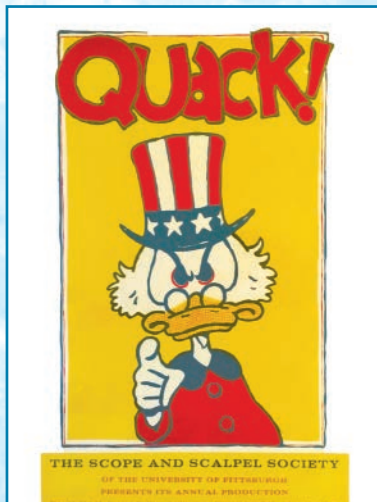




## CLASS NOTES



Playbill from 1970 Scope and Scalpel production of "Quack!"

## '70s

We've heard from a few members of the Class of 1970, which is marking its 50th anniversary this year. (In September, the Class of '70 had a group video chat with Emeritus Dean Arthur S. Levine. The in-person reunion has been rescheduled for fall 2021. Check @pittmedalum or maa.pitt.edu for updates.) **Daniel Hirszen** (MD '70), a rheumatologist and internal medicine specialist, retired in 2018 after working in private practice for 35 years and maintaining one of the last solo rheumatology practices in the

Chicago area. **Howard Grindlinger** (MD '70), a retired psychiatrist in Arizona, has fond memories of cowriting the 1970 Scope and Scalpel show "QUACK!" with the late **James Kaskin** (MD '70), who was an emergency medicine physician in San Francisco before his death in 2015. Grindlinger says the show touched on everything from music to civil rights protests to the Vietnam War. It was "a wonderful melding of so many things that were going on in our lives," he says. Classmate **Michael Linver** (MD '70), director emeritus of the Breast Imaging Center of X-Ray Associates of New Mexico and clinical professor of radiology at the University of New Mexico, received the 2020 Gold Medal from the Society of Breast Imaging. He has advocated for fair breast cancer screening procedures for patients in New Mexico and nationally. He served on the National Mammography Quality Assurance Advisory Committee to the FDA and as president of the New Mexico chapters of the American College of Radiology and the American Cancer Society.

## '80s

**Louis Tripoli** (MD '84, Internal Medicine Resident '88), rear admiral of the U.S. Navy and command surgeon general with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, is retiring in October after 24 years of service. He has been addressing coronavirus outbreaks in



**Louis Tripoli** (in naval uniform) at his promotion to admiral in 2016 with family, including (from left) son, **Louis Philip**, wife, **Michelle**, daughter **Marissa**, mother, **Rita** and father, **Charles**.

the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Louis says his career was inspired by his father, **Charles Tripoli** (MD '55), a retired family physician and lieutenant commander of the U.S. Navy Medical Corps Reserve who participated in 13 mission trips to Latin America as a volunteer with the Catholic Medical Association. Charles Tripoli celebrated his 90th birthday this year. Louis remembers going on house calls with his dad as a kid. Following residency, Louis worked in private practice with his dad for five years. "Being able to come back and practice with him was one of the greatest experiences a son could ever have," he says.

## '90s

**Mark McLaughlin**

(Neurosurgery Resident '99) is the founder of the Princeton Brain, Spine and Sports Medicine neurosurgical practice in New Jersey. His first book, "Cognitive Dominance: A Brain Surgeon's Quest to Outthink Fear," was released in late 2019. "Neurosurgeons," he says, "work in a 'judgment jungle,' where we constantly make so many life and death decisions." McLaughlin wrote "Cognitive Dominance" to understand "the right amount" of fear, he says, that's needed to excel not just in medical settings, but in business and beyond.



**McLaughlin**

## '00s

**Siva Raja** (MD '04,

PhD '04) is the surgical director of the Center for Esophageal Diseases, an associate professor of thoracic surgery and a thoracic surgeon, all at the Cleveland Clinic. In addition to his focus on esophageal cancer, Raja is also frequently sought out to treat achalasia, a rare disease in which the sphincter at the esophagus's base cannot regularly open and close. He credits inspiration for his career to his time at Pitt Med: "I was inspired by Jim Luketich," an esophageal surgeon. "I met him as a third-year medical student. Twenty years later, that's what I'm doing, too."



**Raja**



**Shaffer**

**Jonathan Shaffer** (PhD '08)

works at biotechnology company QIAGEN, where he's a director in research and development. He leads a team that develops genomic and transcriptomic solutions for cancer-related research that enable detection of DNA

variants, RNA fusions and gene expression. “Challenges remain for cancer researchers,” he says, “because samples used in cancer research are often of poor quality or limited quantity.” Why biotechnology? For Shaffer, it’s all about effecting rapid change: “I love the pace of the work,” he says. “I love to see science moving almost faster than life itself.”

**’10s** “Metastasis is what kills cancer patients,” remarks **Yvonne Chao** (MD ’12, Internal Medicine Resident ’15), “but current treatments are not targeted toward metastatic biology.” A postdoctoral

thoracic oncology fellow at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chao is improving models of metastasis. She and her colleagues have implicated an epigenetic regulator, histone deacetylase 11 (HDAC11), as a promoter of breast cancer metastasis in mice. “We think there’s something special about the lymph-node environment that upregulates HDAC11, allowing cancer to survive and then leave lymph nodes for the lungs, liver, brain, wherever.” Chao hopes to develop future therapies aimed at this mechanism.



Chao

**Luke Johnson** (MD ’13) serves as assistant professor of dermatology at the University of Utah School of Medicine. He’s also an enthusiastic podcaster: As cohost of the podcast *Dermasphere*, alongside dermatologist Michelle Tarbox, Johnson tackles “all aspects of dermatology,” he says. A



Johnson

podcast that’s “by dermatologists, for dermatologists,” he notes, as well as for “the dermatologically curious.” *Dermasphere* just recorded its 33rd episode. Johnson and Tarbox host ongoing literature reviews and discussions about professional best practices; they’ve also reported on the safety of tattoo ink and a melanoma-detecting dog.

**Melanie Peffer** (PhD ’14) is a research faculty member at the University of Colorado Boulder whose new book, “*Biology Everywhere: How the Science of Life Matters to Everyday Life*,” was published in February. The book covers topics from the ecological impact of reusable grocery bags to the interconnectedness between nature and the visual arts. “The unifying theme of my career,” Peffer says, “centers on empowering people to engage with biology content.”



Peffer

—John Hansen, Maggie Medoff and Rachel Mennies

## SPOTLIGHT

### PLENTY TO GAIN

**W**ill artificial intelligence replace radiologists? As AI’s deep-learning technology has evolved to read radiological images and identify pathologies, a lot of people are asking that question. But radiologists, says **Geraldine McGinty** (Res ’93), have nothing to fear from AI—and plenty to gain. “There’s been a lot of hype about machines replacing radiologists,” she notes, “but I do not see radiologists as being afraid. From the inception of our specialty we have always embraced innovation.”

McGinty, who recently completed her term as the first woman to chair the American College of Radiology’s (ACR) Board of Chancellors, now serves as ACR president, representing more than 38,000 radiologists. She’s also associate professor of clinical radiology and population health sciences as well as chief strategy officer for the Weill Cornell Medicine Physician Organization. For this leader of radiologists, answering AI questions is paramount for the future of their profession. “I’m excited to influence the beginning of this journey,” she says, “by leading the ACR during this period of rapid change.”

One key issue is addressing diversity: not just that of practitioners, but also of patients and their data. “AI is not only prone to bias,” she says, “but it can actually amplify and propagate bias.” Fighting bias with diversity means mindfully collecting data that considers not just patients’ ethnic and gender backgrounds, but also where patients live. Imaging findings, she notes, don’t always indicate the same diagnoses in disparate regions of the country. For example: the diagnosis of histoplasmosis, also known as Ohio River Valley Fever because of its proliferation in that area. It can cause lung nodules that “might be confusing,” says McGinty, “without the context of knowing the patient’s geography.”

As part of her commitment to medicine’s future, McGinty views mentorship as “a critical part” of her career. She received Cornell’s Jessica M. and Natan Bibliowicz Award for Excellence in Mentoring Women Faculty in 2019. She attributes the mentorship of Jules Sumkin, chair of Pitt’s Department of Radiology, to her own professional growth: From him, she says, “I learned so much about what it means to be a radiologist.” —Rachel Mennies



MARK LEDZIAN

McGinty is the American College of Radiology’s new president.

## STEVEN BEERING

AUG. 20, 1932–APRIL 3, 2020

Steven Beering's idea of retirement was to advise the president and Congress as chair of the National Science Board and to join Pitt's Board of Trustees as chair of the Health Sciences Committee and the Board of Visitors for the School of Medicine. The academic leader who served as a physician to a president and astronauts died in April at age 87.

Although Beering was behind in high school when he immigrated to Pittsburgh from Germany after World War II, he quickly caught up and went on to attend Pitt, where he graduated *summa cum laude* in 1954 and earned his MD in 1958. To cover tuition, Beering tutored French and German, drove a cab, worked in a steel mill and translated medical articles. Decades later, he received an honorary doctorate from Pitt (and nine other universities), and was named a Pitt Legacy Laureate, as well as a Distinguished Alumni Fellow.

After medical school, Beering became a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Medical Corps, where he treated President Eisenhower and the first NASA astronauts. He served as dean of the Indiana University School of Medicine and 18 years as president of Purdue University.

Arthur S. Levine, dean emeritus of the School of Medicine, says Beering "combined a European elegance and classicism with an American ease, intellectual hunger and abundant leadership ability."

—Samantha Paige Rosen

## PAUL CAPLAN

NOV. 21, 1912–MARCH 7, 2020

Paul Caplan's (MD '36) hallmark was listening. After graduating from Pitt Med, Caplan began his internship at Montefiore—the only Pittsburgh hospital hiring Jewish physicians in the 1930s. There, notes his great-nephew Joshua Levenson (MD '11, Res '14), "he learned the skill, the art, of medicine ... being able to talk to people and comfort them."

Caplan was probably Pitt Med's oldest graduate when he died at age 107 in March.

During World War II, Caplan treated wounded D-Day soldiers on Omaha Beach as a captain with the U.S. Air Force. Decades later he returned to Europe as the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra tour physician.

A professor of medicine at Pitt for 66 years, Caplan taught from 1946 to 2012 and was named a Master of the American College of Rheumatology. With a National Institutes of Health grant, he researched osteoarthritis in Pennsylvania coal miners in the 1960s. He traveled to Haiti, where he treated patients outside of rheumatology: "I carried a textbook and learned as I went," Caplan told the Pitt Medical Alumni Association upon receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017.

"I asked questions and, more importantly, I listened."

Caplan retired at age 96. Levenson—who remembers Caplan as a "second grandfather"—remarks, "If he could have kept going, he would have done it forever."

—John Hansen

## JAMES L. FUNDERBURGH III

JUNE 30, 1945–NOV. 27, 2019

James Funderburgh had a musical laugh that rang through the halls—sometimes even reaching the floors above and below his office. As Paul Kinchington, who holds Pitt's Joseph F. Novak, MD, Chair in Ophthalmology Research, remembers: "Jim laughed a lot. Loud and often. I could hear him from 50 feet away."

That laugh "always inspired me to enjoy my work," notes Funderburgh's mentee Yiqin Du, Pitt associate professor of ophthalmology and developmental biology.

A self-described "born scientist," Funderburgh was a professor of ophthalmology and the founder of Pitt's Corneal Cell Biology Lab. He shared his passion for corneal research with his wife and lifelong lab and research partner, Martha Funderburgh. They developed a groundbreaking treatment for corneal scarring: the injection of adult stem cells directly into the cornea. The treatment has brought healing to patients in India.

The discovery led to other landmark ophthalmologic procedures, including one affectionately termed "eye teeth"—the use of stem

cells extracted from teeth to heal corneas. "Jim was very good at thinking outside of the box," remembers his co-"eye teeth" researcher Fatima Syed-Picard, assistant professor in Pitt's School of Dental Medicine. That work is featured on the "Cornea-copia" episode of this magazine's podcast, Pitt Medcast, from 2016.

The Department of Ophthalmology has established the Funderburgh Corneal Regeneration Project, which, says Kinchington, "will continue in his name with the goal to use stem cells to restore corneal transparency in patients."

—Rachel Mennies



Funderburgh

## W. CORY M. JOHNSTON III

FEB. 25, 1973–FEB. 25, 2020

Cory Johnston's life was defined by his loved ones, his patients and the mountains. He grew up skiing in Colorado. After college at Yale, he joined a Utah ski patrol and witnessed a medical team treat an injured skier. In that moment, he decided to go to medical school.

At Pitt Med, Johnston (MD '06) was a top student. "He dazzled the surgeons," remembers neurologist and classmate Jordan Reichman (MD '06). Joan Harvey, retired associate dean for student affairs, says Johnston's evaluations highlighted his diligence, infectious enthusiasm and clinical judgment. Several said he was the best student they had ever worked with.

Cardiologist and classmate Kia Afshar (MD '06) remembers when they were third-year students and Johnston was asked to do a trauma survey. "You'd imagine [the surgeon] would go to the ER resident and attending on call, but he looked to Cory," says Afshar. "Cory did it so smoothly, as if that was his 50th one. And he was so humble."

At the University of Utah, where he did his general surgery residency, Johnston won the residency-wide teaching award. He completed a hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgery fellowship. Until his death from a skiing accident on his 47th birthday, he was a general surgeon at Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital in Oregon.

He was also husband to surgeon Pippa Newell and dad to Rocky, 6, and Bode, 4.

Afshar remembers him as a "phenomenal" researcher, educator, doctor, outdoorsman, family man and friend. —SPR



Johnston



Beering



Caplan

## FORGOTTEN LIVES HUNT-TOBEY RECOVERS HISTORY

BY DEBORAH M. TODD

When Bridget Hunt-Tobey took a course on human anatomy as part of Pitt's Biomedical Masters Program in fall 2018, her goal was to gain a more solid understanding of the human body. She later came to learn how anatomy could reveal glimpses of lives disregarded by American history.

Hunt-Tobey (MS '19), now a research technologist studying chronic kidney disease at Northwestern University, spent the summer of 2019 studying the remains of enslaved and free African Americans who'd worked at the Catoclin blast furnace in Maryland. Hunt-Tobey was an intern with the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative Because of Her Story program.

"You don't typically understand history through analysis of bones, you understand it from documents and artwork and storytelling, and this is one more way to do it. But for a population like enslaved African Americans, for whom there's very little documentation in the first place, it's one of the only options now," says Hunt-Tobey.

The charcoal blast furnace, which operated from around 1776 until 1903, forged iron for items ranging from household tools to the cannonballs fired by George Washington's troops. The proprietors were slave owners who did not maintain records on the lives of laborers. By

the mid-1800s, European immigrants began filling roles at the furnace, and the presence of the enslaved and free African Americans diminished.

"The absence of the story of the enslaved and free Black labor force at the furnace is one of the tragedy of slavery writ large: namely, the lack of a descendant community and erasure of the Black population and collective heritage from an era," says Kari Bruwelheide, a Smithsonian specialist in skeletal biology and Hunt-Tobey's mentor.

The process of rediscovering those stories began in earnest in 2015—four decades after the Maryland State Highway Administration uncovered remains during a road expansion. By then, techniques such as forensic facial reconstruction were available to researchers.

Hunt-Tobey used genetic marker information, data gleaned from the skeletons' struc-

tures, potential environmental contaminants at the furnace and information from medical literature to paint a broader picture of what the laborers' everyday lives might have looked like. Some cases, such as skeletons with elongated skulls caused by craniostenosis—a condition where an infant's skull bone fuses over its brain too early—will help researchers study potential genetic implications of the condition. Hunt-Tobey also saw telltale calluses on femurs, indicating that the person likely worked as a cobbler and used a leg as a platform for hammering out soles.

One woman's femur was misshapen from Legg-Calve-Perthes disease, which disrupts blood flow to the hip joint, resulting in brittle hip and femur bones. Typically, the flow returns and the bones heal. Yet, at the furnace, recovery time wasn't an option for the woman. "Instead of forming the classic ball shape you see in a femur, it looked like a mushroom head," said Hunt-Tobey. "She was able to walk and lived to be 35 or 40 years old, but she most likely walked with a limp and had some pain in her hip."

Hunt-Tobey credits her Pitt anatomy course and Sandra Murray, professor of cell biology, with giving her an eye for detecting abnormalities in bone. (Murray also demonstrated soft skills that Hunt-Tobey aspires to emulate today.)

"The reason anthropologists can learn as much as they do about an individual and extrapolate that to a population is by really focusing on minute details. That has already been something I've needed at this new job," Hunt-Tobey says. ■

—Adapted from *Pittwire*



Hunt-Tobey (left) piecing together people's stories.

MICHAEL BARNES/COURTESY OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

## IN MEMORIAM

### '40s

WILLIAM B. ZEILER, MD '45  
MAR 24, 2020

CHARLES E. CLARKE, MD '46  
JUL 26, 2020

E. KENNETH VEY, MD '48  
MAY 10, 2020

### '50s

ROBERT M. YANCHUS, MD '50  
FEB 9, 2020

CHARLES A. BRADLEY III, MD '54  
APR 17, 2020

WILLIAM R. WRIGHT, MD '54  
MAR 31, 2020

CHARLES R. WILSON JR., MD '55  
APR 17, 2020

BERNARD GOTTLIEB, MD '56  
JUL 25, 2020

RUDOLPH E. M. JANOSKO, MD '56  
MAR 8, 2020

MARTHA D. NELSON, MD '56  
AUG 6, 2020

GEORGE J. PAVLIC, MD '56  
MAR 27, 2020

EDWARD A. JAEGER, MD '57  
JUN 11, 2020

MURRAY SACHS, MD '57  
FEB 13, 2020

KEITH K. BUCK, MD '59  
APR 23, 2020

DENNY W. WALTERS, MD '59  
JAN 24, 2020

### '60s

STANLEY J. CHESLOCK, MD '60  
MAR 8, 2020

LAWRENCE FERLAN, MD '60  
JUL 2, 2020

ROBERT N. MOYERS, MD '62  
MAR 25, 2019

EDWARD R. MCFADDEN JR., MD '63  
FEB 3, 2020

ALEX AZAR, MD '64  
APR 6, 2020

BERTRAM H. LUBIN,  
MD '64, RES '66  
JUN 27, 2020

RONALD O. GILCHER SR.  
RES '66, FEL '68  
MAY 7, 2020

MOLLY T. VOGT, PHD '67  
FEB 9, 2020

### '70s

BRYAN JAMES STEVENS, MD '71  
MAR 15, 2020

BARRY J. KRAYNACK, MD '73  
JUN 26, 2020

DANIEL C. POSTELLON, MD '74  
APR 22, 2020

PHILIP MEYERS LANDAU, MD '76  
FEB 11, 2020

MAXINE K. OBLESKI, MD '76  
MAR 15, 2020

THEODORE W. UROSKIE, RES '76  
JUN 3, 2020

### '80s

HARVEY J. BALTHASER, MD '80  
OCT 26, 2019

SUSAN BASSION, MD '80  
MAR 10, 2019

DARRELL REED, FEL '83  
MAR 26, 2020

BENEDICT J. SEMMES III, FEL '83  
JUN 18, 2020

TABITHA A. HENDERSON, RES '86  
JUL 31, 2020

THEODORE P. CORCORAN, MD '89  
JUL 19, 2020

DANIEL I. KAUFER, RES '89  
JUL 2, 2020

### '90s

MARK R. DAGOSTINO, RES '91  
JUN 28, 2020

AILEEN D. CHANG, RES '94  
MAY 1, 2020

### FACULTY

CARL R. FUHRMAN, MD '79  
JUN 27, 2020

MIROSLAV KLAIN  
MAY 18, 2019

ARTHUR J. KOVEL  
APR 1, 2020

BING LIU  
MAY 2, 2020

UMA N. M. RAO  
APR 7, 2020