

- Remembering William J. Harrington Jr.
- Best & Brightest: Reginald Saint-Hilaire
- Retired Curriculum Dean Reflects

# MEDICAL ALUMNI NEWS

For Alumni of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

## A Banquet of Memorable Moments

ALUMNI AWARDS EVENT REUNITES CLASSMATES, RENEWS OLD BONDS

The capstone event of Medical Alumni Weekend tends to be the Alumni Awards Banquet, and in keeping with tradition, the 2009 version didn't disappoint. The venue changed this year, with the banquet moving from its longtime Coral Gables home at the Biltmore Hotel to the Hilton Miami Downtown hotel.

However, some things—such as the joy of reconnecting with people you've gone through gross anatomy, biochemistry, and clinical rotations with—never change. Bonds renewed during Medical Alumni Weekend and the Alumni Awards Banquet are the kind that stay rock solid, whether graduation was a year ago or, in the case of Tim Smith, M.D. '59, half a century in the past.

"I enjoyed the reunion—it was very nice to see those old people," laughs Smith, who still practices family medicine in Panama City. In Smith's estimation, his alma mater is now "light-years" ahead of where it was when he was a medical student.

While riding in a cab from Miami International Airport to downtown Miami during Medical Alumni Weekend, Smith passed the Miller School of Medicine and was amazed at the medical campus that's sprung up around Jackson Memorial Hospital. "When I was there, it was not surrounded by

high-rise buildings," he marvels.

Ophthalmologist Salina Lin, M.D. '99, says this year's Alumni Awards Banquet, which took place March 7, gave UM medical school grads an opportunity to "see your friends again and catch up with people you haven't talked to in a while but you think of often and fondly.

"It's also nice to be able to network," observes Lin, who's in private practice in Tampa.

Jennifer Marks, M.D. '84, a Miller School professor of medicine, Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, was a member of the Alumni Board and was on the committee that planned the Alumni Awards Banquet.

"It was fun," she says of the event, which saw Barry Byer, M.D. '69, and Joseph A. Gurri, M.D. '75, receive the Anastasia Award. "There were three tables of 1984 graduates, some of whom are retired or onto their second careers," Marks proudly notes, adding that the Class of 1984 is taking an active role supporting philanthropy benefiting the Miller School of Medicine.

"It was a privilege to go to medical school," Marks says. "I always thought that if I was in a position to give back to the school, I would. I hope my classmates in other graduating classes do the same."

Thirty years after earning his medical degree at the University of



Barry Byer, M.D. '69, and Joseph A. Gurri, M.D. '75, received the Anastasia Award during Medical Alumni Weekend.

Miami, plastic surgeon Alan Serure, M.D. '79, found himself marveling at the diverse interests his classmates have taken on. "We've had people become academicians, educators, all kinds of things," Serure says. "Everyone here is successful—they're at the top of their games. And I think, most of all, they're all still thrilled and proud to be doctors."

medicine in the area; therefore, much of his focus was on how the Class of 1999 had changed in the intervening years.

"Our class was pretty special," Green says. "We were very close and we did everything together. And I think we've been able to maintain those relationships."

Bonds renewed during Medical Alumni Weekend are the kind that stay rock solid.

Equally pleasing to Serure is the degree to which the medical school has been transformed since 1979. "We were a very, very good medical school then, and now we are as good as it gets—second to none," he says. "That's all a part of maturation and growth, and I think we

all delight in what's happened in the past 30 years."

The transformation wasn't quite as startling for North Miami Beach dermatologist Andy Green, M.D. '99, since it's only been a decade since he graduated. Green also practices

"My classmates, by and large, are doing fine," adds Green. "I actually recognize all of them—I was worried about that for a while! It's almost as though the time never elapsed."

Ophthalmologist Tom Coffman, M.D. '69, didn't fare quite as well with identifying some of his old colleagues, but enjoyed himself nonetheless. "I only recognized one person out of the class, actually," Coffman laughs. "We're all older and grew beards and things."

"I got involved in ophthalmology while doing research at Bascom Palmer in 1967 and 1968, and it set up my career in ophthalmology very well," Coffman says. "The medical school is fantastic, and I would never miss a reunion if I could help it."



Catching up, renewing bonds, and enjoying the festivities at the Medical Alumni Weekend Alumni Awards Banquet were, clockwise from left, Tom Coffman, M.D. '69; Salina Lin, M.D. '99; Alan Serure, M.D. '79; Tim Smith, M.D. '59; Jennifer Marks, M.D. '84; and Andy Green, M.D. '99.

# Remembering an Outstanding Colleague

MEDICAL SCION WILLIAM J. HARRINGTON JR. MADE HIS OWN NAME IN A CHALLENGING DISCIPLINE

Bearing the name of an accomplished parent can be a blessing or a curse, as the late William J. Harrington Jr., M.D. '84, discovered before becoming a renowned Miller School authority on viral-induced cancers.

Co-leader of the Viral Oncology Program at the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center when he died unexpectedly in January of a cerebral hemorrhage at the age of 54, Harrington was named for a Miller School legend—right down to the middle initial.

The elder William J. Harrington, M.D., who passed away in 1992, was an internationally known blood specialist, chairman of the Miller School's Department of Medicine, and founder of the prestigious William J. Harrington Medical Training Programs for Latin America and the Caribbean.

That placed lofty expectations upon Bill Harrington Jr. during his days as a University of Miami undergrad. When he took a free-spirited approach to academics, a tense William J. Harrington and William J. Harrington heart-to-heart ensued.

"When my dad saw that Bill wasn't doing as well as he could have in college, he strongly suggested that Bill break with his environment a little bit," recalls the younger Harrington's brother, Tom Harrington, M.D. '85, assistant professor of clinical medicine, Division of Hematology/Oncology.

## Brazil Experience Influential

"When we were young, we traveled quite a bit to Peru and Colombia on family trips with my dad," says Tom Harrington, who's three and a half years younger than his late brother. "So we had an interest in South America. Because it had a different language, we were not quite as

familiar with Brazil, but it was a very important country in our Latin America program.

"Dad was able to get Bill to go down to Porto Alegre, Brazil, and he lived there for about a year and a half," Harrington says. "The people of Brazil are so fun and informal, and they have a joyous personality. That sort of clicked with Bill's informal, fun-loving personality."

Thus began a lifelong love affair with Brazil that would later play a role in Bill Harrington's medical endeavors. Life in Brazil "stimulated some of the humanitarian impulses that my dad was hoping it would stimulate," Tom Harrington says. It was in Brazil, too, that Harrington would later meet his wife, Tania.

More mature and focused after his Brazilian interlude, Bill Harrington took pre-med courses at Florida International University and gained admission to the Miller School of Medicine.

## Novel Work in Oncology

Like his father and brother, Harrington felt totally at ease with medicine, and eventually became a professor of medicine in the Division of Hematology/Oncology. His research uncovered, among other things, a novel approach to attacking

viral-mediated tumors that had proved resistant to chemotherapy. He had also collaborated with investigators in Brazil to develop new therapies against Epstein-Barr-related lymphoma.

Harrington was a healthy man who could often be found at the Medical Wellness Center. His death



**Extraordinary achievements, tragic loss:** William J. Harrington Jr. made several remarkable contributions to the distinguished medical legacy he inherited before his death last January.

on January 29 sent shock waves across the Miller School.

"As a final generous act, his organs were donated to benefit others, one of many wonderful legacies he leaves behind," says W. Jarrard Goodwin, M.D., F.A.C.S., director, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. "It is hard to imagine our cancer center without Bill. His leadership and

"Over the last decade, he parlayed his international experience and insights into a rich collaborative cancer research program with colleagues from South and Central America."

Harrington was proud of his standing within the Miller School and the world of medicine, says Tom Harrington. "Bill attracted major grants and enjoyed major cooperation with other physicians around the world," Harrington says. "He also had excellent clinical insights."

While Bill Harrington Jr. lived a life largely free of regrets, one thing always bothered him, his brother reveals. "Bill was sad that my dad died before he established his reputation on his own," Harrington says.

"Maybe," he adds with a smile, "they're somewhere going over their accomplishments right now."

Harrington is survived by his wife, Tania; their four children; one grandchild; his mother; two brothers; and one sister.

His leadership and vision helped create one of the nation's preeminent viral oncology research programs.

vision helped create one of the nation's preeminent viral oncology research programs, and his work was respected worldwide.

"As if this were not enough, Bill also continued his father's legacy through the remarkable success of the Harrington program," Goodwin adds.

## BEST & BRIGHTEST

*Profiles of exceptional Miller School students*

Miller School student **Reginald Saint-Hilaire**, Class of 2010, had a pretty good feel for health care delivery before setting foot in medical school or performing his first medical rotation: Saint-Hilaire's father, Lemoine Saint-Hilaire, is a Broward County pharmacist, while family matriarch Marie J. Saint-Hilaire works as a registered nurse in Pompano Beach.

Still, learning about patients vicariously and seeing them up close and personal are two different things. Saint-Hilaire found it thrilling to actually start encountering medical scenarios he'd heard about during dinner-table conversations.

"I just finished a psychiatry rotation," says Saint-Hilaire, whose likeness can be seen smiling from giant UHealth posters scattered around the medical campus, leading to good-natured ribbing from classmates. "Academically, everything is going well. I'm just going through rotations and doing my reading and learning a lot."

With his third year of medical school over, Saint-Hilaire says he's feeling pressure to pick a medical specialty. "I have varied interests, from the procedural or surgical to the very general, like primary care," he says. "I haven't made up my mind."

During his first year at the Miller School, Saint-Hilaire remembers how professors

continually banded about the term 'lifelong learner,' and what an abstraction those words were at the time. "I think I've come to understand what it means," he reflects.

"Now I'm getting a grasp of how quickly things change, and how on top of things you have to be. You have to constantly be reading and refreshing your memory, because it's impossible to remember everything all the time."

The recipient of a \$10,000 trustee scholarship that's renewed annually, Saint-Hilaire says the money has been helpful in defraying some of his medical school costs. The monetary assistance has also inspired him.

"When I get into a position to be able to help people to do the same thing," he says, "I definitely will, because that's what keeps the cycle going."



# Potter Reflects on Life Post-Retirement

FORMER CURRICULUM DEAN COMBINES PASTORAL LIFESTYLE WITH CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT

Nearly a year has passed since Priscilla Potter, M.D. '93, Ph.D., traded in flat, subtropical Miami for the hills and occasional snow of Charlottesville, Virginia.

Potter had been a Miller School associate professor of neurology for 11 years and an associate dean for curriculum for eight years when she retired in 2008. These days her mornings are taken up by four dogs and two horses—a Swedish warmblood and a Hanoverian—that roam a plot of land inhabited by foxes, deer, and wild turkeys.



Priscilla Potter, M.D. '93, had been the Miller School's associate dean for curriculum for eight years when she retired in 2008.

"To get up and not go to work is quite different," notes Potter, who used to arise mulling issues associated with Miller School curriculum. Dealing with those issues was something she excelled at.

"We salute her for bringing a

generation of students the academic opportunity that would not have been possible without her understanding, her compassion, and her desire to see them succeed," Miller School Dean Pascal J. Goldschmidt, M.D., says of Potter.

Despite Potter's retirement, medicine hasn't lost its lure: She returned to the Miller School in March to give a lecture for the freshman neuroscience and behavioral science module. "And I still come back once every quarter to give lectures to the residents in neurology," she says.

Born in Washington, D.C., and raised in Indianapolis, Potter was steeped in the biomedical sciences growing up: Her father was a psychiatrist, her mother a pharmacist. She earned her bachelor's degree in microbiology from Purdue University, then a Ph.D. in anatomy from the University of Cincinnati.

That's where her husband, James Potter, M.D., (who now teaches pharmacology at the University of Virginia) was working when he was tapped to lead the Miller School's Department of Pharmacology in the 1980s. So the Potters and their three children migrated to Miami.

"I ran my husband's lab as a research associate," Potter says. After a while, conducting protein interaction studies on rabbits and mice got old. So, at the age of 38, she applied to the Miller School and was admitted.

"When I was still doing research, I taught medical students antibiotics as part of a pharmacology course," Potter says. "As a medical student, I assisted in teaching gross anatomy.

some of the most accomplished and distinguished physician-scientists in the country, and have practiced in every conceivable setting—including orbiting aboard the space shuttle! We depend on our alumni to help the next generation of physicians achieve their dreams as well.

The John K. Robinson Scholarship Fund provides important financial support to medical students here at the University of Miami—support that makes the difference in many of their decisions with respect to specialty or interest.

In the most recent fiscal year, 17 percent of our alumni contributed a total of \$249,000 toward the John K. Robinson Fund, compared with

## THE POET'S CORNER

The Poet's Corner is a showcase for those who regularly heed their muse. If you have a poem or essay 600 words or shorter that you'd like to share, please forward it to: Glenda Weiss Rodriguez, director of Medical Alumni Development, at grodriguez3@med.miami.edu.

### In memoriam

By Daniel M. Becker, M.D.

We shuffle into place and grieve in stanzas.  
The acoustics cling like lint and everything—  
family man, scholar, citizen, soldier—

sounds fuzzy and unraveled.  
I read the hymns on my neighbor's lips.  
I count the panes of stained glass.

The windows are too kind—  
saints in post-beatitude poses  
as if their share of suffering

is over, blame placed, sins forgiven,  
and all they have to do now  
is exemplify faith and endurance

the way models in catalogues  
smile at the sea and stay young.  
The sky is too blue, robes too soft,

martyrdom too therapeutic.  
I explore my dark suit's pockets—  
a prescription pad, a photo ID,

a list of people who expect a call,  
a list of errands (birdseed, fertilizer),  
a list of wards and numbered diagnoses.

Afterwards, there's a reception up the hill  
but I am chiming like a clock  
and rush off after letting the survivors

one at a time thank me for everything.



An assistant and then associate professor of medicine with the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine from 1979 to 1985, Daniel Becker, M.D., M.P.H., M.F.A., is now professor of medicine and director of the Center for Biomedical Ethics and Humanities at the University of Virginia School of Medicine. He has been writing doggerel since the second grade and now writes some serious poetry too. Home visits, as pictured, are an interest.

I had a lab of students that I was in charge of, and they were my classmates!"

Though teaching is part of Potter's life again, a crucial component is still missing. "I'm probably going to do some part-time private practice,"

she says. "It's time to go back and see some patients."

It shouldn't take long for Potter's neighbors in Virginia to discover what Miller School graduates and faculty already know: Charlottesville has a medical marvel in its midst.

# Alumni Participation Helps Ensure Excellence

By Mary Ann Sprinkle

Medical schools are ranked nationally by the quality of their curriculum, by the amount and quality of clinical and basic science research, and by a host of other measurements. Did you know that alumni participation is also one of those measurements?

The annual *U.S. News & World Report* issue on American colleges and universities includes alumni participation in philanthropy as a key measurement in its annual rankings—and you can help ensure that the University of Miami continues to rise in standing.

Graduates of the Miller School of Medicine have gone on to become

some of the most accomplished and distinguished physician-scientists in the country, and have practiced in every conceivable setting—including orbiting aboard the space shuttle! We depend on our alumni to help the next generation of physicians achieve their dreams as well.

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In the most recent fiscal year, 17 percent of our alumni contributed a total of \$249,000 toward the John K. Robinson Fund, compared with

\$333,000 for the previous year. We recognize the global economic crisis has slowed the amount of philanthropy flowing into our medical school. While there's never a good time for a recession, the timing of the economic slowdown is particularly inauspicious, because it comes during an era when medical education costs are growing exponentially.

Our goal is to have the John K. Robinson Fund donations return to (or exceed) the \$333,000 level attained in 2008, and to increase overall alumni participation. We would also like to help the Office of Financial Aid fill a \$140,000 shortfall in endowment funds recorded during our most recent fiscal year.

Your commitment and generosity are more crucial than ever, as your alma mater continues its quest to keep producing some of the nation's best physician-scientists. Please call our office at 305-243-6256 if you have questions or wish to make a gift.

Thank you!



Mary Ann Sprinkle is associate vice president of Medical Development and Alumni Relations for the Miller School of Medicine.

## 1970s

**Thomas J. Balkany**, M.D. '72, Hotchkiss Professor and chair of otolaryngology with the Miller School, has received a Presidential Citation from the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery.

## 1980s

**Fred Telischi**, M.D. '85, director of the UM Ear Institute, received the Distinguished Service Award from the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. The award was presented during the opening ceremony of the organization's annual meeting in Chicago in September.

**Robert S. Kirsner**, M.D. '88, led a study titled "Reported skin cancer screening of U.S. adult workers," published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*. Kirsner is a Miller School professor and vice chair of dermatology and cutaneous surgery.

## 1990s

**Jason Goldman**, M.D. '98, is a solo practitioner in internal medicine in Coral Springs, Florida. He was recently appointed chair of membership for the Florida Chapter of the American College

of Physicians. Goldman and his wife, Joy Goldman, had a second child, Ryan Alexander Goldman, last May.

## 2000s

**Jacob D. Steiger**, M.D. '02, a facial plastic surgeon with a practice in Delray Beach, Florida, was named the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery's 2008 Holt Leadership Award winner. Steiger completed his internship and residency at the University of Pennsylvania.

## In Memoriam

**Leo Braverman**, M.D. '56, of Pembroke Pines, Florida, passed away in December at the age of 93. A member of the medical school's first graduating class, Braverman was born in Newark, New Jersey, graduated from New York University in 1935, and started medical school in 1936 in Glasgow, Scotland. In 1948 he earned an M.B.A. in accounting from NYU and a C.P.A. in 1952. Braverman returned to study medicine in 1953 in Switzerland and then transferred to the University of Miami School of Medicine. He specialized in psychiatry after earning his medical degree. He was married to his

wife, Mildred, for more than 60 years, and together they raised three children.

**Charles C. James**, M.D. '59, better known as "Jimmy James," passed away in January. A resident of Miami for 81 years, James was a well-known and beloved physician in the community for nearly 50 years. He and his brother, Eddie, shared a Miami Springs practice for a number of years. James was also affiliated with Palm Springs General Hospital for more than 42 years.

**Leonard Levine**, M.D. '65, passed away in February following a brief illness at the age of 85. A B-24 bomber pilot during World War II, Levine later served as a physician at Cape Canaveral. After initially serving as a general practitioner, he came to specialize in psychiatry and became one of Baptist Hospital's first staff psychiatrists. Levine is survived by his wife, Susan Shapiro, and the many pets and wild animals that he cared for.

**Jack R. Tenzel**, M.D. '83, died in August at his home in Georgia. He was 50. Born in New York, he lived most of his life in Miami before moving to Statesboro, Georgia, in 1997. Tenzel was a dedicated physician caring for his patients at East Georgia

Regional Eye Center. Surviving are his wife of 26 years, Haydee Levin Tenzel, and two sons—Paul Tenzel, who is currently attending Georgia Southern University, and Brian Tenzel. Donations in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, 515 Denmark Street, Statesboro, Georgia 30458.

**Robert D. Gray**, M.D. '88, passed away in October at Northwest Regional Hospital in Margate, Florida. Born in New York City, he received both his bachelor's and medical degrees from the University of Miami, graduating in 1984 and 1988 respectively. After completing his residency at Jackson Memorial Hospital in 1991, Gray worked for the Holy Cross Medical Group in Fort Lauderdale for the next 17 years, with a large practice in internal medicine. Several insurance companies ranked him among the best doctors in South Florida.

**Harry Allen Earle**, M.D. '89, of Cape Canaveral, died in January at the age of 55. An avid fisherman who grew up in Davie, Earle was a fire medic by the age of 18 and a physician's assistant by 21. Earle, who had a family practice in Cocoa Beach, is remembered for being more concerned about medicine and his patients than about monetary rewards.

## ALUMNI PROFILE

## MITCH BERGER, M.D. '79

*Mitch Berger, M.D. '79, did his internship and residency at the University of California, San Francisco, in neurosurgery from 1979 to 1985.*

### Professional accomplishment I'm

**proudest of:** The mapping of the human cortex with regard to language localization. This is my life's work, and it was published this past year in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

### Person who influenced me most in

**medical school:** The person who influenced me most was Dr. Barth Green, chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery.

### Funniest medical school experience:

The only thing I can recall is one night when, as a medical student on the Ob/Gyn service, I gave the idea to one of the mothers in labor to name her baby after me. Whether or not that

ever happened, I don't know, but she thought it might be interesting!

**What about medical school could have been improved?:** Nothing! It was a great school and still is today.

### Personal accomplishment I'm proudest

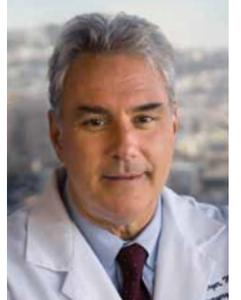
**of:** Becoming chairman of neurosurgery at the University of California, San Francisco.

### Pet peeve:

When my favorite football team, the Indianapolis Colts, lose!

### Has being a physician met

**your expectations?:** Absolutely. It's the greatest profession in the world.



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