



milestones



Care.
Discover.
Teach.



A Banner Year for Weill Cornell Medicine

Weill Cornell Medicine marked an extraordinary year in 2015, capped by launching a new name that exemplifies the unprecedented clinical growth, scientific advancement and educational accomplishments that have cemented the institution as a driving force in healthcare.

“Weill Cornell Medicine could not be where it is today without the ongoing support and dedication of its leadership, donors and friends,” says Dean Laurie Glimcher. “The institution is set on a path for truly remarkable growth.”

In July, the Association of American Medical Colleges named Weill Cornell Medicine the fastest growing medical school in the country based on its increase in operating revenue over the past five years. The successes that led to this period of growth have set the foundation for the institution’s strategic development in the future.

Care

In the past few years, with a significant push in 2015, Weill Cornell Medicine and its faculty practice, the Weill Cornell Physician Organization, have added more than 40 medical practices in Manhattan, Queens and Brooklyn to connect New Yorkers to a network of exceptional physicians. The institution has added more than 150 physicians to its ranks at NewYork-Presbyterian/Lower Manhattan Hospital, and has established five practices nearby to provide patients with top-tier clinical care.

Donors continue to support the institution’s clinical efforts in a variety of ways, including providing funding for the clinical scholar award program, underwriting recruitment for key clinical departments and bolstering the translational research program. Departments like the Joan and Sanford I. Weill Department of Medicine continue to grow and flourish – providing world-class patient care, recruiting healthcare leaders and working side-by-side with top-tier scientists across the institution.

“Weill Cornell Medicine could not be where it is today without **the ongoing support and dedication of its leadership, donors and friends.**”

Dean Laurie Glimcher

Discover

Excellence in patient care is realized only through a robust biomedical research enterprise that can translate discoveries made in the lab into advanced treatments for the clinic. The Belfer Research Building – which was made possible by an outpouring

of donor generosity and support – is empowering the institution’s investigators to do just that. The building, now 80 percent occupied, is a powerful engine for groundbreaking research.

Continued on page 2



The ability to speed the latest cures and treatments to our patients is anchored by your support.

I am proud to share our cover story with you, which highlights the phenomenal growth that we’ve seen at Weill Cornell Medicine in the past year. These successes – in each area of our mission – have been possible because of the commitment of our leadership, faculty, donors and friends. I continue to be amazed, and humbled, by the incredible power of our collaborations across this institution, with industry and other leading healthcare organizations, and, equally important, with our philanthropic partners. The ability to speed the latest cures and treatments to our patients is anchored by your support.

As Weill Cornell Medicine grows its research enterprise, enhances its educational curriculum, expands its clinical presence throughout the city, and further diversifies its partnerships, the insitution is helping ensure better health for generations to come. That is the beacon that propels our mission forward.

With gratitude,

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

Care.
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A Banner Year for Weill Cornell Medicine *continued from cover*

“This has been a success story by all accounts,” Dean Glimcher adds. “This the first time in at least the past quarter-century that the rate of growth of our sponsored research is actually greater than the percent growth of our clinical programs.”

Dean Glimcher attributes this success to the Belfer building’s state-of-the-art scientific technology and enhanced research support core services that enable investigators to conduct high-impact studies.

One example of a Weill Cornell research powerhouse is the institution’s precision medicine program, which in September received a generous gift from Caryl and Overseer Israel Englander. The Englander Institute for Precision Medicine will bolster the work that Weill Cornell scientists are doing to sequence tumors and pinpoint the most effective treatments for each patient.

Another Weill Cornell Medicine priority has been to establish relationships with industry to advance basic science breakthroughs that have commercial potential into viable treatments. The Daedalus Fund for Innovation, a donor-sponsored initiative now in its second year, provides up to \$100,000 in grants to help investigators make their research more attractive to the biopharmaceutical industry.

“Our donors understand that the interaction and collaboration between academia and private-sector industry is absolutely a marriage made in heaven,” Dean Glimcher says. “Discovery is best done in an academic setting, but there are many things we can’t do here as easily as the private sector. Teaming up with pharmaceutical companies, founding new companies – this is the future.”

The Association of
 American Medical
 Colleges named
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 the fastest growing
 medical school
 in the country.

Teach

While the institution expanded the medical school class size by five students to 106, this year was no less competitive. The students who comprise the Class of 2019 have the highest ever undergraduate GPA scores at Weill Cornell Medicine and are tied for highest-ever MCAT scores. The scholarship endowment continues to grow – raising more than \$16 million in 2015 – allowing Weill Cornell Medicine to attract the best and brightest students and keeping student debt down.

Thanks, in part, to funding from the Campaign for Education, Weill Cornell Medicine celebrated the successful launch of its medical curriculum last year, and integrated the feedback from students in the Class of 2018 into version 2.0, unveiled this fall. Academic leaders are continuing their work to enhance the curriculum, with a particular focus on scientific studies during the clerkship years.

2015: A Springboard for Future Growth

Weill Cornell Medicine’s successes over the past year have enabled it to take a strategic approach to guide its future growth. The tactic has resulted in many new recruits and nine new leadership appointments, including Nobel Prize winner Dr. Harold Varmus as senior advisor to the dean, Dr. Leonard Girardi, class of 1989, as chair of cardiothoracic surgery, Dr. Silvia Formenti as chair of radiation oncology, and Dr. Jane Salmon as associate dean for faculty affairs.

The institution continues to examine how best to meet its mission to provide patient care, discover new treatments and educate future physician-scientists. Leadership is in the process of identifying key priorities and goals for the next five to eight years, in order to ensure that Weill Cornell Medicine retains its status as part of a premier academic medical center.

“With an impressively strong foundation in each area of our mission, and key partners both locally and globally, we are poised for greatness,” says Jessica Bibliowicz, Chairman of the Board of Overseers. “There are endless opportunities ahead of us.”

Rosalind and Kenneth Landis Expand Their Support of Weill Cornell Medicine

As members of the Dean's Council, Rosalind and Kenneth Landis have backed various initiatives at Weill Cornell Medicine, including research and entrepreneurship. With their most recent gift, they have chosen to support one of Weill Cornell Medicine's most pressing priorities, with a special focus on neurodegenerative disease research.

"My mother suffers from Alzheimer's disease," says Mr. Landis. "We see the devastation it causes not only to the sufferer, but to the family as well. So we saw, and took, an opportunity to make a difference in that field."

In addition to their most recent gift, Mr. and Mrs. Landis have had a particular interest in supporting the Daedalus Fund for Innovation. The Daedalus Fund advances early-stage research over the post-discovery/pre-commercial development gap to accelerate therapies to patients.

"We're both entrepreneurs and the idea of funding early-stage research is quite appealing to us," says Mr. Landis of himself and his wife. "And as someone who is regularly involved in early-stage investments, I really identified with Dean Glimcher's concerns about a lack of funding for potential research projects. These projects are stalled because they're in a stage too early for traditional institutional investors – that's something I understand."

The Landises have been members of the Dean's Council since 2011, and Mr. Landis recently joined its Executive Committee. The Dean's Council, which

"We really like to be involved in whatever organizations we support, so the Dean's Council, to us, is an opportunity to not only be part of the process, but really learn about what is happening at Weill Cornell."

Kenneth Landis



Kenneth and Rosalind Landis

has more than 130 members, is made up of dedicated philanthropists like the Landises who have made gifts of \$100,000 or more to Weill Cornell Medicine. Dean's Council members are recognized for their generosity and given unique opportunities to learn from world-renowned physicians, researchers and leaders at semi-annual meetings. Additionally, the Landises are members of the NewYork Weill Cornell Council, a joint leadership council for NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital and Weill Cornell Medicine.

"It is so rewarding when donors choose to become more involved with our institution," says Dean Glimcher. "Rosalind and Ken exemplify what makes our donors so great. They are advocates for our institution and all that we do to advance research, education and patient care."

"When my wife and I consider philanthropy, money is just one element of it," he says. "We really like to be involved in whatever organizations we support, so the Dean's Council, to us, is an opportunity to not only be part of the process, but really learn about what is happening at Weill Cornell – to understand where the money is going and what it's achieving."

New Gift Fosters Entrepreneurial Spirit in Students

With a recent gift from longtime donor and friend Nanette Laitman, entrepreneurship is highlighted as an essential feature of Weill Cornell Medicine's curriculum.

Ms. Laitman's \$1 million gift will establish the **Nanette Laitman Education Scholar Award in Entrepreneurship**. The recipient of this award will be a faculty member with special expertise in entrepreneurship who has a talent and a passion for teaching and mentoring students. The award provides the recipient with dedicated time to devote to medical student education in this crucial field.

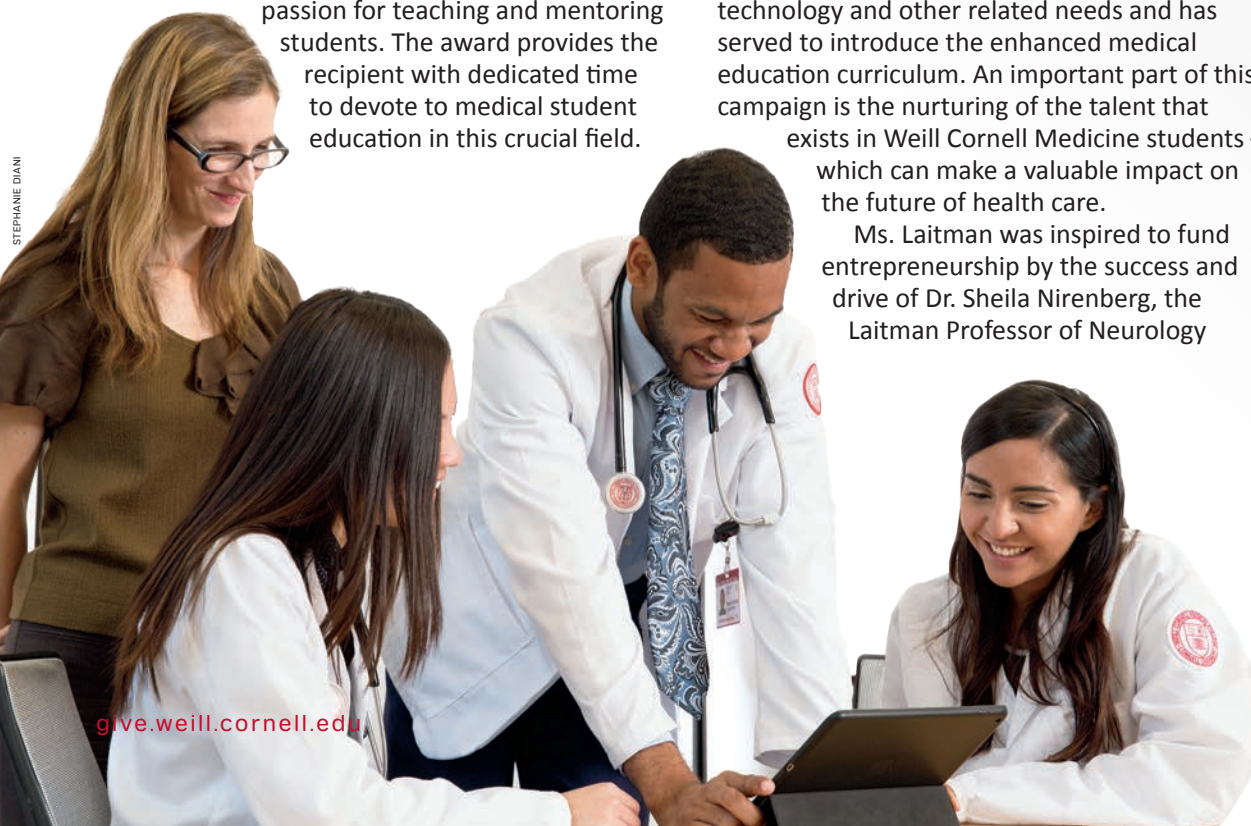
With a special focus on innovation and leadership, this is the third education scholar award at the institution, and is part of Weill Cornell Medicine's Campaign for Education. Raising more than half of its \$50 million goal – at nearly \$28 million – since its launch, the campaign broadly aims to increase Weill Cornell Medicine scholarship and education-related endowments, provide resources for new technology and other related needs and has served to introduce the enhanced medical education curriculum. An important part of this campaign is the nurturing of the talent that exists in Weill Cornell Medicine students – which can make a valuable impact on the future of health care.

Ms. Laitman was inspired to fund entrepreneurship by the success and drive of Dr. Sheila Nirenberg, the Laitman Professor of Neurology

and Neuroscience and a recipient of the MacArthur Foundation's genius award. Dr. Nirenberg's work in the development of an artificial retina has received global recognition, and could one day help millions of blind people worldwide to see again. Dr. Nirenberg's novel approach to her work embodies the entrepreneurial spirit that Ms. Laitman hopes this award will help instill in Weill Cornell Medicine students.

"Dr. Nirenberg's success is a great example of the influence a brilliant mind can have on society when given the opportunity to transform traditional approaches to science," says Ms. Laitman. "I am very happy to promote the leadership skills and out-of-the-box thinking that can lead to innovations in medicine."

"The foremost goal is to provide our medical students with the most well-rounded education they can possibly receive, and entrepreneurship is an important part of that," says Dean Glimcher. "This gift will provide necessary support to faculty who aim to educate future leaders and innovators in medicine. We are so grateful to Nan Laitman for her generosity."





Dr. Michael Foley (left) and Overseer Lewis Sanders

Philanthropy that Drives the Discovery of New Therapeutics

JOHN ABBOTT

With a new \$15 million gift split between Weill Cornell Medicine, The Rockefeller University and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Overseer Lewis and Ali Sanders have once again bolstered one of the most exciting initiatives at the institution – the Tri-Institutional Therapeutics Discovery Institute (Tri-I TDI).

A groundbreaking and novel collaboration between three world class academic medical centers, the Tri-I TDI was launched in 2013 with an initial \$15 million gift from Mr. and Mrs. Sanders and a \$5 million gift from Overseer Howard and Abby Milstein to support its core facilities in the Belfer Research Building. The institute is partnered with Takeda Pharmaceuticals with a goal of expediting early-stage drug discovery into innovative treatments and therapies for patients, arming the most talented researchers with the tools, technology and expertise to remove the barriers that impede drug discovery in academic settings – ultimately to benefit patients.

From the time he first heard about the development of this collaboration, Mr. Sanders has been enthusiastic about its potential. He notes three words that capture the heart of the institute: empower; encourage; and leverage.

“To empower is to bring to investigators the know-how to optimize their intellectual property. To encourage is to incentivize investigators to translate, to commercialize their work. And as a philanthropist, you leverage your gift toward innovation that benefits the many.”

In this unique alliance, the scientists who discover therapeutics work side-by-side with medicinal chemists, speeding the conversion of therapies from the laboratory to effective treatments for patients. The institute is housed on the 16th floor of the state-of-the-art Belfer Research Building. Since its inception, the institute already has one program that is in license negotiations, and leadership is anticipating four additional programs following suit in the near future.

“We wouldn’t have infrastructure or be able to do what we do if it weren’t for philanthropy,” says Dr. Michael Foley, Sanders Director of the Tri-I TDI and director of its Sanders Innovation and Education Initiative. “The National Institutes of Health doesn’t routinely fund medicinal chemistry for academic drug discovery, and pharmaceutical companies cannot do all the basic biology within their walls. Without Mr. Sanders’ investment, there’d be no Tri-I TDI – projects that are now advancing toward proof-of-concept studies simply would have died on the vine, which would be a shame for patients. There are multiple projects now progressing to these studies that ordinarily would not have seen the light of day.”

“You have a chance to advance the standard of care in a very significant way, and save or improve tens of thousands if not millions of lives,” says Mr. Sanders. “If a philanthropist is thinking about how they can impact the lives of the many, investing in healthcare research in academia is a compelling route.”



Dean's Council co-chairs Overseer Sanford Ehrenkranz (far left) and Overseer Leonard Harlan (far right) with Dr. Foley and Dean Glimcher at the Dean's Council Forum

Dr. Foley Presents at Dean's Council Forum

Members of Weill Cornell Medicine's Dean's Council had the pleasure of hearing from Dr. Foley at the Dean's Council Forum on February 1st in the Weill Auditorium. Dr. Foley's presentation, “Curing the Drug Discovery Bottlenecks: Weill Cornell's Pioneering Approach,” resulted in an animated and highly engaging question-and-answer session with council members.

To learn more about the Dean's Council, please contact:
deanscouncil@med.cornell.edu or 646-317-7424

What Inspires Giving?

Meet Dr. John Leonard

During his twenty-five years at Weill Cornell Medicine, Dr. John Leonard, the Richard T. Silver Distinguished Professor of Hematology and Medical Oncology, has been motivated by the same driving force: delivering the best possible treatments and cures to his patients. Moved by this incredible devotion and commitment, hundreds of Dr. Leonard's patients have been inspired to support his groundbreaking work in blood cancer research as well as other priorities throughout the institution, donating millions of dollars. With this strong philanthropic foundation and a team of world-class physician-scientists by his side, Dr. Leonard, also the associate dean for clinical research, the associate director of clinical trials at the Meyer Cancer Center and the director of the Joint Clinical Trials Office at Weill Cornell Medicine and NewYork-Presbyterian, leads one of the top lymphoma research programs in the country.

He recently sat down with Larry Schafer, vice provost of external affairs, to speak about the impact of philanthropy on scientific discovery at Weill Cornell Medicine.

LS: You've been at Weill Cornell Medicine for a long time now – when you first came to this institution to do your internship and residency, did you immediately focus on cancer care?

JL: I had worked in college in a laboratory that was focused on stem cell biology and bone marrow, and so I already had that orientation. As I went through residency, I was deciding between hematology-oncology and infectious disease and at one time, I even considered doing both. Ultimately, I decided that much like when penicillin and other antibiotics were first introduced in the field of infectious disease, there was a steep curve ahead for the field of oncology – exciting things were on the horizon. And that has proven to be true.

LS: And how has it been to spend your entire medical career at Weill Cornell Medicine?

JL: It's been a great place for me. It's a place where people really work together to do the right thing and accomplish similar goals. I think that what makes Weill Cornell unique is that it's a big enough place to get things done, but not so big that projects get stuck with too much red tape. We're right at the sweet spot. I don't think that my team could be doing our work any better at any other institution.

LS: During your time here, how have you seen the institution directly benefit from philanthropic support?

JL: Well, philanthropy has obviously contributed to the success of our institution, but even more important, it has contributed to our success in solving problems. I think it really comes down to rounding out where our funding is coming from. Funding that comes from the federal government is limited and challenging because it doesn't always adequately support our projects – you're getting by on a shoestring. The pharmaceutical industry does great things, and is a huge supporter of biomedical research and a critical partner, but there are some

scientific questions that are not a priority for that industry. So philanthropy and direct support to an institution like ours is central – not only for funding specific studies, but for building infrastructure and core needs – like a database or a biobank. Philanthropy is helping to put the pieces in place and underpinning so many of our efforts.

LS: Your expertise in patient care and treatment has been so motivational to so many of your patients – you have truly changed people's lives. How do you inspire your patients to support our efforts?

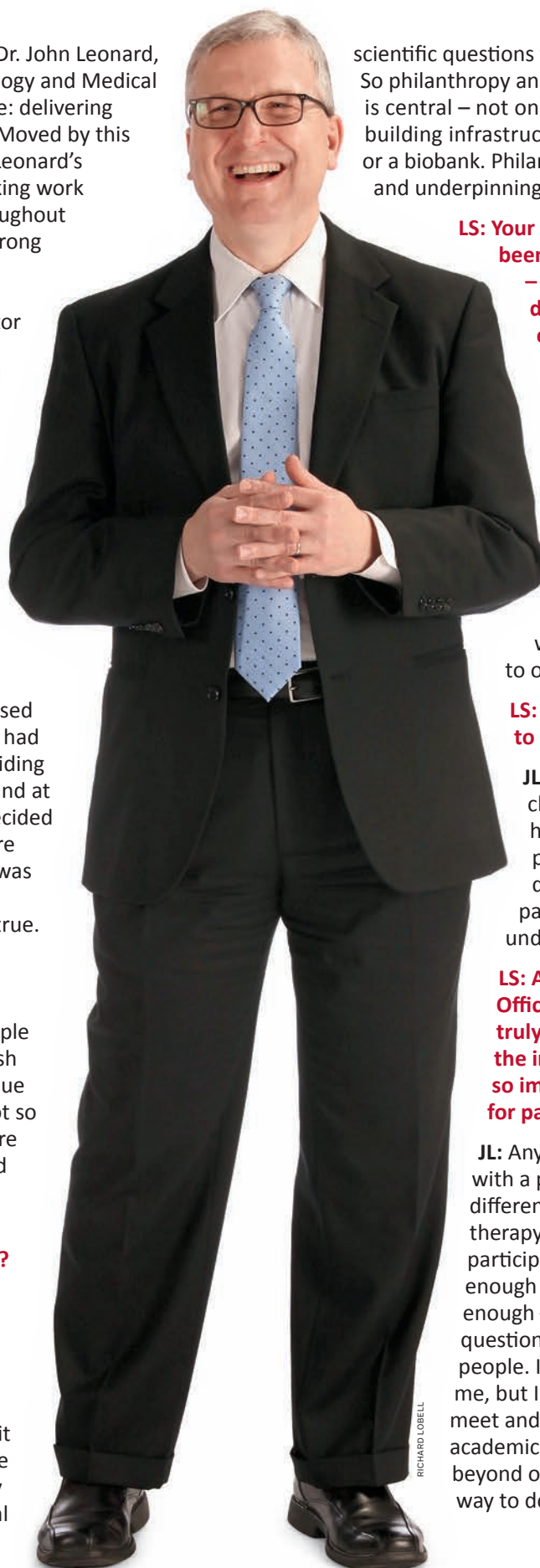
JL: I really enjoy talking to patients and engaging them in our projects. Often, they ask great questions that we haven't thought of – or maybe we haven't prioritized – because we're only looking at it from one angle. I'm constantly amazed by my patients who donate at any level. I get surprised every day with a \$100 or \$1,000 check in the mail – and I think it's because they want to help and they appreciate that we're there for them. Our patients feel loyalty to our institution.

LS: It sounds like you have inspired your patients to give, but they have also inspired you...

JL: When you see people struggle with challenges, you really learn how strong the human spirit is. And, when you're treating patients with disease, you see that in a very direct way. I continue to be inspired by my patients – spending time talking to them, and understanding them, is my favorite thing to do.

LS: As the director of the Joint Clinical Trials Office, you have a front row seat for some of the truly incredible work that is being done across the institution. Why do you think clinical trials are so important for advancing treatments and cures for patients?

JL: Anytime I sit with a patient, or any doctor sits with a patient, and they explain the benefits of the different treatment options or suggest a standard therapy, it's because somebody, somewhere, participated in a clinical trial; a patient was brave enough and dedicated enough – and optimistic enough – to go on a clinical trial to answer that question and hopefully helped themselves and other people. I love treating the patients that are in front of me, but I also want to help the patients that I'll never meet and never see. I think that's a key part of an academic institution – to have a much broader impact beyond our walls – and clinical trials are one significant way to do that.



RICHARD LOBEL



Dr. Linda Vahdat

Information Please

Founded by Overseer Daisy Soros in 1997, the Information Please luncheon series offers friends of Weill Cornell Medicine the opportunity to learn about groundbreaking research and clinical advances from world-class physicians and researchers in an informal setting. This year's event took place on Tuesday, November 10th and featured a presentation by Dr. Linda Vahdat, director of the Breast Cancer Research Program, on the critical impact of precision medicine and targeted therapies on breast cancer. This event marked the 40th Information Please luncheon since the program's inception.

STUDIO BROOKE

Daedalus Fund Event

The Daedalus Fund for Innovation is a program designed to foster, advance and build value around promising early-stage translational research projects and emerging technologies that have commercial potential. Established in 2014, the Daedalus Fund helps our investigators to bridge and overcome the "development gap," enhancing their research projects and enabling Weill Cornell Medicine to offer the industry more compelling, investment-grade opportunities for business development. On November 30th, the 2nd annual Daedalus Fund for Innovation Awards Reception was held at the Belfer Research Building. Featuring keynote speaker Dr. George Yancopoulos, president and chief scientific officer at Regeneron Laboratories, the event also highlighted this year's four award recipients:

Juan Cubillos-Ruiz, PhD

Assistant Professor of Microbiology and Immunology

Shahin Rafii, MD

Director, Ansary Stem Cell Institute

Theodore Schwartz, MD

David and Ursel Barnes Professor of Minimally Invasive Neurosurgery

Professor of Neuroscience, Neurological Surgery and Neurological Surgery in Otolaryngology

Pengbo Zhou, PhD

Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

For more information or to support the Daedalus Fund for Innovation, please contact: **Christine Hughes, Director of Institutional Giving and Science Programs, 646-317-7366 or chh2038@med.cornell.edu.**

STUDIO BROOKE



Dr. Shahin Rafii, Dr. Juan Cubillos-Ruiz, Dr. Theodore Schwartz and Dr. Pengbo Zhou

Children's Health Council Discovery Panel

The Children's Health Council Discovery Panels are semi-annual public events that feature discussions with Weill Cornell Medicine experts on key issues affecting children and adolescents today. On December 8th, the featured topic "Your Child's Brain in Adolescence: The Good, the Bad and Beyond," drew a packed crowd to the Starr-Greenberg Conference Center. Participants learned from world-class physicians and scientists about the complexities of the adolescent social-emotional brain.



Attendees at the Children's Health Council Discovery Panel

Presenters included:

BJ Casey, PhD

Director of the Sackler Institute for Developmental Psychobiology
Sackler Professor of Developmental Psychobiology

Jane Chang, MD

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics in the Department of Pediatrics

Francis Lee, MD, PhD

Professor and Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Psychiatry
Professor in the Department of Pharmacology

Tara Mathews, PhD

Assistant Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry

To learn more about the Children's Health Council,
please contact: (646)-317-7358 or
childrenshealthcouncil@med.cornell.edu

Partners in Medicine

In November, Partners in Medicine held its annual fall luncheon, entitled "Our Brains As We Age: Prevention, Signs, Treatment," featuring Dr. Matthew Fink, chairman of the Department of Neurology and Louis and Gertrude Feil Professor of Clinical Neurology. Participants learned tips on how to prevent the effects of aging on the brain and how to distinguish the signs of normal aging from degenerative conditions such as Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease.

The Partners in Medicine program recognizes the efforts of an exclusive circle of Weill Cornell Medicine donors who share a profound interest in the future of medicine. With annual contributions of \$1,000 or more, these donors help Weill Cornell lead the way in pioneering research and innovative treatments and cures.



In December, Partners in Medicine honored the generosity and commitment of its members with a donor wall dedication ceremony.

To learn more about the Partners in Medicine program, please contact:

Lorelei Schroeter, Director of Annual and Special Giving Programs, at las2026@med.cornell.edu or 646-317-7345.



Weill Cornell Medicine





Alumni Reunion

Sept 23-24
2016



Save the Date

The Weill Cornell Medicine Alumni Reunion will take place from Friday, September 23 – Saturday, September 24, offering engaging guest speakers, institutional updates and tours, class get-togethers, a gala dinner dance, and opportunities to mingle and network with old friends.

Class years ending in '0, '1, '5, and '6 are celebrating milestone reunions, and, as always, all alumni are invited back to campus to commemorate another year since graduation.

We hope to see you there!
Visit www.weill.cornell.edu/alumni/reunion for updates.

Weill Cornell Medicine

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