



milestones



A Wise Investment Research Funding Speeds Treatments and Cures to Patients

Dr. Ted Schwartz with patient Tracy Branick

When Tracy Branick met Dr. Ted Schwartz, director of the Center for Epilepsy and Anterior Skull Base and Pituitary Surgery at Weill Cornell Medicine, she was immediately put at ease. He was warm, kind and confident that he could help her treat the epileptic seizures that were affecting her daily life. “Even if I wasn’t having a seizure, I was constantly worried that I would have one,” she says.

Although Tracy had been on a variety of medications for the 16 years prior to meeting Dr. Schwartz, every few years she would become immune to them – and the seizures would return. Surgery seemed to be the best way forward. And, because the focal point of her seizures was in a non-functional part of the brain, Dr. Schwartz, the David and Ursel Barnes Professor of Minimally Invasive Surgery, and his team were able to safely remove the seizure focus, preventing further spread without creating brain damage. Since her surgery, Tracy has been seizure-free.

Donor support has helped to advance early-stage research projects, promote groundbreaking work by top-tier faculty, and recruit new leading lights to campus – all with the goal of helping patients – and it’s paying off in spades.

“Epileptic seizures arise from the brain – which is the essence of who we are,” says Dr. Schwartz, a 2015 Daedalus award recipient, who is also co-director of surgical neuro-oncology. “Conventional surgery allows us to treat some patients, like Tracy, whose seizures are located in non-functional areas of the brain. But, in a majority of cases, we can’t operate because the seizures occur in more critical locations – if we damage those areas of the brain, the person may never be the same.” Thanks to support from the Daedalus Fund, Dr. Schwartz will now be one step closer to addressing this challenge and providing surgical treatment for more patients with this disease.

The Daedalus Fund is one of many donor-supported initiatives that encourage and facilitate innovation and discovery by world-class faculty at Weill Cornell Medicine. Daedalus funds help bridge the post-discovery/pre-commercial development gap, making early-stage research projects more attractive for potential industry partners, a crucial step toward speeding new cures and treatments to patients.

Dr. Schwartz and his colleagues, including Chris Schaffer, associate professor in biomedical engineering at Cornell University, have spent many years searching for ways to treat epileptic patients who are not candidates for conventional surgery. In that time, they have created a surgical tool that may help to accomplish their goals: a laser scalpel that can cut into the grey

Continued on page 2

The Manning Foundation Supports Groundbreaking Research

Supporting investigators' promising new work can have a significant impact on the future of research – and at Weill Cornell Medicine, the James Hilton Manning and Emma Austin Manning Foundation has established a legacy of doing just that.

Since 2009, the foundation has given nearly \$4 million to support innovative research at Weill Cornell Medicine, through a variety of channels. The foundation endowed the Ralph A. Baer, M.D., Professorship of Medical Research, currently held by Dr. Phyllis August, to focus on research in internal medicine (which was Dr. Baer's specialization as

the medical director at U.S. Trust and a clinical associate professor of medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine); and gave three grants to Dr. David Lyden, Stavros S. Niarchos Professor in Pediatric Cardiology, to fund new research, establish a fellowship for a young investigator and provide his laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment. Their most recent gift of \$1 million has established a new Research Scholar Award.

"We recognize that one of the hardest ways for researchers to get started is hard money," says Dr. Martin Post, vice president of the foundation. "So in establishing these gifts, we have the opportunity to support valuable projects."

The foundation's directors relish their ability to promote

cutting-edge research – and their history of giving has proven invaluable to Dr. August and her work in hypertension, pregnancy and kidney disease, as well as Dr. Lyden's research on exosomes and their role in the progression of cancer metastasis and autism.

"The Manning Foundation has enabled us to not only take care of patients who have all different types of hypertension, but to continue to do research," says Dr. August. "They have been incredibly supportive of our programs over the years, and we're so grateful."

"The Manning Foundation has been instrumental in sustaining projects in our lab," says Dr. Lyden.

"Their funding has helped initiate a new direction in the lab, and has helped shape new paradigms in cancer metastasis and autism fields."

Foundation board members Dr. Post and Dr. Gillian Shepherd's expertise as physicians has allowed them to advocate for researchers whose work has potential to translate to new treatments and cures. "For the three of us who don't have a medical background, we have learned that you need to have a three-year commitment for any particular project to give the researcher the opportunity to get their footing," says Susan Porter, the foundation's treasurer. "One year is not always enough time to accomplish a particular objective."

"The investigators we have supported at Weill Cornell Medicine have all done extraordinarily well," says Dr. Shepherd. "We love to follow what's happening with their research."

STEPHANIE DIANI

The Manning Foundation Board of Directors:

- John Bell, Jr., President
- Juliet Alexander, Secretary
- Susan Porter, Treasurer
- Martin Post, MD, Vice President and a cardiologist at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center
- Gillian Shepherd, MD, a clinical associate professor of medicine who specializes in allergy and immunology

Drs. David Lyden and Phyllis August

A Wise Investment *continued from cover*

matter of the brain without damaging either critical brain tissue or the overlying blood vessels that supply it with oxygen. To date, the laser, which works by sending out tightly focused infrared pulses, has been tested in the laboratory but has not yet moved into clinical trials – an essential step to test safety and efficacy before obtaining a patent. Support from the Daedalus Fund will help make this laser a stronger candidate for licensing – bringing it one step closer to being patient-ready.

"The state of medicine – as great as it is, and as much as we've accomplished – is currently not sufficient to cure and treat so much of human disease," says Dr. Schwartz. "Research, collaborative work and partnerships with industry are critical to moving medicine to the next level, so that we can address those diseases and give our patients the finest care."

Pioneering research like Dr. Schwartz's work is happening at Weill Cornell Medicine every day – world-class scientists are working side-by-side with top-tier clinicians, speeding the latest cures and treatments to patients. And, thanks to the support of leadership and many donors and friends, the institution has significantly expanded its research enterprise during the past few years – and continues to grow exponentially. Donor support has helped to advance early-stage research projects, promote groundbreaking work by top-tier faculty, and recruit new leading lights to campus – all with the goal of helping patients – and it's paying off in spades.

With the help of many donors, Weill Cornell Medicine has recruited more than 50 esteemed scientists and physician-scientists since 2012 who are

spurring new research discoveries using precision medicine and other cutting-edge biomedical approaches, and seamlessly applying them to patient care. The donor-funded Belfer Research Building, which opened in 2014, serves as the hub for these translational efforts, housing more than a half dozen newly established interdisciplinary centers and institutes. This important work has led to a 20 percent growth in sponsored research support – funding received from external sources such as government or industry – for Weill Cornell Medicine.

"I am so proud of the incredible work that our physicians and scientists are doing at Weill Cornell Medicine," says Dr. Laurie H. Glimcher, Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean. "The robust growth of our research program is a testament not only to the fine caliber of our faculty, but also to the ongoing support from our donors and friends. As we increase our funding for research, we create even more opportunities to provide the most cutting-edge treatments to our patients. There is nothing more essential than that."

To support the Daedalus Fund or other critical research initiatives at Weill Cornell Medicine, please contact

Christine Hughes

Director of Institutional Giving & Science Programs

646-317-7366 or chh2038@med.cornell.edu

New Fellowship Bolsters Hardworking Junior Faculty

For many, the demands of a burgeoning career in medicine or science are difficult to manage while raising a family. So it is with great excitement that a new initiative at Weill Cornell Medicine has been established to help faculty members continue to succeed while maintaining their caregiver roles at home.

The Junior Faculty Fellowship initiative, which has received an initial \$1.25 million gift from The Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, will support young researchers and clinicians who are most likely to otherwise scale back in their careers due to obligations at home. The new gift, given by Denise and Overseer Michael Kellen through their family foundation, will immediately provide funding for five fellowship awards, given annually to new fellows for the next five years.

This new fellowship is designed to provide critical support to junior faculty on several fronts including: mentorship by senior faculty; professional development at key transition points in their academic careers; technical



ROGER TULLY

“Strong support for young faculty who are just beginning their careers can be the difference that changes their trajectory forever. I could not be more pleased to launch this fund, thanks in great part to the generosity of the Kellens.”

laboratory assistance; and assistance with needs specific to being a primary caregiver, such as childcare and administrative support to allow the fellow more schedule flexibility.

“Weill Cornell Medicine is an institution that prioritizes nurturing the best and brightest physicians and researchers,” says Dean Glimcher. “Strong support for young faculty who are just beginning their careers can be the difference that changes their trajectory forever. I could not be more pleased to launch this fund, thanks in great part to the generosity of the Kellen family.”



Many junior faculty members experience increased family responsibilities at a crucial time in their careers – a time when they must establish themselves either by teaching, conducting research, competing for grants, working to get published and, in the case of clinical faculty members, practice medicine.

Too often, institutions lack programs that support faculty during their most demanding caregiving years.

“The Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation has a long tradition of making education available to those who do not have ‘easy access,’” says Mrs. Denise Kellen. “Unfortunately, many women in the sciences still seem to have hurdles to jump to achieve equal footing in the scientific hierarchy. Dean Glimcher is a beacon in this effort. The Junior Faculty Fellowship Fund will help attract and keep more women in the pipeline of leadership, success, and ultimate equality. We are honored to be able to further this initiative.”

Leon Levy Foundation Renews Neuroscience Fellowship with New Grant

The Leon Levy Fellowship in Neuroscience empowers young neuroscientists at select New York City institutions to advance their careers and to pursue their pioneering research. Now, with a new \$1.92 million grant, the Leon Levy Foundation is generously renewing the fellowships at Weill Cornell Medicine through 2019, making an even greater impact on early-career researchers in this crucial field.

Leon Levy, an investor and philanthropist, passed away in 2003. His wife, philanthropist Shelby White, founded the Leon Levy Foundation to carry on his legacy and his goals – supporting the expansion of knowledge and ideas that create a just and equitable society.

The Leon Levy Fellowship provides neuroscientists with resources to develop and advance their research projects, helping to position them to compete for major funding and to establish independent research careers



Back row: Leon Levy Fellows Dr. Jacqueline Burré, Dr. Alon Seifan and Dr. Brendon Watson. Front row: Trustees Shelby White and Elizabeth Moynihan with Robert Francis Goldrich, President and CFO of the Leon Levy Foundation.

in neuroscience. Leon Levy Fellows at Weill Cornell Medicine have received accolades, including awards and publication recognition, as a result of their work in this fellowship.

“All of us at the foundation are thrilled to continue this support and foster the progress of these junior

investigators,” says Ms. White. “The Leon Levy Fellows at Weill Cornell Medicine have already done impressive work and I can think of no better way to encourage their excellence than to invest in their research.”

Dr. Costantino Iadecola, the Anne Parrish Titzell Professor of Neurology

and Neuroscience, is the director of the Feil Family Brain and Mind Research Institute and leads the Leon Levy Fellowship program at Weill Cornell Medicine.

“This fellowship gives junior faculty time to establish their laboratory and develop preliminary results so that they can go to the National Institutes of Health or other funding institutions and get a full-fledged grant,” says Dr. Iadecola. “That is what really gets the science going.”

“Neurodegenerative diseases are devastating, not only to patients but also their families,” says Dr. Jacqueline Burré, a 2015 Leon Levy Fellow. “The Leon Levy Fellowship has allowed me to investigate the early events in the brain that trigger these diseases, and I’m really thankful to the foundation for providing me and other young investigators with the help and guidance to advance our work.”

From Our Dean

I continue to be moved by the Weill Cornell Medicine family and your incredible commitment to advancing this world-class institution that we have created together



In this issue of Milestones, you'll read about the truly significant power of our donors' support – to advance groundbreaking discoveries, empower young clinicians and researchers and help speed the latest treatments and cures to our patients.

These important stories are only a small glimpse at the broad-based impact that our donors and friends have in each area of our mission – in patient care, scientific research and medical education. I continue to be moved by the Weill Cornell Medicine family and your incredible commitment to advancing this world-class institution that we have created together. I believe that it's a place unlike any other.

A recent example of this – in November, less than a year since we announced the \$50 million Campaign for Education, we surpassed the halfway goal. This campaign – which will enhance our educational resources, increase our scholarship endowment and help us implement our new curriculum – is critical not only for our institution, but for so much more; clearly, our donors understand that educating the health care leaders of tomorrow is not only important, it's an imperative. The lives of future patients depend on it. And with the ongoing support of our donors and friends, we will continue to lead the way in medical education.

Whether it's helping spark innovative discoveries in the laboratory or providing the best possible learning opportunities for our medical students, each and every contribution that we receive keeps us on the frontlines of medicine and has the power to improve our patients' lives – our driving force.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie H. Glimcher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

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

BOARD OF OVERSEERS

Jessica M. Bibliowicz
Chairman

Robert J. Appel
Vice Chair

Jeffrey J. Feil
Vice Chair

Barbara B. Friedman
Vice Chair

Arthur J. Mahon
Vice Chair

Sanford I. Weill
Chair Emeritus

Laurie H. Glimcher, M.D.
Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean

Gary Koretzky, M.D., Ph.D.
Dean, Graduate School of Medical Sciences

Robert S. Harrison
Chair, Board of Trustees, Cornell University

Elizabeth Garrett
President, Cornell University

Tarek Abdel-Meguid
Madelyn Antoncic, Ph.D.
Ajay Banga
Ron Baron
Robert A. Belfer
Her Highness Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser
Lloyd C. Blankfein
David S. Blumenthal, M.D. '75
Chelsea V. Clinton
Abby Joseph Cohen
Alberto Criboire
Elizabeth Rivers Curry
Robert S. Dow
Ira Drukier
Sanford B. Ehrenkranz
Israel A. Englander
Anne E. Estabrook
Charlotte M. Ford
Gerald J. Ford
Harold E. Ford, Jr.
Kenneth C. Frazier
Antonio M. Gotto, Jr., M.D., D.Phil.
Paul A. Gould
Jeffrey W. Greenberg
Maurice R. Greenberg
Lorraine Gudas, Ph.D.
Leonard M. Harlan
Catherine Hart, M.D.
Michael Jaharis
John A. Kanas
Evan H. Katz
Robert J. Katz
Harvey Kaylie
Michael M. Kellen

James M. Kilts
Spencer H. Kubo, M.D. '80
Charles R. Lee
Thomas H. Lee, M.D. '79
Raul Martinez-McFaline
Michael T. Masin
Peter C. Meinig
Ronay A. Menschel
Edward H. Meyer
Sandra R. Meyer
Howard P. Milstein
Edwin H. Morgens
Spyros Niarchos
Timothy O'Neill
Nancy C. Paduano
Nelson Peltz
Ronald O. Perelman
Stanley B. Prusiner, M.D.
Bruce C. Ratner
Philip R. Reilly, M.D., J.D.
Burton P. Resnick
Zev Rosenwaks, M.D.
Richard G. Ruben
Lewis A. Sanders
Herbert J. Siegel
A.J.C. (Ian) Smith
Daisy M. Soros
Nan Goldman Swid
Samuel O. Thier, M.D.
Andrew H. Tisch
Carolyn Wiener
Barry Wolf

LIFE OVERSEERS

Hushang Ansary
Raymond R. Herrmann, Jr.
Harvey Klein, M.D.
Rupert Murdoch
Margaret Osmer-McQuade
Frank H.T. Rhodes
Isadore Rosenfeld, M.D.
Lawrence Ruben
Patricia Carry Stewart
Harold Tanner
Roger Weiss

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Robert J. Appel
Co-Chair
Jeffrey J. Feil
Co-Chair
Larry Schafer
Vice Provost for External Affairs
Lucille Ferraro
Campaign Director
Patricia Gutter
Special Advisor

Cabaret

This year's annual Cabaret celebration took place on October 8th at the Park Avenue Armory. The record-breaking event, which raised more than \$3.5 million for Weill Cornell Medicine and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, honored the leadership and contributions of Overseers Sandra and Edward Meyer and Barbara and NewYork-Presbyterian Trustee



Clockwise from top left: Honorees Edward Meyer, Peter Georgescu, Barbara Georgescu and Sandra Meyer

Peter Georgescu. Weill Cornell Medicine was thrilled for this opportunity to honor the Meyers, whose \$75 million landmark gift in January 2014 established the Sandra and Edward Meyer Cancer Center, expanding and enhancing Weill Cornell Medicine's distinguished cancer research and care programs.

The entertainment for the evening was the Academy Award-winning actress and singer Jennifer Hudson, whose energetic performance inspired guests to create an impromptu dance floor near the stage.



The Park Avenue Armory



Jennifer Hudson

Women's Health Symposium

The 33rd annual Women's Health Symposium, a joint venture between Weill Cornell Medicine and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, took place on October 15th at the Citigroup Executive Conference Center. The event, which was filled to capacity, featured a program that highlighted the best ways to combat stress and anxiety for children and adults.

The program "Don't Worry, Be Happy: Identifying and Treating Anxiety in Children and Adults," featured presentations by Dr. Gail Saltz, clinical associate professor of psychiatry, and Dr. John Walkup, director of the division of child and adolescent psychiatry and DeWitt Wallace Senior Scholar. The event was hosted by co-chairwomen Joan Weill and Dr. Orli Etingin, the Lisa and Sanford B. Ehrenkranz Professor in Women's Health.



Dr. Walkup, Dr. Etingin, Dr. Saltz and Joan Weill

Dean's Council Fall Meeting



Drs. James Min and Erica Jones

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women, contributing to one of every four deaths in the United States every year. On Monday, October 19th, members of the Dean's Council gathered at the Belfer Research Building to hear from leading Weill Cornell Medicine physicians on this timely topic. The meeting featured presentations by Dr. Erica Jones, director of the HeartHealth Program, and Dr. James Min, director

of the Dalio Institute of Cardiovascular Imaging, who spoke about new and innovative ways to detect and treat coronary disease.



Save the Date

February 29, 2016

Speakers

Dr. Matthew Fink
Dr. John Leonard
Dr. James Min

For more information, please contact:

Michelle Fish | 646.317.7396
mif2018@med.cornell.edu

Milestones is a publication of the Office of External Affairs at Weill Cornell Medicine.

Larry Schafer, Vice Provost for External Affairs • Lucille Ferraro, Campaign Director • Mason Essif, Executive Director of Communications and Public Affairs

John Rodgers, Director of Creative and Editorial Services • Aviva Meyerowitz, Development Communications Manager • Meghan Catucci, Development Communications Associate

If you wish to have your name removed from lists to receive fundraising requests supporting Weill Cornell Medicine in the future, please either 1) write to us at: Privacy Office, Weill Cornell Medicine, 1300 York Avenue, Box 303, New York, NY 10065; 2) call us at 866-841-2420; or 3) e-mail us at optoutwcmed@med.cornell.edu.