



ALL THAT JAZZ: Dr. Norman Yanofsky, chief of the Section of Emergency Medicine at DHMC for almost 26 years, plays the keyboard in a jazz quartet; the group performs regularly in several local nightspots.

DMS experts help national journalists communicate clearly

What if your job description were to “rapidly process lots of complex, quantitative information which is often exaggerated and incomplete”? That’s a pretty accurate encapsulation of the job of a health-care journalist, according to DMS’s Dr. Steven Woloshin, a specialist in how medical information is explained to the public.

Media: He worries that much of today’s media coverage of medicine “creates excessive enthusiasm and certainty about medical research” and perpetuates misinformation. He’s doing more than just worry, though: he is one of the organizers of an annual Medicine in the Media conference, which aims to help journalists cut through ambiguities and avoid passing them along to their audiences. The conference is cosponsored by the National Institutes of Health and Dartmouth.

Response: “We believe,” says Woloshin, “that teaching journalists to use numbers and encouraging them to highlight cautions, [such as] study limitations, will go a long way in mitigating these problems.” The response, he adds, has “been amazingly positive.” Each year, about 50 print and broadcast journalists are chosen to attend from a competitive pool of applicants.

“The course served as a good primer,” says one of this year’s at-

tendees, Barbara Brody, a health editor at *Woman’s Day*. It “will help me better evaluate scientific research.” Journalists must “question everything,” says another attendee, Margaret Williams, an editor at *Babytalk* magazine. “It’s important to accurately judge the findings of the research before delivering it to our readers—and this conference provided me with the tools I need to do so.”

Participants have also come from such places as *ABC News*, the *New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. The conference’s Dartmouth sponsors are the Veteran’s Affairs Outcomes Group and the Center for Medicine, the Media, and the Public (CMMP).

Held alternately in Bethesda, Md., and Hanover, N.H., the event includes tutorials in statistical analysis and study design as well as lectures by experts on the challenges of health-care reporting. Woloshin and Dr. Lisa Schwartz, a fellow member of the DMS faculty, have played key roles in planning and teaching at the conference since its inception seven years ago; the two codirect the CMMP. For the past three years, they’ve been aided by another faculty member, Dr. H. Gilbert Welch.

The conference “is an amazing opportunity to work directly with journalists to teach them skills they need to help communicate the results of medical research to the public,” says Woloshin. “It’s lots of work, but it’s really gratifying.”

VANESSA HURLEY

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

Ethan Dmitrovsky, M.D., the Andrew Wallace Professor and chair of Pharmacology and Toxicology, was named a clinical research



professor by the American Cancer Society (ACS). This highly selective honor is the ACS’s top award; it recognizes career-long contributions to science and patient care and supports mentoring of future generations of researchers. The multiyear grant will support Dmitrovsky’s ongoing studies in the treatment and prevention of lung cancer.

Ann-Christine Duhaime, M.D., a professor of surgery, was named chair-elect of the Joint Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery—a collaboration between the American Association of Neurological Surgeons and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons.



Charles Brenner, Ph.D., a professor of genetics, was named to the National Institutes of Health’s International Cooperative I Study Section for the Center for Scientific Review.

Catherine Pipas, M.D., chief of the Section of Family Medicine as well as assistant dean for medical education, has been ap-

pointed to the New Hampshire Board of Medicine.

Donald Mahler, M.D., a professor of medicine, was appointed to the Leadership Board of the American Lung Association’s New Hampshire chapter.

Jay Buckley, M.D., a professor of medicine, was named cochair of the 2008 New Hampshire Democratic State Convention in Manchester, N.H.

Catherine Carriere, Ph.D., a research assistant professor of medicine, received the 2008 Competitive Award from the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

John Turco, M.D., an associate professor of medicine and Dartmouth team physician, as well as director of the Dartmouth College Health Service, was presented with



the Distinguished American Award by the Joe Yukica New Hampshire Chapter of the National Football Foundation.

Marie Bakitas, D.N.Sc., an assistant professor of anesthesiology, received a two-year Junior Faculty Career Development Award from the National Palliative Care Research Center.

Marcia Herrin, Ed.D., an adjunct assistant professor of community and family medicine, with coauthor Nancy Matsumoto, received the Honors Award in the 2008 National Parenting Publications Awards Parenting Resources competition for their book *The Parent’s Guide to Eat-*
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