



**LIQUID ASSETS:** Two undergraduates, with support from Dartmouth College First-Year Summer Research Awards, spent the summer working with DMS's Dr. Jay Buckley, a former astronaut, on measuring liquids' volume and mass in microgravity.

## New students boast top scores and service, too

They spent their childhoods in lands near and far—from the backwoods of Maine to the coast of the Black Sea, from the West African nation of Nigeria to the Central American nation of Honduras. In college, they studied subjects as diverse as biochemistry, engineering, history, music, and studio art. But in August, they all came together as students at Dartmouth Medical School.

The 183 new DMS students include 82 in the M.D. program (including 6 M.D.-Ph.D.'s); 31 Ph.D.'s in the basic sciences; 46 M.P.H.'s; and 19 M.S.'s and 5 Ph.D.'s in the evaluative clinical sciences. The matriculants were drawn to Dartmouth for diverse reasons, including the "closeness and camaraderie" many said they felt among the faculty and students. DMS's rural location was also a major draw.

"When I visited Hanover," M.D. student Joo Choo wrote to introduce herself to her classmates and the faculty, "one of the very first things I noticed was its geographical similarity to South Korea, where I was born and raised until 11. The mountains and the trees were strikingly similar. Reminiscing on my fond memories of roaming the hills and rivers as a kid, I soon grew comfortable at Dartmouth. I am very happy to be a [DMS '10] because I truly felt a part of my essence in Hanover."

**Color:** This year's admissions were highly competitive for the M.D. program, which had more than 4,600 applicants. The new

medical students—44% of them women and about 40% people of color or from countries other than the U.S.—brought a wealth of accomplishments and experiences. The class's average combined MCAT score was 32, one of the highest in DMS's history. (See the adjacent box for more facts about the M.D. class.) The new students have worked as emergency medical technicians and in clinics and laboratories all over the world, and many have held Fulbright scholarships or already earned advanced degrees.

They also evidence a strong commitment to service. They have volunteered to renovate a school for the deaf in Mexico, organize a book drive for children in Western Samoa, recruit staff for a clinic in Kenya, teach in South Central Los Angeles, and raise funds for an orphanage in Bulgaria. A few have also served in the U.S. military.

The class has no shortage of extracurricular talent either. Among its members are painters, sculptors, dancers, musicians, and several athletes who played intercollegiate varsity sports.

**Programs:** Admissions to the basic science graduate programs and the Center for the Evaluative Clinical Sciences (CECS) continue to be very competitive as well, due to the prestige of both programs. For example, DMS ranks 12th out of 126 U.S. medical schools in funding per basic science faculty member, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges. And CECS is home to several of

### Student Stats

A few figures about the 82 new M.D. students



50

Number of undergraduate institutions they represent

26

Number of states they came from

21

Number born outside the U.S.

15

Age of the oldest new student when the youngest was born

8

Number who are EMTs

1

Number born at Mary Hitchcock

## Gold Society honors giants of the past and of the present

There were giants of medicine present at the inaugural induction ceremony in June of a new DMS honor society. There in the memory of many was Dr. Thomas Almy, for whom the society is named—the Thomas P. Almy Chapter of the Gold Humanism in Medicine Honor Society. His daughter, Susan Almy, was at the event. So were many faculty and students who had known Almy, who came to DMS as chair of medicine in 1968 and died in 2002.

The 11 inductees, all DMS '06s, did not have that opportunity. However, physicians who worked or studied with Almy have continued to pass on what mattered to him—especially the essence of what he called "the healing bond" between physician and patient. Almy, in fact, was one of the exemplars cited by noted physician-author Dr. Lewis Thomas in his book *The Youngest Science*.

**Qualities:** DMS's senior advising dean, Dr. Joseph O'Donnell, spearheaded the creation of the Dartmouth Gold Society chapter, the 53rd in the U.S. He says Almy exemplified the qualities that are fostered by the Gold Society, whose goal is to recognize medical students, residents, and faculty who demonstrate humanistic qualities.

The 11 founding members of the DMS chapter were selected by their peers, clerkship directors, and the assistant deans for

the country's most prominent researchers in health-care policy and variations in health utilization, quality, and spending.

"The next years will be exciting ones for you, challenging intellectually, emotionally, and physically," Dr. Stephen Spielberg, DMS's dean, told the incoming M.D. students in August. In fact, his remarks apply to all the new members of the DMS community. "DMS was founded by one visionary physician, Nathan Smith," he continued, and "its success now is dependent on many scientists and physicians working together, challenging each other, and striving to make health care better for all. Individual excellence in a setting of community."

JENNIFER DURGIN

clinical education. Six residents and two faculty members will soon be added to the roster. The founding student members were Matthew Baird, Brett Chevalier, Joseph Dwaihy, Lisa Ernst, Scott Hughes, Christopher Jons, Andrew Place, John Raser, Rebecca Swenson, Roy Wade, and Emily Walker.

**Gold:** Another giant of medicine present at the induction ceremony was Dr. C. Everett Koop, former U.S. surgeon general and a pioneering pediatric surgeon. Soon to turn 90, Koop said, "I knew both gentlemen—Tom Almy and Ronald Gold." Dr. Gold established the society that bears his name.

"You enter a far different world of medicine than I did 65 years ago this week," Koop told the students, most of whom were about to begin residency. They would face an environment, Koop said, with more chronic disease, uncovered by testing and screening, as well as more unmet needs. He offered himself as an example of what medicine today can do, saying he has two artificial knees, a stent, and two pacemakers and takes 13 pills.

**Care:** "You may not be able to cure, but you will always be able to care," Koop advised. "I really, at 90, envy you," he said, "and wish I could join you."

There were also lesser giants at the induction, though they loomed every bit as big in the eyes of the 11 students who invited them, from among all their teachers, to be at the ceremony. These 11 mentors—some young and eager, others still eager though they've been role models

## MEDIA MENTIONS: DMS

Among the people and programs coming in for prominent media coverage in recent months was a Dartmouth pediatrician who studies physician workforce issues. "A large supply of doctors does not necessarily improve the health of a population, . . . Dr. **David Goodman** of Dartmouth Medical School" told the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* in an article about a projected physician shortage in Georgia. A popular public radio show also tapped



Goodman's expertise in reporting on the Association of American Medical Colleges' call to train more doctors. In "places where there are a lot more physicians," Goodman was quoted as saying on *Marketplace*, "the costs are much higher."

And in an op-ed essay published in the *New York Times*, Goodman said that "the most serious problem facing our health-care system . . . cannot be solved by more doctors. In fact, that approach, like prescribing more drugs for an already over-medicated patient, may only make things worse."

A *New York Times* "Quotation of the Day" may be even more high-profile than a *Times* op-ed essay, but it's a media coup one can't lobby for—it just comes like manna to the especially silver-tongued. On September 8, the honor fell to "Dr. **James Bernat**, a professor of neurology at Dartmouth Medical School." Asked about a British woman in a vegetative state who had shown signs of consciousness on a brain-imaging test, he said: "Even though we might assume some patients are not aware, I think we should always talk to them, always explain what's going on, always make them comfortable, because maybe they are there, inside, aware of everything." The *Washington Post* was among a number of other media outlets that asked Bernat to comment on the case.



When a biotech company announced it had devised a way to extract embryonic stem cells without destroying the embryo, reporters from all over phoned a DMS adjunct professor of community and family medicine. "This technique overcomes

this hurdle . . .," **Ronald Green**, director of Dartmouth College's Ethics Institute and chairman of [the company's] ethics advisory board" told *Agence France Presse*. And the *Washington Post* reported as follows: "'We're speaking here of an enormous breakthrough in American medicine,' said Green, who said his only financial link to the company was the approximately \$200 per day he was paid—more than a year ago—for attending a handful of meetings to review the research."

In a recent feature about treating back pain, *Fortune* magazine consulted "a surgeon and researcher at Dartmouth, Dr. **James Weinstein**, who is leading the



biggest-ever U.S. study of back surgery." Weinstein, chair of orthopaedic surgery, is "trying to make sense of all [the] competing treatments and theories" on back pain in "a massive six-year, \$13.5-million study . . . dubbed SPORT (Spine Patient Outcomes Research Trial)." The trial, *Fortune* said, "seeks to answer the most vexing question in back pain treatment: To cut, or not to cut?"

"Pediatricians usually ask a mother about her baby's sleep pattern or a toddler's eating habits,"



began a recent *Boston Globe* article. "But a study published today suggests . . . they should ask a few questions about the mother's own well-being, too." The study, published in *Pediatrics*, was led by "Dartmouth professor . . . Dr. **Ardis Olson**," noted the *Globe*. Pediatricians already "provide advice in a wide array of areas," Olson was quoted as saying. Asking two additional, simple questions "can quickly and easily start the process of getting [depressed mothers] the help they need."

"Consumers are finally getting some of the tools they need to comparison-shop for health care," the *Wall Street Journal* recently reported. The *Journal* cited three organizations that have "the latest tools," including "Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire, [which has] posted online the charges for 75 of its most common

**TAKEN FOR GRANTED:** DMS was one of eight medical schools awarded a Caring for Community grant by the Association of American Medical Colleges. The funds will go to the Mascoma Valley Free Clinic, which aids the medically underserved.



for years—including O'Donnell and Drs. Brian Lombardo, Patricia Pratt, Roshini Pinto-Powell, Ryan DeLee, Mark Harris, Todd Poret, Peter Mason, Timothy Gardner, and Nancy Cochran, plus the director of multicultural affairs, Shawn O'Leary.

Each student and mentor had something to say about the other. "Dr. Pratt knows her patients so well," said Chevalier. "I want to be like her." And Pratt said that whenever her patients saw Chevalier, "a therapeutic relationship started. Brett was always able to find that little spark."

**Sing:** Joseph Dwaihy noted that Pinto-Powell "has a dedication to students that is unparalleled." And she replied, "I do love the students. All 11 are so deserving it makes my heart sing. . . . All of you will receive many accolades in the future, but I hope this one means a lot."

Christopher Jons said of O'Donnell, "I saw Joe model the compassion and love that he just let blossom," while O'Donnell recalled a frightened patient far from home for whom "Chris was the doctor for his soul."

"I really loved the mentoring aspect that was brought to the ceremony," said Allison Sole, associate director of the honor society's national organization, who attended the induction. "It was a brilliant innovation that I hope other chapters will adopt."

All 11 honorees received a Gold Society lapel pin and a plaque bearing the words "Medicine is the most humane of the sciences and the most scientific of the humanities."

ROSEMARY LUNARDINI

## Worthy of note: Honors, awards, appointments, etc.

**Ethan Dmitrovsky**, M.D., a professor of pharmacology and toxicology, was named associate scientific director of the Samuel Waxman Cancer Research Foundation.

**Gregory Tsongalis**, Ph.D., an associate professor of pathology, was elected president of the Association for Molecular Pathology.

**Charles Wira**, Ph.D., a professor of physiology, has been tapped as president-elect of the American Society for Reproductive Immunology.

**Madeline Dalton**, Ph.D., a research associate professor of pediatrics, received the Alfred University Alumni Award for Distinguished Achievement.

**David Robbins**, Ph.D., an associate professor of pharmacology and toxicology, was appointed to the editorial board of the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.

**Lori Alvord**, M.D., an assistant professor of surgery and associate dean for student and multicultural affairs, received an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Drexel University.

**Marie Bakitas**, D.N.Sc., a nurse practitioner in palliative medicine, received the Anthony Di Guida-Delta Mu Prize for Excellence in Scholarship and Dissertation from the Yale University School of Nursing, in recognition of her doctoral research in chemotherapy-



induced peripheral neuropathy.

**Diane Harper**, M.D., M.P.H., a professor of community and family medicine, was named the 2006 New Hampshire Family Physician of the Year by the New Hampshire Academy of Family Physicians. For more on Harper, see page 56.

**Joseph Annis**, M.D., an adjunct associate professor of anesthesiology, was elected to the American Medical Association board of trustees.

**George Little**, M.D., a professor of pediatrics, was named New Hampshire Pediatrician of the Year by the New Hampshire chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. A specialist in newborn care, Little developed the regional perinatal system for New Hampshire and Vermont.



Three pediatricians with DMS ties were chosen as officers in the New Hampshire Pediatric Society: **Charles Cappetta**, M.B.B.S., an adjunct associate professor, as president; **Patricia Campbell**, D.O., an adjunct assistant professor, as secretary; and **Christine Rosenwasser**, M.D., an adjunct assistant professor, as treasurer.

DHMC's **Norris Cotton Cancer Center** was named one of the top 50 hospitals for cancer care by *U.S. News & World Report* in its 2006 "America's Best Hospitals" issue.

**DHMC** and the **VA Medical Center** in White River Junction, Vt., were named among the nation's 100 most wired small and rural hospitals, according to *Hospitals &*

*Health Networks* magazine. The annual survey focuses on hospitals' use of information technology to address quality, customer service, public health and safety, and workforce issues. DHMC has been a "Most Wired" hospital for six of the last seven years.

**Clarification:** In the feature about AIDS in our Summer 2006 issue, the directory of faculty and alumni involved in HIV/AIDS was an effort to encapsulate (in only 30 to 40 words each) contributions to research and care by 20-some individuals—historical milestones as well as recent work. That resulted in a few descriptions that did not clearly reflect some faculty members' current work. **Alexandra Howell**, since making the seminal 1997 finding described in the article, has studied heterosexual transmission of HIV, the influence of sex hormones on HIV infection, and the replication of HIV within the female reproductive tract.

**Charles Wira** heads a National Institutes of Health Program Project Grant that is designed to increase knowledge of immune protection in the human female reproductive tract and provide information regarding the prevention of local infection in the genital mucosa; such knowledge will be useful in managing sexually transmitted diseases and in understanding heterosexual HIV transmission. And **Susana Asin** studies heterosexual HIV transmission, the influence of sex hormones and of inflammation triggered by sexually transmitted pathogens on HIV infection, and viral replication in the female reproductive tract. ■