

The  
Class of 2006  
Commencement

The College  
of Medicine

and

The School  
of Graduate Studies

of

SUNY Downstate  
Medical Center

Half Past Three  
Thursday Afternoon, May 25, 2006  
Carnegie Hall • New York City, New York



# The Music Program

## Precommencement Musicale

Works by J. S. Bach, A. Banchieri, G. Gabrieli, J. Pezel, and A. Scarlatti played by The Physicians' Brass Ensemble of New York—Daniel Repole, M.A., Conductor; Benjamin A. Rosenberg\*, M.D., '50, Music Chairman. Horn: Eric Davis. Trombones: George Zorko (Tenor), Benjamin A. Rosenberg (Tenor/Bass, also Bass Trumpet). Trumpets: Anthony Bavota, Joseph Kaminski and Joseph Schuffle (also Piccolo Trumpets).

\* Founding Director 1972

## Processional

Coronation March from *The Prophet* (1849, G. Meyerbeer)

Trumpet Tune (1696, J. Clarke)

March from *Dramico per Musica* (1726, J. S. Bach)

Triumphal March from *Aida* (1871, G. Verdi)

Pomp and Circumstance No. 1 (1901, E. Elgar)

## National Anthem

Tamara J. Dunn (Soloist)

## Recessional

Rondeau (1729, J. J. Mouret)

Trumpet Voluntary (1700, J. Clarke)

“See the Conquering Hero Comes” from *Judas Maccabeus* (1746, G. F. Handel)

Turkish March from *The Ruins of Athens* (1812, L.V. Beethoven)

March Militaire (1825, F. Schubert)

Promenade from *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874, M. Moussorgsky)

We would like to thank the following groups for their assistance in organizing this year's commencement ceremony: Office of the President, College of Medicine Alumni Association, Division of Student Affairs, Deans' Offices, Institutional Advancement, Office of Student Life, Office of University Police/Public Safety, and all the people who have given freely of themselves to enrich this year's graduation.

# The Commencement Program

## Presiding Marshal

Eva B. Cramer, PhD

*Professor of Anatomy and Cell Biology and  
Vice President for Biotechnology and Scientific Affairs*

## Processional

*(Audience, please rise for the Processional.)*

## Opening Remarks

Eugene B. Feigelson, MD

*Dean, College of Medicine, and Senior Vice President for  
Biomedical Education and Research*

## Greetings from the President

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

*President*

## Greetings from the Graduates

Tamara J. Dunn

*College of Medicine, Class of 2006*

John F. Crary

*School of Graduate Studies, Class of 2006*

## Greetings from the College of Medicine

Alumni Association

Richard Sadovsky, MD, Class of '74

*President, Alumni Association*

## Presentation to the Dean of the

College of Medicine

Rachel Kueny

Kelle Shawn Oberle

*College of Medicine, Class of 2006*

## Presentation and Conferring of the Honorary Degrees

Eugene B. Feigelson, MD

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

## Hooding of Honorary Degree Recipients

Eugene B. Feigelson, MD

## Honorary Degree Recipients

Robert F. Furchgott, PhD

Willem Johan Kolff, MD

## Presentation of the Ailanthus Award

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

## Ailanthus Award Recipient and

Commencement Speaker

Jordan J. Cohen, MD

## School of Graduate Studies

### Granting of Graduate Degrees

#### Presentation of Candidates

Susan Schwartz-Giblin, PhD

*Dean, School of Graduate Studies*

#### Conferring of Degrees

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

#### Awarding of Diplomas

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

Susan Schwartz-Giblin, PhD

#### Hooding of Candidates

Thesis Research Sponsors and

Maureen McLeod, PhD

*Professor and Acting Chair of  
Microbiology and Immunology*

College of Medicine  
Granting of the Master of Public  
Health Degrees

Presentation of Candidates

Pascal James Imperato, MD, MPH & TM  
*Distinguished Service Professor and Chair,  
Preventive Medicine and Community Health, and  
Director of the Master of Public Health Program*

Conferring of Degrees

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

Awarding of Diplomas

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

Pascal James Imperato, MD, MPH & TM

Judith H. LaRosa, PhD, RN, FAAN  
*Professor of Preventive Medicine and Community Health  
and Deputy Director, Master of Public Health Program*

College of Medicine  
Granting of the MD Degrees

Presentation of Candidates

Eugene B. Feigelson, MD

Conferring of Degrees

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

Awarding of Diplomas

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

Eugene B. Feigelson, MD

Hooding of Candidates

Edmund Bourke, MD

*Professor and Chair of Medicine*

Michael Lucchesi, MD

*Associate Professor and Chair of Emergency Medicine  
and Interim Chief Medical Officer*

Closing Remarks and Administration  
of the Hippocratic Oath

John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP

Recessional

*(Audience, please rise and remain standing until the  
graduates have left the hall.)*

# School of Graduate Studies

## *Celebrating Its 40th Anniversary*

### PhD Degree

**Eric C. Anderson** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
Identification and characterization of MCM8 as a candidate for Afr2, a regulator of gene expression during liver regeneration.  
Resident in the Internal Medicine Research Pathway  
Oregon Health and Science University

**Bob Being Sho Chai** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
Roles of the RSC chromatin-remodeling complex in DNA double-strand break repair and signaling.  
Resident in Diagnostic Radiology  
UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical Center

**John F. Crary** Neural and Behavioral Science  
Atypical protein kinase C in Alzheimer's disease.  
Resident in Anatomical Pathology/ Neuropathology  
Columbia University Medical Center

**Erin Gilbert** Neural and Behavioral Science  
Effects of exogenous lactate on hippocampal intermediary metabolism.  
Resident in Dermatology  
SUNY Downstate Medical Center

**Fatma Betul Guloglu** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
Regulation of early B-cell development by immunoglobulin and surrogate light chain structure.  
Research Fellow  
Moffitt Cancer Center, University of South Florida

**Raquibul Hannan** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
PaCa-Ag1, a candidate pancreatic cancer-specific tumor marker.  
Resident in Radiation Oncology  
Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

**Mohammad Reza Hojjati** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
The effect of serine palmitoyltransferase on sphingolipid metabolism and atherosclerosis.  
Resident in Medicine  
SUNY Downstate Medical Center

**Chongmin Huan** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
TFE3 and TFEB are E-cadherin and CD40 ligand transcription activators.  
Research Scientist  
Transgenic Facility, SUNY Downstate Medical Center

**Jian Huang** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
The roles of yeast RSC chromatin-remodeling complex in genomic transmission and genome stability.  
Fellow in Medicine and Cell and Developmental Biology  
University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine

**Wenfei Kang** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
Regulation of Ste11, a pivotal HMG box transcription factor for differentiation in *Schizosaccharomyces pombe*.  
Research Fellow in Neuroscience  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University

**Petru Codrin Nemes** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
An alternative pathway of mast cell activation in gastrointestinal inflammation.  
Resident in Emergency Medicine  
SUNY Downstate Medical Center

**James K. Park** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
Models of Afr2 regulation of alpha-fetoprotein gene expression during liver regeneration.  
Resident in General Surgery  
St. Barnabus Hospital, NJ

**Richard T. Pomerantz** Molecular and Cellular Biology  
Studies of transcription fidelity by T7 RNA polymerase,  
and the potential application of T7 RNA polymerase as a  
molecular motor.  
Howard Hughes Fellow  
The Rockefeller University

**Marjorie Jeanne Rico** Neural and Behavioral Science  
Phospholipase D and group I mGluR-mediated epileptogenesis.  
Resident in Ophthalmology  
SUNY Downstate Medical Center

**Min Wang** Neural and Behavioral Science  
Group I mGluR activation-induced TRPC trafficking in  
hippocampal neurons.  
Research Fellow in Biologic and Materials Sciences  
University of Michigan School of Dentistry, Ann Arbor

**Xiangping Zhou** Neural and Behavioral Science  
Control of GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor  $\alpha 4$  subunit expression in a human  
neuroblastoma cell line.  
Fellow in Physiology and Pharmacology  
SUNY Downstate Medical Center

## MS Degree

**Maoli Yuan** Pharmacology  
Regulation of GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor  $\alpha 4$  subunit expression.

# College of Medicine

## MPH Degree

Andrew E. Anyadiegwu  
Karen Birgit Ast  
Erika Felicia Brutsaert  
Richard Ambrose Johnathan Clare  
Navin V. Dargani  
Guadalupe Dominguez  
Kapil Gupta  
Sara Michelle Handy  
Seing Houy  
Andre Lloyd Hylton  
James R. Jennings, Jr.  
Rubina Marilyn Khair  
Karen M. Kucinski  
Yan Lai  
Tanika LaWanda Mason  
Rebecca Jeanne Mercier  
Brendan C. O'Connor  
Brian David Rambarran  
Mrugank Shukla  
Young Suk Song  
Tamara Telfort  
R. Niko Verdecias  
Nia Kimya Washington-Plaskett  
Lisa Dolorees White

## MD Degree

\* Robert John DeCiucis Adamo Surgery  
Mark Robert Adams Orthopaedic Surgery  
Aleksandar Adzic Internal Medicine  
Amit Aggarwal Diagnostic Radiology  
Nancy Marie Albrecht Family Practice  
Eileen Alexander Pediatrics  
Janelle Maria Alexander Family Practice  
Jillian Sheree Alfonso Family Practice  
Elizabeth Neeltje Alt Internal Medicine  
\* David Joseph Altschul Neurosurgery

Naveen Anand Internal Medicine  
Neeraj Anand Internal Medicine  
\* Eric C. Anderson Internal Medicine  
Linda Rossy Aponte Pediatrics  
Caroline Marie Badeer Neurology  
\* Divya Balachandar Pediatrics  
Kiyanda Nyree Baldwin Surgery  
Jerasimos Ballas Obstetrics-Gynecology  
Chameeka Olivia Barrett Emergency Medicine  
Joanna Basso-Beizem Pediatrics  
Mihee Jeon Bay Pediatric Neurology  
\* Haidy Adly Bibawy Otolaryngology  
Jennifer A. Block Neurology  
Vijay Borra Orthopaedic Surgery  
Trang Minh Bui Internal Medicine  
Megan Leslie Calmus Pediatrics  
Alexandra Carrer Orthopaedic Surgery  
\* Lorenzo Jose Cervantes Ophthalmology  
Bob Being Sho Chai Diagnostic Radiology  
Evelyn Chang Internal Medicine  
Laura Yonkyung Chang Anesthesiology  
Jason Chih Chen Pediatrics  
Jeffrey Naiyu Chen Pediatrics  
Li-Fen Chen Neurology  
Anitha Pesala Chetty Internal Medicine  
Amit Chhabra Internal Medicine  
Kimberley Ann Chien Pediatrics  
Philip Chun-ming Chin Internal Medicine  
Michelle Yoonyoung Choi Internal Medicine  
Saman Bahram Chubineh Internal Medicine  
Rodney Peter Coe Ophthalmology  
John F. Crary Pathology  
\* Neelangani T. De Soyza Obstetrics-Gynecology  
Phoebus James Dhrymes Psychiatry  
Amos Dodi  
Andrei Nikolai Dokukin Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

\* Denotes Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society



Tamara J. Dunn Internal Medicine  
 David Bernal Edgcomb Psychiatry  
 Janine Elizabeth Eisman Psychiatry  
 Bassem Fawzy El-Bahtity Psychiatry  
 Loretta Azuka Emenike Internal Medicine  
 David Phillip Erstejn Internal Medicine  
 Faraj M. Faour Internal Medicine  
 Arline Faustin Pathology  
 Jennifer Faustin Family Practice  
 \* Frank Michael Fazio Anesthesiology  
 Ruth Nazaret Feliz  
 Sonalis Fernandez Internal Medicine  
 Loren Gail Fickies Internal Medicine  
 \* Eric Jason Forman Obstetrics-Gynecology  
 \* Eric Daniel Fornari Orthopaedic Surgery  
 Carlos Victor Francisco Internal Medicine  
 Wojciech Franzl Anesthesiology  
 \* Gretta Fridman Ophthalmology  
 Orlando Stephen Fuschetto Internal Medicine  
 Alethea Elisheva Garber Emergency Medicine  
 Yevgeniy Gelfand Internal Medicine-Psychiatry  
 Linda George Pediatrics  
 Simi George Internal Medicine  
 \* Erin Gilbert Dermatology  
 Serge Ginzburg Urology  
 \* Heidi Michelsen Golden Internal Medicine  
 Nadia Andrea Granger Pathology  
 Gennifer Joy Greebel Ophthalmology  
 Neilesh Vinny Gupta Diagnostic Radiology  
 Aaron Egan Hagge-Greenberg Urology  
 Sara Michelle Handy Internal Medicine-Emergency Medicine  
 Raquibul Hannan Radiation Oncology  
 \* Jessica Anne Hart Diagnostic Radiology  
 Nicole Josephine Hraniotis Psychiatry  
 \* Narmin Farah Hussain Diagnostic Radiology  
 Kaedrea Annalisa Jackson Internal Medicine-Emergency  
 Medicine  
 John Joseph Jaworsky Diagnostic Radiology  
 Karthik Jothianandan Internal Medicine  
 Grace Youngeun Kang Internal Medicine  
 Jeremy Seth Kaplowitz Anesthesiology  
 Megan Irene Kasnicki Pediatrics  
 Daniel S. Kassavin Surgery  
 Evangelia Katsoulakis Radiation Oncology  
 \* Roni Meredith Keller Otolaryngology  
 Filberto Dean Kelly Internal Medicine  
 Pavan Khurana Diagnostic Radiology  
 Vlad Kononchuk Psychiatry  
 Caroline Bonyoung Koo Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
 Harry Kopolovich Emergency Medicine  
 Vadim P. Kostyushenkov Surgery  
 Miriam Krinsky Pediatrics  
 Rachel Kueny Emergency Medicine  
 Andreana H. Kwon Emergency Medicine  
 \* Paul Joseph Lagonigro Ophthalmology  
 Ying Kit Lai Anesthesiology  
 Rena Yuni Lee Pathology  
 Moshe Dovid Lehrer Internal Medicine  
 Elizabeth Quail Liang Internal Medicine  
 \* Scott David Lipson Anesthesiology  
 Danielle Frances Loeb Internal Medicine  
 \* Abraham Loo Pathology  
 Justin Loona Diagnostic Radiology  
 Anthony Steven Lubinsky Internal Medicine  
 John Nihad Makaryus Internal Medicine  
 Glenn Eric Mann Anesthesiology  
 \* Justin Vincent Maroney Internal Medicine  
 Andrea F. McCalla Family Practice  
 Stacy Ann McGeechan Pediatrics  
 Jennifer M. McKenna Internal Medicine  
 \* Anita Kishor Mehta Diagnostic Radiology  
 \* Mena Mounir Mesiha Orthopaedic Surgery  
 Martina K. Milcevic Internal Medicine  
 Christie Nicole Miller Anesthesiology  
 Meredith Lauren Monaco Pediatrics  
 Daniel John Mooney Pediatrics  
 Lester Cox Morehead Internal Medicine  
 John Nicholas Moricco Anesthesiology  
 \* Mircea Muresanu Emergency Medicine  
 Esther Muschel Pediatrics  
 Ajin Nair Psychiatry  
 Nancy Ngai Pediatrics  
 Kelle Shawn Oberle Obstetrics-Gynecology  
 Glenn Arthur Occhiogrosso Psychiatry  
 Daniel Stephen O'Connor Internal Medicine

\* Denotes Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society

Erica Lynn Olsen Emergency Medicine  
 Philip Edward Otterbeck Internal Medicine  
 Kelly C. Pajela Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
 Sheau-Fang Pan Family Practice  
 Gaetano Pannella Internal Medicine  
 James K. Park Surgery  
 \* Neeral Patel Internal Medicine  
 Payal R. Patel Pediatrics  
 Sheetal Patel Ophthalmology  
 James Shaotsung Peng Emergency Medicine  
 Daniello B. Perez Pathology  
 Michael Edward Pettei Anesthesiology  
 Joe Philip Internal Medicine  
 Alain Pierre-Louis Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
 Daniil Leonidovich Polishchuk Orthopaedic Surgery  
 Steven Jay Poskar Psychiatry  
 \* Nikola Ragusa Ophthalmology  
 Vinny Krishnan Ram Internal Medicine  
 Brian David Rambarran Urology  
 \* Mityanand Ramnarine Internal Medicine-Emergency Medicine  
 Adam Joseph Rana Orthopaedic Surgery  
 Richard Ratanaprasatporn Internal Medicine  
 Judith Janice Richards Internal Medicine  
 Juan Felipe Rico Pediatrics  
 Marjorie Jeanne Rico Ophthalmology  
 Igor Rybinnik Neurology  
 Martine Sanon Internal Medicine  
 \* Kumaran Sathyamoorthy Urology  
 Ahmed Sawas Internal Medicine  
 \* Rifka Chaya Schulman Internal Medicine  
 James Augustine Scott Obstetrics-Gynecology  
 Urmi Sen Internal Medicine  
 Salman S. Shah Diagnostic Radiology  
 Craig Andrew Shapiro Pediatrics  
 Chunpang Tony Shen Pediatrics  
 Haniel Shen Psychiatry  
 Ja Hyun Shin Obstetrics-Gynecology  
 Young-Rok Shin Internal Medicine  
 Igor Shuryak  
 Brandon George Smaglo Internal Medicine  
 \* Hwajung Son Otolaryngology  
 Young Suk Song Diagnostic Radiology  
 Parviz Soomekh Anesthesiology  
 Victoria Sorokin Surgery  
 Scott James Christopher Stanat Orthopaedic Surgery  
 \* Kenan Walter Davis Stern Pediatrics  
 \* Mira Stotland Dermatology  
 Samantha Streater Emergency Medicine  
 Boram Sung Pediatrics  
 Willeatha Marion Taylor Pediatrics  
 David Lut-Yu Tsang Oral Surgery  
 Geoffrey Paul Turner Pathology  
 Ejovi Ughwanogho Orthopaedic Surgery  
 Suzanne L. V. Van Benthuysen Pediatrics  
 Robert James Vasquez Pediatrics  
 \* Gennadiy Vengerovich Otolaryngology  
 Franco Verde Diagnostic Radiology  
 Cedric Absalaam Walls Internal Medicine  
 Janice Yungtai Wang Internal Medicine  
 William Wang Internal Medicine  
 \* Rachel Sue Weiselberg Emergency Medicine  
 Onome Whiteru Internal Medicine  
 Sophia Natasha Williams Pediatrics  
 Winston S. Wong Surgery  
 \* Aaron Jemal Woodall Urology  
 Patricia Lai Wu Internal Medicine  
 Chi-cheng Yang Pathology  
 Andrew Yin Internal Medicine  
 Haejung Yoon Pediatrics  
 Chao Annie Yuan Emergency Medicine  
 Jiyon Yun Internal Medicine  
  
 Distinction in Research  
 John Nihad Makaryus  
 Alain Pierre-Louis  
 Daniil Leonidovich Polishchuk  
 Adam Joseph Rana  
 Kumaran Sathyamoorthy  
 Craig Andrew Shapiro  
 Igor Shuryak  
 Victoria Sorokin  
  
 Commendation in  
 Investigative Scholarship  
 Robert James Vasquez

\* Denotes Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society

# Honorary Degree Recipient

## Doctor of Science: Robert F. Furchgott, PhD

Robert F. Furchgott, PhD, distinguished professor emeritus of pharmacology at SUNY Downstate and recipient of the 1998 Nobel Prize in medicine, is internationally recognized for research that has revolutionized scientists' understanding of vascular physiology. His discovery of the critical role nitric oxide plays as a signaling molecule touched off, in the words of the Nobel Assembly, "an avalanche of research activities in many different laboratories around the world." Scientists today continue to build on his discovery, which set the stage for the development of many applications of nitric oxide, including drugs to combat cardiovascular disease and new treatments for shock, cancer, and erectile dysfunction.

Born in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1916, Dr. Furchgott graduated with a BS degree in chemistry from the University of North Carolina in 1937 and a PhD in biochemistry from Northwestern University in 1940. He held positions at Cornell University College of Medicine and Washington University School of Medicine before becoming, in 1956, founding chairman of Downstate's Department of Pharmacology. Dr. Furchgott served in that position for 26 years before stepping down in 1982 to devote himself primarily to research.

Dr. Furchgott is recognized for his research in cardiac pharmacology, adrenergic peripheral mechanisms, theory of drug-receptor mechanisms, and vascular pharmacology and physiology. In 1980, he reported his seminal discovery of the obligatory role of endothelial cells in the relaxation (vasodilation) of arteries by the neurotransmitter acetylcholine and demonstrated that the relaxation resulted from the release of a labile factor, endothelium-derived relaxing factor (EDRF), from the stimulated endothelial cells. In 1986, he presented evidence that EDRF is nitric oxide (NO).

This scientific breakthrough dramatically advanced our understanding of cardiovascular function. Scientists now believe that many cardiac and pulmonary conditions are the result of too much or too little endothelial release of NO. The molecule also appears to play an important role in cell communication in the brain. Researchers are investigating the effects NO may have on memory, pain, and addiction, as well as many other disorders.

Dr. Furchgott has received many national and international awards. A member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Sciences, and a former president of the American Society for Pharmacology, he holds honorary degrees from universities in Spain, Sweden, London, and Belgium, as well as in this country. In 1996, Dr. Furchgott received the prestigious Albert Lasker Award for Basic Medical Research. Two years later, in Stockholm, Sweden, he received the highest international recognition a scientist can attain, the Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology.

To honor Dr. Furchgott and continue his legacy, SUNY Downstate has established the Robert F. Furchgott Society. The Society will provide support to MD/PhD students and scientists doing research in the areas of basic science, hypertension, memory, and pulmonary disease.

# Honorary Degree Recipient

## Doctor of Science: Willem Johan Kolff, MD

Millions of people worldwide are alive today due to the creative genius of Willem J. Kolff. Best known as the inventor of the artificial heart and the kidney dialysis machine, he is considered the father of the field of artificial organs. SUNY Downstate is honored to have him as a celebrated member of its faculty.

Born in the Netherlands, Dr. Kolff received his MD from the University of Leiden and his PhD from the University of Groningen. The first of his groundbreaking achievements took place during the Nazi occupation of his native land during WWII. As he now recalls, "I wanted to make an artificial kidney that would save people. I was convinced that I could. I clung to it until it was done." Using sausage casings and laundry tubs, he constructed a crude device that was able to cleanse the blood of patients whose kidneys could no longer function.

After immigrating to the United States with his family in 1950, Dr. Kolff became professor of clinical investigation at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation and head of its department of artificial organs. It was there that he began work on creating an artificial heart. He built one of the first heart-lung machines, which made open-heart surgery possible, as well as an intra-aortic balloon pump for cases of acute myocardial distress.

Dr. Kolff later joined the faculty of the University of Utah as professor of surgery and medicine and research professor of engineering, and as director of its Institute for Biomedical Engineering. Under his leadership, the Institute became one of the world's leading artificial organ research centers. One of Dr. Kolff's inventions, a wearable artificial kidney, allowed patients for the first time to undergo dialysis at home. He also directed research in the development of artificial vision, hearing, limbs, and membrane oxygenation.

Continuing his work on the artificial heart, Dr. Kolff in 1982 brought together the surgical team that implanted the first "permanent" mechanical heart in a human patient, Dr. Barney Clark. This feat remains one of the true milestones in surgical medicine.

Inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 1985, Dr. Kolff was already in his 90s when he last worked on creating a wearable artificial lung.

Dr. Kolff has received numerous honors, including the Scientific Achievement Award from the American Medical Association, the Amory Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Valentine Medal, the Cameron Prize from the University of Edinburgh, the Russ Prize from the National Academy of Engineering, and the Albert Lasker Award for Clinical Medical Research, the highest tribute in American medicine. He also has the distinction of being made Commander in the Order of Oranje-Nassau, the most prestigious scientific honor bestowed by the government of the Netherlands.

# Ailanthus Award Recipient and Commencement Speaker

Jordan J. Cohen, MD

As president of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), Dr. Jordan J. Cohen heads an organization that has been a major voice on issues vital to America's health. The Washington-based association represents all 125 accredited medical schools in the United States, 17 schools in Canada, nearly 400 major teaching hospitals, 94 academic and professional societies, and the nation's medical students and residents.

Under Dr. Cohen's leadership, the AAMC has worked with the nation's medical schools to incorporate new elements into their curricula that reflect the changing terrain of medicine, such as geriatric medicine, end-of-life care, and cultural competence. It has become increasingly active in lobbying Congress for increased funding for biomedical research, Medicare and Medicaid, and programs that enhance medical education and residency learning.

Dr. Cohen has helped build broad coalitions to promote breakthrough research in regenerative medicine, including stem cell research. At a time of global unrest, he has spearheaded a bioterrorism initiative, "First Contact, First Response," to prepare the nation's first responders in the event of terrorist attacks. He is a staunch supporter of initiatives that enhance diversity in the physician workforce in order to better respond to the needs of an increasingly multi-racial and multi-cultural society. "I am especially proud," he has said, "to be at the helm of an organization active in promoting social justice issues that affect the quality of the health care available to everyone."

During the course of a distinguished career spanning almost four decades, Dr. Cohen has served at some of the most prestigious medical institutions in the country: as dean of medicine at SUNY Stony Brook; associate chair of medicine at the University of Chicago-Pritzker School of Medicine; and physician-in-chief and chair of medicine at Chicago's Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center. He has held medical faculty positions at Harvard, Brown, and Tufts universities and served as president of the medical staff at the New England Medical Center Hospital in Boston.

A graduate of Yale University and Harvard Medical School, Dr. Cohen's chief areas of research interest are acid-base metabolism and renal physiology. He is the author of more than 100 publications and editor of *Kidney International's Nephrology Forum*.

Concurrent with his leadership of the AAMC, Dr. Cohen also serves on the Board of Directors of the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation, the Foundation for Biomedical Research, and numerous other organizations. Dr. Cohen has been a member of the American College of Physicians since 1978 and was awarded a mastership from the College in 1993. In 1994, he was named a member of the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine.

Dr. Cohen has announced that he will retire from the presidency of the AAMC in June 2006.

# SUNY Downstate Medical Center

SUNY Downstate Medical Center, formally known as the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn, is one of four academic health centers within the 64-unit State University of New York. Located on an urban campus in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn, SUNY Downstate includes the College of Medicine, School of Graduate Studies, College of Nursing, College of Health Related Professions, Master of Public Health Program, a major research center, and University Hospital of Brooklyn.

Over the years, SUNY Downstate has undergone several name changes. In 1856, two physicians established a dispensary in downtown Brooklyn to provide care for poor immigrants. The Long Island College Hospital grew out of this dispensary. In 1858, the state granted the hospital's request for a charter to launch a medical school. The school, which opened its doors two years later, revolutionized medical education in the United States. The new school was unique because, for the first time in this country, the teaching of medicine was brought to the hospital bedside and the idea that physicians should be trained exclusively in university classrooms and lecture halls was rejected. It was truly a *college hospital*.

In 1931 the school was rechartered as the Long Island College of Medicine, with affiliated hospitals throughout Brooklyn. The "Downstate" era began on April 5, 1950 with a special ceremony at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, where a merger contract was signed between the Long Island College of Medicine and the newly constituted State University of New York. Several years later, the current campus was built in East Flatbush. In April 1953, ground was broken for the Basic Sciences Building, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower laid the cornerstone in 1954. The complex was expanded in 1966 with the opening of University Hospital of Brooklyn. The School of Graduate Studies, the College of Health Related Professions, and the College of Nursing were also added that year.

Today, SUNY Downstate is the focal point of a health education network that encompasses 30 hospitals, with a campus of 13 acres, a total student body of 1,500, a faculty of 4,755 (including full-time, part-time, and voluntary), and support staff of 3,182. In 1998, one of its researchers, Dr. Robert F. Furchgott, received the Nobel Prize in Medicine.

# Faculty Members Serving as Marshals

Michael Augenbraun, MD Associate Professor of Medicine and Associate Professor of Preventive Medicine and Community Health

Edmund Bourke, MD Professor and Chair of Medicine

Hugh J. Carroll, MD Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus of Medicine

Margaret Clark-Golden, MD Clinical Associate Professor of Pediatrics

Eva B. Cramer, PhD Professor of Anatomy and Cell Biology and Vice President for Biotechnology and Scientific Affairs

George Frangos, PhD Associate Dean of Graduate Medical Education

Donald Gerber, MD Professor of Medicine and Clinical Assistant Dean

Marcia Gerber, MD Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, Clinical Assistant Dean, and Director of Student/Employee Health Service

Mimi Halpern, PhD Distinguished Teaching Professor of Anatomy and Cell Biology

Constance Hill, MD Clinical Professor of Anesthesiology and Associate Dean for Minority Affairs

Michael Lucchesi, MD Associate Professor and Chair of Emergency Medicine, and Interim Chief Medical Officer

Maureen McLeod, PhD Professor and Acting Chair of Microbiology and Immunology

Steven Ostrow, MD Clinical Associate Professor of Radiology

Miriam T. Vincent, MD, PhD Professor and Chair of Family Practice

## SUNY Board of Trustees

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John R. Ryan, Vice Admiral USN (Ret.)

*Chancellor, State University of New York*

John J. O'Connor, MS

*Vice Chancellor and Secretary of the University*

# The Academic Procession

The procession is led by the presiding marshal. Other members of the procession include faculty marshals (chosen by the graduates), faculty members, deans, honorary degree recipients, and the president of SUNY Downstate.

The academic gown worn by procession members is said to be symbolic of the “democracy of scholarship,” for it covers any dress of rank or social standing underneath.

Academic gowns originated in the Middle Ages, the period when universities were beginning to take form. At that time, most scholars were also clerics—and therefore dressed as clerics, in long gowns. Over time, the gown became the accepted dress code for scholars: in England, in the second half of the 14th century, for example, several colleges forbade “excess in apparel” and decreed the wearing of long gowns.

The assignment of colors to signify different academic disciplines developed much later, and was standardized in the United States in the late 19th century. In 1895, an intercollegiate commission composed of representatives from leading colleges established a code of academic dress that prescribed cut, style, and materials of the gowns, as well as colors to represent different fields of learning. Today, academic dress code is regulated by a formal Committee on Academic Costumes and Ceremonies created by the American Council on Education in 1952.

The gown is usually black for all degrees, with variations in the sleeves, the front cut, and trim. The bachelor’s degree gown is black with long pointed sleeves. The master’s degree gown is black without trim and has oblong sleeves so the upper part of the arm comes through the slit in the sleeve. Doctoral (Ph.D.) gowns are black with bell-shaped sleeves. Mortarboards (caps) with tassels have their own significance. Master’s and bachelor’s tassels are black, while the Ph.D. tassel may be black or gold; medicine is green.

Hood colors indicate the field of learning: dark blue—philosophy; green—medicine; light blue—education; apricot—nursing; science—golden yellow; history—white; law—purple; psychology—dark blue.

Details of academic attire may vary depending on where faculty members completed their degrees. Some foreign degree holders, for example, wear special hats, distinctive to their degree and institution. Whatever the differences, however, the governing tradition is continuity of the academic symbols from the Middle Ages.



# The Hippocratic Oath

I do solemnly swear by that which I hold most sacred:

That I will be loyal to the profession of medicine  
and just and generous to its members;

That I will lead my life and practice my art  
in uprightness and honor;

That whatever house I shall enter, it shall be for the good  
of the sick to the utmost of my power;

That I will hold myself aloof from wrong;

That I will exercise my art solely for the cure of my patients,  
and will give no drug and perform no operation  
for a wrongful purpose;

That whatsoever I shall see or hear of the lives of men  
and women that should not be spoken, I will keep secret;

These I do promise, and in proportion as I am faithful to  
this my oath may happiness and good repute be ever mine.