

INSIDE Medicine

May 2021

The Newsletter of the Department of Medicine

Pride Without Hubris

A message from the chair, Steve Abramson

“Pride is the cause of every deadly sin.” - Thomas Aquinas

Last week I shared some thoughts with the medical school’s graduating Class of 2021. The theme was that pride, without hubris, need not be a “*deadly sin*.” Portions of those comments are below:

Class of 2021, we congratulate you and your family on your graduation today. Each and every one of you have completed a remarkable journey to this moment and have accomplished so much along the way. Graduation, therefore, is a moment to celebrate with shared pride, pride felt not only by your family and friends, but by each of you individually. In fact, my advice on this day of your graduation is that you reflect on your journey and feel the pride of becoming a physician at the NYU Grossman School of Medicine.

Be proud of your personal achievements, you are among a generation who have learned medicine and cared for patients amidst a world-wide pandemic that ranks among the most deadly in history. Side-by-side with your classmates, you have confronted this pandemic with courage and dedication.

Be proud of your institution, the NYU Grossman School of Medicine, which marshalled the enormous skills of its physicians and scientists in the fight against SARS-Cov2 and redoubled its efforts to ensure health equity. At the epicenter of the first wave one year ago, NYU faculty made crucial clinical and research observations that have helped improve the care of patients world-wide.

And, be proud that you are now part of the extraordinary profession of medicine – and the contributions each of you will be able to make to others through the skills you have acquired. Appreciate the role of your profession during the stunning history of the past year, confronting a

deadly pandemic at numerous bedsides while partnering with scientists to bring a vaccine to millions worldwide.

So, congratulations Class of 2021, be proud of all that you have achieved, believe in yourself, have dedication and pride and go forward with confidence that you will accomplish great things in the future.

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Farewell to Katy Wesnousky

The job of a Department Administrator involves countless moving pieces, including fiscal health, efficiency, strategic growth, and more, all while working closely with faculty and staff within the department and across the institution.

Katy joined the Department of Medicine in 2012, just months before Superstorm Sandy hit New York City. Managing a crisis of that scope was a trial by fire, and she worked tirelessly to help the department through those difficult days, ensuring our recovery and growth. Over the past year, she played a critical role during the height of the pandemic, helping to launch the Covid Army, orchestrate coverage from around the country, and navigate the rapidly changing situation with ease.

With her tenure framed by these two devastating events, which she handled admirably, it's no wonder that Katy's leadership has helped the Department of Medicine grow in remarkable ways. One of her early priorities was developing a strong infrastructure among the administrative staff, which created a solid foundation for grant support and financial operations. She was involved in the recruitment and hiring of an extraordinary group of faculty over the years, as well as the launch of the One Faculty initiative, designed to create community among our faculty members.

In partnership with Dr. Abramson, and others among our faculty and staff, Katy has helped to energize the Department of Medicine. Her contributions are many, and she will be deeply missed.

Here, we share Katy's own words.

On team-building

One of the first things that I did was to help build an infrastructure of grant support and financial support. I was trying to create a sense of what the Department of Medicine could be administratively, and to see what value I could add to my team's jobs and how they could add value to their jobs in the same way.

With the One Faculty initiative, our goal was to create a common identity for Medicine, to bring together faculty from across our divisions and locations.

To be honest, the team that I have now is phenomenal. They will go on without me and be terrific. Building the department and building the staff is what I'm most proud of — the camaraderie, the reliance, and the collegiality we have.



On managing crises: how Superstorm Sandy prepared her for Covid

Hurricane Sandy was my initiation into NYU. It affected me personally and professionally. To be honest, it was important in helping prepare me for Covid. You knew you had to go all out for certain things. You'd be working 18 hours a day and not even think twice about it.

With Covid, I felt responsible for making sure that the hospitals were adequately staffed. I was on the daily calls with the chiefs of medicine about the load balance between the faculty, staff, and residents. You don't think about yourself. I was scared for my colleagues because some of them got sick. Early on, people didn't realize how transmissible it was. It was awful to see the doctors working on the wards turn out to be patients.

We also had to try to manage the staff and keep morale up. We had to keep the wheels turning. The normal things — payroll, personnel issues, grant changes — all had to happen as well.

On what she will miss most and least about her job

What I'm going to miss most are the people. I've never worked at a place with such collegiality, where I felt that people truly value each other. We have different strengths and we appreciate them. Sometimes when you're an administrator, you're low on the totem pole, but that's not true here. I'm really going to miss the interactions with my staff.

It's very bittersweet for me. I've built such good relationships with so many people that it's hard to let go. And I'm going to miss New York.

What am I going to miss least? The deadlines.

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## **In Their Own Words: Colleagues on Katy**

"Katy has been a true partner leading the department: smart, quick with a laugh, respected and tough as nails when needed. She will have a lasting impact on our department and community."

- *Steven B. Abramson, MD, Chair, Department of Medicine*

"Katy embodied the essence of the Department of Medicine and her ability to make things happen through her skill and dedication was extraordinary. And, in addition to all that talent came a wonderful sense of humor. She will be greatly missed!"

- *Mark Pochapin, MD, Clinical Vice Chair, Department of Medicine, Director, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology*

"Katy had a great combination of taking control of the department while also delegating details to her administrative staff. I learned from this — being on top of important issues while still trusting staff to handle the details. Many leaders create an atmosphere where staff are looking over their shoulders and therefore don't take initiative; from my observations, Katy fostered empowerment in her staff."

- *Doug Bails, MD, Chief of Medicine, Bellevue Hospital*



"Katy hired me 8 years ago as the Operations Manager to start-up practices of a young FGP. During this time, Katy has been an amazing mentor to me! She set the tone for putting together a team of administrators that today, I consider as family. I will miss Katy dearly! I wish her a wonderful new phase in her life!

- *Rocio Zito, Operations Manager, Faculty Group Practice*

**Continue reading more quotes from faculty and staff below**

(please scroll down if link does not work)



Above: Katy "taking over" Dr. Abramson's office while he was away

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# THE ADVISOR IS IN

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**Ira Goldberg, MD**

*Clarissa and Edgar Bronfman, Jr. Professor of Endocrinology  
Director, Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism*



## How to Get a Grant

### 1. Clarify what is known and what is not known or in controversy.

- Controversy is good. It allows you to propose a resolution.
- No one is excited to support data collections that do not answer a question.
- Make your studies as globally important as you can. Possible lines: “Our study on using lifestyle to reduce cardiac risk will uncover methods to increase patient compliance with other health-promoting activities.” “Learning why renal failure leads to kidney fibrosis will uncover basic processes that likely cause fibrosis in other organs.”

### 2. The hypothesis does not need to be correct, only reasonable.

- Take a stand.
- Having a hypothesis that is counter to the dogma is good.

### 3. In expected results, make it clear that if your hypothesis is wrong this is even more important than if it is right.

- Providing expected results allows the reviewer to understand the importance of your proposed work.
- You do not collect data to prove a hypothesis. Rather you test it; so make clear that you might be wrong.
- Include a line in expected results – usually the second paragraph starts like this, “Our hypothesis might be wrong; if so this will be even more important because

it will xxxxx”

[Continue reading](#)

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## The Historian Is In: America's First Female Medical Student

In January 1849, the Medical Institute of Geneva, New York (now Hobart College), broke tradition by awarding the nation's first medical degree to a woman—the British-born feminist Elizabeth Blackwell.

[Continue reading](#)



## Featured Student Piece: "Preround"

Jamie Fried's "Preround," winner of The Anthony J. Grieco Clerkship Award For Outstanding Essay In Creative Arts, is a multilayered piece, comprised of an original music composition and accompanying description: *"It's a thorny ostinato with a frantic pace that's a direct response to the feeling of being new on Bellevue inpatient medicine... The pulse felt right at 126 beats per minute, an anxiety-induced sinus tachycardia."*

[Continue reading & listen](#)

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# NEWS & AWARDS

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## **Brian Bosworth, MD, Appointed to Associate Chief Medical Officer**

**Brian Bosworth, MD**, has taken on the role of associate chief medical officer at our Manhattan main campus, effective May 1, reporting to Fritz François, MD, chief medical officer for NYU Langone Health. In his new role, Dr. Bosworth will continue to focus on optimizing our operations to deliver the highest level of safety and quality while continuing to enhance the patient experience. This includes refining protocols to improve standardization and escalation of care, reducing waste, and using technology and analytics to drive continuous improvement. He will engage with individual units to create better outcomes while facilitating staff engagement and creating an environment that fosters performance excellence.



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## **Joshua Chodosh, MD, MSHS, Named Director of the Division of Geriatric Medicine and Palliative Care**

**Joshua Chodosh, MD, MSHS**, has been named Director of the Division of Geriatric Medicine and Palliative Care, after previously serving as Interim Director since September 2020. He is the Michael L. Freedman Professor of Geriatric Research and a Professor of Medicine and Population Health.



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**Summer Reading with the Patient Experience Book Club**



NYU Langone Health's Patient Experience Book Club, founded by Dr. Katherine Hochman in 2011, brings faculty, staff, trainees, and students together to discuss and reflect upon important issues in patient care through the lens of literature. Over the years, participants have read over fifty books, including *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* by Leo Tolstoy, *Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison, *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi, to name just a few.



“Our book sessions get to the meat of what it means to be human. How better to connect with our patients?” says Dr. Hochman. “I am a better physician because of this group, and for this I am so thankful.”

Participation is open to all members of the NYU community. Please sign up via Eventbrite for the summer reading line-up in 3 separate links (one for each book) below.

- June: *In Shock* by Dr. Rana Awdish
- July: *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson
- August: *Quackery: A Brief History of the Worst Ways to Cure Everything* by Dr. Lydia Kang and Nate Pedersen

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## Meet New Faculty

**Matthew Vorsanger, MD**, a former fellow, has rejoined NYU Langone Health as a faculty member in the Division of Cardiology. Dr. Vorsanger is a native New Yorker, having grown up in Rockaway, Queens. He attended Yale University, earning his undergraduate degree in Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry. He then returned to New York, where he received his medical degree from NYU School of Medicine. Dr. Vorsanger remained at NYU for his internship and residency in Internal Medicine, as



well as an additional year as Chief Resident, and continued at NYU for fellowship training in Cardiovascular Disease. Following fellowship, he joined the faculty at Weill Cornell Medicine, where he was the site director for cardiology at New York Presbyterian-Lower Manhattan Hospital. Dr. Vorsanger's clinical interests include cardiac rehabilitation, vascular medicine and sonography, echocardiography, and preventive cardiology. He is thrilled to return to NYU Langone Health, where he will take the lead on creating and directing a new Cardiac Rehabilitation Center at Bellevue Hospital. He also will play a major role training our fellows in vascular imaging and vascular medicine, as well as serve as a lead preceptor in the Bellevue Cardiology Clinic.

Also from the Division of Cardiology: **Dr. Eugene Yuriditsky**, the Associate Director of the Tisch CICU, recently became the division's first ACGME Cardiology Critical Care fellow. He will return to the faculty in January 2021. **Dr. Sam Bernard** joined the division this academic year as a dual trained critical care cardiologist, and **Dr. Ray Pashun** will be joining for the 2021-22 academic year after he completes his critical care fellowship at Stanford.

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## **NYU Langone's Patient Experience Innovation Pitch Showcase Winner**

**Anand Viswanathan, MD**, Medical Director of the 10th Floor Unit in Kimmel Pavilion, won both the judges' and Audience Choice awards to receive top honors in the Patient Experience Innovation Pitch, for his "Fishing for Compliments" innovation. Noting that morale is boosted when receiving compliments, Dr. Viswanathan has formally put this in practice by encouraging patients to acknowledge staff who provide excellent service. Patients can use their mobile device to scan a QR code, which is made available in their hospital rooms. They are then taken to a link where they can give a comment. [Learn more about this and other projects.](#)





## In Their Own Words: Colleagues on Katy (continued)

"Katy was incredibly supportive of me when I came to NYU from Penn 6 1/2 years with scant knowledge about the nuts and bolts of running a Division. Her guidance has been instrumental in the growth of our Division's clinical and research enterprise."

- *Daniel Serman, MD, Director, Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine*

"'What about Frank?' Katy had an amazing way of seeing bigger opportunities for people that they never saw for themselves. For me this led to the most important opportunity of my career when she suggested me for Chief of Medicine in Brooklyn. I am forever grateful."

- *Frank Volpicelli, MD, Chief of Medicine, NYU Langone Hospital-Brooklyn*

"I want to thank Katy for the many challenges and successes, but most of all for her guidance. As the saying goes: 'success is no accident.'"

- *Marian De Backer, Program Director, Research*

"It's hard to imagine the Department of Medicine without Katy by Steve's side. After 9 years her absence will be felt throughout the department and we wish her the best with her family. She won't be soon forgotten."

- *Jill Buyon, MD, and Jim Darrow, Director and Administrator, Division of Rheumatology*

"Katy has been a strategic force in our Department – always thinking three steps ahead, anticipating challenges and leading us to success. Our new Division of Hospital Medicine thanks Katy for her unwavering support and steadfast guidance."

- *Katherine Hochman, MD, Director, Division of Hospital Medicine*

"Great teams don't just happen... Thank you, Katy! Enjoy your retirement!"

- *Elsa Nunez, Manager, Department of Medicine*

"Katy's witty humor painted enjoyable canvases that were always engaging."

- *Fritz Francois, MD, Chief Medical Officer*

"Katy established a very tight management team that not only worked hard to make their areas and Medicine overall 'the best' but supported each other and their own teams in the process! We appreciate her leadership, her direct, no nonsense but friendly style, and wish her all the best on the West Coast!"

- *Ron Slivinski, Administrator, Division of Cardiology*

"Katy was an administrative force! Never was there any ambiguity in her decisions and I always appreciated her administrative support. She will be greatly missed."

- *Joshua Chodos, MD, Director, Division of Geriatric Medicine and Palliative Care*

"Katy, you always found the way to get the best out of all of us! Thanks for your unwavering support and guidance through all the challenges and happy triumphs. Looking forward to the west coast reunion! We will miss you dearly!"

- *Dayana Venero, Program Manager, Internal Medicine Residency*

"Katy has built a collaborative team over the years that share her dedication to this Department and its continued success. We wish her a long, healthy and happy retirement!"

- *Lauren Soneira, Katie Singer, Susan Amato, Victoria Neville  
Division Administrators*



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## Upcoming CME Activities

### **Post-Acute Covid Syndrome**

June 8, 7:45am - 4:00pm

Course Directors: Shari Brosnahan, MD; Rany Condos, MD

Virtual Webinar ~ [Learn more](#)

### **Big Gut Seminars: Focus on Complex Esophageal Disease: Emerging Concepts and Controversies**

July 16, 11:45am - 5:00pm

Course Directors: Tanuja Damani, MD; Abraham Khan, MD

Virtual Webinar ~ [Learn more](#)

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We welcome your announcements of awards, honors, publications, presentations, new programs, and events. Email us at [DOMcommunications@nyulangone.org](mailto:DOMcommunications@nyulangone.org).

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