Thanks to a momentous $28 million gift from the Feil family, Weill Cornell has the resources in place to transform neuroscience research for generations to come. With this gift, Weill Cornell has named the new Feil Family Brain and Mind Research Institute in honor of Gertrude and Louis Feil.

The Institute, established in September 2012, will bring together expert physicians and scientists working toward one common goal – to speed the most promising therapies and cures to our patients. Research will focus on a variety of conditions including Parkinson’s disease, stroke, and multiple sclerosis, and will build on the strengths of the Appel Alzheimer’s Disease Research Institute.

This gift will provide essential resources for the Feil Family Institute: the recruitment of top-tier neuroscientists; seed support for the translational neuroscience program which will create a critical bridge between researchers and clinicians; state-of-the-art core technology facilities; training scholarships for post-doctorates, fellows and clinicians; and need-based scholarships for medical students.

“There has never been a more critical time to advance research in neuroscience and neurodegenerative disease and this institute is key to keeping Weill Cornell on the frontlines.”

Overseer Jeffrey Feil
Chairman of the Discoveries Campaign’s Initiative for the Brain Subcommittee

Newly appointed Director of the Institute, Costantino Iadecola, M.D., the Anne Parrish Titzell Professor of Neurology and Professor of Neuroscience, explains: “This generous gift enables the Institute to be a focus of intense multidisciplinary research that will advance the pace of discovery and the development of new treatments, and will create a greater platform for obtaining federal grants and tapping into other sources of extramural funding.”

“Now is a perfect time for such an institute at Weill Cornell as we double our research space and further enhance our first-rate biomedical enterprise,” says Laurie H. Gelmcher, M.D., the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean and Provost for Medical Affairs. The Institute will also work in tandem with the Department of Neurology, which has recently named highly regarded clinician and institutional leader Matthew Fink, M.D., Professor of Clinical Neurology, as Chairman. Weill Cornell’s clinical partner, NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, is integral to this project.

“We are honored to support such an important endeavor,” says Overseer Jeffrey Feil, who is also Chairman of the Discoveries Campaign’s Initiative for the Brain Subcommittee. “There has never been a more critical time to advance research in neuroscience and neurodegenerative disease and this institute is key to keeping Weill Cornell on the frontlines.”
When Mitchell Blutt, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine, thinks back on his residency at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center, he smiles and says, “It was an intense experience, but it was fantastic and some of my closest friends came from that era of my life.” He continues, “We actually managed to have an enormous amount of fun, in between working incredibly hard.”

Dr. Blutt is founder and Chief Executive Officer at Consonance Capital, an investment firm focused on equity investments in the healthcare industry. He and his wife, Margo, recently gave a $100,000 gift to the Medical College, establishing them as the newest members of the Dean’s Council (see p. 3 for more information on the Council).

It was during his residency at Weill Cornell that Dr. Blutt first became interested in the intersection of healthcare and the financial sector, when a fellow resident suggested he pursue a fellowship through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars program. The fellowship led him to his MBA (which he received in 1987), and later, his work in healthcare investments at J.P. Morgan.

“It’s been reported that I was the first physician to migrate into the healthcare business,” says Dr. Blutt. “It was very unusual for a physician to get an MBA, and even more unusual to actually pursue a career in healthcare investments.”

Because he was not entirely ready to leave the world of direct healthcare, Dr. Blutt joined the faculty at Weill Cornell, where he regularly taught courses and saw patients until 1999.

Dr. Blutt is currently a guest lecturer at the Medical College. He speaks about the interface between clinical care and the healthcare business, occasionally with his partner at Consonance Capital, Benny Soffer, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at Weill Cornell.

When asked about his philosophy on giving, Dr. Blutt says, “My wife and I have tried to focus our philanthropic efforts in places where we are deeply engaged, and have not only a financial impact, but also a strategic impact, a philosophical impact and an experience-based impact.”
When I look back on my first year as Dean, I feel so proud of all that we have accomplished together. Thanks to the tireless dedication of our faculty, staff and students and the generosity of our Board of Overseers and donors, Weill Cornell continues to flourish in each area of our tripartite mission – in research, education and clinical care.

We are bringing the best and brightest students to the Medical College. This year, the average GPA for our incoming first-year class was 3.78, higher than ever before. The students at Weill Cornell are the future leaders in healthcare. They are an outstanding group of individuals and, thanks to our scholarship supporters, many of them will be able to pursue their careers with less worry about debt.

We are breaking down academic silos. When I first took office, I pledged to avoid the “silos” so often seen at academic medical centers. With the establishment of the new Cancer Center, led by Dr. Lewis Cantley, and the Feil Family Brain and Mind Research Institute, directed by Dr. Costantino Iadecola, Weill Cornell is promoting a culture that not only crosses departmental and institutional lines, but also encourages true translational science, linking groundbreaking research directly with patient care.

We are doubling our research space and expanding our brainpower. In the past year, the Belfer Research Building, made possible by the generosity of so many of our donors, has literally risen before our eyes. This state-of-the-art research center is built with collaboration in mind – its open-design floor plans and labs signal the new face of research at Weill Cornell and beyond. As we continue to recruit top-tier physicians and scientists to our campus, we expand our capacity for breakthrough discoveries and delivering world-class medical care.

We remain focused on our patients. Our patients are at the center of everything we do. They always have been and always will be. Our physicians and scientists are working together, across disciplines, to bring discoveries from the lab bench to our patients’ bedside. They are focused on solving our toughest health problems and assuring longer, healthier lives for our children, grandchildren and future generations.

Together, we are building on our strengths, while forging a new frontier at Weill Cornell. As I look toward the future, I am energized by our past accomplishments and excited about the possibilities on the horizon.

Laurie H. Glimcher, M.D.
Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean
 Provost for Medical Affairs

Dr. Ronald Crystal presents to the Dean’s Council.

Dean’s Council Fall Meeting
The Risks and Rewards of Personalized Medicine

The Dean’s Council, a group of philanthropic advocates who provide significant support to Weill Cornell, held its fall Dean’s Council Meeting on October 9th at the Weill Greenberg Center. This session’s theme was “The Risks and Rewards of Genome-Based Personalized Medicine,” with a presentation by Ronald G. Crystal, M.D., The Bruce Webster Professor of Internal Medicine and Chairman of the Department of Genetic Medicine.

Dr. Crystal, a pioneer in his field, has had his own genes sequenced, and was able to give first-hand knowledge of the discoveries that can be made by receiving a decoded interpretation of your own body’s chemistry. Formerly cost-prohibitive, the cost of sequencing a genome is now less than $3,000.

While gene sequencing can provide life-saving information about one’s predisposition to certain diseases, it can also lead to complicated prognoses that may accomplish little aside from anxiety. Still, Dr. Crystal recommended the procedure, touting the benefits of precision medicine such as catering pharmaceuticals to an individual’s needs and passing on information about genetic predispositions to one’s children.

Guests were welcomed by Leonard M. Harlan, Co-Chairman of the Dean’s Council Executive Committee, along with Co-Chairman Sanford B. Ehrenkranz.

“Dean’s Council programming provides exclusive opportunities for you to interact with senior faculty of the Medical College about topics that have a direct impact on your healthcare,” said Mr. Harlan in his welcoming remarks.

“These meetings are a great way to showcase our most promising research to council members,” said Dean Glimcher. “It’s so important to us that our advocates are well-informed on our exciting work here at Weill Cornell.”

The Dean’s Council is a group of philanthropic leaders dedicated to advancing the goals of academic medicine by providing major support for Weill Cornell Medical College, and by introducing others to its mission. For more information about the Dean’s Council, contact the Dean’s Council Office at 646-317-7424 or deanscouncil@med.cornell.edu.
FROM OUR CAMPAIGN LEADERSHIP

As I sit here writing this letter in early January, I am thrilled to report that...we are almost there! With your generosity, dedication and commitment, the Discoveries Campaign has nearly reached our goal of $1.3 billion. At the start of this Campaign, we set our sights high. We knew that this was an ambitious undertaking. This was believed to be the largest Campaign ever launched by a Medical College at that time, and we raised our first $1 billion in a record time of less than four years. Together, with the help of Dean Glimcher, Tony Gotto, Sandy Weill, our Board of Overseers and our donors and friends, we remained focused and determined to rise to this challenge. As we enter our final stretch, I wanted to pause for a moment and celebrate many of our impressive accomplishments. These numbers speak to the breadth of this groundbreaking Campaign:

- 130 of our friends and supporters have generously given $1 million or more, including 35 donors who have given $5 million and above
- 112 donors have directed their gifts to recruitment and endowment, the heart of the Research Leads to Cures Initiative

And, of course, the centerpiece of the Campaign is the Belfer Research Building. Standing tall on 69th Street, this building is a towering monument to our donors’ extraordinary support and the future of research at Weill Cornell. Incredibly, 100 donors have given $389 million toward this state-of-the-art building that will double our research space and will open its doors in 2014. As we approach the culmination of this Campaign, we would like to thank those of you who have been so generous, not only with your philanthropic gifts, but also with your time and energy.

Sincerely,
Robert J. Appel
Campaign Chairman

FROM OUR BOARD LEADERSHIP

It is with great pride and excitement that we bring in this new year. Pride, for all that we have accomplished together at Weill Cornell during the past year. Excitement, as we look toward the future and further shape our vision to create an even stronger Medical College, already a leader in research, medical education and patient care.

As we continue to focus on recruitment needs and bring top-tier physicians and scientists into our community, our sights must be on the broader view – Weill Cornell is committed to providing the best possible patient care and creating healthier lives for our patients and future generations. Bringing more leading lights to our campus is one important piece of that promise. These new recruits will join some of the best and brightest minds and work, together, to discover new treatments and cures for some of our most daunting health challenges.

As always, we thank our generous donors for all that you have done to support our institution and we look forward to seeing what the future holds.

Sanford I. Weill
Chair, Board of Overseers
Antonio M. Gatto, Jr., M.D., D.Phil.
Co-Chair, Board of Overseers
Lewis Thomas University Professor
Vice President, Cornell University
Powerhouse Recruit for New Cancer Center

With the help of our friends and donors, world-renowned scientist Lewis Cantley, Ph.D., has been appointed Director of the new Cancer Center jointly established by Weill Cornell and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital.

Dr. Cantley, a leading researcher credited with discovering a family of enzymes fundamental to understanding cancer, comes to Weill Cornell from Harvard, where he was the William Bosworth Castle Chair in Medicine and Professor of Systems Biology. He was also Director of the Cancer Center and Chief of the Division of Signal Transduction at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

Thanks, in part, to the generosity of key donors including Overseer Beth and Ravenel Curry, Board Vice Chair Barbara and Stephen Friedman and Corinne and Overseer Maurice R. (“Hank”) Greenberg and The Starr Foundation, Dr. Cantley began his tenure at Weill Cornell and NewYork-Presbyterian in October.

“We are on the brink of an evolution in cancer research and patient care that will dramatically change how our patients are diagnosed and how their diseases are managed.”

Dr. Lewis Cantley

The Cancer Center is designed to make precision and personalized translational medicine for cancer diagnosis and cancer treatment a reality. The Center will ensure that patients can immediately benefit from the latest discoveries and treatments, especially in clinical trials, while also training future researchers in the field.

Research will be multi-disciplinary and collaborative – focused on gathering Weill Cornell’s basic, translational and clinical research expertise under one umbrella, across faculty and departments. Weill Cornell physician-scientists will focus on the interplay of cancer with other diseases and conditions, such as chronic inflammation, diabetes and neurodegenerative disorders, to identify new targets and strategies for treatment and prevention.

Highlights of the Center include state-of-the-art lab space (the Center’s research program will be headquartered in the Belfer Research Building), a cancer tumor tissue bank, facilities for genetically profiling each patient’s tumor, and more.

The physician-scientists at the new Cancer Center will continue to advance leading-edge discoveries, while delivering the best possible patient care.

For more information on how to donate to the new Cancer Center, please contact Lucille Ferraro, Campaign Director, 646-317-7387 or luf2003@med.cornell.edu.
What Inspires Giving?  
Meet Julie and Steven Silbermann

Julie and Steven Silbermann have long been members of the Weill Cornell family. The Silbermann family, including Steven’s late parents Rosanne and Joachim and his brother David, has given more than $11 million to the Medical College and provided major support to NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital to promote efforts including cardiology, rehabilitation medicine, geriatric health and pediatrics. Most recently, the Silbermanns made two generous $1 million gifts to Weill Cornell through the Rosanne H. Silbermann Foundation: the first (in 2010) will provide space for the Initiative for Children’s Health in the Belfer Research Building and the second (in 2012) will support recruitment of a top pediatric geneticist.

Julie and Steven recently sat down with Larry Schafer, Vice Provost for Development, to speak about their history with Weill Cornell, their special interest in pediatrics and their family philosophy on philanthropy.

LS: Thank you for everything that you and your family have done to support Weill Cornell. How did your family first become involved with the Medical College?

S: My parents first got involved with Weill Cornell in 1997, when my father was a patient at the medical center. After that, they developed a close and long-lasting relationship with then Dean Tony Gotto and his wife, Anita. We followed suit and have developed a number of meaningful relationships with many of the doctors here, who we now consider our personal friends.

LS: You have given to many areas at Weill Cornell, especially the departments of geriatrics and pediatrics. What inspires you to give in these particular areas?

J: Both are vulnerable populations in need of support. Steven’s parents were primarily interested in geriatrics — so, while it’s important to us to maintain and strengthen those relationships, we also wanted to broaden our focus and concentrate on a younger population.

S: In addition to our focus on pediatrics, our daughter, Karen, has been interested in the blend of social work and pediatrics for many years. She was a summer volunteer at Weill Cornell in the pediatric emergency room and department. Right now, she is getting her MSW at Columbia University and wants to work with children. We call her our “family do-gooder.” As successor to her grandmother as President of the Silbermann Foundation, Karen has helped us to identify and support the needs of your youngest patients.

LS: With your help and generosity, Weill Cornell will be able to recruit a new pediatric geneticist, who will be essential for translating the latest research discoveries into new treatments, and even cures, for the diseases that affect our children. What made you support recruitment at this time?

J: One of the things that we’ve decided as a family is that there should always be an open dialogue about what an institution needs and what we can do to help. Recruitment is the priority here right now and we want to support it.

S: So, when we had the opportunity to sit down with Laurie [Gilicher], we learned that you don’t recruit a top scientist alone. In addition to the person at the top of the pyramid, you also need to find ways to bring other important resources (supporting scientists, labs, etc.) along. We are glad that our gift will help recruit a junior pediatric geneticist who is an essential member of the team.

LS: Julie, you are on the Discoveries Campaign’s Initiative for Children’s Health Subcommittee and recently had a chance to tour the new Belfer Research Building, where the Silbermann Family Conference Room and the Silbermann Family Laboratory Bench Module will be located. What did you think?

J: We’re very proud to be involved with the Belfer Building, because this is the future. This is where Weill Cornell is heading — and it is phenomenal that there is going to be this all-inclusive, a-to-z, soup-to-nuts environment where research studies will be translated into treatment at the patient’s bedside, so that you can completely take care of children and adults, whatever their medical needs may be.

LS: You are also both active members of the Dean’s Council — a core group of philanthropists and advocates for the Medical College. How has this experience shaped your ongoing relationship with Weill Cornell?

S: We are on the Dean’s Council because of our philanthropy, but I view the meetings as an educational process. The Council is made up of an extremely interesting group of people and the meeting topics are relevant and thought-provoking. For instance, we never would have thought about the human genome process without having attended the last meeting, and now our family is always talking about whether we would choose to have our genomes sequenced — and what we would do if we found out that we were related to Genghis Khan...or Jon Stewart (laugher).

LS: If I walked in on your family at the kitchen table, it sounds like you might be having a lively discussion about the family’s philanthropy. Does that happen at home?

J and S (in unison): It happens ALL the time!

LS: So, if your kids, Matthew and Karen, were here and we asked them about your family philosophy on giving, what would they say?

J: I think that they would be very proud. I know that they are very supportive. We include them in the decision-making process and they have input into the family’s gift-giving choices. They also look forward to picking up the philanthropy baton when it’s their time. Both of our children value tradition. Both of our children value tradition. I’m not even allowed to change a menu for a holiday meal (laugher)!

So, Matthew and Karen are very fortunate that Steven and I both came from families that had the same values of ‘giving and doing’ — that is our family tradition and our children embrace it.

We feel so fortunate to be able to give, because it is so right and so important. We have always gone by the Jewish philosophy of tzedakah — that if you can give, you should...and you must.
The inaugural Appel Alzheimer’s Disease Research Institute Symposium took place on Thursday, November 1, in the Uris Auditorium at Weill Cornell. The Institute was established in 2006 by a $15 million gift from Board Vice Chair Bob Appel and his wife, Helen, who were thrilled to attend the first symposium. Greeted by the Director of the Institute, Steven M. Paul, M.D., Burton P. and Judith B. Resnick Distinguished Professor of Neurodegenerative Diseases, over 200 attendees were educated on genetic risk factors, new treatments, prevention research and more. Dr. Paul also presented, in addition to speakers including Costantino Iadecola, M.D., the Anne Parrish Tizzell Professor of Neurology and Professor of Neuroscience; Gregory Petsko, D.Phil., Arthur J. Mahon Professor of Neuroscience; and Norman Relkin, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Professor of Clinical Neurology and Neuroscience. The Symposium concluded with a panel discussion led by Matthew E. Fink, M.D., Professor of Clinical Neurology and Chairman of the Department of Neurology followed by a lively question-and-answer session.

Board Vice Chair Bob and Helen Appel with Dean Glimercher and the panel of presenters at the Symposium.

Dr. Norman Relkin, Dr. Gregory Petsko, Dr. Costantino Iadecola, and Dr. Steven Paul answer questions from the audience about Alzheimer’s disease.

Hear inside stories from our scientists and doctors about their latest research and how it’s helping our patients.

To see the full videos, please visit weill.cornell.edu/campaign/research
The Belfer Research Building currently stands 18 stories high and has taken its prominent place in our campus skyline.

Construction during the past few months has shown remarkable progress: the double-fritted glass curtain wall, designed to maximize energy efficiency, is nearly complete; the framing on most floors is in place; the open-design labs and offices are beginning to take shape; and it’s becoming easier to truly imagine the breakthrough discoveries that will take place in this historic building.

Many donors have enjoyed the opportunity to tour this state-of-the-art research space. Wearing hard hats, they have been guided through the building and have had the chance to see “behind-the-scenes” of this exciting transformation.

The building is well on its way to its scheduled completion date in early 2014. For more information about donor hardhat tours of the Belfer Research Building, contact Kerry Clyne-Ivkovic, Director of Campaign Strategy, at 646-317-7379.
Women’s Health SYMPOSIUM

The theme for the 30th Annual Women’s Health Symposium was “The S Factor: Sleep, Sex and Stress,” drawing a packed house who came to hear more about how best to manage one’s life both in bed and outside of it. The Symposium took place at the Citi Auditorium on Wednesday, October 3, and expert speakers were Ana C. Krieger, M.D., M.P.H., Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine in the Departments of Medicine, Neurology and Neuroscience, who presented “A Good Night’s Sleep for a Better Tomorrow,” and Gail Saltz, M.D., Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry, whose presentation was entitled “Coping with Stress, Having Better Sex.”

This year, Herbert Pardes, M.D., Executive Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, was honored with an award for his many contributions to the Women’s Health Symposium over the past ten years. Joan Weill, Chairwoman of the Women’s Health Symposium Executive Steering Committee, and Orli Etingin, M.D., Medical Director of the Iris Cantor Women’s Health Center and Lisa and Sanford B. Ehrenkranz Professor of Women’s Health, presented him with the award.

“The contributions of Dr. Pardes to this symposium have been immeasurable,” said Mrs. Weill.

Outgoing President of the Alumni Association Michael M. Alexiades, M.D. ’83, with Dean Glimcher, Sandy and Joan Weill, and R. Ernest Sosa, M.D. ’78, incoming President of the Association.

A Reunion TO REMEMBER

This year’s alumni reunion was a huge success, bringing in over 200 alumni from across the country from October 19-20. Alumni were treated to a guided campus tour and a multitude of informative presentations. Speakers included Dean Glimcher, Everest mountaineer Richard B. Birrer, M.D. ’75, and Anthony S. Fauci, M.D. ’66, Director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, among many others. David J. Skorton, M.D., President of Cornell University, moderated a panel discussion on cross-campus research initiatives, and Special Achievement Awards were given to four alumni, all of whom gave lectures over the weekend. In recognition of their generosity and dedication, Joan and Sandy Weill, Chairman of the Board of Overseers, were presented with the inaugural Distinguished Fellowship award. The weekend culminated in a gala with dinner and dancing at Cipriani 42nd Street.

Alumni and guests enjoy a tour of the gross anatomy lab given by Estomih Mtui, M.D., Associate Professor of Clinical Anatomy.