

INSIDE *Medicine*

December 2020

The Newsletter of the Department of Medicine

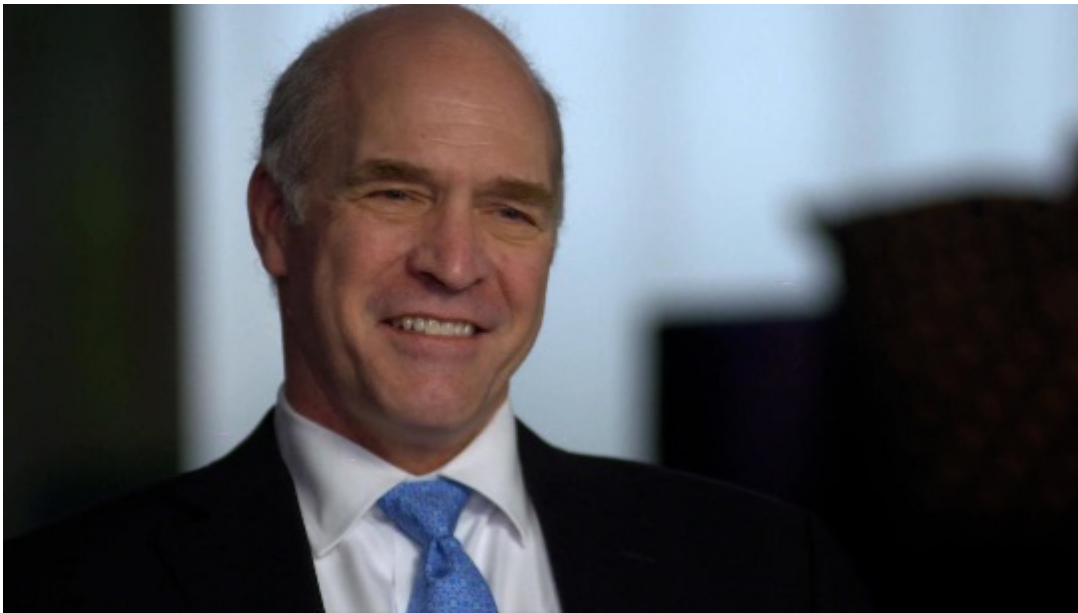
Silver Linings

A message from the chair, Steve Abramson

We began 2020 with a pandemic that rivals the Great Influenza of 1918 and continues to this day. National deaths may soon approach the 500,000-800,000 seen in that past pandemic.

This issue of the Newsletter allows us to reflect on the *Silver Linings* of the past year. We have a vaccine in record time based on breakthrough technologies and the tireless efforts of researchers such as Mark Mulligan and his team. We have seen the emergence of junior faculty, among them Drs. Ortigoza, Haberman and Brosnahan, who not only served on the frontlines as part of the COVID Army, but joined the research efforts to study, understand and treat the SARS-CoV-2 virus. And, in the reflections of our faculty, housestaff, and staff below, we see the personal bonds that sustained each of us during the cold period of COVID isolation.

We end 2020 reflecting upon a year of personal resilience and the fight together against the new COVID reality. I want to thank every member of the department for their individual strengths, talents and commitment that have shined during this challenge. May we all build on the Silver Linings of 2020 and celebrate the New Year with renewed optimism.



Developing the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID Vaccine

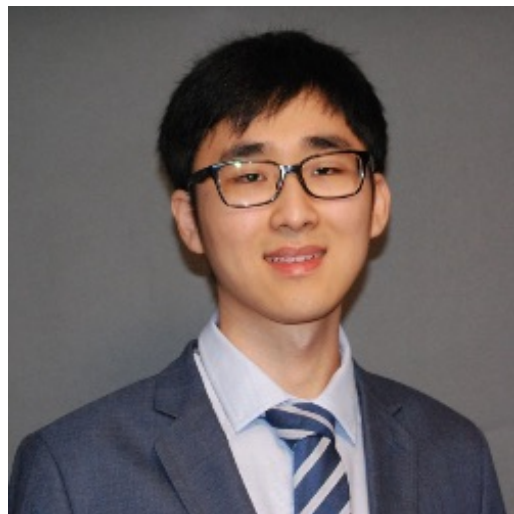
Mark Mulligan, MD, director of the NYU Langone Vaccine Center and the Division of Infectious Diseases and Immunology, was featured in a *60 Minutes* segment on the scientists and advances in biotechnology behind a COVID-19 vaccine that could help end the pandemic.

[Watch the segment](#)



The Historian Is In: Dr. Joseph Goldberger

David Oshinsky, PhD, tells of one of



Student Essay: "Words as Medicine"

"I have always had trouble relating to this idea

our medical school's notable alumni, Dr. Joseph Goldberger, whose research on the prevention of pellagra demonstrated that the disease was a nutritional deficiency—not a transmissible disease requiring quarantine, as thought by many doctors and scientists at the time.

[Learn More](#)

of 'words as medicine' on a personal level. That is, until my encounter with Ms. A"

William Miao's essay, winner of the Clerkship Award For Outstanding Essay In Medical Humanism, describes the ways in which words can be used by physicians to console, educate, and motivate patients.

[Read the essay](#)

Junior Faculty Research Showcase



At a recent Medicine Grand Rounds, Drs. Mila Ortigoza, Rebecca Haberman, and Shari Brosnahan presented their COVID-related research. Learn more about their work:

- ["COVID-19 and Convalescent Plasma,"](#) Mila Ortigoza, MD, PhD, Instructor, Division of Infectious Diseases and Immunology
- ["COVID-19 and Rheumatic Diseases,"](#) Rebecca Haberman, MD, Clinical Instructor, Division of Rheumatology
- ["COVID-19 and Thromboembolic Disease,"](#) Shari Brosnahan, MD, Assistant Professor, Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine

**Silver Linings:
Some Good Things That Happened in 2020...**

As this depressing year comes to a close, we are more than ready to put it behind us. Yet, despite its tremendous challenges, it also brought perspective and perhaps a new appreciation of what matters most. Here are some of the uplifting things that happened to members of the Department of Medicine this year.

(If you are interested in being included in a future issue, please send a photo and short description to DOMCommunications@nyulangone.org.)

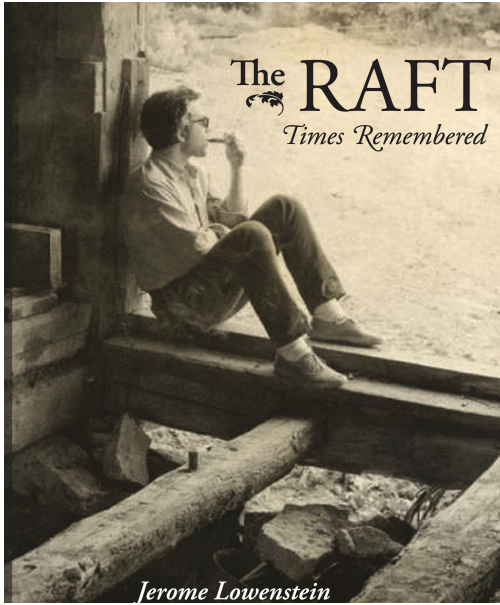


"This spring was a physical and emotional roller coaster. In April I was bed-ridden for three weeks with COVID-19, losing 15 pounds and requiring home O2. Fortunately, my two daughters, my son-in-law and my first brand new granddaughter had moved in with us just a few weeks earlier. Being together as a three-generation family and especially bonding with the new baby every day for the subsequent six months was an uplifting and joyous silver lining to this otherwise most challenging year. "

Glenn Fishman, MD

Director, Leon H. Charney Division of Cardiology

Vice Chair for Research, Department of Medicine



"I have been hunkered down, but able to see the VA from my window. Aside from online teaching, I have managed to work through some of my feelings by writing a memoir of a special part of my life."

Jerome Lowenstein, MD

Professor of Medicine,

Division of Nephrology

Director, Humanistic Aspects of Medical

Education (HAME)

"My wife and I had an opportunity to spend a week far away from everybody in Acadia. We did several amazing hikes!"

David Kudlowitz, MD

Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine

Merrin Master Clinician Fellow

Inpatient Site Director, Tisch Hospital





"In addition to the incredible support of family, friends and colleagues, my two German Shepherd pups, Hero (right) and Saga (left), helped me out of the COVID doldrums. The day starts at 5AM for a brisk morning jaunt and by 6AM they are devouring their favorite breakfast, burgers and rice."

Katherine Hochman, MD, MBA, FHM

Associate Professor of Medicine; Associate Chair for Quality, Medicine;
Assistant Chief of Medicine; Section Chief, DGIMCI



"After so many worries in 2019 and fretting about my family staying healthy during this pandemic, I am happy to have received a wonderful gift on November 27th, my grandson, Christian Anthony Rios, Jr. I am very thankful!"

Madeline Rios

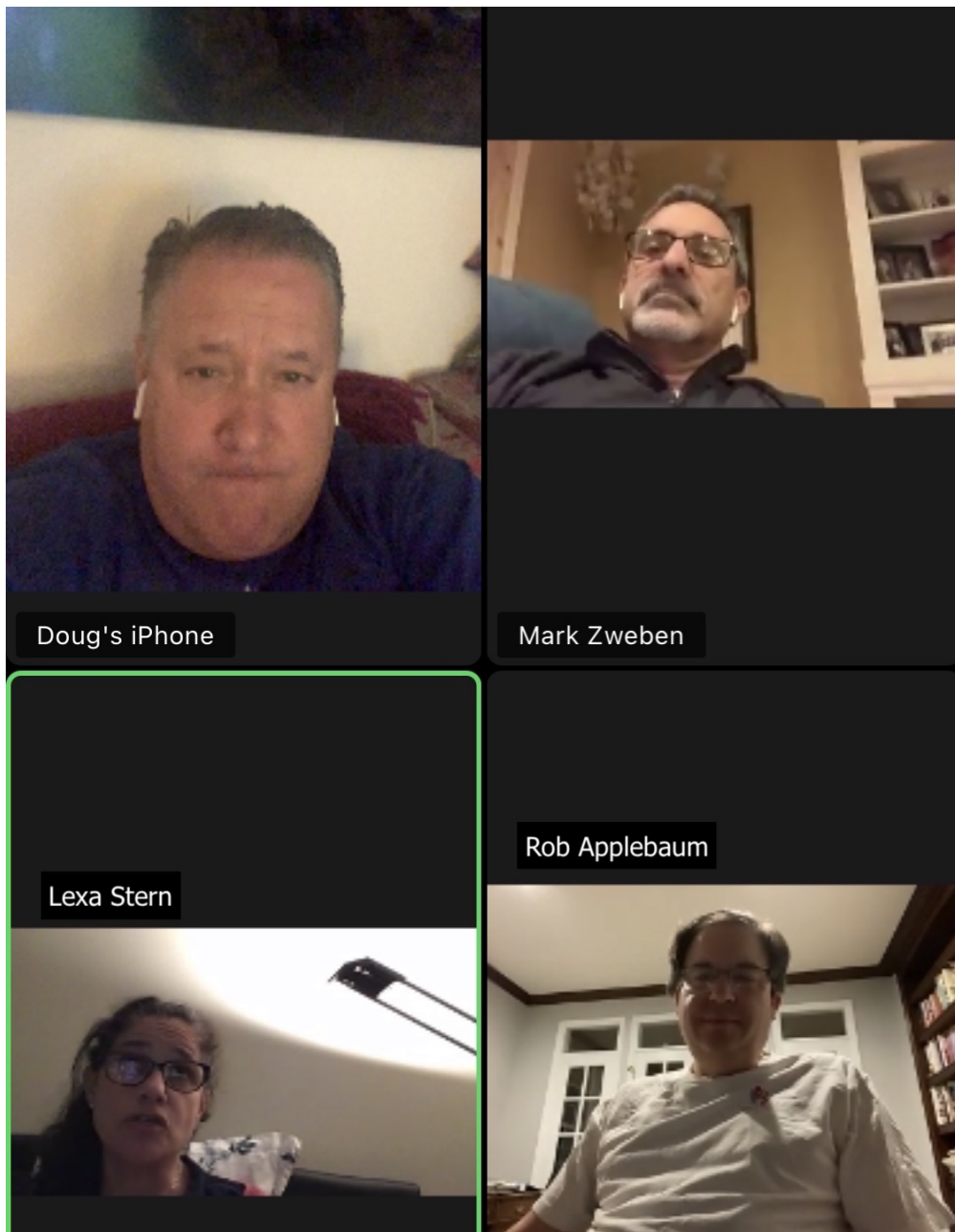
Executive Assistant to the Chair

"My wife, Carol, and I are learning to make fruit tarts. This is our first."

Martin Kahn, MD

Joel E. and Joan L. Smilow Professor of
Cardiology, Associate Chair for Academic Affairs





"A residency at NYU/Bellevue teaches invaluable lessons; it's busy and intense. In the early 1990s, we experienced that intensity first-hand when the AIDS epidemic and AIDS related-illnesses dominated our training.

By the time we graduated, we had shared a major part of our lives together. Then we went our separate ways, abruptly. Almost three decades passed; we had families and built our own lives. Fast forward to April, 2020, when Mark Zweben, now a cardiologist in Delaware, took the initiative and arranged a Zoom meeting. Three of us caught up, and each was assigned to invite an old residency friend. Now we have twice-monthly Zoom meetings with 15-20 people.

It's been a humbling coping mechanism, and I have no doubt that had it not

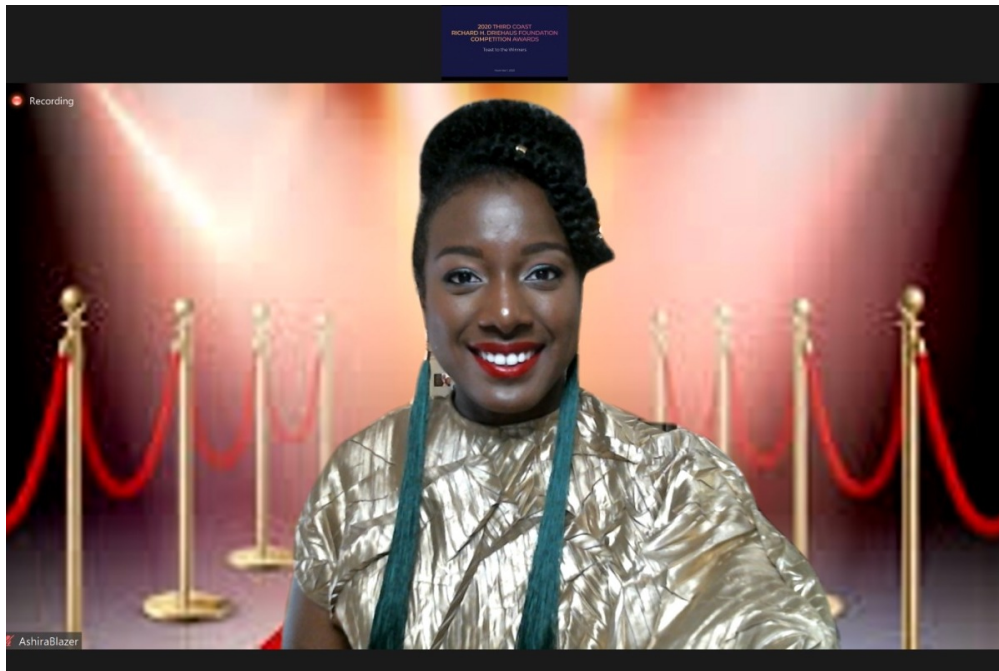
been for COVID, this would never have happened.

Here's a pic of me with Mark Zweben, Lexa Stern, and Rob Applebaum: three people I haven't seen in person since 1995!"

Doug Bails, MD

Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Medicine

Chief of Medical Service, Bellevue Hospital



"I got an international podcast award! I did an episode on COVID-19 for one of my friend's (super dope) podcast. The episode was called 'Dat Rona,' and it was aimed at educating Black and Brown people about the virus. It ended up winning an Impact award during the [Third Coast Festival](#) this year."

Ashira Blazer, MD MSCI

Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of Rheumatology



"On April 1 my niece was born, the first of the next generation. My wife (an internal medicine resident at a different institution) and I drove out to see her on our first day off together, a few days after she came home."

Samuel Cytryn, MD

Senior Chief Resident, Internal Medicine

"A silver lining of the pandemic has been working from home some days, which means more time with my sweet children!"

Kate Otto Chebly, MD, MPA

Chief Resident, Primary Care/Internal Medicine





"Inspired by one of my colleagues, I've made it an annual tradition to take my birthday off from work and come up with a 'treat yourself' day — and I didn't want this year to be any different. Obviously my activity options were more limited than usual, though, so inspired by another one of my colleagues, I went for a solo hike — following blazes and forgoing maps. When I reached the lake, it felt like one of my greatest accomplishments of the year."

Ann Garment, MD

Clinical Associate Professor, DGIMCI

Section Chief, General Internal Medicine, Bellevue Hospital Center



"Two nice things in 2020 for me are: My son Mark and his wife Kristin had a baby girl (Madison Jean Sliwinski) in April. Her picture (with me) is attached. In addition, my daughter Lauren got married to Ryan Jones, despite her big wedding reception being delayed a year due to the pandemic!"

Ron Sliwinski, MPA

Administrator, Leon H. Charney Division of
Cardiology

"I have made a habit of walking in the hiking trails near my house and enjoy the serenity and nature."

Lynn Buckvar-Keltz, MD

Associate Professor of Medicine

Associate Chair for Professional Development





"Our family's Vitamin D levels clearly increased this year with the amount of time that we spent outside together. Among the highlights were biking the Bronx River Parkway every Sunday, hiking through local parks, and clearing trails at the Marshland Conservatory in Rye, NY with my daughter."

Brian Bosworth, MD

Chief of Medicine, Tisch Hospital



"I am grateful for our two new granddaughters born in 2020: Sylvia and McKenzie. The Facetime sessions with them have brought my wife and me many laughs and smiles. And our two shepherds have been great company!"

Mark Mulligan, MD

Thomas S. Murphy, Sr. Professor, Department of Medicine

Director, Division of Infectious Diseases and Immunology

Director, NYU Langone Vaccine Center



"I took a kayak certification course over the summer from an outfitter that launches into the Hudson from 44th St. I went on to take trips every weekend and, amidst COVID, gained a deeper appreciation for the natural beauty surrounding our cityscape, how to read the water (the Hudson River is more of a 'tidal estuary' for the first 100 miles, meaning the direction of flow changes with the tides), and the need to advocate for protecting our ecosystem and waterways. The picture is from a trip past the GW bridge to Fort Lee Historic Park in the Palisades."

Scarlett Murphy, MD

Chief Resident, Internal Medicine

Quality Improvement and Patient Safety

"In an effort to reduce public transport exposure, I did up my biking commute which has definitely improved sanity.

Listen to a podcast, get to experience the beauty of the Hudson even in NYC – great way to start (and sometimes end each day). About 70 minutes from home each way down the greenway."

David Charytan, MD MSc

Director, Division of Nephrology





"It all started with a couple of plants here and there then I spiraled into becoming a full-fledged plant mom. I've never had a green thumb, have killed plants in the past by under-watering, overwatering and just plain forgetfulness. During the pandemic though, the care of plants gave me a sense of connection, stability and hope."

Elsa Nunez

Manager, Department of Medicine



"On the toughest days of the pandemic, I would remind myself: in just a few months, you're going to have a baby! And here he is. Very grateful for the love and support I've received as a new dad from my NYU family."

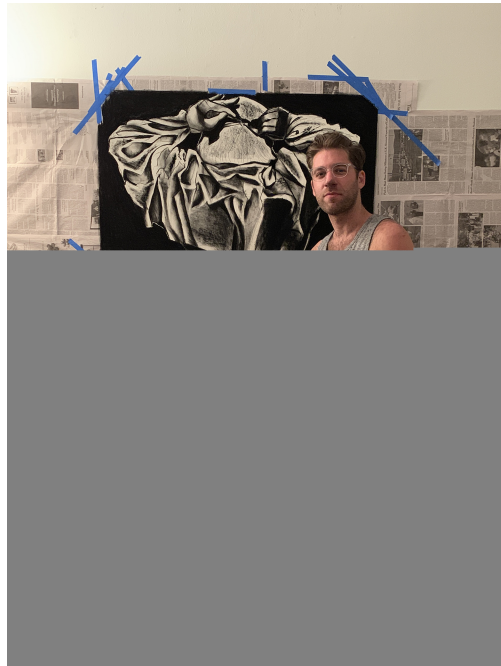
Charles Gillihan, MD

Internal Medicine Resident

"I've been finding time for creative outlets to help express myself during these trying times."

Michael Natter, MD

Endocrinology Fellow PGY-4





"When I was 16, my father and I purchased a rusted out 1968 Chevelle Malibu Convertible which stayed with me during high school, college, summer jobs, and medical school. I loved working on that car, and nothing made me feel freer than when driving my old convertible with the top down. Unfortunately, it needed a lot of work and parking became increasingly difficult as a medical student in NYC, so I was forced to sell it in 1984, always vowing to buy that same car someday in the future.

The years passed and I have been driving my family crazy talking about getting this car for 36 years. However, after COVID and recognizing that nothing is certain in life, my wife and I decided that now is the right time to look for a '68 Chevelle. After a bit of searching online, we purchased a Chevelle that is the exact same year, model and color as my original car. The previous owners had the car in their family for 51 years and called her Gertrude. After Gertrude gets her COVID test, I am hoping to drive her before the end of the year."

Mark Pochapin, MD

Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs

Director, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology

Sholtz/Leeds Professor of Gastroenterology



"Photography allowed me to enjoy the small details...on the road ahead."

Fritz François, MD, MSc

Chief Medical Officer

Professor, Department of Medicine

"My husband, Anthony Amato, and I were married on 10/24/20. Followed COVID rules: 50 people; temperature checks at venue; face masks; hand sanitizer!"

Susan Lucaj, MBA

Adminrator, Division of Infectious Disease and Immunology, Division of Geriatric Medicine & Palliative Care





"Whenever I could get a day off I would drive up to northern NJ and spend the day with my mom outside. Each time I would bring her a new paint by number to help keep her busy, so she would have something to do while she was quarantining. We call her Amy Da Vinci!"

Doreen Addrizzo-Harris, MD

Professor of Medicine; Associate Director for Clinical and Academic Affairs;
Program Director, Fellowship Training; Co-Director, NYUL Pulmonary Associates
Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine



"Over the fall my family and I discovered a love for hiking as a way to get away from screens, devices, and the daily stresses. It became a welcome escape for all!"

Frank Volpicelli, MD

Associate Chief Medical Officer,

Chief of Medicine

NYU Langone Hospital-Brooklyn

"The major thing that has helped keep me sane and somewhat healthy during the course of the pandemic has been hiking in Valley Forge National Park, which is adjacent to the rental townhouse relocated to after a catastrophic house fire in September. The various and changing seasonal vistas of Valley Forge, including the aptly named 'Mount Misery,' have been a balm for all the stresses of life and work during the pandemic. I go for 3-4 mile hikes each day over the weekend past historical landmarks, covered bridges, and creeks with fly fishermen plying their craft."

Daniel Sterman, MD

Director, Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care,
and Sleep Medicine





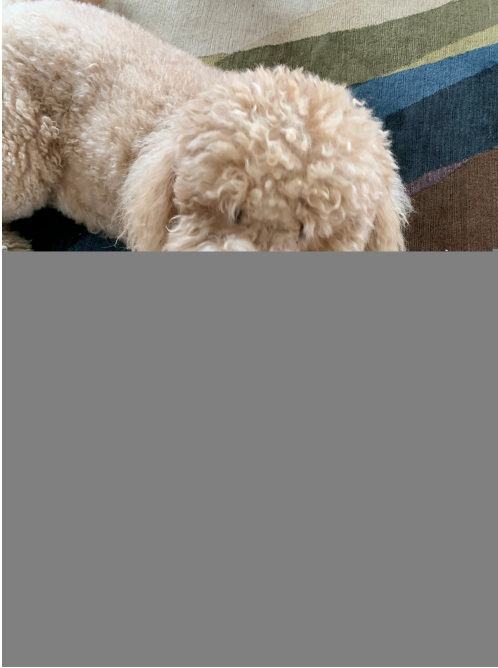
"In New York City the pandemic pretty much put a hold on so much of what we like to do in the city (theater, opera, restaurants) but resulted in much closer family ties. My son, daughter-in-law, and their 2-year-old (the dog too) have now made us a multi-generational household and, because of the pandemic-imposed changes in their busy social lives, my daughter and her husband have spent much more time with us than before. I had forgotten what it was like to live with a 2-year-old but, as a grandfather, I get to spoil him rotten and hand off responsibility when things get messy. Spending more time with my family has been one of the few bright lights of an otherwise awful year."

Bruce Cronstein, MD

Paul R. Esserman Professor of Medicine

Director, NYU-H+H Clinical and Translational Science Institute

Director, Division of Translational Medicine



"Things that kept me sane: My furry friend and dining outside. Here is Brooks dining inside with his favorite sushi."

Sondra Zabar, MD

Director, Division of General Internal Medicine

and Clinical Innovation

Director, Standardized Patient Program

"I've counted quite a few blessings in this dreary year. In terms of something specific that happened, I think back to the height of the pandemic in April, when the weather and sun allowed me to take regular evening walks in Riverside Park with my wife to enjoy the cherry blossoms!"

David Stern, MD

Vice Chair for Education and Faculty Affairs,

Department of Medicine





"We adopted an adorable 8 week only puppy over the summer. Meet Coda!"

Tanya Wilcox, MD

Cardiology Fellow



"The *New York Times* reminds me that none of us do anything unique. I learned to bake my own biscotti (Joy of Cooking recipe) while my wife baked sour dough bread. Sundays found us on the bicycle trails in Putnam and Dutchess

Counties. The view from the railroad bridge in Poughkeepsie is worth the 12 miles that we rode from Hopewell Junction.

Here is some good (?) news. During the windstorm in NYC in August, my car was parked on West 108th Street near Broadway. We used the insurance money to buy a new car to replace our old one with >100K miles and enough NYC street parking dents to look like it survived D-Day. "

Ira Goldberg, MD

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

We welcome your announcements of awards, honors, publications, presentations, new programs, and events. Email us at DOMcommunications@nyulangone.org.

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