Chairman’s Message

I am very pleased to share with you the 2014 Fall Issue of the Department of Surgery News. In this issue we report on several named visiting professor lectures, special events, and expansion of our clinical services:

- We were fortunate over the past few months to welcome two nationally renowned speakers to deliver two of our named lectures. Dr. David W. Rattner, Chief, Division of General and Gastrointestinal Surgery, Massachusetts General Hospital and The Warshaw Family Professor of Surgery, Harvard Medical School, visited as the 32nd Annual Peter C. Canizaro, MD, visiting professor and guest lecturer. Dr. Jeffrey P. Gold, Chancellor and Professor of Surgery, University of Nebraska Medical Center and Vice President, University of Nebraska, visited as the 14th Annual Hassan Naama, MB, BCh, visiting professor and guest lecturer. This year the Naama Lecture was co-sponsored with the New York Weill Cornell Medical Center Alumni Council.

- At the recent 100th Annual ACS Clinical Congress, our faculty and residents had a substantial role in giving lectures, presentations, moderating sessions and teaching postgraduate courses. We also co-hosted our ACS Annual Alumni Reception with NYP/WCMC Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, and the Departments of Surgery at Houston Methodist Hospital, New York Hospital Queens and New York Methodist Hospital.

- Our team of pediatric surgeons, led by Dr. Nitsana Spigland, Professor of Clinical Surgery and Chief of Pediatric Surgery and Pediatric Trauma at NYP/Weill Cornell, expanded its services to provide advanced care to children in Queens, Brooklyn and The Bronx.

In this issue, we announce new faculty appointments and promotions, and note our faculty’s recent honors and awards. In addition, we report on a recent visit by Dr. Arthur Fleming, the first president of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons, whose grandson, transplant surgeon Dr. Anthony Watkins, is an Assistant Professor of Surgery in our Department. We note the key role played by Dr. Alfons Pomp, Chief of GI Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, in arranging for needed simulation equipment to be donated to a hospital in the Dominican Republic, and report on our 14th Annual Golf tournament to raise funds for surgical education and research. In Alumni Updates, we report on our distinguished alumni’s recent appointments and publications. We also feature an article about the 2014 surgery graduation and welcome our new residents and fellows.

I hope you find this issue of interest and welcome your feedback about our newsletter.

Sincerely yours,

Fabrizio Michelassi, MD
Lewis Atterbury Stimson Professor of Surgery
Chairman, Department of Surgery
Surgeon-in-Chief
NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center
The Department of Surgery’s 32nd Annual Peter C. Canizaro, MD, Visiting Professor Lectureship was held Monday, October 13, 2014. The lecture, “The Quest for Even Less Invasive Surgery,” was presented by nationally renowned GI surgeon, educator and researcher, David W. Rattner, MD, FACS, Chief, Division of General and Gastrointestinal Surgery, Massachusetts General Hospital and The Warshaw Family Professor of Surgery, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA.

Dr. Rattner obtained a BS from the University of Michigan in 1974, and received his MD from The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in 1978. He completed his surgical residency training at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in 1985. Dr. Rattner was appointed to the staff of MGH’s Department of Surgery in 1986 and has remained at the institution to the present time. In 1999, Dr. Rattner became Chief of the Division of General and Gastrointestinal Surgery at MGH. He was made Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School in 2003 and was named the inaugural The Warshaw Family Professor of Surgery in 2012. A recognized leader in the field of minimally invasive surgery, Dr. Rattner was a founding member of the Center for Innovative Minimally Invasive Therapies (CIMIT) and is a program leader for Operating Room of the Future. Dr. Rattner currently serves as the co-director of the MGH Digestive Healthcare Center.

An active member of over 20 national surgical organizations, Dr. Rattner has held leadership roles in several of these organizations. He has served as President of the Boston Surgical Society, the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract (SSAT) and the Society of American Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES). He was recently awarded the SAGES Distinguished Service Award in 2013. Dr. Rattner is a member of the American Surgical Association and a fellow of the American College of Surgeons, where he served as a Governor from 1995-1998.

Dr. Rattner has served as principle investigator or co-investigator on numerous research projects and has authored over 160 original publications and 100 book chapters. He has served as a visiting professor to numerous institutions and has been a sought-after invited speaker to major national and international meetings. He is on the editorial board of seven peer-reviewed medical journals. Dr. Rattner was one of the founding members of the Intersociety Council on Surgical Fellowships that established the parameters for many of the gastrointestinal surgical fellowships that exist today. Dr. Rattner currently directs the MGH Advanced Minimally Invasive Surgery fellowship.

Dr. Rattner's clinical interests include surgical treatment of achalasia, hiatal hernias, gastroesophageal reflux, minimally invasive surgery of the gastrointestinal tract, hernias and treatment of gastrointestinal and colorectal malignancies. His major research efforts have focused on gastrointestinal pathology, the operating room of the future and, most recently, Natural Orifice Transluminal Endoscopic Surgery (NOTES). Dr. Rattner and his collaborators have developed three new NOTES procedures that are currently in human clinical trials.
The Department of Surgery’s 14th Annual Hassan Naama, MB, BCh, Memorial Lectureship was held on September 22, 2014. The lecture, “Escape Velocity: Can We See the Future of Medical Education?”, was presented by nationally renowned thoracic surgeon, educator and researcher, Jeffrey P. Gold, MD, FACS, Chancellor and Professor of Surgery, University of Nebraska Medical Center and Vice President, University of Nebraska. The lecture was co-sponsored this year by the New York Weill Cornell Medical Center Alumni Council.

After graduating from Cornell University College of Engineering in 1974, Dr. Gold received his MD from Cornell University Medical College in 1978. He was awarded the John Metcalfe Polk Award for Highest Academic Achievement and was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. Dr. Gold completed his general surgery internship and residency training at the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center in 1983 and served as administrative chief resident. He completed his cardiothoracic residency training at the Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Boston Children’s Hospital of Harvard Medical School. Dr. Gold is a board-certified thoracic surgeon and specializes in adult and pediatric cardiac surgery.

Dr. Gold is a nationally recognized leader and tireless advocate for transforming academic medical education, bioscience research and health care delivery. He became Chancellor of the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) in February, 2014, and also chairs the board of a clinical enterprise that includes UNMC’s primary hospital partner, The Nebraska Medical Center; its physician practice group, UNMC Physicians; and the Bellevue Medical Center. As UNMC’s chief executive officer, Dr. Gold is responsible for all aspects of campus administration, including its annual operating budget of more than $640 million, a staff of about 5,000 and its 3,600 students. Additionally, the clinical enterprise has 6,500 employees and an operating budget of more than $1 billion. Dr. Gold also holds a health professions appointment as a Professor in the Department of Surgery.

Prior to joining UNMC, Dr. Gold served as Chancellor of the University of Toledo’s health science campus, which includes the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Science and Human Service, and Graduate Medical Study. In that role, Dr. Gold had full leadership responsibility of the clinical, education and research programs, the faculty practice plan and the clinical delivery system. As Dean of the University of Toledo’s College of Medicine and Life Sciences, Dr. Gold was responsible for the cultivation and recruitment of faculty, development and implementation of its curriculum and ensuring the highest level of education for its students, residents and faculty. Prior to joining the University of Toledo, Dr. Gold was on faculty and served in leadership positions at both Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Weill Cornell Medical College.

Dr. Gold serves on over 50 professional committees and more than 100 national organizations, volunteer boards, government/public health councils, and industry. He was recently elected to the American Medical Association’s Council on Medical Education and the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. He has served as President of the Thoracic Surgery Directors Association, a national organization devoted to improving the education of resident physicians. Dr. Gold has authored over 200 peer-reviewed articles, 250 national presentations, 40 books and chapters and has been invited as a visiting professor at more than 60 institutions.
100th Annual
American College of Surgeons
Clinical Congress Meeting

Many of the Department of Surgery’s faculty and residents played an active role at the American College of Surgeons’ meeting in San Francisco this past October, giving lectures, presentations and videotalks, participating in panel discussions, moderating sessions and teaching postgraduate courses.

**DR. CHRIS AGRUSA** presented “Bone Marrow induces STAT3 Pathway Activation in a Model of Disseminated Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Cells,” and “A Novel Platform for Proteomic Analysis of Proximal Source Pulmonary Venous Blood Identifies Potential Biomarkers for NSCLC.”

**DR. SOUMITRA EACHEMPATI** was a discussant on “Hypotension, Anemia and Abnormal Partial Thromboplastin Time Accurately Predict the Need for Massive Transfusion in Trauma Patients.”

**DR. BRENDAN FINNERTY** presented “General Surgery Training & Robotics: Are Residents Improving their Skills?”

**DR. SANG LEE** taught two postgraduate courses,”Advanced Coloscopy: New Techniques for Polypectomy and Advanced Intervention” and “Minimally Invasive Colorectal Surgery.”

**DR. FABRIZIO MICHELASSI** hosted a “Meet the Experts” luncheon on “Crohn’s Disease: Bring Your Toughest Cases.” He was an invited speaker for a postgraduate course, “Challenges in the Surgical Treatment of Crohn’s Disease.” He also presented “Symptomatic Stricturing Crohn’s Disease of the Small Bowel Strictureplasty.”

**DR. JEFFREY MILSON** was a discussant on “Comparison of Open, Laparoscopic, and Robotic Colectomy using a Large National Database: Outcomes and Trends Related to Surgery Center Volume.”

**DR. KATRINA MITCHELL** presented “Global Initiatives: WCMC Pediatric Burn Unit in Tanzania.”

**DR. ALFONS POMP** co-coordinated a video session symposium on “Complications in General Surgery.”

**DR. PIERRE SALDINGER** co-moderated a session “NSQIP – A Quality Improvement Program that Improves Outcome and Reduces Costs.”


Dr. Fabrizio Michelassi was elected to Chair of the Board of Governors at the ACS Clinical Congress meeting. He succeeded Dr. Gary Timmerman. An ACS Fellow since 1987, Dr. Michelassi has served on the Board of Governors since 2010.
On Tuesday, October 28th, 2014, surgical alumni, faculty and friends of NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, Houston Methodist Hospital, New York Hospital Queens and New York Methodist Hospital, gathered at the American College of Surgeons headquarter hotel for our Annual Alumni Reception. The Reception was co-hosted by Dr. Fabrizio Michelassi, Lewis Atterbury Stimson Professor and Chairman, Department of Surgery and Surgeon-in-Chief, NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center; Dr. O. Wayne Isom, Terry Allen Kramer Professor and Chairman, Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Cardiothoracic Surgeon-in-Chief, NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center; Dr. Barbara Lee Bass, the John F. and Carolyn Bookout Chair and Professor, Department of Surgery, Houston Methodist Hospital; Dr. Pierre F. Saldinger, Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery, New York Hospital Queens and Dr. Anthony J. Tortolani, Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery and Cardiothoracic Surgery, New York Methodist Hospital. The reception this year attracted over 125 alumni and friends and was held in the new Vista Lounge, located on the 45th Floor of the Hilton San Francisco Union Square Hotel, with breathtaking views of San Francisco.
The Department of Surgery’s Pediatric Surgery and Pediatric Trauma division has expanded its clinical footprint to provide outstanding surgical services and cutting edge technological advances to pediatric patients in Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx. Our pediatric team is now seeing patients and performing surgical procedures at New York Hospital Queens, in Flushing; Brooklyn Hospital in downtown Brooklyn; New York Methodist Hospital in Park Slope, and Lincoln Hospital in The Bronx. These children benefit from convenient access to the innovative, high quality care offered by NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center’s Komansky Center for Children’s Health, while staying in their own communities. For cases which require advanced medical services not available in their communities, surgery is performed at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center.

Our pediatric surgeons are board-certified in both general surgery and pediatric surgery. The team is led by Dr. Nitsana Spigland, Professor of Clinical Surgery, who serves as Chief of Pediatric Surgery and Pediatric Trauma at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, as well as these other satellite hospitals, and is comprised of Dr. Spigland and her two colleagues, Dr. Demetri Merianos, Assistant Professor of Surgery and Assistant Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, and Dr. Shaun Steigman, Assistant Professor of Surgery and Assistant Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center.

Drs. Spigland, Merianos and Steigman provide the full spectrum of surgical services and the most advanced minimally invasive expertise in pediatric thoracic and abdominal surgery, head and neck surgery, gastrointestinal surgery, endocrine surgery, surgical oncology, general surgery, trauma surgery and complex neonatal congenital malformations.
James J. Gallagher, MD, Assistant Professor of Surgery and Assistant Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center was appointed to the position of Director of the Intensive Care Unit of the William Randolph Hearst Burn Center of NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. A board-certified surgeon, Dr. Gallagher has extensive experience in the treatment of burns, surgical critical care, and international surgery. His areas of special interest include surgical education, international surgical outreach, the burned hand, burn resuscitation, and surgical care of the burn wound. He has gained national and international prominence through his pioneering work to establish the Sekou Toure Burn Unit in Tanzania.

Dr. Gallagher received his BS summa cum laude in biochemistry from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1988 and his MD from SUNY Upstate Medical Center, Syracuse, New York in 1992. He completed his internship and residency training in general surgery at Robert Packer Hospital, Sayre, Pennsylvania in 1997. After completing his residency training, Dr. Gallagher moved with his wife and young children for one year to Cameroon, West Africa, where he served as the solo surgeon in a rural missionary hospital. During this time, Dr. Gallagher had his first exposure to patients with burn injuries. Upon returning home to the United States, Dr. Gallagher completed a fellowship in surgical critical care and trauma surgery at Stony Brook University, and a clinical burn fellowship at the William Randolph Hearst Burn Center at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. He then joined the faculty as an attending burn surgeon at Shriners Burns Hospital for Children in Galveston, TX. In 2009, he joined the Department of Surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center.
Sabrina Mahil, DDS, MD, has joined the Department of Surgery as Assistant Professor of Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College and Assistant Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. Dr. Mahil specializes in oral and maxillofacial surgery, and her clinical expertise includes dental implant surgery, dento-alveolar surgery, orthognathic surgery, benign pathology and facial trauma.

Dr. Mahil received her DDS from the UCLA School of Dentistry, Los Angeles, CA, in 2006 and earned her MD from Weill Cornell Medical College in 2012. She completed her residency in general dentistry at Albert Einstein Medical Center, Philadelphia, PA, in 2008 and her residency in oral surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center in 2014. Dr. Mahil is a member of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and the American Dental Association. She has volunteered as a surgeon with the non-profit organization Smile Bangladesh, where she and her team performed 75 cleft lip and palatal surgeries.
Melanie Ongchin, MD, has joined the Department of Surgery as Assistant Professor of Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College and Assistant Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. Her general surgery practice is located at NewYork-Presbyterian/Lower Manhattan Hospital, and she sees patients at the newly-renovated patient care center on 156 William Street. Dr. Ongchin provides the most advanced, state-of-the-art minimally invasive laparoscopic and robotic treatments in general surgery and gastrointestinal surgical oncology. She also has strong experience and expertise in cytoreductive surgery and chemoperfusion, peritoneal disease, cancer of the appendix and hepatobiliary surgery.

In 2002, Dr. Ongchin received her BS in biochemistry and BA in psychology from Muhlenberg College, in Allentown, PA, graduating magna cum laude and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. She earned her MD in 2006 from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey/New Jersey Medical School, and completed her residency at the State University of New York-University of Buffalo in 2012. Dr. Ongchin completed a year of research in 2009 in the Department of Surgical Oncology at Roswell Park Cancer Institute, in Buffalo, NY. She completed her fellowship in surgical oncology at the University of Pittsburgh, PA, and earned a Certificate in Clinical Research at the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Clinical Research Education in 2014. Dr. Ongchin has earned many honors and awards, including the Arnold P. Gold Foundation Humanism and Excellence in Teaching Award in 2007. She has published seven articles in peer-reviewed journals, and been invited to give 11 presentations at national medical meetings and scientific conferences. She is a member of many prestigious medical societies, including the Society of Surgical Oncology, the American College of Surgeons, the American Association for Cancer Research, the Pancreas Club and the Association for Academic Surgery.
Faculty Appointments and Promotions

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James D. Smith, MBBCh, FRCSI, has joined the Department of Surgery as Assistant Professor at Weill Cornell Medical College and Assistant Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. Dr. Smith is an experienced, board-certified surgeon, specializing in general surgery, colorectal surgery and gastrointestinal surgical oncology. He has a strong expertise in the most advanced minimally invasive surgical procedures. Dr. Smith’s general surgery practice is located at NewYork-Presbyterian/Lower Manhattan Hospital, and he sees patients at the newly-renovated patient care center on 156 William Street.

Dr. Smith received his MD from UCD School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, University College Dublin, Ireland in 2001. In 2008, Dr. Smith earned his Masters of Surgery (MCh) at the UCD School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, University College Dublin, Ireland, and was a specialist lecturer in general surgery, receiving the Teacher of the Year Award. He completed his general surgery residency training with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland in 2013. Dr. Smith completed a research fellowship in 2011, and a clinical fellowship in colorectal surgical oncology in 2012 at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. During this time, he received the Chairman’s Award for Excellence in Clinical Research. He completed a clinical fellowship in colorectal surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center in 2014.

Dr. Smith is a member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He is widely published in his area of expertise, having authored 13 articles in peer-reviewed journals and two book chapters. He has volunteered as a surgeon with Doctors without Borders and completed humanitarian missions in Guinea, Haiti, Burundi and Pakistan.
Dr. Cheguevara Afaneh, Instructor of Surgery and Assistant Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, won 2nd place in the Top Gun Competition sponsored by the Society for Laparoscopic Surgeons, in September, 2014.

Dr. Soumitra Eachempati, Professor of Surgery and Director of the Surgical Intensive Care Unit at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, was appointed Chair of Applicant Interviews for the American College of Surgeons, Manhattan District #2.

Dr. Sang Lee, Vice Chief, Colon and Rectal Surgery and Associate Professor of Surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, was named editor of the American College of Surgeons’ web portal. Dr. Lee served as the director/session chairman of the Advanced Endoscopy and Endoluminal Symposium and as director of the “Meet the Professor” symposium on Advanced Endoscopy at the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons Annual Meeting in Hollywood, FL, in June, 2014. He was an invited speaker at a GI symposium in Tacoma, WA, in September, 2014. His lecture was “Minimally Invasive Surgical Treatment of Crohn’s Disease.” Dr. Lee was also an invited speaker at the Annual Digestive Disease Symposium in the Lehigh Valley, Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown, PA, in October, 2014. The name of his lecture was “Prevention and Treatment of Colorectal Cancer.”

Dr. Fabrizio Michelassi, Lewis Atterbury Stimson Professor and Chair of Surgery and Surgeon-in-Chief at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, was an invited lecturer at the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation Long Island Chapter in September, 2014. The name of his lecture was “Surgery as Part of the Treatment Plan.” He was also an invited lecturer in October, 2014, at the 116th French Congress of Surgery, in Paris, France. The name of his lecture was “Novel Strategies in the Surgical Management of Complex Small Bowel Crohn’s Disease.”

Dr. Toyooki Sonoda, Associate Professor of Clinical Surgery and Associate Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, was given the Physician of the Year Award by the Department of Nursing, in conjunction with the Weill Cornell Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition Council, in a ceremony in November, 2014. Dr. Sonoda earned this honor in recognition of his commitment to providing the highest quality, patient-focused care.

Dr. Alexander Swistel, Associate Professor of Clinical Surgery and Associate Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, was the recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Cancer Research and Treatment Fund (CR&T) at their annual Hall of Fame event in November, 2014, in New York City. Dr. Swistel was honored in recognition of his many pioneering advances in breast cancer treatment. Dr. Swistel’s patient, male breast cancer survivor Peter Criss, the original drummer for the band KISS, was also honored at the event, which helped raise awareness of male breast cancer. For more than four decades, CR&T has been providing research grants to world’s most promising physicians-scientists to fund cancer research, including sizable contributions to Weill Cornell Medical College.
The NYP/Weill Cornell Department of Surgery and Department of Anesthesiology’s Skills Acquisition and Innovation Laboratory (SAIL) won a prestigious design Merit Award in the interiors category from the Society of American Registered Architects. The award was presented at the society’s annual conference in Palm Springs, CA, in October, 2014.

SAIL photographs courtesy of Ari Burling and Dattner Architects
**Honors ★ Awards**

**Dr. Shuibing Chen**, Assistant Professor of Chemical Biology in Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College, was the recipient of a Novel Award from Weill Cornell Medical College’s CTSC to fund her study, “Sir-tuin2 Inhibitors as Novel Therapeutic Agents for Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma.”

**Dr. Todd Evans**, Vice Chair of Research and Professor of Cell and Developmental Biology in Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College, was awarded two NYSTEM grants to fund his studies, “Precision Genetics in hESCs to Define the Roles of GATA6 in Human Development and Disease,” and “Comprehensive Shared Facility for the Derivation, Validation and Distribution of Stem Cells for Disease Modeling and Development of Therapeutics.” Dr. Evans was also awarded two grants, along with his co-PIs from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, from the Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative to fund their collaborative studies, “Molecular Control of Primitive versus Definitive Endoderm Fates from Stell Cells,” and “Epigenetic Regulation of Hematopoietic Stem Cells by 5-Hydroxymethylcytosine.”

**Dr. Todd Evans**, Vice Chair of Research and Professor of Cell and Developmental Biology in Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College, was awarded two grants, along with his co-PIs from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, from the Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative to fund their collaborative studies, “Molecular Control of Primitive versus Definitive Endoderm Fates from Stell Cells,” and “Epigenetic Regulation of Hematopoietic Stem Cells by 5-Hydroxymethylcytosine.”

**Dr. Fabrizio Michelassi**, Lewis Atterbury Stimson Professor and Chair of Surgery and Surgeon-in-Chief, NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, was awarded a grant from the Lupin Foundation to fund his study “Crohn’s Disease Post-operative Recurrence: Assessment of a Predictive Index.”

**Dr. Jason Spector**, Associate Professor of Surgery and Associate Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, was awarded a Plastic Surgery Foundation grant to fund his study, “Differential Density Microsphere Scaffold Optimizes Wound Healing.” Dr. Spector also was awarded a seed grant from Weill Cornell Medical College to fund his study, “Prenatal Repair of Cleft Lip/Palate by Reactivation of Developmental Programs.”

**Dr. Marco Seandel**, Assistant Professor of Cell and Developmental Biology in Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College, was awarded a grant, along with his co-PI from The Rockefeller University, from the Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative to fund their collaborative study, “The Role of RNA Metabolism in Self-renewal: Novel Approaches for Culturing Spermatogonial Stem Cells.”

**Dr. Yariv Houvras**, Assistant Professor of Medicine in Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College, was awarded a grant from the Tri-Institutional Therapeutics Discovery Institute to fund his study, “Small Molecule Inhibitors of Protein Methyltransferase SET8 for Novel Anti-cancer.”
NY DAILY NEWS REPORTS ON DR. NITSANA SPIGLAND’S LIFE-SAVING SURGERY

On September 10, 2014, the New York Daily News ran an article featuring the miraculous recovery of Jacob LaRose, a critically-ill four year old who was treated in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the Komansky Center for Children’s Health at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. Jacob was suffering from an extraordinarily rare, life-threatening complication from E. Coli 0157. Through the four months he spent in the hospital, he developed shock, respiratory failure, kidney failure, heart failure, liver failure and was in a medically-induced coma and on life support. When the E.Coli caused large perforations in his colon, Dr. Nitsana Spigland, Chief of Pediatric Surgery and Pediatric Trauma, performed four complex emergency surgeries to repair his colon and a fifth surgery in June to reestablish his gastrointestinal continuity. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts and multidisciplinary, state-of-the-art care provided by the Komansky Center’s dedicated team of pediatric specialists, Jacob was fully recovered in time to start pre-kindergarten in September.

US NEWS & WORLD REPORT FEATURES DR. JASON SPECTOR’S BIOENGINEERED EAR

The 2015 US News & World Report Best Hospitals issue featured an article on an innovative bioengineered human ear developed by Dr. Jason Spector, Associate Professor of Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College, in collaboration with his colleague, Dr. Lawrence Bonnassar, Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering at Cornell University. The breakthrough method employs 3-D printing and injectable gels made of living cells, which can be used to fashion ears nearly identical to a human ear. The replacement ears could be a novel solution for reconstructive surgeons to help children born with the absence or severe deformity of the ear, or for people who have lost their external ear due to an accident or cancer.
Dr. Peter W. Blumencranz (class of 1970), Medical Director of The Comprehensive Breast Care Center of Tampa Bay, at Morton Plant Hospital, FL, recently published an article, “Use of Hydrogel Breast Biopsy Tissue Marker Reduces the Need for Wire Localization,” in the *Annals of Surgical Oncology*, 2014.

Dr. Evan Feldman (class of 2011), an attending colon and rectal surgeon at Piedmont Hospital Atlanta, GA, was recently appointed Vice Chair of the Piedmont Atlanta Hospital Cancer Committee and a Cancer Liaison Physician to the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer.

Dr. Joseph Michael Pober (class of 1981), was recently named Chief, Division of Plastic Surgery, at Hackensack University Medical Center at Pascack Valley, Hackensack, NJ.
On October 20, 2014, the Department of Surgery welcomed a distinguished visitor to our M&M and Surgical Grand Rounds, Arthur Fleming, MD, the first president of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons (SBAS) and former Chair of the Department of Surgery at King-Drew Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA. His grandson, transplant surgeon Dr. Anthony Watkins, Assistant Professor of Surgery, Assistant Attending Surgeon and Director of the Skills Acquisition & Innovation Lab (SAIL) at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, led Dr. Fleming on a tour of the hospital, including SAIL, the ORs, the research facilities and patient care areas.

In October, 1987, Dr. Fleming played an instrumental role in founding the Society of Black American Surgeons (SBAS), an organization dedicated to promoting more active participation in academic surgery among African-Americans. He helped organize the society’s first meeting, which took place at Duke University Medical Center in 1989, and was attended by many prominent chairs of surgery from across the country, including Dr. G. Thomas Shires, Chair of Surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. Dr. Watkins and Dr. Tracy-Ann Moo, Assistant Professor of Surgery and Assistant Attending Surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, are both active members of SBAS and will be hosting the 2019 meeting of SBAS at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, along with Dr. Fabrizio Michelassi.

Alfons Pomp, MD, Chief of GI Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, was instrumental in facilitating a donation of a laparoscopic simulator to a teaching hospital in Latin America, Hospital Jose Maria Cabral y Baez de Santiago in Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic. The $2.4 million state-of-the-art equipment, which was donated by Karl Storz Endoscopy, has greatly benefited the hospital’s surgical education program and enabled surgical residents to practice and perfect their laparoscopic skills.

This past October was National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and the faculty and staff of the Weill Cornell Breast Center sponsored and participated in several events to help raise awareness of the disease. They distributed brochures and information on the latest minimally invasive treatments for breast cancer at the NYC Third Avenue Fair; raised funds in the American Cancer Society’s Walk; and sponsored the Young Survivors Coalition’s virtual gala fundraiser to support breast cancer research.
The 13th Annual Golf Tournament to support surgical education and research was held on October 9, 2014, at Pelham Country Club in Pelham, New York. Monies raised help benefit our Skills Acquisition & Innovation Laboratory (SAIL), named lectures and resident presentations at medical conferences. We extend our deepest appreciation to our 15 sponsors for their support: Dr. Hugh Hemmings and the Department of Anesthesiology; Dr. O. Wayne Isom & the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery; Drs. Jon Cohen and Karen Kostroff; Dr. Gavin Duke & East River Imaging, Inc.; Dr. Laura Forese, Dr. Cam Patterson, Mark E. Larmore and NYP Administration; Dr. Todd J. Albert & Hospital for Special Surgery Orthopaedic Surgeons; Image Stream Medical; Peter Crean, Esq. & Martin, Clearwater & Bell, LLP; Dr. Michael Stewart & the Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery; Dr. Daniel Knowles & the Department of Pathology; Dr. Zev Rosenwaks & the Ronald O. Perelman and Claudia Cohen Center for Reproductive Medicine; Dr. Peter Schlegel & the Department of Urology; Karl Storz; Dr. Robert Min & Weill Cornell Imaging at NewYork-Presbyterian; and an anonymous sponsor. We’d like to also thank our patrons: Dr. Robert Grant; Dr. K.S. Clifford Chao & the Department of Radiation Oncology; Dr. Barry Smith & the Rogosin Institute.

(from left) Dr. Michelassi with the Best Foursome trophy winners, Dr. Benjamin Golas, David Golas, II, Jon Golas and Dr. Soumitra Eachempati (not pictured)

Dr. Michelassi congratulates Dr. Benjamin Golas for winning the Straightest Drive trophy

Dr. Michelassi awards Closest to the Pin trophy to Dr. Ralph Slepian
Surgery Graduation

On Friday, June 13, 2014, our surgical residents, faculty, friends and family gathered at the Water Club in New York City to celebrate the commencement of our eight graduating chief residents and recognize their many achievements: Drs. David N. Anderson, Stefan S. Kachala, Starr Koslow Mautner, Peter B. McWhorter, Katrina Blackburn Mitchell, Alyssa-Reiffel Golas and administrative chiefs, Dr. Cheguevara Afaneh and Dr. Barrie S. Rich. The annual Department of Surgery award presentations included the 13th Annual Hassan Naama, MB, BCh, Memorial Resident Award presented to Dr. Cheguevara Afaneh; the 8th Annual Fabrizio Michelassi, MD, Chief Surgical Resident Award presented to Dr. Barrie S. Rich; the 9th Annual William T. Stubenbord, MD, Resident Award presented to Dr. Neel P. Chudgar and the 6th Annual Resident Student Teacher Award presented to Dr. David A. Kleiman. The 5th Golden Apple Award was presented to David Fehling, MA, Surgical Education Program Manager, for his exceptional commitment and service to the Department of Surgery. The graduating chief residents presented the 8th Annual Chief Residents Outstanding Intern Award to Dr. Katherine D. Gray and they presented the Annual Faculty of the Year Teaching Award to Dr. Fabrizio Michelassi. Dr. Michelassi had previously received this award from the 2012 graduating chief residents, in recognition of his outstanding commitment to resident education. Congratulations to the Class of 2014!

(from left) Drs. Peter McWhorter, Stefan Kachala, Starr Koslow Mautner, Barrie Rich, Thomas J. Fahey, III, Fabrizio Michelassi, Cheguevara Afaneh, Alyssa Reiffel-Golas, Katrina Mitchell, David Anderson
Career Paths of Chief Residents: 2014

The majority of our program graduates usually continue their training in a specialized area of surgery. Chief residents routinely secure prestigious fellowship positions in any one of a number of academic programs across the country. Here's an update on the career paths of the 2014 alumni of our general surgery residency program:

**Cheguevara Afaneh, MD**
New York Presbyt/Weill Cornell Medical Center
Advanced Gastrointestinal Minimally Invasive Surgery Fellowship

**David N. Anderson, MD**
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Breast Surgery Oncology Fellowship

**Alyssa Reiffel-Golas, MD**
New York University
Plastic Surgery Residency

**Stefan S. Kachala, MD**
Cleveland Clinic
Thoracic Surgery Fellowship

**Starr Koslow Mautner, MD**
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Breast Oncology Fellowship

**Peter W. McWhorter, MD**
North Shore Hospital System/Long Island Jewish
Colon and Rectal Surgery Fellowship

**Katrina B. Mitchell, MD**
Instructor in Surgery
Weill Bugando Medical Centre, Mwanza, Tanzania

**Barrie S. Rich, MD**
North Shore/LIJ Cohen Children’s Medical Center
Pediatric Surgery Fellowship
8th Annual Chief Residents Outstanding Intern Award: Katherine Gray, MD

Annual Faculty of the Year Teaching Award: Fabrizio Michelassi, MD

(from left) Drs. Afaneh, Mitchell, Koslow Mautner, Reiffel-Golas, Gray, Rich, McWhorter, Kachala, Anderson

(from left) Drs. Mitchell, Anderson, Rich, Koslow Mautner, McWhorter, Michelassi, Reiffel-Golas, Afaneh, Kachala

(from left) David Fehling receives the Golden Apple Award from Dr. Michelassi

Dr. Thomas J. Fahey, III, Program Director and his wife Stacey Fahey

Surgical Awards to WCMC Medical Students

Four Weill Cornell Medical College graduates from the class of 2014 were recognized by the Department of Surgery for their exceptional academic achievements. We offer our congratulations to the following award recipients:

The G. Thomas Shires II Prize in Surgery: Justin Lee Perez, MD
The Fabrizio Michelassi Medical Student Annual Award: Edmund B. Chen, MD
The Coryell Prize in Surgery: Justin Taylor Schwarz, MD
The Harry L. Bush, Jr, MD Award for Excellence in Vascular Biology: Krzysztof Glomski, MD

Dr. Fabrizio Michelassi and his wife Dr. Caren Heller
Welcome New Residents and Fellows  2014-2015

GENERAL SURGERY RESIDENTS

Nicole Croteau, MD  
Boston University School of Medicine

Patrick Dolan, MD  
University of Virginia School of Medicine

Gregory Eckenrode, MD  
Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania

Adam Elmously, MD  
Temple University School of Medicine

Kendall Massengill, MD  
Wake Forest School of Medicine of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center

Caitlin McIntyre, MD  
Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University

Timothy Ullman, MD  
Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Marc Vimolratana, MD  
University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine

Rachel Akintayo, MD  
Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth

Marco Bertucci Zoccali, MD  
Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Facolta di Medicina

Ariel Lederman, MD  
Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California

Blair Murphy-Chutorian, MD  
University of California, Irvine, School of Medicine

Saad Sheikh, MD  
New York University School of Medicine

Saud Aleissa, MD  
King Abdulaziz University College of Medicine and Allied Sciences
GENERAL PRACTICE DENTISTRY RESIDENTS

Michael Cohen, DMD
Tufts University

Emily Kim, DDS
SUNY Stony Brook

Ashley Mears, DDS
University of Buffalo

Neha Patel, DDS
SUNY Stony Brook

Resham Patel, DMD
University of Pennsylvania

Andrew Tonelli, DMD
Tufts University

Joshua Woodruff, DMD
Nova Southeastern University

ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY RESIDENTS

Jungsuk Cho, DMD
Harvard University

Maryam Farag, DMD
Tufts University

PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY RESIDENTS

Peter Hashim, MD
Yale University School of Medicine

Philip Lotfi, MD
New York University School of Medicine

ADVANCED GI MINIMALLY INVASIVE SURGERY FELLOW

Chegvevra Afaneh, MD
BURN SURGERY FELLOWS

Anton Kelly, MD
Wei Wei Zhang, MD
Anthony Lin, MD
Emmanouil Pappou, MD
Sunil Patel, MD

CRITICAL CARE FELLOW

Daniel Kim, MD
Justin Yozawitz, MD

ENDOCRINE AND METABOLIC SURGERY FELLOW


VASCULAR AND ENDOVASCULAR SURGERY FELLOWS

Javariah Aghar, MD
Nina Bowens, MD

RESEARCH FELLOWS

Neel Chudgar, MD
Elinore Kaufman, MD
Adam Levy, MD
Michael Pezold, MD
March 9, 2015
46th Annual Benjamin S. Park, Jr, MD, Visiting Professor Lectureship
and Alumni Banquet (honoring classes of 1985 and 1995)
Harmonie Club, New York City
Guest Lecturer: Andrew Warshaw, MD
President, ACS, Surgeon-in-Chief Emeritus, Massachusetts General Hospital, W. Gerald Austen Professor of Surgery, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA

April 13, 2015
42nd Annual Preston A. Wade, MD, Visiting Professor Lectureship
Weill Cornell Medical College
Guest Lecturer: David Herndon, MD
Chief of Staff at Shriners Burns Hospital for Children, Professor of Surgery, Professor of Pediatrics and the Jesse H. Jones Distinguished Chair in Burn Surgery, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, TX

April 23, 2015
The 4th Annual Stanley J. Behrman, DMD, Lectureship
Weill Cornell Medical Center
Guest Lecturer: Melvyn Yeoh, DMD, MD
Assistant Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery/Head and Neck Surgery
Louisiana State University Health Science Center, Shreveport, LA

April 27, 2015
6th Annual International Lectureship
Weill Cornell Medical Center
Guest Lecturer: Yves Panis, MD, PhD
Professor of Surgery, Head of Department of Colorectal Surgery
Beaujon Hospital, Clichy, France
WAYS TO GIVE

The Department of Surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center is committed to our three-fold mission of education, research, and patient-centered care. Philanthropy plays a vital role in realizing our vision of excellence in these three areas. Whether it is for the groundbreaking research that will treat and cure the scourge of disease, teaching the next generation of top doctors, or providing the most advanced care in a truly compassionate, patient-centered way, philanthropy is critical to our success.

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http://www.cornellsurgery.org/patients/give/index.html
We ask that you partner with us in our mission and consider a tax-deductible gift to the Department of Surgery. You may also make a check payable to NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Department of Surgery and mail to:

Ms. Michele Berko-Field
Office of Development
NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center
525 East 68th Street, Box 123, New York, NY 10065

For more information about the Department of Surgery, please visit our website at www.cornellsurgery.org