

The Class of 2001 Commencement

The College
of Medicine

and

The School
of Graduate Studies

of

SUNY Downstate
Medical Center

Six O'Clock
Thursday Evening, May 17, 2001
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: Jeanine Gilson. Trombones: George Zorko (Tenor), Benjamin A. Rosenberg (Tenor/Bass, also Bass Trumpet). Trumpets: Anthony Bavota, Robert Owens, and Joseph Schufle (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)

America the Beautiful

Virginia Summerville (Soloist)

Kunjan Ashvin Bhatt (Violin)

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, Alumni Association, Division of Student Affairs, Deans' Offices, Institutional Advancement, Student Center, 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, Ph.D.

Professor of Anatomy & Cell Biology

Processional

(Audience, please rise for the Processional.)

Opening Remarks

Eugene B. Feigelson, M.D.

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

Greetings from the President

John C. LaRosa, M.D., FACP

President

Greetings from the Graduates

Jacob Moalem

College of Medicine, Class of 2001

Shaye Isaac Moskowitz

School of Graduate Studies, Class of 2001

Greetings from the Alumni Association

Sam L. Unterricht, Class of '76

President, Alumni Association

Presentation of Honorary Degrees

Eugene B. Feigelson, M.D.

Conferring of Honorary Degrees

John C. LaRosa, M.D., FACP

Honorary Degree Recipients

Seymour Furman, M.D.

Richard C. Reynolds, M.D.

Presentation of Ailanthus Award

John C. LaRosa, M.D., FACP

Ailanthus Award Recipient

Vivian W. Pinn, M.D.

Commencement Address

Vivian W. Pinn, M.D.

School of Graduate Studies
Granting of Graduate Degrees

Presentation of Candidates
Susan Schwartz-Giblin, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Graduate Studies

Conferring of Degrees
John C. LaRosa, M.D., FACP

Awarding of Diplomas
John C. LaRosa, M.D., FACP
Susan Schwartz-Giblin, Ph.D.

Hooding of Candidates
Thesis Research Sponsors and
Peter Bergold, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Physiology and Pharmacology

College of Medicine
Granting of the M.D. Degrees

Presentation of Candidates
Eugene B. Feigelson, M.D.

Conferring of Degrees
John C. LaRosa, M.D., FACP

Awarding of Diplomas
John C. LaRosa, M.D., FACP
Eugene B. Feigelson, M.D.

Hooding of Candidates
Stephan L. Kamholz, M.D.
*Professor and Chairman of Medicine, Long Island Jewish
Hospital, North Shore University Hospital*

Michael Lucchesi, M.D.
*Associate Professor and Chairman,
Department of Emergency Medicine*

Closing Remarks and Administration of the
Hippocratic Oath
John C. LaRosa, M.D., FACP

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

School of Graduate Studies

Ph.D. Degree

Subha Basu Microbiology & Immunology

Cycles of apoptosis and necrosis during neuroinflammation in hippocampal slice cultures.

Stefan Bradu Anatomy & Cell Biology

An in vitro model of pancreatic carcinogenesis: Characterization of transformation-associated biological and molecular alterations induced by the tobacco smoke carcinogen NNK in rat pancreatic BMRPA1 cells.

Jenny Libien Pharmacology

PKC isoforms in neuronal anoxia.

Shaye Isaac Moskowitz Neural & Behavioral Science
The role of inflammation in in vitro chronic neurodegeneration.

Squire Matthew Stead Neural & Behavioral Science
Responses of single CA1 neurons to minimal stimulation of Schaffer collaterals in behaving rats.

Yong Zhuang Biochemistry
Regulation of Na, K-ATPase β 1 subunit gene expression by low K.

College of Medicine

- M.D. Degree**
- * **Amgad H. Abdu** Internal Medicine
 - * **Deborah Beth Abeles** Surgery
 - Ashik Nisar Ahmad**
 - Albert Z. Akkerman** Anesthesiology
 - Fatma Akmese** Family Practice
 - * **S. Fahd Ali** Surgery
 - Rose Sherley Antilus** Obstetrics-Gynecology
 - Malik Eastern Ashe** Family Practice
 - Allison Pauline Atherley-Ward** Pediatrics
 - * **Melanie C. Austin** Pediatrics
 - * **Meir Mosheh Baalhaness** Ophthalmology
 - Marina Babiy** Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
 - Rahul Bajaj** Internal Medicine
 - Tayyaba Riaz Bashir** Internal Medicine
 - Monica Nabil Bastawros** Ophthalmology
 - Joseph Beacher** Internal Medicine
 - Meera S. Beharry** Pediatrics
 - Kunjan Ashvin Bhatt** Internal Medicine
 - Moneesh Deepak Bhow** Emergency Medicine
 - Aaron R. Biala** Internal Medicine
 - Gurpreet Kaur Bindra** Family Practice
 - * **Jeffrey Ross Blitstein** Urology
 - Michael Seth Bogaisky** Internal Medicine
 - Loida Elena Bonney** Medicine-Pediatrics
 - * **Marina Boruk** Otolaryngology
 - Thomas Madison Boyd** Emergency Medicine
 - Stefan Bradu** Dermatology
 - Steven Jeffrey Brunner** Pediatrics
 - Danyelle Lori Caeti** Pediatrics
 - Christiana Campbell** Pediatrics
 - Marisol Carpio-Brown** Obstetrics-Gynecology
 - Mamie Caton** Emergency Medicine
 - Jonathan T. Chang** Internal Medicine
 - Charlene Zhiyi Chao** Surgery
 - Jerrica L. Chen** Emergency Medicine
 - Daniel Cho** Surgery
 - Henry Choi** Ophthalmology
 - Walter Hyunmin Choi** Internal Medicine
 - Woo Sung Choi** Diagnostic Radiology
 - Ayman Chritah** Oral Surgery
 - Sunitha Chundru**
 - Kinga Marta Cieloszyk** Internal Medicine
 - Everton George Clare** Internal Medicine
 - Deirdre Jill Cohen** Internal Medicine
 - * **Michael Victor Corvini** Medicine-Primary
 - Preeta Sanjeevani Dhanantwari** Pediatrics
 - * **Brian Anthony Di Carlo** Internal Medicine
 - * **Matthew Alan Diament** Internal Medicine
 - Hajir Dilmanian** Internal Medicine
 - Patrick Giles Duffy** Surgery
 - Latoya L. Edwards** Family Practice
 - * **Evan Ray Eisenberg** Urology
 - Milena Elimelakh** Internal Medicine
 - * **Natalia Elkin** Ophthalmology
 - Ainsworth Bartholomew Farrell** Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
 - Robert Lawrence Feig** Ophthalmology
 - Joy Sarfati Feld** Internal Medicine
 - Edward Fels** Medicine-Pediatrics
 - Lauren Adele Ferrara** Obstetrics-Gynecology
 - Sandra Lolita Forde** Family Practice
 - Christian Anthony Gasson** Internal Medicine
 - Julie Gershun** Diagnostic Radiology
 - Marianna Gertsberg** Internal Medicine
 - Monique Dayna Gillman** Pediatrics
 - Yuliya Giyaur** Ophthalmology
 - Regina Goft** Emergency Medicine
 - Errol L. Gordon** Medicine/Neurology
 - Seth David Gordon** Pediatrics
 - * **Mila Gorsky** Internal Medicine

Jonah Steven Green Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
David Benjamin Greenberg Internal Medicine
Christina Dilia Guillen Pediatrics
Kelley J. Halstead Obstetrics-Gynecology
* **Rosemarie Elizabeth Hardin** Surgery
Stephen Patrick Havasy Emergency Medicine
Jennifer Henle Pediatrics
Gail Katherine Hepner Psychiatry
* **Francine Isidra Hippolyte** Obstetrics-Gynecology
Ki-Sung Steve Hong Internal Medicine
Melissa Willene Hull Anesthesiology
Eric Yu-Shu Hwang
Jay Steven Itzkowitz Emergency Medicine
Pierrot Jeannot Medicine-Pediatrics
* **Amit Augustine Johnsingh** Internal Medicine
Shelley AM Jones Emergency Medicine
Reginald Edwin Julien Surgery
Matthew S. Kaufman Internal Medicine
Aseef Syed Kazmi Surgery
David Christopher Kim Emergency Medicine
Richard Bumsoo Kim Surgery
Laurie Jill Kirstein Surgery
Izchak Kohen Psychiatry
Srinivas Ramanadham Kolla Surgery
Mark Michael Korenge
Dariusz Kostrzewa Family Practice
Shawna C. Lambert Emergency Medicine
* **Marian Larkin** Pediatrics-Primary
Duc T. Le Internal Medicine
Sanyup J. Lee Psychiatry
William Lee Anesthesiology
Ari Benjamin Lerner Anesthesiology
Paula Evelyn Lester Medicine-Primary
Samson Leung Anesthesiology
Michael Shu Hao Liang Anesthesiology
Jenny Libien Pathology
James Weishi Lin Internal Medicine
Jordan Mills Lisella Surgery
Peter Lu Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
Julia Mandelblat Internal Medicine
* **Mercedes Marte** Obstetrics-Gynecology
Alisa Martin
* **Michelle Saltiel Mayer** Pediatrics
Christy A. McAvoy Obstetrics-Gynecology
Jamarcy L. McDaniel Emergency Medicine
Nickolaos Michelakis Internal Medicine
Eddie E. Michli Urology
Paul Maurice Milhoua Urology
Brian Howard Miller Orthopaedic Surgery
Lisa Alice Mills Internal Medicine
Jacob Moalem Surgery
Sushama Mody Internal Medicine
Theresa A. Molisse Internal Medicine
Esther Meehae Moon Obstetrics-Gynecology
* **Larissa Jeanette Mooney** Psychiatry
Maya Devi Moorley Internal Medicine
Yesenia Morales Pediatrics
Stephen Francis Xavier Morin Internal Medicine
Shaye Isaac Moskowitz Neurosurgery
Vibhuti Naik Pediatrics-Primary
Eric Peter Nastro Emergency Medicine
Dennis Ng Surgery
Norland Ng Internal Medicine
Andrew Nguyen Internal Medicine
Tadhg O'Gara Orthopaedic Surgery
Boris Ovodenko Internal Medicine
Angela Marie Parise Obstetrics-Gynecology
Robert Kaizad Patel Emergency Medicine
Yudhistira Kishan Persaud Pediatrics
Bruce Eric Petersen
Richard G. Picciocca, Jr. Surgery
Maria Catherine Pietanza Internal Medicine
Vincent Edward Pinedo Pediatrics
* **Jonathan Eric Posner** Diagnostic Radiology
Soumya Prasad Pediatrics
* **Helen Radoszycki** Dermatology
Diane Lauren Reidy Internal Medicine
Rola Husam Rimawi Internal Medicine

Michael Rivera Pathology
Michelle Linda Romero Internal Medicine
Lawrence Stephen Rosenthal Internal Medicine
* Adam Michael Rotunda Dermatology
Elissa Hope Rubin Pediatrics
Igor Rubinshteyn Orthopaedic Surgery
Marc Scheublin Psychiatry
Randolph James Sealey, Jr. Orthopaedic Surgery
Joseph Mario Sedutto Anesthesiology
* Ronak Rajnikant Shah Emergency Medicine
Sejal Kirit Shah Emergency Medicine
* Matthew David Shaines Internal Medicine
* Roopal Rajendra Shanghvi Dermatology
Aleksander Shapsis Internal Medicine
Anton Shcherbina Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
David Yu-Chin Shih Emergency Medicine
Dmitry Shtrambrand Internal Medicine
Arthur Howard Siegel Internal Medicine
Shaghayegh Siyahrezaei Pediatrics
Amanda Wetherbee Smith Emergency Medicine
Michelle Vanessa Soto Medicine-Primary
Squire Matthew Stead Pediatric Neurology
* Scott James Streater Anesthesiology
Virginia Summerville
Mia H. Svensson Pediatrics
Andrea Telak Pediatrics
Maria Thanjan Pediatrics
Nelson Leo Tieng Emergency Medicine
* Roger Decker Tillotson Emergency Medicine
Loanne Tran Pediatrics
Lawrence Tsao Pathology
Jenine Nicole Vecchio Internal Medicine
Sean St. Patrick Walcott Emergency Medicine

Christine Tinghua Wang Pediatrics
George Choching Wang Internal Medicine
* Keri Lee Weingast Obstetrics-Gynecology
* Moshe Weizberg Emergency Medicine
Katherine Elizabeth Weyhrauch Obstetrics-
Gynecology
Brian Basik Whang Surgery
* Baruch Michael Wieder Internal Medicine
Lavonne Juanita Williams Internal Medicine
* Daniel Lawrence Wolfson Internal Medicine
Steven Scott Wright Emergency Medicine
Elizabeth Yeung Pediatrics
Hishalah Zvulon Obstetrics-Gynecology
* Allison Gayle Zysman Dermatology

Commendation in Investigative Scholarship
Soumya Prasad

* Denotes Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society

Honorary Degree Recipient

Doctor of Science: Seymour Furman, M.D.

Seymour Furman, M.D., is professor of surgery and medicine at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and director emeritus of the Pacemaker Center at Montefiore Medical Center. His colleagues have called him “the father of transvenous endocardial pacing of the heart” and “the enabler of modern electrophysiologic diagnostic and therapeutic modalities.” The techniques he introduced have saved or improved the lives of countless patients over the last 43 years, and his students and disciples are spread around the globe. He is also a graduate of SUNY Downstate Medical Center.

Dr. Furman was born in New York City in 1931. He graduated from Washington Square College, New York University, and received his M.D. degree from the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center in 1955. His postgraduate training included an internship in medicine and a residency in surgery at Montefiore Hospital and Medical Center. He then spent two years in the Navy, becoming a Lt. Commander, USNR. He thereafter performed a cardiothoracic year at Baylor University in Houston, Texas.

In 1963, Dr. Furman returned to Montefiore and Albert Einstein College of Medicine, rising through the ranks to professor of surgery in the Department of Cardio-Thoracic Surgery in 1982. He was also named professor in the Department of Medicine in 1988, in recognition of his long-term interaction with the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory and Cardiology Division in that department.

Dr. Furman’s signal contribution to medicine and surgery came in the second year of his surgical residency (1957-58). He spent half-time functioning as a cardiology resident in the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory. Coupling his knowledge of right-heart catheterization and intracardiac electrocardiography, he proposed and proved in the laboratory that the heart could be paced endocardially. On July 16, 1958 he paced a patient successfully for two hours during a colon resection, using an endocardial lead-electrode of his own design and a high voltage pacemaker intended for pacing through the intact chest, which he had modified for the needs of safe endocardial stimulation. A second patient followed, paced for three months from August to November 1958. By the time he entered the United States Navy in July 1960 he had paced nineteen patients, six of whom eventually survived with pacing over one year, three for more than ten years, and two for more than twenty years. Transvenous endocardial pacing is now the standard route for implanted cardiac pacemakers and implanted cardioverter-defibrillators worldwide. In addition, endocardial pacing, coupled with His bundle mapping, made possible the emergence of modern electrophysiologic diagnostic techniques.

In the ensuing decade, Dr. Furman was at the forefront of work that refined the techniques of temporary and permanent pacemaker application. He has also made a striking impact on the entire subspecialty with his founding, in 1978, of *PACE*, the journal of *Pacing and Clinical Electrophysiology*. His editorials offer terse and timely commentary, guidance, and critiques to the industry, its practitioners, and regulators. In 1979, he was one of four core founders of the North American Society of Pacing and Electrophysiology (NASPE), and in 1991 he became its second president.

Dr. Furman’s honors include the Distinguished Service Award by the Intersociety Commission for Heart Disease Resources, the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Transvenous Pacing recognition by NASPE, Cardiotim’s Pioneer in Pacing Award, the Distinguished Service Award by NASPE, and honorary membership in the cardiac pacing societies in Argentina, Brazil, Great Britain, Chile, Israel, and elsewhere. In March 1995 he received the Distinguished Scientist Award from the American College of Cardiology. He most recently received a Distinguished Achievement Award from NASPE.

Honorary Degree Recipient

Doctor of Humane Letters: Richard C. Reynolds, M.D.

Richard C. Reynolds, M.D., is a highly respected physician, educator, and administrator who has excelled in numerous fields. He served as executive vice president of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is co-editor of *On Doctoring*, an anthology of poems, stories, and essays that pay tribute to the wonders of the medical profession. First published in 1991 and co-edited with physician-poet John Stone, M.D., *On Doctoring* is now in its third edition. Presented by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation each year to first-year medical students in all of the nation's medical colleges, it is intended to foster an appreciation of medicine as a humanitarian endeavor.

Dr. Reynolds grew up and attended public school in Kingston, New York. He earned his undergraduate degree from Rutgers University, and his M.D. from The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at Johns Hopkins, followed by a two-year tour in the U.S. Public Health Service's Indian Health Service. Assigned to Alaska, Dr. Reynolds helped provide health-care services to the remote Yukon area.

Returning to Johns Hopkins, Dr. Reynolds completed his residency as well as a fellowship in allergy and infectious diseases. He developed a private practice in Frederick, Maryland, which he maintained for nine years. In 1968, he joined the Department of Medicine at the University of Florida College of Medicine in Gainesville. He was subsequently appointed chairman of the Department of Community and Family Medicine and assistant dean for community health. While at the University of Florida, Dr. Reynolds established one of the country's first rural health-care delivery systems and developed novel educational programs in rural counties for medical students and residents.

In 1978, Dr. Reynolds was appointed dean of the then-fledgling Rutgers Medical School, soon to be renamed the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Colleagues credit Dr. Reynolds with "maturing" the school, and laying the foundation for one of the country's premiere medical colleges. Under his leadership, the medical school established a number of community health outreach programs, including the Eric B. Chandler Health Center in New Brunswick. In 1984, he was appointed UMDNJ's first senior vice president for academic affairs. In recognition of his contributions to UMDNJ, the university awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1997.

In 1994, Dr. Reynolds accepted the position of executive vice president of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the nation's largest health-related philanthropic foundation. While there, he was instrumental in guiding the foundation's innovative funding decisions. In 1996, in honor of Dr. Reynolds, the foundation endowed a faculty chair at UMDNJ.

Today, Dr. Reynolds teaches first- and second-year medical students at the University of Florida and continues to work on behalf of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He oversees its Clinical Scholars Program, which provides physician training in such areas as policy studies, ethics, history, social sciences, and law.

Dr. Reynolds has published more than 80 articles and three books. He has written on such topics as the need to improve the delivery of health-care services to rural and underserved communities and reforming medical education.

Commencement Speaker and Ailanthus Award Recipient

Vivian W. Pinn, M.D.

Dr. Vivian W. Pinn was named associate director for research on women's health at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in February 1994. She is also the first full-time director of the Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) at the NIH, an appointment she has held since November 1991. Dr. Pinn came to the NIH from Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, D.C., where she had been professor and chair of the Department of Pathology since 1982.

NIH created the ORWH in 1990 in response to concerns that women were not represented in clinical trials of promising new medications and therapies. Dr. Pinn points out, however, that ORWH's mission goes far beyond getting women enlisted in clinical trials. The office actively supports basic research related to women's diseases, works with the NIH's constituent institutes to identify new research areas relevant to women's health, promotes career development for women in science, and acts as a liaison between women's groups and the NIH.

"The whole reason for putting women in clinical trials is not just to be politically correct," says Dr. Pinn, "but because it is good science. You want to know if there are differences." A decade or so ago, few if any women were enrolled in NIH clinical trials. Today, they are nearly two-thirds of the participants.

Dr. Pinn is proud of her office's efforts to help women begin and advance their scientific careers, especially a career re-entry program for women wanting to return to science after taking time off for family obligations. ORWH has enabled many women (and several men) to go back into research in mentored environments, restart their careers, and go on to become principal investigators. The re-entry program is so successful that many NIH institutes have adopted it.

Born in Halifax, Virginia, Dr. Pinn received her early education in the public schools of Lynchburg, and graduated from Dunbar High School as Valedictorian of her class in 1958. She earned her B.A. from Wellesley College in Massachusetts, and received her M.D. from the University of Virginia School of Medicine in 1967, where she was the only minority and only woman in her class.

She returned to Massachusetts to complete her postgraduate training in pathology at the Massachusetts General Hospital, during which time she also served as a teaching fellow at the Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Pinn joined the faculty of Tufts University School of Medicine and Tufts New England Medical Center Hospital in 1970 and held the positions of assistant dean for student affairs, associate professor of pathology, and associate coordinator for minority student affairs at the time she left to assume the chairmanship of the Department of Pathology at Howard University College of Medicine and Howard University Hospital in September 1982.

She is a member of long standing in many professional and scientific organizations, in which she has held many positions of leadership. She also served as the 88th president of the National Medical Association (and second woman president) during the year 1989-1990, during which time she implemented a national program related to breast cancer screening and clinical examination.

Dr. Pinn has received numerous honors, awards, and recognitions, and has been granted seven honorary degrees since 1992. In October 1994, Dr. Pinn was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and, in October 1995, she was elected to the Institute of Medicine.

She has long been active in efforts to improve the health and career opportunities for women and minorities and has been invited to present the ORWH's mandate, programs, and initiatives to many national and international individuals and organizations with an interest in improving women's health.

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, 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 27 hospitals, with a campus of 13 acres, a total student body of 1,500, a faculty of 3,500 (including full-time, part-time, and voluntary staff), and support staff of 2,800. In 1998, one of its researchers, Dr. Robert F. Furchgott, received the Nobel Prize in Medicine.

Faculty Members Serving as Marshals

Angela Bennett, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics

Peter Bergold, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Physiology & Pharmacology

Thomas P. Bradley, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine

Eva B. Cramer, Ph.D., Professor of Anatomy & Cell Biology

Donald Gerber, M.D., Professor of Medicine

Marcia Gerber, M.D., Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of Student/Employee Health Service

Alan Gintzler, Ph.D., Professor of Biochemistry

Constance Hill, M.D., Clinical Professor of Anesthesiology and Associate Dean for Minority Affairs

Stephan L. Kamholz, M.D., Professor and Chairman of Medicine, Long Island Jewish Hospital,
North Shore University Hospital

John Lewis, Ph.D., Professor of Anatomy and Cell Biology

Theophilus Lewis, M.D., Clinical Associate Professor of Surgery

Michael Lucchesi, M.D., Associate Professor and Chairman of Emergency Medicine

Richard J. Macchia, M.D., Distinguished Teaching Professor and Chairman of Urology

Steven Ostrow, M.D., Assistant Professor of Radiology

Jerome G. Stempak, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Anatomy & Cell Biology

SUNY Board of Trustees

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Nelson A. Rockefeller, Jr., M.B.A.

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Harvey F. Wachsman, M.D., J.D.

Robert L. King, J.D.

Chancellor

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.

