1950s
A.L. (Art) McPherson, M.D. ’56, has been appointed by the AMA Board of Trustees to the Senior Physicians Group Governing Board. The Senior Physicians Group is composed of physicians over age 65 who may be retired, although it is not necessary to be retired.

1970s
Andrew J. Pumariega, M.D. ’76, was recently made president-elect of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, the nation’s only interdisciplinary organization in mental health. Last year, Pumariega assumed the position of chair, Department of Psychiatry, at The Reading Hospital and Medical Center and professor of psychiatry, Temple University School of Medicine.

1980s
Lawrence Berman, M.D. ’84, recently joined the Department of Anesthesia at Hutchinson Medical Center in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. Tambery Ford Marcus, M.D. ’87, is the newly elected president of the Florida Obstetrical and Gynecological Society. A physician with a practice in Winter Park, she co-authored an article in the June 2007 issue of CBERMAG Management titled, “Laparoscopic Hysterectomy: Learn it—or Get Left Behind.”

2000s
M. Albert Malvehy, M.D. ’00, recently completed an M.B.A. degree at Duke University, while engaged in a part-time emergency practice and a yearlong fellowship with a life science venture firm in the Research Triangle. After earning his M.B.A., Malvehy joined Accuitive Medical Ventures, a medical device venture capital firm and incubator. Stewart B. Duvin, M.D. ’03, has been made the COO for SafeStitch Medical, Inc., a publicly traded medical device firm headquartered in Miami. SafeStitch develops and markets endoscopic and minimally invasive surgical devices. Jena Carter Miller, M.D. ’03, is currently doing a fellowship in maternal fetal medicine at the University of Maryland at Baltimore. She and her husband, Geoffrey, recently attended the medical alumni reception at the Association of American Medical Colleges annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

In Memoriam
George T. Vents, M.D. ’61, a highly respected and beloved longtime Coral Gables and Miami physician, passed away in September. He was 82. Vents was a decorated World War II pilot, owner of a fleet of shrimp boats that ranged from Charleston, South Carolina to Key West, an avid skier, world traveler, and a family practice physician for more than 40 years. Vents was an instructor in the medical school’s Department of Family Medicine and was on the medical staffs of South Miami Hospital and Doctors Hospital, where he served as chief of family medicine for many years.

Stephan D. Plager, M.D. ’64, died in September of leukemia at Stanford Medical Center. He was 68. Plager had been in private practice as an ophthalmologist in Santa Cruz, California, for 23 years. He was the medical director of Plager Vision Center and was assistant clinical professor in the Department of Ophthalmology at Stanford University. Plager received his undergraduate degree from the University of Florida in 1960 and was president of the medical fraternity at the Miller School of Medicine. His internship was at Los Angeles County General Hospital. He later served for nine years in the U.S. Air Force.

Alvin E. Smith, M.D. ’64, died in Daytona Beach last September. Smith was born in Talladega, Alabama, and moved to the Daytona Beach area at a young age. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Florida. Smith was a veteran of the Korean conflict, having proudly served in the Army for 12 years, and was in the reserves for an additional ten years. He was one of the founding members of the Florida Society of Clinical Oncology and was on the Council of the Florida Society of Internal Medicine.

Michael J. Lerner, M.D. ’75, of Miami, passed away in September from complications of colon cancer. A longtime practitioner of internal medicine and cardiology, Lerner did his undergraduate work at the University of North Carolina.

A. Kyle Mack, M.D. ’99 was a decorated military physician. He served as a doctor with the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War and returned to practice in the United States. He went on to become a leader in the field of ophthalmology and served on the editorial boards of several medical journals.

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I n pre-Internet days, investors kept tabs on the stock market by using ticker tape machines, unwieldy contraptions that spewed a narrow strip of paper imprinted with stock symbols and updated prices.

The late Jack Sanders, M.D., ’57, had two of the devices—one at his medical office in Graceville, Florida, the other at his home. The incessant tick-tick-tick of his mechanical sentinels was music to Sanders’s ears, because he loved Wall Street nearly as much as practicing family medicine. Pursuing both passions enabled him to leave the Miller School of Medicine more than $2.1 million, the largest gift from a graduate in the institution’s 51-year history.

Sanders, who died of cancer in 2004, asked that his estate create the Bernard J. Fogel M.D. Endowed Chair in Medical Education. A ceremony dedicating the chair to Mark O’Connell, M.D., the Miller School’s director of undergraduate education, took place two months ago and was attended by UM President Donna E. Shalala as well as Miller School Dean Pascal J. Goldschmidt, M.D.

Sanders’s gift to the Miller School was a fitting concomitant to other medical schools that denied him admission. They basically questioned whether Sanders, who was born with craniofacial deformities and had associated hearing and speech problems, was suited to practice medicine.

Aware that actions invariably trump words, Sanders let his sterling medical legacy, as well as his largesse, speak loud and clear about his abilities and personality. He had a hard time getting into medical school,” says Sanders’s first cousin, Eddie Register. Sanders’s admission difficulties materialized despite the fact that he was the top scholar in his high school and had earned a pharmacy degree from the University of Florida. “He applied to several medical schools and when the University of Miami accepted him, he was grateful for that,” Register says.

Sanders and Register grew up in Graceville, a small Panhandle town three miles south of the Alabama border that looks like it dropped out of a Norman Rockwell painting. Sanders was born with a hare lip and a hole in his palate, among other problems, and underwent several surgeries as a small boy to address his medical issues.

Sanders discovered early on that people, especially youngsters, can be cruel to those with deformities. “He had different people that sort of made fun of him,” Register remembers. “I had several fights on account of him.”

The son of a father who was a Standard Oil Company tanker captain and a mother who once worked as a schoolteacher, Sanders was urged to refrain from roughhousing due to his ongoing medical treatments. So he sought refuge in books but sometimes secretly played football and other sports, much to the chagrin of his mother, Erma Sanders.

“He mother kept a close eye on him to keep him from getting hurt,” says Graceville resident Kathleen Turner, a close friend. “If he got bumped or anything, his face could get damaged.”

By all accounts, Sanders’s physical challenges toughened and motivated him, instead of bringing about bitterness or self-pity. He had a quiet confidence that never wavered, not even after his high school attempted to quash his valedictory speech on the pretext that Sanders’s dictation was difficult to understand. After his outraged mother intervened, Sanders was granted his rightful place at the podium.

An only child, Sanders began focusing on medicine around the age of 18, following the sudden death of his father, John Sanders, from a heart attack. Sanders was granted his rightful place among the very best academic medical care to beyond,” Goldschmidt says. “With this new flagship hospital, our top-ranked physicians will forge a new era in University of Miami-delivered care. This academic medical center will become a true medical destination.”

Patients and physicians will be among the biggest beneficiaries of the deal, as the Miller School plans on being a resource for the entire community.

“The type of very sophisticated, cutting-edge, state-of-the-art care that we are planning to develop . . . can only be developed if we entirely control the delivery of care from the time a patient makes an appointment to the time the patient leaves the hospital,” Goldschmidt says.

By owning its own hospital, UM is expected to strengthen its ability to recruit top-notch physicians and researchers. It will also bring about a unification of the campus’s Clinical Research Building and forthcoming Biomedical Research Building.

“The creation of a university hospital environment enables us to provide the very best academic medical care to the people of South Florida and beyond,” Goldschmidt says. “With this new flagship hospital, our top-ranked physicians will forge a new era in University of Miami-delivered care. This academic medical center will become a true medical destination.”

Miller School Now Has a Hospital All Its Own

For Alumni of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

A Legacy to Benefit His Alma Mater

The late Jack Sanders, M.D., ’57, made largest alumni gift in school history

In a major move that promises to change the hospital industry in South Florida, the University of Miami has purchased Cedars Medical Center, a 560-bed facility located in the Miami Health District just across Northwest 12th Avenue from the Miller School of Medicine. The facility is now known as the University of Miami Hospital.

The purchase from the Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) came after the Board of Trustees voted in late October to give UM senior officers the authority to complete the deal. The University assumed ownership and operation of the hospital December 1.

The acquisition will help accelerate the Miller School’s transformation into a first-class destination medical center—a place where people from all over the United States and the world come
Alumnus Steven Falcone Advances the Miller School’s Mission on Multiple Levels
Veteran faculty member now heads clinical affairs at Miller Boca Raton campus

Like many medical school students, Steven Falcone, M.D. ’87, M.B.A. ’03, found his calling during his third and fourth years of medical school when he started doing clinical rotations. Fascinated by the imaging that supports neurology and ophthalmology, Falcone gravitated to neuroradiology and eventually became the Miller School’s medical director of MR services.

After spending 20 years mastering a field where CT scanners and MRI rules the days, three months ago Falcone made a fairly dramatic career change.

Instead of driving to the Miller School’s campus five days a week, these days Falcone treks to Palm Beach County, specifically Boca Raton. Falcone has taken a position as the executive regional dean, clinical affairs, for the Miller School of Medicine at Florida Atlantic University.

One of Falcone’s responsibilities is to oversee the final two years of medical school training for students at the Miller School of Medicine at FAU. Given that the second half of medical school helped Falcone crystallize his career aspirations, he appreciates how crucially important those years are.

“I’m helping lead a great team with the transition from a two-year program to a four-year program,” Falcone says of his new duties.

The overarching theme of the program’s curriculum is chronic illness and care, with an emphasis on continuity of care. To achieve these goals, the regional campus seeks to depart from the traditional clerkship format and offer integrated clerkships.

“Although our students begin their clinical experience early in the first year of medical school, the last half of medical school is when students begin to immerse themselves in the clinical aspects of their education,” Falcone continues. “Those years have a tremendous impact on career choices, so I’ll be making sure that students have appropriate places to perform their clinical rotations.”

Prior to working at the Boca Raton campus, Falcone had also been a Miller School associate professor of radiology, neurologic surgery, and ophthalmology in addition to serving as director of imaging services. He misses the give and take he used to have with the medical students, residents, and fellows he trained in neuroradiology.

“But now I’m in a position to have a greater impact on South Floridians’ health care landscape,” he observes. A diehard Mets baseball fan born in New York City, Falcone and his family moved to Broward County while he was in high school. His interest in medicine blossomed around that time, after a younger sister developed type 1 diabetes and his mother developed a pituitary abnormality.

After graduating from Coral Springs High School, Falcone earned a B.S. in chemistry from UM, followed by M.D. and M.B.A. degrees. In the course of performing his responsibilities as a medical clinician and teacher, Falcone also played an active role helping the Miller School realize its $700 million fundraising goal as part of the Momentum campaign.

“The research and teaching missions of our school cannot survive without a foundation of philanthropic support,” Falcone says. “As faculty members, we must set the example for both our colleagues and those potential donors outside.”

“I’ve contributed not only financially, but through having trained students, residents, and fellows,” notes Falcone, a married father of three daughters who resides in Weston. “There are so many things that an individual can do to contribute, whether it’s working as a voluntary faculty member or by giving in a financial sense.”

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI HOSPITAL, from page 1

Jack Sanders from page 1

Jack Sanders, the former governor of Florida and former Florida State University president, died peacefully today from pancreatic cancer in Miami at the age of 76.

“Dr. Jack Sanders was a true leader and a true gentleman,” said University of Miami President Donna Shalala. “He was a man of principle and a man of deep integrity. His dedication to excellence in higher education and his commitment to the University of Miami will be remembered and honored.”

Sanders served as Florida’s 50th governor from 1991 to 1995, and he was a strong advocate for higher education. He earned his Ph.D. from Fordham University in New York City, and he served as the University of Miami’s president from 1995 to 2000.

Sanders was a longtime advocate for the arts, and he was a strong supporter of the performing arts at the University of Miami. He was a dedicated mentor to many young people, and he was a champion of education and community service.

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Maria Abreu Returns to the Miller School as Chief of Gastroenterology

Alumna committed to developing faculty, clinical services

On February 1, 2008, things came full circle for Maria T. Abreu, M.D. ’90. That date marked Abreu’s first day as chief of gastroenterology at the Miller School of Medicine, returning Abreu to her alma mater as well as her adopted hometown. Abreu had been director of the Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center and an associate professor of medicine at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City since 2003.

“There’s such tremendous energy at the Miller School along with a sense that things can really change drastically for the better,” Abreu says. “That’s something Miami has needed for a long time.”

As is often the case, Abreu found her work at Mount Sinai engrossing and wasn’t looking to leave when she was approached about leading gastroenterology at the Miller School.

“Actually, it had been a couple of years before I applied for the job. I was interested in coming back to Miami, but I moved to LA in 2001, so I wasn’t looking then,” Abreu says.

“I was flattered to be considered—for the most part. ‘I’m really kind of young for this job,’ “Abreu adds. “The MIU division has been understaffed for a long time, and we want to be able to offer people excellent care as well as build up the faculty.”

A Cuban-American born in New Jersey, Abreu and her family moved to Miami when she was 13. An accomplished scholar who had already amassed 24 college credits by the time she graduated from high school, Abreu segued directly into medical school under a six-year University of Miami honors program in medical education.

Among her objectives at the Miller School is the eventual formation of a research center focusing on mucosal immunology as well as gastrointestinal cancer.

“I think the first priority is to meet the clinical needs of the medical campus,” Abreu adds. “The GI division has been understaffed for a long time, and we want to be able to offer people excellent care as well as build up the faculty.”

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After earning her M.D. in 1990, Abreu traveled to Boston for an internal medicine residency at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, followed up by a GI fellowship at UCLA. After that, Abreu remained in Los Angeles and joined the faculty of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where she began conducting research on inflammatory bowel diseases.

Abreu has initiated studies involving the response of the intestinal lining to disease-causing bacteria and has investigated osteoporosis associated with inflammatory bowel disease. Over the course of her career, she has been awarded research grants from a number of sources, including the National Institutes of Health and the Colitis & Crohn’s Foundation of America.

In many ways, Abreu’s return to the Miller School is a family affair. Not just because her parents still live in Miami, but also because her husband, Paul Martin, M.D., was recently named the Miller School’s new chief of hepatology. Martin moved from New York to Miami in late 2007, with Abreu and the couple’s children, Adler, 10, and Brian, 12, following this year.

When it comes to her offspring, Abreu says “Miami is really their second home. My parents are there, and my children have been catching planes to Miami since they were newborns.”

According to Abreu, her tenure at Mount Sinai has been great professionally and personally. “If it weren’t for this particular Miller School of Medicine opportunity at this particular time, I wouldn’t contemplate leaving,” Abreu notes.

“But the allure of going to the Miller School was having the opportunity to build something from the ground up, having the ability to shape something that will have a lasting impact for at least the next ten years,” Abreu says.

“THERE AREN’T TOO MANY POSITIONS WHERE YOU CAN DO THAT.”

The University of Miami Hospital has 560 patient beds, 13 floors, 1.5 million square feet of space, and three emergency generators that can churn out 750 kilowatts of electrical power.

The University of Miami Hospital’s 204 psychiatric beds make it one of South Florida’s biggest psychiatric providers.

The Miller School was asked to raise $450,000 of UM’s total $3.1 million contribution for the United Way in 2007.

Richmond Naval Air Base formerly operated on the 106-acre South Campus site where the MIU’s Marine Human Genetics Laboratory has located its medical equipment.

In the 1950s, UM’s Medical Research Unit used to conduct malaria experiments on spider monkeys at the South Campus.

The Class of ’83 produced more Miller School faculty and attending physicians than any other (William Darperi, Enrique Ginzburg, Thomas Harrington, Marilyn Glassberg, Gail Ironson, James Jacque, Daniel Kett, Walter Lambert, Dennis Polin, Alberto Pereyra, and Fred Telisch).

One glass of milk can give a person a .02 blood alcohol concentration on a breathalyzertest, enough in some states for persons under 21 to lose their driver’s license.

THE POET’S CORNER

Eulogy for Mozell Lovett

Mozell Lovett was a man
A man I didn’t know
He might of course have been a King
An airless monarch with nowhere to go
It might have been with Kingdom gone
King Lovett was downcast in defeat
And it was amidst this soulful rain
That he was struck in the street

He might have been a prophet
Carrying a Godsent message to us all
And perhaps it was blinding joy and rapture
That led to his mundane fall

No, I can’t be sure of the circumstance
Which surrounds this wondrous tale
And the doctor’s mostreinvestigation
Though thorough, was still to no avail
The telltale clot, which still tells not
Of motive, character, weak or bold
I am therefore at liberty to assume
That his heart was worth its weight in gold

Mozell Lovett was a man
A man who is no more
But his dying has cast me into wonder
And isn’t that what death is for?

Brian Greer, M.D. ’86, is a double-board-certified adult, adolescent, and child psychiatrist working in Boca Raton, Florida. Greer has appeared as a medical expert on Oprah as well as on 60 Minutes with Connie Chung.

Author’s note: This was written for my autopsy presentation during my sophomore year of medical school. The discussion was held by a car one afternoon and ended in the hospital five weeks later of a pulmonary thromboembolus.

From music to athletics to oratory, students entering the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine bring with them a wide range of talents and interests. The Poet’s Corner is a showcase for alumni 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 for Medical Alumni Development, at gweiss@med.miami.edu.

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