

# FROM THE Dean's Desk



**ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON  
MEDICAL SCHOOL**  
University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey

## Message from the Dean

I am honored to have been selected as your new dean. I'm grateful for the confidence shown in me by UMDNJ President **William F. Owen, Jr., MD**, and the UMDNJ Board of Trustees.

Our university and our school have made great strides in recent years, and I firmly believe that we are poised to accelerate our development as a resource for our state and beyond.

The opportunity to continue to lead the talented faculty, staff, and students of RWJMS is an honor and a privilege. As a school community, we look forward to working with the university and our affiliate hospitals, including Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, and Cooper University Hospital, to grow top-tier academic health centers in New Jersey.

I ask everyone to join me in continuing to develop our medical school into a culture that increasingly values respect, diversity, and a dedication to excellence.

Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD  
Dean

## Dr. Peter S. Amenta Selected as New Dean

**P**eter S. Amenta, MD, PhD, has been appointed dean.

The selection of Dr. Amenta was approved by the UMDNJ Board of Trustees and confirmed the recommendation of UMDNJ President **William F. Owen, Jr., MD**. The appointment follows a national search.

"Two years ago, Dr. Amenta stepped forward to take on vast responsibilities as interim dean of one of America's best-known medical schools," says Dr. Owen. "Dr. Amenta is a talented researcher, an accomplished educator, and has demonstrated the leadership skills and the vision to drive UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School to even greater levels of performance in the future."

Under Dr. Amenta's leadership, research core facilities have been expanded, partnerships with affiliate hospitals have been strengthened, the model for a regional campus has been redefined, and a state-of-the-art electronic medical record system is being implemented for the school's faculty practice.

Dr. Amenta earned his medical degree at Hahnemann University. He completed his residency in anatomic and clinical pathology and earned his PhD in anatomy, also at Hahnemann. He is a fellow of the American Board of Pathology. Dr. Amenta joined the faculty in 1989 and became chair of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine in 1998. During his tenure as chair,



Peter S. Amenta,  
MD, PhD

the department doubled in size and expanded its clinical, research, and educational programs. The Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine has clinical oversight responsibilities at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital at Hamilton, Bayshore Community Hospital, and Southern Ocean County Hospital. The department also oversees the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services clinical laboratory and is responsible for the state's HIV rapid testing program.

Dr. Amenta is the author or co-author of more than 150 scholarly articles, abstracts and book chapters. He has served as the residency program director and chief of the pathology service at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, as well as chair of the Performance Improvement Committee at the hospital and senior vice president, medical affairs and chief of staff. He was the founding director of The Cancer Institute of New Jersey's Immunohistochemistry Shared Resource. Dr. Amenta is a member of CINJ's Scientific Council and Internal Advisory Board, the EOHSI Board of Directors, and the Stem Cell Institute of New Jersey Board of Managers. He also serves on the boards of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, Cooper University Hospital, University Medical Center at Princeton, and Meridian Health System.

## Eric B. Chandler Health Center Gala Raises \$125,000

The Eric B. Chandler Health Center Gala, held on September 20, celebrated Chandler's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and raised \$125,000 in support of the healthcare and community outreach programs



Linz Photograph



Linz Photograph

*Above: Gala honorees, C. Roy Epps, president and CEO, the Civic League of Greater New Brunswick, recipient of the C. Roy Epps Community Leadership Award; and Mariella Herrera-Cifelli, BSW, CSW, social worker, Chandler Health Center, was the recipient of the Excellence in Service Award.*

Brunswick, and **Mariela Herrera-Cifelli, BSW, CSW**, social worker at the Chandler Health Center, were recognized at the gala.

provided by the health center.

"This was a tremendous event, celebrating not only a remarkable anniversary, but also our commitment to advancing our mission in community health and our strong partnership with the city of New Brunswick." says **Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD**, dean. "It was a tribute to everyone who works to make Chandler such an outstanding success."

In recognition of their leadership and contributions to providing quality healthcare to the New Brunswick community, **C. Roy Epps**, president and CEO, the Civic League of Greater New

## RWJMS Welcomes Class of 2012 at White Coat Ceremony

**R**WJMS formally welcomed the **Class of 2012** at the 15th annual White Coat Ceremony. Celebrated at the end of Orientation Week, the ceremony honors each new class as future physicians.

Keynote speaker **Patricia Whitley-Williams, MD**, professor and interim chair, Department of Pediatrics, and chief, division of pediatric allergy, immunology and infectious diseases, drew on the initial letters of the words "White Coat Ceremony" to single out themes in clinical medicine. "It's not the coat that's important, it's the character of the person that wears the coat that counts," she said.

**Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD**, dean, notes that



Steve Hockstein

*Members of the Class of 2012 at White Coat Ceremony.*

Dr. Whitley-Williams's comments resonated with members of the new class, who have a remarkable record of academic excellence, a strong commitment to community service, and a demonstrated interest in basic science and clinical research.



Steve Hockstein

## Profile: The Class of 2012

**T**he **Class of 2012** has an unusually strong background in science, says **Carol A. Terregino, MD '86**, associate professor of medicine, associate dean for admissions, and interim associate dean for the Camden campus. Overall, members of this class had the highest MCAT score in biological sciences in the history of the medical school. They have a remarkable record of achievement in academia, research, and public service.

The 156 members of the Class of 2012 have much to share. Educated at 66 different institutions, 22 per cent graduated from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and 18 percent graduated from Ivy League colleges. Forty-six percent attended one of the nation's top 50 national universities or liberal arts colleges, as ranked by

*Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD, dean (left), and Carol A. Terregino, MD '86, associate professor of medicine, associate dean for admissions, and interim associate dean for the Camden campus (right), with the Dean's Scholars from the Class of 2012: Muhammad Shahid, Emily Donelan, Karina Lam, Krishnapriya Kalyam, Ankit Shah, Hannah Kim, and Ogechi Dike.*

*U.S. News & World Report.* Six students were admitted as members of the MD/PhD program. More than half the class majored in the biological and physical sciences; 23 graduated with double majors — nine with double-science majors — and 14 bring a liberal arts background to the mix. They have served in global health settings in 18 different countries. Thirty-three were born abroad, representing more than 20 different nations. Half are natives of New Jersey. Fourteen percent are from groups traditionally underrepresented in medicine, and, following a trend of the past several years, more than half are women.

## Alumni Association Approves New Scholarships and Loans

The Alumni Association Board of Trustees approved \$130,500 in scholarships and loans for RWJMS students during the 2008-2009 academic year.



*Nancy Sierra, MD '89 (left) vice president/president elect, Alumni Association, congratulates Mindy Brittner '12, on her Hippocrates Scholarship.*

The scholarships included \$20,000 awards to each of the four current Hippocrates Scholars. The association also contributed an additional \$10,000 to the RWJMS Alumni Association Endowed Scholarship Fund.

"RWJMS alumni are committed to supporting our students through scholarships and loans," says **Geza Kiss, MD '95**, associate professor of anesthesiology and president, Alumni Association. "Students need money, and we're here to help."

## Master Educators' Guild Names 2008 Members

The UMDNJ-Stuart D. Cook, MD Master Educators' Guild recently named its newest members from the RWJMS faculty: **Kathleen K. Casey, MD '82**, clinical professor of medicine; **Michael J. Leibowitz, MD, PhD**, professor of molecular genetics, microbiology, and immunology and director of academic diversity initiatives, UMDNJ-Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at RWJMS (GSBS); **Stephen Moorman, MD**, associate professor of neuroscience and cell biology; and **John Pintar, PhD**, professor of neuroscience and cell biology and member, Center for Advanced Biotechnology and Medicine. Dr. Leibowitz and Dr. Pintar were nominated as GSBS faculty.

Working closely with 100 or more students each year, **Dr. Casey** models clinical excellence, scientific rigor, compassion for the patient, and dedication to the community. She directs the second-year physical diagnosis course and the third-year clerkship at Jersey Shore University Medical Center (JSUMC). She serves

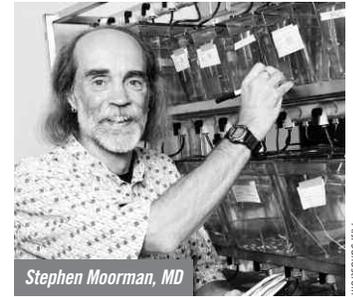


as associate program director of the JSUMC internal medicine residency program and is site program director for the joint infectious diseases fellowship on the two campuses.



**Dr. Leibowitz** is a national leader in the recruitment, retention, and training of underrepresented minority students for careers in biomedical research. He has served as thesis advisor, mentor, thesis committee member, and advisor for minority graduate students and has supervised scores of undergraduate and medical student trainees in his laboratory. Many of his protégés earned grant support from the National Institutes of Health. In 1992, he was appointed acting associate dean of the GSBS, with a full appointment in 1995. He led in the creation of the molecular biosciences graduate programs umbrella and is founder and course director of the ethical scientific conduct course.

**Dr. Moorman** advises and mentors extensively. His memorable teaching techniques and educational innovations engage learning communities both locally and nationally. The academic community benefits from his original applications of



technology, including video productions that assist medical students in gross anatomy, sophisticated, detail-specific course assessment software, and computer-assisted videoconferencing. He may be best known for "Prof-in-a-Box," a distance learning technique that he developed, which uses Internet videoconferencing to put an anatomist — from a nearby office or anywhere in the world — tableside with dissection teams.

**Dr. Pintar** teaches first-year medical students in histology and in cellular and genetic mechanisms, which he co-directs. He also co-directs and teaches the graduate course in advanced cell biology,



entailing assigning and grading a writing project for 50 to 80 graduate students each year. He directs the joint Rutgers-GSBS program in neuroscience and is responsible for recruiting and training the program's graduate students. Furthermore, he is committed to training graduate students and fellows in his own laboratory and has served on thesis committees for more than 35 additional graduate students.

## Holiday Toy Drive



Please donate a new, unwrapped toy for a child. Toys will be distributed to area children through the **Eric B. Chandler Health Center**. Look for collection bins in each building **November 17 – December 16**.

**K U D O S**

**Dr. John Scott Publishes Article on the Meaning Of Healing**

**J**ohn Scott, MD, PhD, assistant professor of family medicine, was the corresponding author of "Understanding Healing Relationships in Primary Care," an article published in the *Annals of Family Medicine* 2008;6(4)315-322. It is one of a cluster of three articles



John Scott, MD, PhD

that examine the healing process. Dr. Scott and his co-investigators explored the healing relationship in in-depth interviews, speaking separately with exemplar primary care physician-healers and patients with whom the physicians had experienced healing relationships.

A multidisciplinary team subsequently studied the interviews using an analytical process that led to the development of case studies for each clinician-patient pair. The patients and clinicians shared an understanding of healing as a transcendence of suffering. Healing meant being cured when possible, reducing suffering when cure was not possible, and finding meaning beyond the illness experience. "We found the locus of healing neither in patient nor in healer, but rather in the space created by connections of the two," says Dr. Scott.

The *New England Journal of Medicine* chose **Terri Nordin, MD**, a resident in the Department of Family Medicine, to join a select group of her peers for editorial discussions at its Horizons conference.

**Sarah E. Hitchcock-DeGregori, PhD**, professor of neuroscience and cell biology, is the new secretary of the faculty of RWJMS.

The American Association for Cancer Research selected a tissue microarray project by **David Foran, PhD**, professor of pathology and laboratory medicine and radiology, and his team, for inclusion in a campaign titled "31 Days of Discovery," designed to bring awareness of National Cancer Research Month and to highlight breakthroughs in cancer research.

The American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ASTRO) selected **Bruce G. Haffty, MD**, professor and chair, Department of Radiation Oncology, as a 2008 ASTRO fellow.

**Barbara DiCicco-Bloom, RN, PhD**, assistant professor of family medicine, is principal investigator of a project titled "Institutional Research Training Grant," that received \$698,735 in renewed funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration.

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the New Jersey Interagency Council on Osteoporosis awarded their Professional Award to **Jeffrey P. Levine, MD, MPH**, associate professor of family medicine and director, Women's Health Programs, Department of Family Medicine.

Citing his work with recombinant interferons, the New Jersey Inventors Hall of Fame awarded its Inventor of the Year award to **Sidney Pestka, MD**, professor and chair, Department of Molecular Genetics, Microbiology, and Immunology.

The Arthritis Foundation, New Jersey Chapter, honored three RWJMS faculty members who receive funding from the foundation: **Afton L. Hassett, PsyD**, assistant professor of medicine; **L. Nandini Moorthy, MD**, assistant professor of pediatrics; and **Nicola Partridge, PhD**, professor and chair, Department of Physiology and Biophysics.

The International Society of Exposure Science selected **Paul J. Lioy, PhD**, professor and vice chair, Department of Environmental and Occupational Medicine and chief, division of exposure measurement and assessment, as its Distinguished Lecturer in Exposure Science.

The International Society of Hypertension presented a Pfizer Award to **John B. Kostis, MD**, professor and chair, Department of Medicine.

**Zana Etter, EdM, MLS**, media library director, presented "Digital Audio Lectures: Securing the Library's Future" at the annual Health Libraries Group Conference 2008 in Cardiff, Wales. **James Galt, EdM**, curriculum development/instructional design specialist supported the initial project and was co-author.

**GE Healthcare Goes Live at RWJUMG**

**G**E Healthcare Centricity Business went live at the Robert Wood Johnson University Medical Group (RWJUMG) on October 1 throughout all departments. The initial phase included the scheduling and registration modalities. Using state-of-the-art information technology, it will provide revenue cycle enhancements and data management services, vastly improving the management of patient accounts. In addition to generalized flow improvements, this new technology offers the capability for contract compliance, electronic eligibility and patient keeper.

**Anthony Scardella, MD**, professor of medicine, acting senior associate dean for clinical affairs, and president, RWJUMG, offers kudos to all RWJUMG staff who worked to put 30,000 appointments into the new system.

**E D U C A T I O N**

**Radiation Oncology Residency Program Earns Full Accreditation**

**F**ollowing its first formal site review, the residency program in the Department of Radiation Oncology earned full accreditation. It also gained approval for an increase in the complement of residents, from six to eight. The first residents entered the program in 2006, and it remains the only radiation oncology residency training program in New Jersey.

"In addition, to these achievements, we were given a review cycle of five years (the maximum allowed cycle time), with the next review in 2013," says **Bruce G. Haffty, MD**, professor and chair, Department of Radiation Oncology. "The approval for increase in resident complement and the five-year review cycle attest to the strength of the program, compliance with standards, and overall success of our training program at this early stage."



Bruce G. Haffty, MD

John Emerson

## NIH Awards \$1.2m Eureka Award to Dr. Masayori Inouye

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded **Masayori Inouye, PhD**, distinguished professor of biochemistry, \$1,248,000 to develop innovative technology aimed at determining the structure of membrane proteins. Dr. Inouye's project was among 38 selected under an NIH program called Exceptional, Unconventional Research Enabling Knowledge Acceleration



Masayori Inouye, PhD

(EUREKA). In this, the program's first year, the NIH awarded a total of \$42.2 million in EUREKA grants.

To date, very few membrane protein structures have been determined, though they constitute approximately 30 percent of total proteins in species ranging from bacteria to humans and play various essential roles in living cells. It is vital to determine their three-dimensional structures, says Dr. Inouye. Yet, because they are hydrophobic and resist purification, determining their structure remains one of the most challenging areas in molecular biology.

## Research Highlights

**Joseph E. Parrillo, MD**, professor of medicine, was author of an editorial, "Septic Shock — Vasopressin, Norepinephrine, and Urgency," published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* 2008;358(9):954-956.

New Jersey Technology Fellowship Program Awards, granted by the New Jersey Commission on Science and Technology, provide up to \$85,000 for early-stage technology firms in New Jersey hiring selected post-doctoral graduates from the state's research universities. The 2008 awards included three recent graduates of RWJMS doctoral programs: **Marika Bergenstock, PhD** (3D Biotek), **Rebecca Baerga, PhD** (Niiki Pharma, Inc.), and **Liliana Perez, PhD** (Rational Affinity Devices, LLC).

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded **Ramsey Foty, PhD**, associate professor of surgery, a five-year, \$1,612,922 grant for his study, "Tumor Microenvironment, Tissue Liquidity, and Cell Interaction in Prostate Cancer."

The National Institutes of Health awarded **Shaohua Li, MD**, assistant professor of surgery, a four-year, \$1,248,000 grant for his study titled "Regulation of Embryonic Epithelial Morphogenesis."

**Grace L. Lu-Yao, PhD, MPH**, associate professor of environmental and occupational medicine, was lead author of "Survival Following Primary Androgen Deprivation Therapy among Men with Localized Prostate Cancer," a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2008;300(2):173-181.

The Department of Defense awarded a three-year, \$1.75 million Idea Award for a study, titled, "Developing Treatment, Treatment Validation and Treatment Scope in the Setting of an Autism Clinical Trial." Serving as initiating principal investigator (PI) is **William G. Johnson, MD**, professor of neurology. **Sherie L. Novotny, MD**, assistant professor of psychiatry is a partnering PI.



**Sunita G. Kramer, PhD**, assistant professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, was first author of "Repulsion by Slit And Round-about Prevents Shotgun/E-Cadherin-Mediated Cell Adhesion during *Drosophila* Heart Tube Lumen Formation," an article first published online July 28 in the *Journal of Cell Biology*.

**Vassiliki Karantza-Wadsworth, MD'01, PhD**, was awarded an \$880,000 Howard Temin Pathway to Independence in Cancer Research Award, sponsored by the NIH, for her study titled, "Autophagy as a Therapeutic Target in Breast Cancer Treatment." In addition, she received a three-year \$450,000 grant as part of the Damon Runyon Clinical Investigator Award from the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation.

## Ideas, Technology, and Esprit De Corps Unite Campuses

Modifications in several areas are enhancing the partnership between the New Brunswick and Camden campuses. Each change helps equalize the student experience on the two campuses, particularly in areas affecting the medical school's missions in education and community health.

"We respect the individual strengths of the two campuses," says **Carol A. Terregino, MD '86**, associate professor of medicine, associate dean for admissions, and interim associate dean for the Camden campus. "But we're aiming for renewed esprit de corps along with academic and administrative uniformity that will guarantee all our students the same great experience."

The student affairs deans and co-clerkship directors from both campuses meet regularly to guarantee parity in grading and grade reporting and to ensure that clinical activity is tracked identically and evaluated using the same criteria. In-person and virtual visits are enhancing communications: dean's letters and clinical evaluations are posted on a secure shared server. The "Distinction" programs — in research, medical education and service to community — are offered on both campuses, with some inter-campus teams.

In spring 2008, RWJMS hosted a single banquet for members of AOA and the Gold Humanism Honor Society and, starting in 2009, the school will have a combined graduation banquet and yearbook.



Liz Photography

## First Annual Competition of the Classes

The first annual Competition of the Classes took place August 20 on the Livingston Fields, at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Teams of students from years one and two competed against students from years three and four, spending the late afternoon and early evening engaged in informal athletic and non-athletic events. "This kind of informal, team-building event is a great way for students to interact with each other and with the faculty," says **Peter S. Amenta, MD, PhD**, dean. "I'm already looking forward to next year's competition."

**A P P O I N T M E N T S**

**Dr. Robert DiPaola Appointed to Lead The Cancer Institute Of New Jersey**



Robert S. DiPaola, MD

John Emerson

**R**obert S. DiPaola, MD, professor of medicine, was appointed director of The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ). His selection culminates a national search that began in 2007.

advance CINJ to the top echelon of comprehensive cancer centers in the country," he says. "By using a team science approach with collaborators from across the globe, we will be able to achieve this vision."

"It will be my privilege to

Dr. DiPaola joined the RWJMS faculty in 1994. An accomplished senior clinician at CINJ, he conducts internationally recognized research. His research interests have included targeting pathways of cancer resistance and metabolism as a means to restore drug sensitivity in patients with prostate, bladder, and kidney cancers.

Dr. DiPaola earned his medical degree from the University of Utah School of Medicine. He completed his medical residency at Duke University Medical Center and a fellowship in oncology and hematology at the University of Pennsylvania. He has written more than 200 articles, abstracts, and book chapters on cancer research, and has been published by journals including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

**Dr. Sonia Garcia Laumbach Accepts Position In Student Affairs**

**S**onia Garcia Laumbach, MD '99, assistant professor of family medicine, was appointed assistant dean for student affairs.

director of Student Health Services.

Dr. Garcia Laumbach, a native of Cuba, came to the United States as a child and is fluent in Spanish. As a medical student, she taught the elective in medical Spanish. She taught the course to fellow residents during her residency and fellowship, and will develop a Medical Spanish Elective. Dr. Garcia Laumbach says, "It's exciting to be back here — back in the place where I found out who I was."

Dr. Garcia Laumbach served as chief resident in the RWJMS Family Practice Residency Program. She joined the Family Medicine Residency Program at CentraState Medical Center, in Freehold, where she developed the educational curriculum for family medicine residents. She returned to RWJMS in 2007 as



Sonia Garcia Laumbach, MD '99

Steve Hochstein

**Dr. Eric Jahn Appointed Senior Associate Dean For Community Health**

**E**ric G. Jahn, MD '88, associate professor of environmental and occupational medicine, has been appointed senior associate dean for community health, pending approval from the UMDNJ Board of Trustees. Dr. Jahn previously served as acting senior associate dean since 2007. His responsibilities include overseeing community partnerships, which he sees as key to the success of the



Eric G. Jahn, MD '88

Steve Hochstein

RWJMS missions, not only in community health, but also in education and clinical care, because they help prepare culturally competent physicians.

The excellent quality of clinical care and social services at the Chandler Health Center reflects Dr. Jahn's commitment to care for the whole person, regardless of the patient's ability to pay. "Community health is a chance to take care of people and improve their lives in a way that only medicine can do. Not having resources doesn't mean you shouldn't get excellent care, follow-up care, or continuity of care."

Dr. Jahn joined the faculty in 1992 and began as medical director of the Chandler Health Center in 1994. A 1988 graduate of RWJMS, Dr. Jahn earned his undergraduate degree from Princeton University and completed premedical studies at Columbia University. He did his residency and fellowship training in general internal medicine at the University of California, Irvine Medical Center.

**Dr. Mitchell-Williams Accepts Student Affairs Post on Camden Campus**

**J**ocelyn Mitchell-Williams, PhD, MD '97, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, was appointed assistant dean for multicultural affairs and community affairs, Camden campus. Dr. Mitchell-Williams, who earned her medical degree on the Camden campus in 1997, says, "I have always

loved the atmosphere here."

She adds, "I hope to help the students find creative ways to develop cultural competency and improve their communication and relationships with their patients."

After earning a doctorate in biomedical engineering from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Dr. Mitchell-

Williams taught in the RWJMS Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology and in the Biomedical Careers Programs. During her subsequent pursuit of an MD degree, she decided to specialize in OB/GYN, completed her residency at **Cooper**



Jocelyn Mitchell-Williams, PhD, MD '97

Steve Hochstein

**University Hospital** and joined the faculty practice. Her new position as assistant dean allows her to tie these threads together. "I feel very prepared to help students in almost every aspect of their education, research and training."