammatory Bowel Disease. This collaboration will allow a multidisciplinary team of researchers and clinicians to establish a new patient tissue biobank and employ patient-oriented basic research and clinical trials to investigate the factors that influence the development of IBD, and find innovative translational treatments and therapies.

“One of the things that most excites me about coming to Weill Cornell is the collaborative and dynamic research environment here, shaped by Dean Glimcher and the support of donors like Jill Roberts,” says Dr. Artis. “Jill’s generosity and lifetime commitment to combating this disease is incredible. Her support will allow us to develop a unique institute focused on basic and translational research, helping us better understand the causes of and find better treatments for IBD.”

“It is vital that we find a cure, and I am certain that this new research institute, working in tandem with the Jill Roberts Center for Inflammatory Bowel Disease, will bring us closer to that goal,” Mrs. Roberts says. “I am thrilled that Dr. Artis will lead our efforts to make great strides against these diseases.”
The Daedalus Fund for Innovation, established by Dean Glimcher and the Board of Overseers earlier this year, is a new program designed to advance promising early-stage applied and translational research with commercial potential, in order to speed the latest laboratory breakthroughs to the patient bedside.

Thanks, in part, to the generosity of a number of anonymous donors, Weill Cornell announced the six scientists who have been selected as the inaugural winners of awards from the fund. The investigators, Drs. Peter Goldstein, Gang Lin, David Lyden, Stefano Rivella, Enrique Rodriguez-Boulan and Vladislav Sandler will each receive $100,000 to fund studies demonstrating that their early-stage discoveries can be translated into effective treatments for patients.

“The Daedalus Fund is helping us mobilize and innovate,” said Larry Schlossman, Managing Director of BioPharma Alliances and Research Collaborations at Weill Cornell, who manages the Daedalus Fund. “That’s incredibly exciting. I see so much rich opportunity in Weill Cornell’s research enterprise, but some of the projects need a little help getting across the finish line or getting to the proverbial take-off point where they will be viewed favorably by industry as potential candidates for further development.”

The Daedalus Fund is designed to help Weill Cornell investigators make their research more appealing to the biopharmaceutical industry. Investors require “proof of concept” – for instance, data derived from testing in models or the discovery of a new biomarker – as the standard by which they determine whether a project is ready for funding.

While grants from the National Institutes of Health or other agencies fund basic science research, they often don’t provide enough money to cover these “proof of concept” studies. This funding gap is one of the greatest obstacles scientists face when trying to advance early-stage discoveries into next-generation treatments.

To learn more about giving to the Daedalus Fund, please contact:
Christine Hughes
Director of Institutional Giving and Science Programs
646-317-7366
chh2038@med.cornell.edu

Weill Cornell Launches New Daedalus Fund for Innovation
Inaugural Winners Announced

These six scientists are at the vanguard of medical discovery and leading the way to new treatments and cures for our patients.

Peter A. Goldstein, M.D.
Professor of Anesthesiology
Associate Professor of Medical Ethics in Medicine
Research: A Potential New Treatment for Nerve Pain
Dr. Goldstein is testing new compounds in animal models to see if they can relieve the symptoms of chronic and intense nerve pain as successfully as the anesthetic propofol, but without any of the powerful drug’s side effects.

Gang Lin, Ph.D., M.Sc.
Associate Research Professor of Microbiology and Immunology
Research: Innovative Treatments for Inflammatory Bowel Disease
Dr. Lin is studying the efficacy of a new class of compounds based on a tuberculosis drug design he developed to see if it can successfully reduce the inflammation characterized by inflammatory bowel diseases.

David Lyden, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Pediatrics
Stavros S. Niarchos Professor in Pediatric Cardiology
Research: A Liquid Biopsy for Cancer
Dr. Lyden is studying whether molecules isolated from the blood of melanoma, breast cancer and prostate cancer patients can provide accurate measures of treatment efficacy, and if they can also be predictors of future metastasis.

Stefano Rivella, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Genetic Medicine in Pediatrics
Research: Curing Blood Disorders
Dr. Rivella is developing a gene therapy for the blood disorders sickle cell anemia and beta-thalassemia that is designed to enable the body to produce normal and abundant oxygen-carrying molecules without the use of matched bone marrow transplants.

Enrique Rodriguez-Boulan, M.D.
Charles and Margaret Dyson Professor in Ophthalmology
Research Professor of Cell Biology in Ophthalmology
Research: Ending Juvenile Blindness
Dr. Rodriguez-Boulan is investigating a new drug to see if it preserves sight for patients with Stargardt disease, the most common form of inherited juvenile macular degeneration.

Vladislav Sandler, Ph.D., M.S.
Instructor of Neuroscience
in Medicine
Research: A New Bone Marrow Transplant
Dr. Sandler is investigating the transplantable and regenerative properties of blood cells engineered from blood vessels to see if they are capable of treating a variety of diseases for which the most common cure is a matched bone marrow transplant.
Launching a transformative medical school curriculum is no small task – but with the able leadership of Drs. Carol Storey-Johnson ’77 and Barbara Hempstead, working alongside Dean Glimcher and countless faculty members and students, Weill Cornell is positioned to lead the way in medical education for many years to come. After more than 13 years as the Senior Associate Dean for Education, Dr. Storey-Johnson was recently appointed Senior Advisor for Medical Education. As she steps into this new role in January, Dr. Barbara Hempstead, Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Diversity and the O.Wayne Isom Professor of Medicine, will take the reins. Together, the two physicians' experience and dedication have helped to shape the new curriculum – an essential piece of the Campaign for Education.

Drs. Storey-Johnson and Hempstead recently sat down with Larry Schafer, Vice Provost for External Affairs, to speak about the new curriculum, how we are shaping the healthcare leaders of tomorrow and the importance of supporting medical education.

LS: Thanks to both of you for all that you have done to design and roll out the new curriculum. For some context, can you tell me about what the typical curriculum was like when you were in medical school?

CSJ: In the first two years we were in class, mainly lectures, from 8:30-5:00 every day, including some Saturday mornings. Every night we studied, took notes and synthesized information to prepare for our exams. That’s actually one of the great skills that physicians have – to assimilate a lot of information quickly and do something important with it.

BH: We were taught by immersion – we went to an almost inordinate number of lectures and then we had to synthesize on our own. There were a lot of redundancies and we didn’t learn until later in our training how to really think like a physician. Many of the most important aspects that you need to learn to become a physician – like doctor-patient interactions, physician communication skills, ethics and decision-making – were not specifically taught. You had to learn on the fly. Now, we are trying to integrate that skillset from day one.

LS: What are some of the challenges you have faced with this new curriculum?

CSJ: This curriculum is very different from our prior one because it integrates clinical skills and science in a much tighter fashion. But, to do that, you sacrifice time for what had traditionally been allotted exclusively to basic science. That’s hard for some of our faculty members who have been through the traditional medical school curriculum to envision. But, we are fortunate to have expert faculty on board who will serve as role models for the kind of critical and integrative thinking that we’re trying to teach our students.

BH: We are trying to teach students to think like academic clinicians from day one. If you consider how a leader in a clinical field sees a patient, makes a diagnosis, understands the basic biology behind that individual’s disease, enrolls that patient in a clinical trial and talks with the family about the implications of these decisions, that’s all in one head! (laughs) We used to teach these skills in different units. I think that our medical students aren’t going to have much difficulty with the change. They are unbelievably bright and gifted individuals. It will take time to help faculty embrace this new approach because they are used to teaching discrete “pods” of information.

LS: So, why do you think launching this new curriculum is important at this time?

BH: It’s never been a more exciting time in medicine – we need this new generation of physicians more than we ever have before. We need doctors who ask the right questions; we need academic physicians to be able to take the amazing explosion in scientific knowledge and translate it to the bedside; we’ve never had a greater need and we’ve never had a greater opportunity. This curriculum has the ability to impart this excitement to our students and faculty.

LS: It sounds like you’re feeling positive about the curriculum?

CSJ: Very positive. I think that many of us wish that we had had this kind of educational experience when we were in med school!

LS: There are a lot of people who can say that this curriculum was their ‘baby,’ but Dr. Storey-Johnson, you must really feel like this was your ‘baby.’

CSJ: This was absolutely my baby. But, when I say it’s my baby, it’s not all about me. I had the great privilege to lead a huge faculty effort, so the faculty owns this, too. It’s their curriculum and their ideas. But, yes, it feels like my baby. And, now I’m going to help take care of my baby. (smiles)

LS: As you know, we call this column “What Inspires Giving” – and the two of you have clearly been inspired to give so much of your time and dedication to medical education. Why do you think it is important for people to support medical education?

CSJ: Well, education is certainly a wonderful investment. It’s something that, as with any investment, gives back over time. You get back more than what you actually put into it. Because when you invest in someone’s education, they go out and they teach 10 people, and they cause excellence to happen in another 25.

BH: There are two aspects in terms of support – Carol and I were able to graduate from medical school without huge amounts of debt. Being able to walk out of a medical education without being burdened by substantial debt is an unbelievable gift, because it allows you to do what you really want to do and not be encumbered by having to make decisions that are more financial in nature rather than aspirational.

The other area is investing in faculty support. Our faculty members are excellent clinicians and fantastic scientists. And, if we really want them to be world-class teachers, we have to give them time away from the other roles that they play so that they can focus on teaching and being the best educators that they can be.
On Friday, October 10th and Saturday, October 11th, more than 350 alumni traveled from near and far to return to Weill Cornell for Reunion 2014. This year’s theme, The Evolution of Medical Education, explored the myriad ways advancements in medical science have altered the way we educate medical students. The program included presentations by Dean Glimcher, distinguished faculty members, alumni from the 25th and 50th anniversary classes, and current Weill Cornell students. Additionally, alumni enjoyed campus tours of Weill Cornell’s state-of-the-art facilities including the new Belfer Research Building, individual class get-togethers, a festive Gala Dinner Dance at Cipriani 42nd Street, and plenty of time to reminisce and reconnect with classmates and friends.

Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make Reunion 2014 such a success!

Milstein Symposium

“From Target to Treatment,” The Milstein Symposium in Medicinal Chemistry, was held on September 9th at the Belfer Research Building. The program featured keynote speaker Tadataka Yamada, M.D., Chief Medical and Scientific Officer of Takeda Pharmaceuticals International, Inc., a partner in the Tri-Institutional Therapeutics Discovery Institute (Tri-I TDI). Dean Glimcher presented, alongside Mark A. Murcko, Ph.D., a senior lecturer in the Department of Biological Engineering at MIT and Nancy Thornberry, an independent consultant to biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies. Their talk was moderated by Michael Foley, Ph.D., the Sanders Director of the Tri-I TDI and Director of its Sanders Innovation and Education Initiative.

Howard Milstein has been a longtime, dedicated member of the Weill Cornell family, serving on the Board of Overseers for over 20 years. The Milstein foundations established the Howard P. Milstein Computational Biomedicine Programmatic Core, Abby and Howard P. Milstein Core Facility and Program in Chemical Biology and Translational Medicine, as well as the Abby and Howard P. Milstein Program in Medicinal Chemistry – a cornerstone of the Tri-I TDI.
Dean’s Council
Fall Meeting

The Dean’s Council Fall Meeting took place on October 8th at the Belfer Research Building. Overseers Sanford B. Ehrenkranz and Leonard M. Harlan, Co-Chairs of the Dean’s Council Executive Committee, gave remarks along with Dean Glimcher before a presentation by Gregory Petsko, D.Phil., Director of the Helen and Robert Appel Alzheimer’s Disease Research Institute, the Arthur J. Malon Professor and Professor of Neuroscience.

Dr. Petsko educated Dean’s Council members in his presentation “The Impending Epidemic of Neurodegenerative Diseases and What We Are Trying to Do About It,” and took part in a lively question-and-answer session afterward.

Women’s Health Symposium

The 32nd annual Women’s Health Symposium, chaired by Joan Weill and Orli Etingin, M.D., the Lisa and Sanford B. Ehrenkranz Professor in Women’s Health, was held on October 16th at the CITI Auditorium. Entitled “What’s Hiding in Your Genes? Precision Medicine and You,” the event featured a presentation by Ronald Crystal, M.D., Chairman of the Department of Genetic Medicine, Director of the Belfer Gene Therapy Core Facility, the Bruce Webster Professor of Internal Medicine and Professor of Medicine. Dr. Crystal spoke about the many ways precision medicine and gene mapping can be useful for patients while stressing that this is still a new science. After the presentation, Dean Glimcher moderated a question-and-answer session featuring Dr. Crystal, Dr. Etingin and Zev Rosenwaks, M.D., Revlon Distinguished Professor of Reproductive Medicine in Obstetrics and Gynecology and Director and Physician-in-Chief of the Ronald O. Perelman and Claudia Cohen Center for Reproductive Medicine.

Palm Beach Symposium

MARCH 9TH AT THE FOUR SEASONS RESORT PALM BEACH

For more information, please contact: Michelle Fish, 646-317-7396, mif2018@med.cornell.edu
Supporting Pediatric Research: Weill Cornell’s Children’s Health Council

Breakthrough discoveries into the nature of cancer metastasis in children, genetic insights into the causes of asthma that may lead to novel therapies, and revolutionary research shedding new light on the psychiatric and molecular mechanisms of autism are just a few of the notable achievements made in recent years by the world-renowned physicians and scientists at Weill Cornell Medical College.

The Children’s Health Council – a newly established group of individuals, parents and grandparents committed to supporting the quest for solutions to some of the most prevalent health issues facing children and adolescents today – is an essential partner in these pioneering children’s health research efforts. Led by Executive Committee Co-Chairs Jack Barchas, M.D., Chairman of Psychiatry and the Barklie McKee Henry Professor of Psychiatry, and Gerald Loughlin, M.D., Chairman of Pediatrics and the Nancy C. Paduano Professor of Pediatrics, the Council includes members who have committed a minimum gift of $50,000 payable over three years to support research in children’s health.

Members have the opportunity to meet esteemed researchers and clinicians on the Weill Cornell pediatric team and learn about the latest discoveries in children’s health and development. They will also be invited to tour laboratories and attend privately hosted salon discussions with our faculty experts, family-oriented educational events, including a science day, and other special activities.

“We have learned a great deal by interacting with the knowledgeable and compassionate medical professionals at Weill Cornell,” say Jill and Eric Rosen, Children’s Council Executive Committee members. “As parents, we have made better decisions regarding the care of our children since we became part of the council.”

The goal of the council is to increase public knowledge of the major health issues of widespread concern to today’s families. In November, the council held its semi-annual Children’s Health Forum, featuring the topic “Tots to Teens: Sleep and Your Child.”

“The Children’s Health Council helps to engage the public in appreciating the impact of medical research in the lives of pediatric patients, and helps build a more robust platform of support for the work that we are undertaking here at Weill Cornell,” says Dean Glimcher.

For more information or to learn more about our upcoming Children’s Health Council events, please contact childrenshealthcouncil@med.cornell.edu or 646-317-7358.

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