

Einstein/Montefiore Orthopaedic Alumni Newsletter

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3

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1

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MONTEFIORE



The View From The President's Perch

It was a great day! Looking back to the beginning, taking stock of the present, and anticipating the future—through a window hazy, but filled with promise. The 50th Anniversary meeting was very well attended, representing a whole spectrum of the graduating classes from the late 1960's to the present. The formal presentations included the Senior Resident projects, Distinguished Alumni guest speakers (**Richard Laskin** and **Jo Hannafin**), a historical and pictorial retrospective of the first 50 years (**David Hirsh**, **Edward Habermann**) and selected recollections from “The Days of the Giants” (**Leonard P. Seimon**). The day was divided into three sessions—morning lectures, a luncheon, and the graduating residents’ dinner—providing a forum for the formal scheduled activities and time for catch-up on a personal level, revisiting fond memories and old “war stories” with friends and colleagues a long time not seen. The dinner for the graduating residents was held at the elegant Westchester Country Club. The high points of the evening included a very moving tribute to **Arthur J. Helfet**, the first Professor and Chairman of our department, eloquently delivered by his son **David Helfet**. This was followed by the formal presentation and admission of the Class of '05 to the Alumni Association. This year's recipient of the “Alumnus of the Year” award went to **Martin Levy** for his outstanding contributions and selfless dedication to the enhancement of resident training and education. The “Resident Review”, a fantasy laced with good natured roastings and toastings concluded the evening with a smile. It was an inspiring day, with pleasant reminiscences of the past, pride in what had been achieved, and confidence in a bright future. A special thanks is owed to Muriel Chaleff and Bernie Franklin for their contribution of a treasure-trove of slides and pictures of the “early years”, and to Tanya Riedl whose tireless efforts and capable organizing was the magic that brought the parts together seamlessly and so very successfully. A professionally recorded DVD of the entire event (including morning, afternoon and evening activities) as well as a fleece jacket monogrammed with the alumni logo designed for this

occasion, are available upon request. The cost of the DVD is \$30.00, and the fleece jacket is \$40.00, to cover the cost of production and mailing. For those who were unable to attend, we missed you! Looking forward to meeting again at the annual Academy meetings in Chicago.

In friendship yours,

David M. Hirsh, M.D.

The Chairman's Corner

As we finish another round of student interviews and prepare to select another group of first year residents I realize that this is now the fifth time that I have done this. I am again simply astonished at the level of applicants that we have attracted. The current group of chief residents is the first class we selected and they have proven themselves to be extraordinarily talented. They are off in a few months to begin fellowships at some of the best programs in the country. Marty Levy has done a great job of preparing them to become our colleagues.

Our lab continues to make progress in the area of the immune response to wear debris generated by joint replacements and I look forward to our first publications in the next few months. Dr John Hardin continues as our director and with the help and financial support of our staff and alumni I think we will be able to grow considerably in the next year. Our fledgling effort now has a firm grasp and will prosper with your help.

We continue to grow as a department and will number nineteen full time faculty members this August. **Dr. David Geller** will be joining us to develop our Sarcoma service. David is a graduate of our program will complete his orthopaedic oncology fellowship at Harvard this year. **Dr. Steve Kim** joined us as another joint replacement surgeon this past summer after his fellowship at the Hospital for Special Surgery and has proven to be a great addition to our staff. We are currently completing negotiations to add a second spine surgeon and have been able to choose from a number of excellent applicants. All in all we continue to grow and prosper. The best additions by far this year however have been **Dr. Mel Adler** and **David Gonzalez** who are now full time faculty members.

Mel so far seems to be enjoying himself and I think will be happy if we can continue to insure that he can be available for optimum tee times.

I hope that this will reach most of you in time to encourage all of you who will be in Chicago in March to stop by and see us Thursday evening for the alumni meeting. It will be a great opportunity to say hello to old friends.

Neil J. Cobelli, M.D.

Alumnus' Corner

There's No Place Like Home

The Bronx has a way of calling you back. It is my home, always was, always will be. I remember childhood vividly. I played stickball in the streets, using a car as first base, the top of a garbage can second base, a fire hydrant third base and home plate was a crushed can of soda. The catholic schools in the Bronx were tough inside and out. I was frequently reprimanded in the form of a ruler to the hand or a paddle to the behind. Outside wasn't much safer—my friends got held up and had their denim jackets stolen by local gangs. But I also remember family—lots of them—in the summer, visiting different apartments and having more cousins than I could count. And food, all the time. Every relative meant a different meal had to be consumed. The days seemed long and exciting.

The Bronx provided for my family. My dad owned several bodegas that supplied the neighborhood with all the necessary comforts including food, cigarettes and alcohol. He did well financially and eventually felt it was necessary to move us out of the Bronx. We moved to a nice neighborhood in New Jersey but part of me still missed the Bronx and I knew I would be back.

After college in Syracuse, I applied to medical school throughout the country. But something stirred inside of me when I interviewed at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx. Those childhood memories came back strong and seeing my family and neighborhood made my choice easy.

I still visited my dad's bodega as a student to load up on necessities during med school, and I truly found my stride back in the Bronx. So much so, that it was a no-brainer staying on for orthopaedic residency.

Once again I left the Bronx thinking there was a better future elsewhere. But after a fellowship in Virginia and private practice in Florida I realized the grass is not greener for me outside of New York. The Bronx is my culture; it is my reality. Taking care of patients here comes naturally as if I'm taking care of a family member. At the same time I am giving back to a community that nourished me during my youth. Now I've returned for

good, joining the full-time faculty at Einstein, and there really is no place like home.

David Gonzalez, MD *is an alumnus of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, as well as the Einstein/Montefiore Orthopaedic Surgery Residency Program. He received his fellowship training with Dr. Robert Nirschl, and is currently an Assistant Professor in our department.*

In the Trenches

After another successful beating of the attendings in touch football during our Fall Classic, the residents challenged the attendings once again to a Superbowl Sunday Spectacular, sponsored (yet again) by the generous Dr. Marty Levy. Brooding questions stirred as to whether Dr. David Gonzalez would learn how to throw like a man or whether Dr. Mel Adler would pull another groin muscle. We give him credit, though. Watching Dr. Adler chase down an infield flyball during our First Annual Doctors vs. O.R. Staff Softball game was like watching a maimed gazelle chase a carrot on a stick. It was clear that the residents would run off with another crushing defeat of the elderly competition. So frightened were they that less than a handful showed up. All kidding aside, our semi-annual football games and our annual softball game have added another level of camaraderie to our group at Montefiore, making resident life much more enjoyable.

In other resident news, it is nearly time for another change as we will shortly say goodbye to our outgoing chief residents, our colleagues for five years and our leaders to this point. We wish them well on their fellowship plans, and hope to hear good stories from the road.

On a similar front, we've recently completed a very successful match for the six interns who will join our program come this July. The Class of 2011 will include **Jonathan Courtney** (Sackler School of Medicine), **Yaser El-Gazzar** (Drexel University), **Matthew Green** (Albert Einstein College of Medicine), **Mickey Plymale** (Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine, Marshall University), **Chris Sambaziotis** (Tufts University), and **Evan Schwechter** (UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School). We are excited to welcome them in just a few months!

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