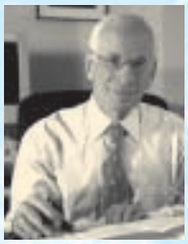
CLASS NOTES

'50s

Middle ear disease (otitis media) is the second-most commonly diagnosed infection in children—but as recently as a few decades ago, "it was totally neglected" by researchers, says **Charles Bluestone** (MD '58, Intern '59). In 1975 he founded Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC's Department of Otolaryngology. This summer, as he retired after 50 years of service, Children's named Bluestone an honorary staff member, and Pitt named him Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Otolaryngology.



Bluestone

Bluestone trained 60 fellows, most of whom are now in academic medicine and several of whom are department chairs. He's also coauthor of the "bible" of the field, *Bluestone and Stool's Pediatric Otolaryngology*, now in its fifth edition. "This thing is a monster," he says, placing it on his desk with a thud. "It should be online."

An author of more than 250 articles and 27 books, he's still working—each month, Bluestone collects ENT literature from PubMed and posts it to the Society for Middle Ear Disease Web site, which he founded in 2012.

'70s

Frank Rudy's (MD '74) interest in pathology and laboratory medicine began early—he interned at the Harrisburg Hospital lab in high school and college. The former chair of the Department of Laboratories at PinnacleHealth System credits his Pitt training for turning his interest into a passion. Rudy has since paid it forward by educating hundreds of physicians on test interpretation and use. In 2014, Rudy received the Laboratory Accreditation Program Service Award from the College of American Pathologists at a ceremony in Chicago. This national award recognizes his efforts to improve patient safety.

'80s

Robert Brolin (Surgical Resident '80), a charter member and former president of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, recently won the organization's 2014 Outstanding Achievement Award. The codirector of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery at University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro, N.J., former professor of surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, and self-described "Bahnson boy" (a tip of the hat to former Pitt surgery chair Hank Bahnson) has performed more than 3,200 bariatric procedures. "I think that [Pitt] is a major contributor to my success." And he wants to make it very clear that, even though he no longer lives in the Steel City, he remains a huge Steelers fan.

'90s

Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew (MD '94, Obstetrics and Gynecology Resident '98), associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology and of reproductive biology at Case Western Reserve University, is a founding member of WONDOOR (Women Neonates Diversity Opportunities Outreach Research), an organization that helps advance maternal and neonatal health worldwide. Through international partnerships with health care providers, it also provides training for emerging physicians. Mentoring young physicians—especially from underrepresented groups—has long been a priority for Larkins-Pettigrew, who was recently named the Edgar B. Jackson Jr., MD, Endowed Chair for Clinical Excellence and Diversity. To assuage health care inequities on a grand scale, she says, "We need to develop specialty physicians to stay in resource-poor countries."

Larkins-Pettigrew

In **David Madoff**'s (MD '95) years as an interventional radiologist, what has surprised him the most is how, as of late, cancer has become so multidisciplinary. (For example, specialists now come together to manage tumors affecting the liver, kidney, and lungs.) "In the past, radiology was largely limited to image interpretation. Nowadays, interventional radiologists often offer primary oncologic therapies that are minimally invasive, improving survival and quality of life, with low complication rates." In September 2014, a book he co-edited, *Clinical Interventional Oncology*, received a "highly commended" citation from the the British Medical Association.

In 2008, **Clifton Callaway** (Emergency Medicine Resident '96), an MD/PhD and the Ronald D. Stewart Professor of Emergency Medicine Research at Pitt, and his colleagues in critical care medicine and surgery realized that, instead of competing for the same acute-care clinical trial participants, they just might do better by working together. So Callaway, along with **David Huang** (Critical Care Medicine Fellow '03), MD/MPH associate professor of critical care medicine and emergency medicine, and **Jason Sperry**, MD/PhD associate professor of surgery and critical care medicine, and a host of other Pitt colleagues joined forces in a new collective dubbed the Multidisciplinary Acute Care Research Organization, or MACRO. Its first director was Pitt's **Scott Gunn** (Critical Care Medicine Fellow '01), an MD associate professor of critical care medicine. Theirs was a big idea that's yielding big benefits, as detailed in a 2013 *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery* study. The team saw a 300 percent increase in patients enrolled in a three-year period. (For more on what Callaway has been up to, see our infographic on p. 12, "The Rush to the Hospital: Pitt People Paved the Way.")

'00s

Matthew Hartman (MD '02) studied the second edition of *Clinical Radiology: The Essentials* as a Pitt med student. Now an assistant professor of radiology at Temple University, Hartman has come full circle, serving as a coeditor of the fourth edition. He thanked his Pitt mentor, **Carl Fuhrman** (MD '79), in the acknowledgments. And, he's quick to add, another alum, Pitt associate professor of radiology **Matthew Heller** (MD '01, Radiology Resident '06, Abdominal Imaging Fellow '07), cowrote a chapter.

The new edition includes references for docs in all fields, particularly in regard to their two most burning radiology-related questions, which Hartman identified in a study published in *Academic Radiology* in 2013: First, how to determine which imaging tests to order. Second, how to read a chest X-ray to ensure a tracheal tube has been put in correctly.

If you're wondering why Hartman's name sounds so familiar, it could be because you saw the name of his "superstar wife," **Amy Hartman** (Microbiology PhD '03), in the newspaper. An expert in highly pathogenic viruses, she was a media go-to through much of the recent Ebola coverage in Pittsburgh, having studied the virus as a fellow at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Now, she studies Rift Valley fever at Pitt as assistant professor of infectious disease and microbiology in the Graduate School of Public Health and also serves as research manager of the Regional Biocontainment Laboratory at the Center for Vaccine Research.

In July, the journal *RadioGraphics* will publish a paper the Hartmans cowrote as a sort of microbiology 101 course for clinicians. "Most physicians don't

have a good sense of microbiology and infection control," says Matt Hartman. The paper includes equipment-cleaning protocols, guidelines for protective gear, and other helpful hints for docs and techs as they cross paths with TB, MRSA, *Clostridium difficile* colitis, and other pathogens. Yet another Pitt med alum, **Melanie Fukui** (MD '87, Radiology Resident '91, Neuroradiology Fellow '92), was a coauthor, as well.

Recently, Tripler Army Medical Center's Colonel **Becket Mahnke** (Pediatric Cardiology Fellow '03) was awarded the 2014 Thurman Award for Excellence in Telemedicine and Advanced Medical Technology from the comfort of his office chair in Hawaii. It was fitting that the American Telemedicine Association bestowed this honor during a video teleconference—working across several time zones, via various technologies, is SOP (standard operating procedure) for Mahnke. He serves as director of Pacific Asynchronous TeleHealth (PATH), a provider-to-provider teleconsultation platform used by military medical facilities throughout the Pacific Region. Mahnke continued to direct PATH during deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

—Robyn K. Coggins, Nick Moffitt, and Elaine Vitone

A FRIEND INDEED

Got the scoop on a fellow alum who's doing something great? We're all ears at medmag@pitt.edu.

NICOLE SHIRILLA

UPHOLDS LIFE, AND DEATH

Nicole Shirilla (second from the right) and colleagues at St. Luke Hospital.

Outside a hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in 2008, several Pitt med students huddle around a priest. "Poverty degrades people's humanity, and it doesn't end when they die," Father Rick Frechette warns. They see what he means when they enter a morgue where the bodies of deceased patients—whose families do not have the means to bury them—have been placed. Together they honor the dead with a burial service.

Among the med students is Nicole Shirilla (MD '11), who arranged this trip after learning of the St. Luke Foundation for Haiti, an organization that provides education, medical care, employment opportunities, and humanitarian outreach to Haiti's most underserved. After inviting six other classmates to volunteer with her during spring break, Shirilla approached professor of emergency medicine Susan Dunmire (MD '85), then-executive director of the Medical Alumni Association, to inquire about financial assistance.

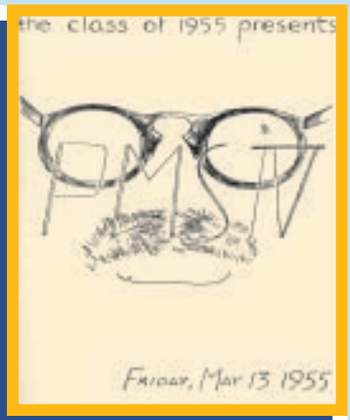
"They were incredibly responsive and supportive," Shirilla says.

With MAA's green light, the group observed day-to-day life in Cité Soleil, a region near Port-au-Prince that, with 200,000 residents living without proper sanitation or infrastructure, is considered the largest slum in the Western Hemisphere. In Tabarre, Haiti, the students volunteered alongside Haitian doctors at St. Damien pediatric hospital, which successfully treats thousands of patients. At a nearby chapel, they paid tribute to those who died. This experience bolstered Shirilla's desire to focus her life's work on palliative care.

The 2010 earthquake magnified the area's need, and Shirilla has maintained her connection to St. Luke, returning to Haiti when possible. Alongside the pediatric facility, a makeshift general hospital was erected; Shirilla has volunteered in its emergency department.

Now, as a hospice fellow at the University of California, Irvine, Shirilla remains committed to upholding the dignity of all, particularly those suffering from terminal illness or approaching the end of their lives. She often recalls those moments of honoring the dead in Haiti: "Your work doesn't end when you can't cure someone." *—Liberty Ferda*

MAA SAYS, "ICE, ICE, BABY."



Playbill from Scope and Scalpel's 1955 *PMS IV.*

In 1897, Queen Victoria celebrated 60 years on the throne of England, and the party was so big, it got a name—the Diamond Jubilee. Since then, that flashy gemstone has become the traditional gift for a six-decade affair.

What's that got to do with Pitt's School of Medicine? Funny-show Scope and Scalpel will mark the big 6-0 with a special anniversary production. *Pitt Med: SPU* has an irreverent *Law & Order* vibe. Check out scopeandscalpel.org/videos to see a trailer for the upcoming act. And this year, the Class of '55 will celebrate a whopping 60 years of camaraderie at the Medical Alumni Association's Alumni Reunion Weekend, this May 15–18.

There are plenty of other gems to be found during the celebrations: Classes ending in 0 or 5 are invited to reunite during this extended weekend of laughs and memories (and maybe a few giveaways). The alumni weekend intentionally coincides with the School of Medicine's graduation (Monday, May 18), so scholars young and not-so-young can party together.

Of particular intergenerational interest: the Champagne Breakfast, which will be Saturday, May 16 at 9 a.m. As usual, attendees will brunch with the dean, get a quick school update, and witness the Philip S. Hench Distinguished Alumnus Award ceremony. But this year's breakfast comes with a new element—a student panel, which "will give the alumni an opportunity to ask questions about the students' day-to-day activities, as well as the type of projects they have been a part of," says Pat Carver, executive director of MAA.

So join your Pitt med brothers and sisters (and daughters and sons), and raise a glass to the next 60 years. May they be just as sparkling. *—RKC*

MEDICAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WWW.MAA.PITT.EDU

CAROL M. ANDERSON

NOV. 1, 1939–NOV. 20, 2014

Anderson

Schultz

Szulman

Turner

University of Pittsburgh professor emerita of psychiatry and social work Carol Anderson, a PhD, "was incredibly innovative and far-sighted—she turned the treatment of schizophrenia completely on its head," says Armando Rotondi, PhD associate professor of critical care medicine and health policy and management at Pitt.

Anderson, coauthor of *Schizophrenia and the Family: A Practitioner's Guide to Psychoeducation and Management*, widely viewed as a seminal publication in the field, died in November.

After earning her PhD in interpersonal communication at Pitt, Anderson joined the Yale University School of Medicine faculty in 1968 and then returned to Pittsburgh in 1973, as part of Thomas Detre's team of researchers and clinicians at the School of Medicine and the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic.

At WPIC, Anderson established a psychoeducational program for patients with schizophrenia and their families (teaching them how to best deal with the disorder), which became a national model for treatment. Anderson "was a pioneer" in this area, says Gretchen Haas, a PhD and Pitt associate professor of psychiatry and psychology.

"Her approach to treatment was radical and had far-reaching effects on mental health care," says Rotondi. *—Lori Ferguson*

STANLEY G. SCHULTZ

OCT. 26, 1931–OCT. 23, 2014

Stanley Schultz, an MD, was renowned both as an outstanding scientist and skilled educator.

A former dean of the University of Texas Medical School at Houston, Schultz was a critical figure in advancing the understanding of epithelial ion transport. His early work demonstrated, for the first time, sodium-coupled sugar and amino acid absorption by the small intestine and underpins the science of oral rehydration therapy (ORT), a process cited by the World Health Organization as second only to vaccination as a lifesaving intervention.

Schultz joined the Department of Physiology at the University of Pittsburgh in 1967 where he earned several Golden Apple awards. "I learned how to teach from Stan," says John H. "Jack" Byrne, a PhD and the chair of neurobiology and anatomy at UTHealth.

"He was a master of pedagogy."

"Stan had the unique ability to explain difficult concepts by use of examples and humor," notes Raymond Frizzell, a PhD professor of cell biology and director of the Cystic Fibrosis Research Center at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC. (Schultz once likened the way a pair of charged molecules moves through a membrane channel to establish a diffusion potential to a poor swimmer being attached to an Olympic swimmer via a rubber band.) "He was a mentor to us all," says Frizzell. *—LF*

ARON E. SZULMAN

MAY 3, 1920–NOV. 22, 2014

Aron E. "Bob" Szulman, MD professor emeritus of pathology, conducted groundbreaking work on rare uterine masses known as hydatidiform molar pregnancy and choriocarcinoma, notes Pitt pathology chair George Michalopoulos (an MD/PhD who is the Maud L. Menten Professor of Pathology). "He nurtured and trained a lot of people on the role of chromosomes in embryonic development and maternal fetal medicine. And he was one of the nicest people I've ever met."

Szulman, who joined Pitt in 1964 and became full professor in 1981, was a popular lecturer, speaking frequently at symposia internationally. His contributions were recognized upon his retirement with the establishment of an annual scientific lectureship at Pitt.

Szulman "had an amazing sense of humor and a great intellectual curiosity, both of which he maintained until the end of his life," observes Urvashi Surti, a PhD and director of the Pittsburgh Cytogenetics Laboratory. "Even in his final days, he was very interested in discussing my latest research."

The pathologist was a member of the World Health Organization Scientific Group and a fellow of the UK's Royal College of Pathologists. *—LF*

MORRIS E. TURNER

OCT. 2, 1948–JUNE 30, 2014

Morris Turner (MD '73, Res '76) hit his 60s before his chair in Pitt's Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences, W. Allen Hogge, an MD, told him he needed to slow down. Turner was still on call every fourth night, providing services to women who otherwise might not have had access to care.

I can't slow down, he told Hogge, who recently retired as chair. Turner was too concerned about making sure the women of Pittsburgh got the care they needed. As a med student, Turner saw the devastating effects of back-alley abortions, and, when he opened his East Liberty practice in 1976, he became one of the few abortion providers in the city. He and his partner later planted clinics throughout the county.

Turner served as president of the medical staff at Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC, chief of gynecological services at UPMC McKeesport, and medical director for both Adagio Health and Allegheny Reproductive Health Center, as well as a member of the Allegheny County Medical Society's Board of Directors. At Pitt med, he was an active student mentor and member of the Admissions Committee.

—Amy Whipple

IN MEMORIAM

'50s

WILLIAM HARRISON PITTS
MD '51
OCT. 26, 2014

OTTO F. SWEGAL
MD '52
DEC. 5, 2013

JOHN R. QUINN
MD '53
OCT. 21, 2014

FENTON M. MITCHELL
MD '57
OCT. 15, 2014

EDWARD WILLIAM HEINLE JR.
MD '58, RES '63, FEL '65
AUG. 30, 2014

'60s

ROBERT R. CASSELLA
MD '60
DEC. 1, 2014

RICHARD MINNEAR
MD '61
OCT. 6, 2014

PAUL HARKINS
MD '62
OCT. 28, 2014

LEROY S. INDORATO
MD '67
OCT. 26, 2014

'80s

MICHAEL D. PATTERSON SR.
MD '80
NOV. 26, 2014

DAVID L. WEINSWEIG
MD '85
SEPT. 13, 2014

BRIAN J. CAPUTO
MD '89
NOV. 9, 2014

'00s

NICOLE M. KOTCHEY
MS '07
NOV. 12, 2014

FACULTY

ALBERT STRATTON
NOV. 21, 2014

SURGEON HERBERT ZEH RETHINKS PANCREATIC CANCER

BY SHARON TREGASKIS

COURTESY ZEH

Zeh performing a robotic Whipple at UPMC Presbyterian, one of only a handful of hospitals in the United States to offer the procedure.

Surgical oncologist Herbert Zeh (MD '94) says he isn't a runner. And yet he signed up for the Pittsburgh, New York, and Dublin marathons. "It seemed like an interesting challenge," says the Pitt associate professor of surgery, who completed every step of the 26.2 mile routes in New York and Pittsburgh. (And the Dublin finish line? "The pint of Guinness seemed more important," he quips.)

Zeh

And as a third-year medical student, Zeh signed up for a post in the laboratory of the University of Pittsburgh's Michael Lotze, investigating the role of the immune system in cancer. The collaboration was so productive, Zeh took a year off from his coursework to author seven papers on their findings.

So don't let that quip about the Guinness distract you—Zeh is tenacious. Consider his chosen field. He is chief of UPMC's Gastrointestinal Surgical Oncology Division and codirector of the UPMC Pancreatic Cancer Program.

Typically identified late in its progression, pancreatic cancer kills 75 percent of patients in the first year after diagnosis. "Pancreas cancer was the highest mountain out there," says Zeh, who also directs clinical research for UPCI's Division of Surgical Oncology.

Prospects for survival are better for those who undergo the Whipple, a complex surgical procedure with an ominous reputation among surgeons and patients alike. During the operation, surgeons remove the head of the pancreas, the gallbladder, and portions of the small intestine, bile duct, and sometimes the stomach.

Then they replumb the whole system to excise pancreatic tumors and their blood supply while preserving gastrointestinal function.

Despite significant advances in the past 40 years, about 40 percent of patients experience significant postsurgical complications. Zeh mastered the procedure as a senior resident and fellow at Johns Hopkins Hospital, training at the elbow of John Cameron. "When Cameron started in the '70s, patient mortality was 30 percent from the Whipple," says Zeh. "By the time I graduated, only 1 to 3 percent of our patients died from the surgery. But we hadn't made any progress on survival from the pancreatic cancer. Even if we did a successful surgery, 90 percent of the time, the cancer would come back."

In 2002, Zeh joined the Pitt faculty and set about developing a robotic surgical program to further minimize the trauma and blood loss of the conventional Whipple and speed recovery. Recently, he partnered with assistant professors of surgery Melissa Hogg (Fel '13) and Amer Zureikat (Fel '10), to develop a surgical training program using the robotic techniques. "This approach gets more patients on to chemo, helps them return to health and work quicker, and they don't have as much pain," says Zeh. "The bottom line is that a complex operation like the Whipple can't be done safely with the current [nonrobotic] laparoscopic technology," because of the extremely fine dexterity required, he says.

Back at Pitt, Zeh also reconnected with Lotze, MD professor of surgery, immunology, and bioengineering and vice chair for research in the Department of Surgery, who had overseen Zeh's foray into research as a med student. In 2003, they started work on a study that would be published in 2005 by the *Journal of Immunotherapy*, "Addicted to Death."

"We suggested that cancer cells had learned to die in the wrong way, and [that] what we see as cancer is a consequence of their dying—a terrible, awful, crying out loud, blood-in-the streets kind of death," says Lotze. "Virtually everything we imagined has come true."

The two have since coauthored 56 papers, many on aspects of what is known as autophagy, a process that recycles damaged cellular components and returns a cell to useful service and, in cancer, appears to fuel a malignant cell's survival.

In a series of ongoing investigations, Zeh, Lotze, and Daolin Tang, a PhD assistant professor of surgery, are testing tactics to interrupt autophagy in pancreatic cancer and elucidate the molecular mechanisms by which the cellular repair process runs off course. Promising data from clinical trials of a drug that halts autophagy in pancreatic cancer patients suggest the trio is on the right track. "Over the last two years, we're starting to see changes that make me think we might get the rock up the hill," says Zeh. "And I'm crazy enough to think the gods won't push it back down." ■