TWO MANY POSTDOCS? TOO LITTLE FUNDING.

Why BU’s postdocs are still getting ahead.
DEAR FRIENDS,

The concerns facing research at schools of medicine in the US are complex, from the pressure on clinician faculty to see more patients in less time—thus crowding out time for research and teaching—to the growing numbers of PhDs in laboratories struggling to compete for declining federal research support for biomedical science.

This issue of Boston University Medicine examines the careers of graduate students and postdocs and showcases how a novel BU program is helping to reengineer the careers of biomedical PhDs by exploring job opportunities outside of academia such as in science policy and journalism, the pharmaceutical industry, or even investing in new drugs and devices on Wall Street.

The central focus of this issue, though, is you, our readers: alumni, friends, foundations, corporations, faculty, and staff who have helped us advance the School of Medicine this past year through your generous financial support.

On the following pages, you will read about three faculty members who have received named professorships and another, Assistant Professor of Pharmacology and Medicine Dr. Neil Ganem, who was named a prestigious Searle Scholar—the first BU researcher to earn this recognition. You will also read about other generous foundation support that enriches our scientific enterprise.

We thank you for supporting our ultimate goal of making BUSM the best place to learn, teach, and discover. All of your contributions highlighted in the donor report included in this issue illustrate your commitment to our future.

On behalf of our students, faculty, and administration, thank you for your generosity.

Best regards,

Karen Antman, MD
Provost, Medical Campus
Dean, School of Medicine
Professor of Medicine

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Boston University’s policies provide for equal opportunity and affirmative action in employment and admission to all programs of the University.
Members of the Class of 2019 Receive Their White Coats

On August 3, 180 first-year medical students received their white coats, symbolic of their first steps on the road to becoming physicians.

Academically you are among the most accomplished class we have ever had, and you are also a very diverse group,” said Witzburg. “Thirty-six of the 50 states in America are represented in your class and your places of birth include 17 countries. Eighty-two percent of you are bilingual and, as a group, you speak a total of 27 different languages.”

Karen Antman, MD, BUSM dean and provost of the Boston University Medical Campus, candidly shared her insight about the inevitable challenges and situations that likely could arise for the new students, such as passing out during their first anatomy class or retaking their licensing exams. “That doesn’t mean you won’t be good physicians,” she said.

“You’re about to embark on a great adventure with a steep learning curve.” Ravin Davidoff, MB, BCh, BUSM professor of medicine and senior vice president for medical affairs and chief medical officer at Boston Medical Center, delivered the keynote address.

After explaining the history and significance of the white coat to the new students, he emphasized that practicing medicine is a collaboration as well as a privilege. “Medicine is a team sport. There is far too much for any of us to know to ever feel complacent. Each of you, as you move along the lifelong journey of learning and caring for patients, will face the complex dilemma of clinical decision-making,” said Davidoff. “It is truly a glorious journey but it is challenging and daunting. From my perspective, the key to succeeding in this space is to always appreciate the privilege you have been granted to treat patients.”

Douglas Hughes, MD, associate dean for academic affairs, read out student names—promising that his pronunciation of them would improve before graduation in four years—as assistant and associate deans helped the students put on their white coats.

After the coating, students recited the Hippocratic Oath for the first time, signifying the beginning of their journey into the profession of medicine. They will recite it again at their May 2019 Commencement, signifying their entrance into the practice of medicine.
**Dean Antman Visits BUSM’s California Community**

Dean Karen Antman, MD, traveled to northern and southern California over the summer to meet with alumni, parents, and students prior to the start of the school year. Terry Miller (MED’75) and Meredith Halik-Miller (MED’75) and Stacy Weiss, MD, and Pedram Salimpour (MED’00) graciously hosted luncheon receptions at their homes, giving attendees a wonderful opportunity to connect with each other and meet current and incoming medical students.

**Suzanne Maselli Named Assistant Dean of Development**

Suzanne Maselli has been appointed BUSM assistant dean of development. A development professional with 24 years of experience in the field, Maselli served as senior advancement officer, principal gifts, for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, where she was responsible for cultivating transformational gifts for the institute, focusing on its schools of science and engineering as well as interdisciplinary research in the health care arena. Previously, she was director of distinguished events and major gifts at the American Cancer Society for the Capital Region and Hudson Valley of New York. She is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

Maselli received a Bachelor of Arts in English from Binghamton University in New York, and a Master of Science in TV/Radio Production from Brooklyn College in Brooklyn, New York. She is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

“Suzanne’s experience in higher education, especially in the areas of science and interdisciplinary research, as well as her passion and high energy will be an asset to BUSM as we continue to broaden philanthropic support of our research programs, student scholarships, and enhancing the quality of academic life for our students, faculty and staff,” said Karen Antman, MD, BUSM dean and BU Medical Campus provost.

Maselli said, “I am so pleased to be joining Boston University’s School of Medicine, and look forward to working with Dean Antman and the development team to build philanthropic support for the top-tier medical education and lifesaving research work BUSM provides.”

**Klings Named Director of Sickle Cell Disease Center**

Elizabeth Klings, MD, BUMS associate professor in the Department of Medicine and attending physician in Boston Medical Center’s Intensive Care Unit and on the Pulmonary Consultation Service, has been named director of the Center of Excellence in Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) at BUSM and BMC. The center supports the highest quality patient care and promotes interactive basic and clinical research and patient and professional educational activities. It also coordinates teaching for fellows, house staff, and medical students: Klings is medical director of the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program and has a clinic in the Pulmonary Hypertension Center at BMC, where she is involved in the diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment of patients with pulmonary hypertension and has a special interest in the management of patients with chronic dyspnea.

Klings’ research focus is the pathogenesis of pulmonary vascular complications of SCD. She is a National Institutes of Health-funded principal investigator in the Pulmonary Center, collaborating with the Boston Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center, Sickle Cell Genetics Research Group, and the Cardiovascular Proteomics Center at Boston University. She has phenotypically screened close to 200 sickle cell patients at BMC for the presence of pulmonary hypertension and has begun to study the role that genetic polymorphisms play in the pathogenesis of this disease process.

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Suzanne Maselli
Dick A.J. Brown, MD, on May 19, 2015, at the age of 82. For decades, Dr. Brown was a beloved professor and colleague in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology. As the department’s director of medical student education from 1985 to 2005, he taught second-year students the pathophysiology of the female reproductive system. During his illustrious career, he educated more than 3,000 students in the reproduction issues of medicine and mentored a significant proportion of every graduating class. He also received numerous teaching awards, among them the 1996 McAll Award, the University’s highest teaching honor.

In recognition of his many outstanding years of service to BUSM, in 2006 the School established the Dick A.J. Brown Endowment Fund for Medical Education to support the teaching and professional development of OB/GYN faculty. Dr. Brown received both his undergraduate and medical degrees from Northwestern University and completed two years of general surgery training at Chicago’s Wesley Memorial Hospital and Malden Hospital in Massachusetts. He continued his training in obstetrics and gynecology at the Boston Lying-In Hospital, now known as Brigham and Women’s Hospital. Following eight years as an assistant in OB/GYN, he became an instructor at Harvard Medical School and remained associated with the school from 1970 to 1995, rising to the position of clinical professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Biology. Throughout his career, he published numerous articles related to the declining maternal mortality in Massachusetts, while earning a reputation as a respected clinician, educator, and role model for students and faculty alike. He will be greatly missed.

Dr. Brown leaves his wife of nearly 60 years, Roma Jean, two daughters, one son, 11 grandchil- dren, one great-granddaughter, and a brother. To make a donation in memory of Dr. Brown, please contact the BUSM Development Office at 617-638-4570 or busmedw@bu.edu.

Three Faculty Members Receive Named Professorships

Mark B. Moss, PhD, has been named the Waterhouse Professor of Anatomy and Chair of the Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology at BUSM. The Waterhouse Professorship began in 1857 when the widow of Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, a professor in the department of medicine at Harvard University, generously started an endow- ment fund for the chair of anatomy of the New England Female Medical College with a $1,000 gift. In 1864, by a bequest in her will, the endowment was raised to $10,000. Moss was the first professional endowment fund to be established by a woman for the medical education of women. Appointed in 1881, Caroline Hastings, PhD, was the first Waterhouse professor.

Lindsay A. Farrer, PhD, has been named the BU Distinguished Professor of Genetics. Dr. Farrer also is professor and chief of the Biomedical Genetics Section in the department of Medicine and professor of neurology and ophthalmology at BUSM, as well as professor of epidemiology and biostatistics at BU School of Public Health. Since 1998 he has been director of BU’s Molecular Genetics Core Facility.

Richard Myers, PhD, has been named the Milunsky Chair in Human Genetics, estab- lished by Dr. Aubrey Milunsky, the former director of the Center for Human Genetics at BUSM. Dr. Myers has been a profes- sor of neurology since 1994 and also holds appointments as professor of biostatistics in the College of Engineering; professor of biomedical genetics in the department of Medicine at BUSM; and professor of bio- statistics and epidemiology in the School of Public Health.

Faculty Honors & Awards

BILL Adams, MD, BUSM professor of medicine and a pediatrician at Boston Medical Center (BMC), has been named a Center for Disease Control Childhood Immunization Champion for his outstanding efforts to promote childhood immunization in Massachusetts. Adams was recognized for his dedication to improving the way immunization data is used within Electronic Medical Records and the development of a high-quality, statewide immunization registry.

Michael Charness, MD, professor of neurology and associate provost of veterans affairs at BUSM and chief of staff of the VA Boston Health Care System, has been selected by the Rosset Committee of the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Study Group as the 2015 recipient of the Henry Rosset Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders field.

Carine Lenders, MD, MS, S.D., associate professor of pediatrics; medical director, BMC Nutrition and Fitness for Life (pediatric obesity) program; director, BMC Pediatric Nutrition Support Services and project director, the Abbott Fund Institute of Nutrition Sciences (AFINS) in Hanoi, Vietnam, has been awarded the commemorative medal “For the People’s Health” from Vietnam’s Ministry of Health, AFINS in Hanoi, Vietnam, has been awarded the commemorative medal “For the People’s Health” from Vietnam’s Ministry of Health, and has been named the 2015 recipient of the AFINS Henry Rosett Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Study Group as the 2015 recipient of the Henry Rosset Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders field.

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Boston University School of Medicine
Young Investigators Gather for Inaugural Genetic Epidemiology and Functional Genomics Workshop

Thirty-five young investigators gathered on the BU Medical Campus for the inaugural Genetic Epidemiology and Functional Genomics Workshop hosted by the Framingham Heart Study (FHS), the Center for Translational Epidemiology and Comparative Effectiveness Research, and Section of Preventive Medicine and Epidemiology at BU School of Medicine (BSUM). Attendees from nine states and five countries heard, among other speakers, David Seldin, Wesley and Charlotte Skinner Professor of Research in Amyloidosis, professor of medicine and microbiology, and chief of the Section of Hematology-oncology at Boston Medical Center (BMC) and BSUM, died of prostate cancer June 27 at age 58. A beloved, caring teacher and clinician, he was a world-renowned expert on amyloidosis, a rare disease caused by abnormal protein buildup in blood and other tissues that is linked to many progressive illnesses, including cancer and Alzheimer’s disease, and can lead to fatal organ failure. Seldin became director of the BU Amyloidosis Center in 2007, and chief of hematology-oncology the following year. “Boston University School of Medicine has lost a distinguished professor, a brilliant investigator, an exceptional teacher, and a friend,” said Karen Antman, BSUM dean and provost of the Medical Campus. “David had a marvelous dry wit and was a master of irony, which he delivered with just a hint of a smile as he waited for others to get the joke. He loved good, freewheeling critical science discussions, and coached, supported, and mentored students and junior faculty. David’s patients loved how he provided expertise based on his extensive experience with amyloidosis, a disease that other physicians saw perhaps once in their careers. He treated patients with warmth and caring, while his research results provided hope. We will all miss him.” A 1978 graduate of Harvard College, Seldin graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1986 with a medical degree as well as a PhD in immunology. He arrived at BSUM in 1994 as an assistant professor of medicine and went on to teach in a range of departments. His work as a researcher and clinician earned him many fellowships and grants and has been supported by the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, the Avon Foundation, the Department of Defense, and the NIH. Seldin’s colleagues remember him as a passionate Renaissance man who loved to spend time outdoors hiking, skiing, and at the beach with his family. He also was an avid scuba diver for many years, a wine connoisseur with his own wine cellar, and an LP record collector and audiophile who built his own stereo system. But he will be remembered best as a generous mentor known for his kindness to staff, patients, and colleagues. “David was a compassionate physician, an accomplished researcher and mentor, and a wonderful person,” said Kate Walsh, BMC president and CEO. “His leadership and advocacy in the area of amyloidosis research and treatment are known across the country and the world, and he will be greatly missed by all his colleagues and patients at BMC.”

Martha Skinner, Amyloidosis Center interim director, said that Seldin was not only a brilliant scientist and clinician, but took pleasure in working with those just beginning their careers in medicine. “His special love was students and young scientists; he had an amazing ability to critique their work respectfully and encourage them to strive for the best,” she said. Seldin and his colleagues developed a publicly available amyloidogenic protein database as well as an amyloidosis model used to test novel therapies. He devoted a large portion of his time to training and mentoring a generation of physicians and postdoctoral and predoctoral fellows in the context of clinical, laboratory, and translational research. “David will be remembered by our community as a beacon of hope for his patients, inspiration for his trainees, and with admiration by his colleagues,” said David Coleman, Wade Professor and chair of the Department of Medicine and chief of the BMC Division of Medicine. Among his many honors, Seldin was appointed to the Wesley and Charlotte Skinner Professorship for Research in Amyloidosis in 2014. He had been a member of an NIH study section and grant review panels for Canada, Greece, the United Kingdom, and Singapore. He was the first director of the graduate program in molecular medicine in the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences, and established graduate course in cancer biology. He appeared on a variety of “Best Doctors” lists. He served on the scientific advisory board of the Amyloidosis Foundation and on the board of the International Society of Amyloidosis and was an associate editor of Amyloid, Journal of Protein Folding Diseases. Amyloidosis Center colleague Vaishali Sanchorawala, MD, professor of medicine, summed up Seldin’s legacy with these words: “David Seldin—where brilliance met kindness.” Seldin is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Hohmann, an infectious diseases specialist at Massachusetts General Hospital; three daughters, Stephanie, 26, Maggie, 23, and Diana; 21, his sister, Judy; and his parents, Florence and Ira Seldin. To make a gift in memory of David Seldin, call the School of Medicine Development Office at 617-638-4570 or email busmeddev@bu.edu. Donations will support an endowed professorship in Seldin’s name in the BSUM Department of Medicine.—Stony courtesy of BU Today

Young investigators from nine states and five countries gathered on the Medical Campus for the inaugural Genetic Epidemiology and Functional Genomics Workshop.

“We are excited that we were able to highlight cutting-edge talks on genomic research, career development and grant writing tips, and training to access and analyze Framingham Heart Study data,” said Ramachandran.

David Seldin, Wesley and Charlotte Skinner Professor of Research in Amyloidosis, professor of medicine and microbiology, and chief of the section of hematology-oncology at Boston Medical Center (BMC) and BSUM, died of prostate cancer June 27 at age 58. A beloved, caring teacher and clinician, he was a world-renowned expert on amyloidosis, a rare disease caused by abnormal protein buildup in blood and other tissues that is linked to many progressive illnesses, including cancer and Alzheimer’s disease, and can lead to fatal organ failure. Seldin became director of the BU Amyloidosis Center in 2007, and chief of hematology-oncology the following year. “Boston University School of Medicine has lost a distinguished professor, a brilliant investigator, an exceptional teacher, and a friend,” said Karen Antman, BSUM dean and provost of the Medical Campus. “David had a marvelous dry wit and was a master of irony, which he delivered with just a hint of a smile as he waited for others to get the joke. He loved good, freewheeling critical science discussions, and coached, supported, and mentored students and junior faculty. David’s patients loved how he provided expertise based on his extensive experience with amyloidosis, a disease that other physicians saw perhaps once in their careers. He treated patients with warmth and caring, while his research results provided hope. We will all miss him.” A 1978 graduate of Harvard College, Seldin graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1986 with a medical degree as well as a PhD in immunology. He arrived at BSUM in 1994 as an assistant professor of medicine and went on to teach in a range of departments. His work as a researcher and clinician earned him many fellowships and grants and has been supported by the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, the Avon Foundation, the Department of Defense, and the NIH. Seldin’s colleagues remember him as a passionate Renaissance man who loved to spend time outdoors hiking, skiing, and at the beach with his family. He also was an avid scuba diver for many years, a wine connoisseur with his own wine cellar, and an LP record collector and audiophile who built his own stereo system. But he will be remembered best as a generous mentor known for his kindness to staff, patients, and colleagues. “David was a compassionate physician, an accomplished researcher and mentor, and a wonderful person,” said Kate Walsh, BMC president and CEO. “His leadership and advocacy in the area of amyloidosis research and treatment are known across the country and the world, and he will be greatly missed by all his colleagues and patients at BMC.”

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Chelsea Epler, the high-achieving daughter of a Midwestern farmer and a special education teacher, spent the summer between junior and senior years of college falling in love. Working in a microbiology lab at the University of Iowa—an opportunity she won through the National Science Foundation (NSF)—she became besotted by science. She loved staying late to purify proteins and culture bacteria to grow overnight. She loved coming back to the lab at 7:30 a.m., when she would inhale the earthy aroma of bacteria and know the experiment was working. “I was totally sold on science,” she says.

Epler made up her mind to pursue a career as an academic biomedical research scientist. “In my idealistic, 21-year-old view of things,” she recalls, “I thought if I could put a mark on science, I could help millions of people.”

Fast forward nine years and one PhD in microbiology later, to 2014. Epler was on her second postdoc, in biophysics, at the School of Medicine, spending 13- and 14-hour days in the lab, earning $42,000 a year, and in despair over her future. She was doing all the right things. She had published two journal articles with her mentor, Esther Bullitt, a BUSM associate professor of physiology and biophysics, who had told her she had the chops to become an outstanding independent researcher.

But with Congress constricting federal research funding, Epler realized that she had spent over a decade preparing for an academic job she was unlikely to get anytime soon, if ever. The scarcity of federal resources had left too many bright, highly trained postdocs competing for too few faculty positions.

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To today too many people are chasing too little money to support increasingly expensive research,” former National Cancer Institute director and Nobel Laureate Harold Varmus and three other prominent scientists wrote in a Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences article last April. The result is “a hypercompetitive atmosphere,” the scientists warned, in which “promising careers are threatened.”

Between 1979 and 2009, the number of life sciences PhD students ballooned from 30,000 to more than 56,000, according to the NIH. No one has accurate data on postdoctoral trainees—there has been a large influx of young scientists from Europe and Asia—but their ranks soared as well, and the NIH estimates their number at between 37,000 and 68,000. Although unemployment among people holding biomedical PhDs is extremely low, most of those postdocs will find jobs not in academia, but in industry, law, science policy, government, education, and other fields. The NIH, among others, is concerned that the long training time and the declining
numbers of PhD graduates who are getting independent academic research positions will make biomedical research a less appealing career and that the United States could lose a generation of the best and brightest scientists. There is a striking disconnect, meanwhile, between the evolving biomedical workforce and graduate training, which continues to focus almost exclusively on preparing people for traditional academic research positions, according to a 2012 NIH Biomedical Workforce Working Group report.

Hence, Epler’s life crisis, at age 30. “We all have these rose-colored glasses on when we start,” she says. “We know only 15 or 10 percent of our class will end up getting jobs in academia, but we think we’re going to be in that 10 percent.”

**CHelsea Epler**

“In my idealistic, 21-year-old view of things, I thought if I could put a mark on science, I could help millions of people.”

**Esther Bullitt**

“She would have been a great PI, but I want her to be happy, too . . . Learning how to think scientifically is perfect for lots of jobs. People go into banking, patent law, all sorts of things that need high-level skills. I totally respect other choices.”

NIH and universities the machine, trainees the engine

The NIH and NSF define a postdoctoral trainee as someone with a doctoral degree who “is engaged in a temporary and defined period of mentored advanced training to enhance the professional skills and research independence needed to pursue his or her chosen career path.” That is the ideal, but it’s not how the training always works in practice. The vast majority of postdocs in the United States are supported on a combination of NIH training grants, fellowships, and research project grants, most notably the NIH ROI, the $1.25 million grant that’s the workhorse of biomedical research. Their training is supervised by principal investigators, or PIs, who act as mentors.

PIs rely heavily on trainees to carry out most of their lab’s hands-on work, running experiments and collecting the data needed to publish studies and write the next grant application.

If the NIH and universities like BU are the machine of research, says Linda K. Hyman, associate provost for BUMS’s Division of Graduate Medical Sciences, then trainees are the engine. “They’re the ones driving or performing the work.” Hyman says. “They’re often underpaid. They’re in these positions for a long time. Their mentors are the ones who decide when they’re ready to move on, and they provide the letters of recommendation they need to succeed.”

The postdoctoral training period has been traditionally seen as a three- to five-year apprenticeship, the final step to becoming an independent researcher. Things work differently in some departments, such as BUMS’s pharmacology and experimental therapeutics department, which has had a long partnership with the pharmaceutical industry. Many of its graduates and postdocs pursue successful careers in that industry, as well as in academia and government, according to department chair David H. Farb, a BUMS professor of pharmacology and experimental therapeutics.

Farb says he sees postdocs in other biomedical research fields get stuck in the pipeline; they’re not moving up in academia or on to something else. “You finally get your PhD and now you go into a postdoc,” he says. “Then let’s say it’s another five years, and you’re just at the beginning of being able to do your own work. After years of virtual poverty, you’re 31 years old, you haven’t had a real job, and there are few academic jobs to go around, except for those working in the ‘hot fields’ of research at the moment. You’ve committed your life to science—what do you do?”

Luis Olmos earned a PhD in cellular biology in his native Spain and came to the United States in 2007 to do his first postdoc, at Children’s Hospital in Washington, DC. He is now in the fourth year of his second postdoc, in Tarik Haydar’s neural development and intellectual disorders lab at BUMS. Haydar, a BUMS associate professor of anatomy and neurobiology, recruited him and has given him invaluable opportunities to grow as a scientist: “He’s very supportive.”

Haydar has been trying to arrange a faculty position at BUMS for Olmos and for Bill Tyler, the second postdoc in his lab, but amid all the uncertainty over money Olmos still worries. He is 39 and he and his wife, who is a lab manager at BU, have three kids under age 7.

Haydar pays both his postdocs well above the NIH recommended guidelines, he says, which start at $42,840 a year and go up to $56,376 after seven years. “They (Olmos and Tyler) are both superior postdocs. These are two scientists who in the right universe should be running their own labs and starting on their own independent careers, but the playing field is very difficult for everybody.”

**Luis Olmos**

Olmos says his mentor, Tarik Haydar, a BUMS associate professor, has given him invaluable opportunities to grow as a scientist: “He’s very supportive.”

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Haydar says he would commit to supporting Olmos and Tyler as independent researchers for a brief period until they win funding on their own. “This can hopefully get them through the door,” he says. “My lab’s research would be greatly augmented by having them as independent neighbors and colleagues. I am willing to take on my part of that risk and my department has always been willing to provide support for deserving members of the junior ranks.”

Haydar did his own postdoc at Yale in the late 1990s. “There’s this career progression,” he says. “You get a PhD, you do a postdoc,
LINDA HYMAN
“We just want people to know what they’re getting into and to open their eyes about options. The problem with the old system is that you weren’t given the opportunity to think about anything outside of academia.”

JOSEPH MIZERED
“It’s a joy to do what we do… I think our students and postdocs don’t hear the plus sides from us enough. The obstacles and anxieties are obvious, and deservedly get emphasis from their mentors. But we should also be telling them more often about the wonderful sides of academic research… It’s a really hard and difficult path and you might not make it, but you are guaranteed not to make it if you don’t try.”

you look for an academic job, you become an assistant professor. You scrabble around for funding, you get a grant, you have success for one day. Then you start scrabbling around again—what’s your second grant going to be? That’s the traditional track. That track is nonfunctional now.

The broken pipeline
After years of reports documenting “the broken pipeline” in biomedical research, and with postdocs themselves speaking up more, there are signs that things are beginning to change.

Last fall Boston postdocs organized a Future of Research symposium at BUMS to call attention to the problem and propose reforms. And now, with the NIH recommending that graduate students and postdocs be better prepared for “a broad-based and evolving research and research-related economy”—in other words, for jobs outside of academia—a growing number of universities, including BU, are stepping up their efforts to recognize and help postdocs.

BUMS opened the Office of Professional Development and Postdoctoral Affairs four years ago, under Hyman. The office expanded to the Charles River Campus in February with the appointment of Sarah Chebot Hokanson (CAS’05), who has a PhD in biochemistry and biophysics and did a postdoc fellowship in chemistry and chemical biology at Cornell, as program director. The office offers all graduate students and postdocs professional guidance that includes nonresearch-related training, such as workshops led by Lauren Celano (Questrom’10), who runs the Boston area life sciences search and career development firm Propel and helps trainees connect with opportunities outside of academia.

There are 525 postdocs across the University and about two thirds of them are in biomedical research on the Medical Campus.

Last fall, BUMS won a five-year, $1.25 million NIH Broadening the Participation Pipeline grant—the first given to universities across the country. The grant is enabling BUMS to implement a novel program that will reengineer the biomedical training pipeline by preparing postdocs and graduate students for science careers both in and outside of traditional academic research. Hyman is a principal investigator on the BEST team, along with Director of Graduate Studies Barbara M. Schreiber. They are working closely with industry partners to identify available biomedical research and research-related jobs and to make sure trainees are prepared for those jobs. Some skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving, working in a team, and the ability to clearly communicate science, are part of learning to be a bench scientist and should carry over into jobs outside of academia, Hyman says. “What you learn in graduate school and as a postdoc provides you with transferable skills for a variety of careers, including research-intensive and research-related ones,” she says. “That doesn’t mean that everyone is going to get their first choice jobs—you still have to be competent and competitive and trained—but the jobs are there.”

The grant includes a position for program manager. With Bullitt’s support, Chelsea Epler applied for, and got, the job. After considerable soul searching, she had decided that even if she could eventually land a faculty job somewhere, the current realities of academic medicine, and bioinformatics. She also says that she is well trained with during my postdoc at Columbia—from 1991 to 1997—she says. “We have peers who have left the academic track. Of the people that I know, several no longer do bench science.” They are working in venture capital, business development, intellectual property law, consulting, journalism, and for executive search firms, he says.

For all the reports of biomedical research graduate students and postdocs finding happiness and fulfillment outside of academia, there are concerns that the current academic research atmosphere may discourage the best scientists in the rising generation of researchers.

“It’s a joy to do what we do,” says Joseph Mizgered, a BUMS professor of medicine, microbiology, and biochemistry and director of the Pulmonary Center. “I love trying to understand the biology. It’s always changing, it’s always new, it’s always exciting. We’re really privileged. Not surprisingly, some BUMS faculty are skeptical about trainees who are being paid out of federal research grants, taking extended time away from the lab for nonresearch-related workshops and other activities.

“Young people are thinking about anything outside of academia.”

Sarah Mazzilli, who has a PhD in cancer pharmacology and experimental therapeutics, says she loves the research she is engaged in as a postdoc in the pulmonary research laboratory of Avram Spira (ENG’02), a RUSM professor of medicine, pathology and laboratory medicine, and bioinformatics. She also says that she is well aware of how hard the academic path is and that she is determined to try. “I have a lot of freedom here, a lot of support,” Mazzilli says. “Will I have this perfect tenure position at some high-ranking university? I don’t know that. I have papers to publish, I have to prove myself. I have so many years to get an ROI and if you don’t do that—then what? It’s terrifying. I try to stay as optimistic as I can. I’m going to keep working as hard as I can.”

“I do think the culture is changing,” Henderson adds. “Most of us have peers who have left the academic track. Of the people that I trained with during my postdoc at Columbia—from 1991 to 1997—several no longer do bench science.” They are working in venture capital, business development, intellectual property law, consulting, journalism, and for executive search firms, he says.
Neil J. Ganem, an assistant professor of pharmacology and medicine at the Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM), has won the prestigious Searle Scholar award for his research on genomic instability in cancer cells. His innovative work increases the understanding of cancer cell division, potentially leading to new avenues of treatment.

Ganem is the first person from BU to receive the Searle award and one of only 15 winners nationwide in 2015. The award is given to assistant professors judged to be among the country’s most promising young researchers in the chemical and biological sciences. Ganem and the other winners will each receive $300,000 in flexible funding over three years.

“The Searle award validates our view that Dr. Ganem’s research will continue to make great contributions to the area of cancer biology and, most importantly, to understanding the basic mechanisms of the disease,” says David H. Farb, who is chair of BUSM’s department of pharmacology and experimental therapeutics and who recruited Ganem to the School of Medicine in 2013. “Every so often there’s a person who has a unique approach to the problem. Neil is one such person.”

The Searle Scholars were chosen by a panel of senior scientists from a pool of 186 finalists nominated by 126 universities and research institutions. “We are delighted that Dr. Ganem has been named a Searle Scholar, one of the most prestigious and competitive new investigator awards,” says Karen Antman, dean of the School of Medicine and provost of the Medical Campus. “We thank the Searle Scholars Program for this award, which will further support Dr. Ganem’s research on how cancer cells adapt to abnormal chromosomal content.”

“I’m a bit shocked, but also very proud,” says Ganem, who received his PhD from the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute/Harvard Medical School under David Pellman. “I know and admire the work of so many Searle Scholars. It is truly an honor to be a part of that group.”

Ganem uses a combination of high-resolution microscopy, genome-wide RNA screening, and bioinformatics to study the consequences of genomic instability in human cancer. His lab seeks to understand the tumor suppression mechanisms that limit the proliferation of aneuploid cells—cells that have the wrong number of chromosomes and are found in virtually all tumors—and to identify the common genetic adaptations made by cancer cells to overcome these growth barriers.

He says he will use part of his Searle award to upgrade the $150,000 microscope that his lab uses for live cell imaging. As a postdoctoral fellow, Ganem’s expertise in imaging helped him uncover a mechanism leading to chromosome missegregation and the generation of aneuploid cancer cells. This discovery was Nature’s cover article in July 2009 and has been widely cited since publication. During summer 2014, Ganem published a follow-up study in Cell describing how some cancer cells adapt to tolerate this abnormal number of chromosomes. The Searle was Ganem’s sixth foundation grant in five months and brings his private foundation funding to $936,000. “It’s unparalleled,” Farb says of Ganem’s funding streak.

The other awards include: the Smith Family Foundation Award for Excellence in Biomedical Research ($300,000); the Skin Cancer Foundation’s Todd Nagel Memorial Award ($25,000); the Melanoma Research Alliance’s Jackie King Young Investigator Award ($225,000); the Karin Grunbaum Cancer Research Scholar Award ($36,000); and the Alexander Burdo Research Award ($50,000), given through the Sarcoma Foundation of America.

Ganem says that these awards, named for cancer patients or survivors, offer him inspiration and a sense of purpose. For instance, Jackie King was 19 when she discovered a mole on her back and was diagnosed with melanoma. She died in September 2014 at age 22. “Jackie was a remarkable young woman who fought courageously for three years,” Ganem says. “She advocated tirelessly for the Sunscreen Innovation Act, which was passed by Congress in 2014, and she became an active member of the Melanoma Research Alliance. Her personal motto, ‘It’s cancer’s turn to be afraid,’ is a powerful and motivating message that I will never forget.”

Professor Neil Ganem Named Searle Scholar
Biol ogist is first BU researcher to earn the award

By Sara Rimer

Neil Ganem with (from left) Allison Bolgioni (MED’17), Sanghee Lim (MED’19), Amanda Matthews, and Hatim Mustaly (MED’19) and members of his lab (from left) Allison Bolgioni (MED’17) and Sanghee Lim (MED’19).
Overuse of Medical Care

whites may consume scarce health care resources and career scientist at the VA Boston Healthcare System. Medicine at Boston Medical Center and research of Medicine, member of the Section of General Internal Disparities Research Program in the BUSM Department author Nancy Kressin, PhD, director of the Healthcare among minorities relative to whites,” explained lead
most often evident in studies finding more overuse race differences, and poorer-quality data analyses were findings, or the study’s risk of bias, although the quality overuse by clinical area, type of treatment, category of overuse occurs among white patients. These findings may lead to a better understanding of how and why race/ethnicity might be associated with overuse and may result in ways to reduce it from occurring.

“we found no clear patterns regarding race and overuse by clinical area, type of treatment, category of findings, or the study’s risk of bias, although the quality of data was markedly poorer in those studies finding no race differences, and poorer-quality data analyses were most often evident in studies finding more overuse among minorities relative to whites,” explained lead author Nancy Kressin, PhD, director of the Healthcare Disparities Research Program in the BUSM Department of Medicine, member of the Section of General Internal Medicine at Boston Medical Center and research career scientist at the VA Boston Healthcare System. According to the researchers, overuse of care among whites may consume scarce health care resources and thus contribute to the underuse among minorities, further exacerbating disparities in care. “Problems with the fairness of both systems and practitioners must be identified and corrected, and minority patients’ distrust of physicians and health systems and their more pessimistic expectations of the outcomes of treatment must be addressed. It is vital that any corrections do not lead to more inappropriate care among minority patients but instead encourage appropriate care,” said Kressin.

Study of Veterans Finds Family Support During Deployment Reduces Suicidal Thoughts

According to a new study in the journal Anxiety, Stress one in four families report stress during deployment is an important protective factor against post-deployment suicidal ideation, which includes thoughts that can range from fleeting consideration of suicide to the development of a specific plan for killing oneself. Research on suicidal ideation in veterans who served in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq has revealed a number of important predictors of suicidal ideation, including potentially traumatic deployment experiences such as combat and sexual assault; mental health symptoms and diagnoses such as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression; and lack of social support. Despite advances in understanding suicidal ideation among veterans, family factors during deployment remain relatively unexplored as predictors of suicidal ideation in this population. “We found that both family stress and lack of family support during deployment were associated with suicidal ideation; however, these associations occur primarily through mental health symptomatology, consistent with findings observed for other deployment factors,” explained Dawne S. Vogt, PhD, BUSM associate professor of psychiatry and epidemiologist in the Women’s Health Sciences Division, National Center for PTSD at the VA Boston Healthcare System. According to the researchers, this study provides first evidence for the role of deployment family factors in post-deployment suicidal ideation and further highlights the potential of treating mental health symptoms as a means of preventing suicidal thoughts among veterans.

This work was supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Services Research and Development Service grant “Validation of Modified DRRI Scales in a National Sample of DE/OF Veterans.”

Potassium Improved Blood Pressure in Teen Girls: Salt Had No Adverse Effect

Eating 3,000 mg per day of salt or more appears to have no adverse effect on blood pressure (BP) in adolescent girls, while those girls who consumed 2,400 mg per day or more of potassium had lower blood pressure at the end of adolescence, according to an article published online by the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Pediatrics.

Lynn L. Moore, DSc, MPH, BUSM associate professor of medicine, and coauthors examined the long-term effects of dietary sodium and potassium on blood pressure at the end of adolescence. The authors used data from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute’s Growth and Health Study; participants included 2,185 black and white girls (ages 9 to 10) who were followed for up to 10 years. “We found no evidence that higher levels of cardiorespiratory fitness were associated with enhanced brain structure in older adults,” explained corresponding author Scott Hayes, PhD, BUSM associate professor of psychiatry and the associate director of the Neuroimaging Research for Veterans Center at the VA Boston Healthcare System. “We found that physical activities that enhance cardiorespiratory fitness, such as walking, are inexpensive, accessible, and could potentially improve quality of life by delaying cognitive decline and prolonging indepen-
dent function.” The researchers caution that additional research is needed to track changes in fitness and brain structure over time, as well as clarify the impact of specific exercise regimens (such as strength, aerobic, or combined training) or dose of exercise (frequency, intensity, duration) on white matter microstructure.

This work was supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Rehabilitation Research & Development Service, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Clinical Science Research & Development Service, and the National Institute on Aging.

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Wayne J. Riley, MD, MPH, MBA, and Leslie K. Serchuck (MED’90), MA, MBE, have been named members of the DAB Dean’s Advisory Board (DAB). Members serve three-year renewable terms and actively participate in School planning and external relations activities.

DAB members are leaders in medicine, business, technology, and many other sectors of society. They share a passion for basic science, clinical research, and supporting BUSM. Board members are uniquely positioned to help advance the School and its students, scientists, and clinicians.

Riley is president-elect of the American College of Physicians, the largest medical specialty organization and the second-largest physician group in the United States. Riley served with distinction as the 101st president and chief executive officer of Meharry Medical College from January 2007 to June 2013. He also held academic positions as a tenured professor of internal medicine and a senior health policy associate in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at Meharry, which he founded. Currently, Riley is a clinical professor of medicine at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine and an adjunct professor of health care management and “Health Care Executive in Residence” at Vanderbilt’s Owen Graduate School of Management, where he teaches health care leadership and advises and mentors emerging health care MBA executives and MD/MBA students.

Riley received his BA in Anthropology from Yale University and his MPH in Health Systems Management from the Tulane University School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine. He earned his MD from the Morehouse School of Medicine. He also holds an MBA from Rice University’s Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Management.

Serchuck is a pediatric infectious diseases physician and bioethicist with specific expertise in the development, administration, and conduct of clinical trials and translational research. She currently serves as a member of both the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Executive IRB Committee of The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and as a pediatric infectious disease member of the Data Safety Monitoring Board for a large multicenter, international study conducted by a pharmaceutical company. Since 2012, Dr. Serchuck has been on the board of directors and the scientific advisory board of the nonprofit Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research (FSR), serving as the FSR research representative to the Global Rare Diseases Registry and Repository at the Office of Rare Diseases in the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, National Institutes of Health (NIH). She is the principal investigator and developer of the FSR Online Patient Registry, which will serve as a key resource for partnered initiatives with academic investigators and the pharmaceutical industry to bring new therapies to patients with sarcoidosis.

Serchuck received her undergraduate degree in psychology from Hamilton College and her Master’s in Counseling Psychology from Lesley University. She completed her internship, residency, and fellowship in Pediatrics/Pediatric Infectious Diseases at the former Boston City Hospital, now Boston Medical Center. She received her Master’s in Biomedical Ethics from the University of Pennsylvania.

New Dean’s Advisory Board members Leslie K. Serchuck (MED’90), MA, MBE, and Wayne J. Riley, MD, MPH, MBA

RACHEL FEARNS RECEIVES HARTWELL BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH AWARD

Rachel Fearns, PhD, BUMS associate professor of microbiology, has received a 2014 Hartwell Individual Biomedical Research Award supporting innovative research with the potential to benefit children in the United States. One of 12 scientists nationwide to be recognized as a Hartwell Investigator, Fearns will receive $300,000 over three years to study respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), a severe respiratory disease in infants and young children and the leading cause of viral death in children. In spite of decades of RSV research, there is currently no vaccine or effective treatment for it. The goal of Fearns’ Hartwell Foundation-supported project is to determine if particular protein activities are essential to the virus. If so, these activities could pave the way toward a major scientific breakthrough: the development of a drug to combat this common, life-threatening disease.

The Hartwell Award is designed to fund innovative, cutting-edge research in its formative stages; projects that, as such, are unlikely to initially be supported by traditional funders such as the NIH. Beyond supporting Fearns’ research, the Hartwell Foundation will provide an additional $100,000 to a postdoctoral fellow training in pediatric research.

MASS LIFE SCIENCES CENTER AWARDS $1.92M TO BU, BMC

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC), an investment agency that supports life sciences innovation, research, development, and commercialization, awarded $1,740,000 to launch an expansive Lung Regeneration Initiative (LRI) as part of the Center for Regenerative Medicine (CrEM). The LRI’s goal is the clinical application of recent BLU-led discoveries in stem cell research, such as the treatment of lung diseases with personalized therapeutics, as well as the ultimate reconstitution of diseased lung epithelia in patients with emphysema. The LRI also aims to define and launch treatments for pulmonary fibrosis, pulmonary hypertension, cystic fibrosis, and acute lung injury from inhaled pathogens.

MLSC also awarded BU’s Biomedical Laboratory and Clinical Sciences (BLC5) Program, offered by Metropolitan College in collaboration with the School of Medicine, $180,000 in funding to enhance the quality of the training and add to the competencies of the students.

“We are delighted that both the Center for Regenerative Medicine and the Biomedical Laboratory and Clinical Sciences Program have received this honor from the Massachusetts Life Science Center,” said Karen Antman, MD, dean of Boston University School of Medicine and provost of Boston University Medical Campus. “Their investments in these programs will help patients with pulmonary hyper tension, cystic fibrosis, and acute lung injury as well as provide students with the necessary equipment as they train for careers in the biotechnology field.”

BUSM RECEIVES $405,000 FROM SUSAN G. KOMEN

Susan G. Komen has awarded Boston University School of Medicine $405,000 to train underrepresented minority graduate students at the Boston University School of Public Health on breast cancer disparities experienced by low-income patients. Led by Associate Professor Tracy Battaglia, MD, the BU Mentorship and Training in Cancer Health Disparities (MATCH) Graduate Training in Disparities Research program will expand on activities previously funded by Susan G. Komen. Through this new three-year grant, participants will develop research skills focused on disparities in cancer care and treatment. Funding will support training in research methods, mentorship by senior investigators, exposure to patient care and research, and engagement with community organizations.

This work is a natural extension of Dr. Battaglia’s expertise in minority health issues, the School’s deep commitment to urban health and underserved populations, and its affiliation with Boston Medical Center, the city’s recognized safety-net hospital and a rich environment for current and future health care professionals dedicated to advancing the health and well-being of all individuals and communities. The MATCH program also addresses the Institute of Medicine’s 2013 recommendation that the health care community, including researchers, work together to equitably improve the quality of life and outcomes for all patients with cancer.
T he Department of Medicine proudly celebrates four new endowed professorships honoring and immortalizing iconic faculty members.

The David C. Seldin, MD, PhD, Professor of Medicine will honor the late Dr. Seldin, who led the Amyloidosis Center, Hematology-Oncology Section, and Graduate Program in Molecular Medicine. An accomplished investigator, clinician, and teacher, he was a beacon of hope for his patients, a source of inspiration for his trainees, and greatly admired by his colleagues. Dr. Seldin, who led the Amyloidosis Center, Hematology-Oncology Section, and Graduate Program in Molecular Medicine.

The John Noble, MD, Professorship in General Internal Medicine will honor Dr. Noble, who recently retired from the department after serving for nearly 40 years. Chief of General Internal Medicine and director of the Primary Care Center at Boston City Hospital (1978–97), he was an insightful clinician and prescient leader who foresaw the importance of primary care in modern health care systems and led the development of a large and successful academic primary care practice.

Working with the leadership of BUMC, the Department of Medicine will appoint outstanding faculty leaders to these endowed professorships. In so doing, the department will further fortify its reputation for excellence in education from its= clinical and research missions. The society is named in honor of Dr. Chester S. Keefer, whose foresight and determination in roles as chairman of the Department of Medicine, dean of Boston University School of Medicine, and director of the Medical Center, were responsible for laying the foundation for the Boston University Medical Center. In memory of his spirit, we honor those donors whose total contributions have reached $50,000 or more at the School of Medicine. Names in bold are new members.

In Memoriam

Albert Ghassianian, MD, a BUSM Development Advisory Board member, on April 2 at the age of 76. Dr. Ghassianian established an endowed scholarship in 2013 with his late wife, Virginia, for worthy incoming students at Boston University and the School of Medicine. The Ghassianians were also generous supporters of the Armenian Medical Fund and the Aram V. Chobanian, MD, Scholarship Fund. Dr. Ghassianian spent more than 30 years in private practice as an internist and cardiologist in Methuen, Massachusetts.

Robert Schlessea (MET’78, GSM’832), a BUMS Dean’s Advisory Board member, on October 23 at the age of 69. Dr. Schlessea established an endowed scholarship in 2012. He received his appropriation of education from his parents, who demonstrated a strong work ethic and resilience throughout their lives, despite facing many health challenges. Mr. Schlessea was equally devoted to lifelong learning—while working in the IT field, he earned a master of applied science from BU’s Metropolitan College as well as a master of business administration from BU’s Graduate School of Management.
Giving

DONOR

GIFTs FROM THE DeANS ADVISORY BOARD, ALUMNI, FACULTY, STAFF, AND FRIENDS (CONTINUED)

President’s Society (AFDLS) Member | Young Alumni Giving Society Member | Faculty/Staff Member | Pew | Three-year Consecutive Giving | First-time Donor | Reaches
class notes

1958 Arthur L. Fine of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, writes, “What a lucky life I have left from BUSM in Duke (two years) to University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (two years) to Yale (five years) to UNC (130 years) as a reasonably successful scientist (never a grant) and professor; then retirement at age 64 to my second career as a clocksmith. And the permanently good for no one, just back to Delphi for almost 59 years, with three children and four grandchildren. I remain in good health, still playing squash two to three times a week and wondering just how long my luck can last. All of the kids have moved out, I don’t want to see that aging isn’t fun, especially as we watch our class size diminish and the world fall apart. I still hope that each of us can leave the world better for our having passed through it, but that is a really tough chore, and it isn’t getting any easier.”

1959 Rohden L. Bacht in Sarasota, Florida, was featured in October 30, 2014, Ringling College news release: Ringling College of Art and Design (RCAD) is excited to announce an approximately 20,000-square-foot Visual Arts Center thanks to a $3 million gift by Ringling College Trustee Dr. Richard Bacht and Sarasota Museum of Art/STANDA Board Member Barbara Bacht.

1960 Peter F. Jeffries and Joanne F. Arnold (MD ’59) of Wake Forest School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, talked about a 10-day cruise they took to Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India last year. They plan to cruise again this year. “Life is wonderful! I have been doing very well in my practice since I retired from the Navy in 1991 and I have been living in Sarasota, Florida, for the last 13 years. We spend summers in Colorado and travel the world during the winter months.”

1964 Kenneth W. Vaughn, Jr., of Miami, Florida, writes, “I now work at a nonprofit community health center providing care for the underserved. In the short time I have been there, I have seen health conditions that I hadn’t seen since my pediatric residency; patients and families are simply grateful that someone is willing to address their concerns and improve their health. I encourage my classmates to do volunteer health care work when you can, whether in your own communities or overseas.”

1966 David A. Alessandro of Lighthouse Point, Florida, writes, “I retired from practice in Fort Lauderdale two years ago and now live in Lighthouse, which has been my home since 1975. I have two progeny living in Boston, so we’re anticipating even more frequent travels to Massachusetts, and I am pleased to see BU and BSUM taking renewed initiative to engage alumni. I think there is considerable benefit to bringing together alumni from the UK and alumni events, especially in our hometowns. I think we can grow these two areas if we have seen only two classmatess with any regularity, Bill and Sandy Katon ‘66, who live in Maasa, and Jerry and Denise Beveridge, who live in Fort Lauderdale. Jerry is retired from psychiatry, Bill is a retired ENT surgeon and my practice has been general and vascular surgery. My daughter Lisa McHale resides in Tampa and is very engaged with BUMB’s Bob Caton, Bob Stem, Ann McIntyre, and Chuck Neufeld as BUMB is a director of medical research and development. Their findings and legal initiatives will someday be recognized as major contributions to cardiac science with professional sports, where conclusive forces are unfavorable.”

1969 Jack A. Ferling in Saginaw, Michigan, writes, “Internship at BU’s Jewish Hospital (now University of Cincinnati College of Medicine) there in Doha, Qatar) for five years. Upon returning to the USA, I became first chief, Department of Medicine, then associate chief of staff for Clinical Medicine at the Aloda E. Lutz VAMC in Saginaw, Michigan, and clinical professor of Medicine at the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine; I remained in that capacity for almost 15 years. In all these roles, I have performed extensive cardiac diagnostic research and have published more than 500 book chapters, papers, and abstracts. I am still professor of Medicine at the University of Cincinnati and also perform ad hoc cardiac consultations, and serve on the IBHE committee of various hospitals and programs as the cardiologist.”

1969 Marc F. Hirsh of Bowling Green, Kentucky, writes, “I retired from hospita and academic medicine in 2015 after 25 years as chair of the Department of Medicine. My major accomplishment was my first definitive mystery, The Case (on Amazon as a paperback and Ebook/Kindle), which was released as a second edition by a new publisher after some editing in 2014. The second in the Alice White, Investigator series, titled Ned Case, was published July 16, 2015. DCS also published a romantic fiction features Alice White, a legal assistant and night nurse at NYU Law who conducts a small Manhattan firm’s investigations. I got several five-star reviews for The Case (Ca’son-Arm’ and wrote a screenplay of the book, which will soon be marketed. I think the unexpected and third book will help sell the screenplay. Check it out.”

1970 Somoara Y. Shaumba of Kinshasa, Limete, Democratic Republic of the Congo, writes, “Grateful to God that I just celebrated my 72nd birthday in excellent health, as I like daily and working on my memoirs.”

1972 Andrew M. Weaver of Pacific Palisades, California, writes, “I remain as only a medical and pediatric craniofacial plastic surgeon, a Los Angeles Kaiser department chief, scientist, and professor of Otolaryngology.”

1978 Richard I. Basch and Sarasota Museum of Art/SMOA Board Member of Woodbridge, Connecticut, writes, “I have news, announcements, or creative works you’d like to share with your fellow alumni, please write to the BUSM Alumni Association at 72 E Concord Street, LDJ, Boston, MA 02118 or email alumnibusm@bu.edu.”

contaCTUS
If you have news, announcements, or creative works you’d like to share with your fellow alumni, please write to the BUSM Alumni Association at 72 E Concord Street, LDJ, Boston, MA 02118 or email alumnibusm@bu.edu.
I’ve been in dermatology pri-

te care practice for 25 years in New

Haven and finally adopted an
electronic medical record: this

year I was elected vice president

of the Massachusetts Section of

ACOG; president of the Obstetri-
cal group, and facilities are growing

in the future. I am very happy to see

many people throughout the course of

the year and I remember her with great fondness and affec-
tion. On behalf of the entire Wilk and Schwartz families, thank you

for being part of our lives and for giving the best to all of us at all
times. I will always love you, and I will always miss you. Rest in peace,
my sister.”

—Joseph Wilk

1947 • Stanley H. Konefal

Dr. Konefal was named chief of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Boston Lying-In Hospital, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, and St. Elizabeth’s Medical Center. He served as chair of the Ob-Gyn Department at St. Elizabeth’s Medical Center, chair of the Massachusetts Section of ACOG, president of the Obstetri-
cal Society of Boston, and secretary for the NGO Women’s Health and Education Organization, Inc. He was a member of the clinical

teaching faculty at both Harvard and Tufts medical schools and

beloved mentor to all students, medical and otherwise. His great-
salt professional accomplishment was delivering thousands of babies safely into the world. Fran is loved and survived by her

four children, Francis, Laura, Renee, Nicole, Jacques, Jean-Paul, Michel, Lise, and Robin, his sister, and her sister, Denise Hendrigan.

1985 • Stacey E. Wilk of Edgewater, New Jersey: “Stacey Wilk

was my sister. She was a sweet and wonderful person who offered specialized medical care and personal comfort to so many people throughout the course of her all-too-brief time with us. She sacrificed so much for so many, and always found ways to give of herself even when she seemed to have nothing left to give. Stacey was brilliant, beautiful, and kind, and she had a sweetness that touched the lives of everybody whose paths she crossed. She gave far more to this life than she received, and she left us far too soon. I miss her terri-

ribly every day, and I remember her with great fondness and affec-
tion. On behalf of the entire Wilk and Schwartz families, thank you

for being part of our lives and for giving the best to all of us at all
times. I will always love you, and I will always miss you. Rest in peace,
my sister.”

—Joseph Wilk

1940 • Iver S. Rahn of Auburndale, Massachusetts, formerly of Chestnut Hill and Haverhill, Massachusetts, on May 13, 2015, at the age of 99. Beloved husband of the late Bernice Rahn. Devoted father of Richard M. Rahn and his wife Carol Baum; and the late Dani-

ale whom he enjoyed a happy retirement for more than 10 years. He leaves three married children, Stanley H. Konefal, Jr., MD (Jean) of Westfield, Massachusetts; Joseph J. Konefal, MD (Karen) of Norfork, Virginia; and Catherine A. Murray (Patrol) of Centerville, Massachusetts; eight grandchildren; three great grandchildren; and four

sisters and their families, Clara Baà, Anna Danko, and Bernice Chausse of Connecticut, and Helen Bloss of Maine.
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Take Tania Torres-Sanchez (MED’16), who fell in love with BU during her interview visit. “I knew that I wanted to be here and work with this patient population,” she says. But she also knew that her med school choice might be driven by financial aid, not fit. Thanks to a donor-funded scholarship, “I could come to BU, where I wanted to come,” she says. “When I got my BU financial aid packet, I thought ‘Oh, good. I don’t have to choose between what I want and what I can afford.’ That’s a great feeling.”

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