Dear Colleagues,

One of my greatest honors as dean is the opportunity to share news of your outstanding work with people across Columbia and beyond. Recently, I was invited to testify before a Congressional committee about the importance of full funding for the National Institutes of Health. I urged the committee to increase the NIH budget by $1.3 billion to $32 billion so NIH can fund more research and the U.S. can remain the world leader in biomedical science.

Much of the work done here at CUMC provides strong evidence in support of NIH’s impact. Recent publications include a study led by Pathology Professor Karen Duff that provides new insight into how Alzheimer’s disease spreads throughout the brain. I also reported about Drs. Megan Sykes and Michael Friedlander, who have developed a way to re-create an individual’s immune system in a mouse, offering researchers an unprecedented tool for individualized analysis of abnormalities that contribute to type 1 diabetes and other autoimmune diseases.

The quality of research at CUMC is also why our portfolio of NIH-supported research has grown. Despite a 1 percent decline in the overall NIH budget last year, NIH awards grew 6 percent for P&S and 12 percent for the Mailman School of Public Health. Growth like this speaks volumes about the excellence of our faculty and all of the people working here at CUMC — but we need to help lawmakers and the public understand the consequences of underfunding NIH.

I also want to congratulate the many members of our faculty whose achievements are in this month’s issue of Celebrates. In particular, please join me in congratulating Dr. Tom Jessell, who received the 2012 Canada Gairdner award for his contributions to the field of medicine, and Dr. Wafaa El-Sadr, who gave a Columbia University Lecture on April 5, titled “The HIV/AIDS Epidemic: Global Tragedy, Lasting Triumphs.”

And I am pleased to report that this month’s list of philanthropic gifts is capped by a $5 million gift to the Irving Institute for Clinical and Translational Research to provide analytic tools for scientists around the world.

This month’s issue of Celebrates is evidence of the amazing work being done on our campus. Thank you for all that you do to make this work possible.

Lee Goldman, MD
Dean of the Faculties of Health Sciences and Medicine, Executive Vice President for Health and Biomedical Sciences Columbia University Medical Center
Anissa Abi-Dargham, MD, Department of Psychiatry, has received $1.1 million over five years from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism for “Alcohol-induced Human Striatal Dopamine Release Related to Alcoholism Vulnerability and Habitual Use.”

Ronald Silverman, PhD, Department of Ophthalmology, has received $1.58 million over four years from the National Eye Institute for “Elastographic Imaging of the Retina/Choroid in Age-Related Macular Degeneration.”

Wei Dong, PhD, Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery, has received $1.2 million over five years from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders for “Exploring Otoacoustic Emissions with Intracochlear Pressure and Motion Measurements.”

Heidi Schambra, MD, Department of Rehabilitation and Regenerative Medicine, has received $874,000 over five years from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for “The Neurophysiology of Spontaneous Biological Recovery.”

Andrea Califano, PhD, Department of Biomedical Informatics, has received $480,000 over three years from the Department of the Army, Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, for “Discovery of Akt-regulated Transcriptional Modules Associated with Malignant Phenotypes in Breast Cancer.”

Ronald Wapner, MD, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, has received $279,000 over one year from an anonymous funding source for “Non-invasive Prenatal Diagnosis using Free Floating Fetal DNA Clinical Study (The Genception Non-invasive Prenatal Diagnosis Trial).”

Salvatore DiMauro, MD, Department of Neurology, has received $273,000 over two years from the Muscular Dystrophy Association for “Therapeutic Strategies in Neutral Lipid Storage Disease with Myopathy.”
AWARDS & HONORS

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

Thomas M. Jessell, PhD, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics, received the 2012 Canada Gairdner International Award in recognition of his contributions to medical science. Michael Rosbash, PhD, of Brandeis University, also received the award.

Darpun Sachdev, MD, (at left) first year fellow, Division of Infectious Diseases, and Khanh Thieu, MD, resident, Department of Dermatology, were among 43 junior investigators who recently received research grants from the American Medical Association Foundation, through the Seed Grant Research Program.

COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE

Kayleigh A. Eaves, DDS candidate’12, has received The American Dental Education Association/Crest Oral-B Scholarship for Predoctoral Students Pursuing Academic Careers.

Jiwon Lee, DDS candidate’14, has been named Speaker of the House of Delegates of the American Student Dental Association.
Robert Tauber, DDS, has been elected for a three-year term to the Board of Ethics, Village of Mount Kisco.

Wafaa El-Sadr, MD, MPH, Department of Epidemiology, has been appointed to the Committee on Global Thought, an organization that brings together faculty at Columbia University to explore global issues from an innovative, interdisciplinary perspective. Dr. El-Sadr also gave the prestigious Columbia University Lecture on April 5 at the Morningside Campus. The title of her speech was “The HIV/AIDS Epidemic: Global Tragedy, Lasting Triumphs.”

Kenneth Ong, MD, MPH, Department of Health Policy and Management, was elected to the board of directors of Health Information Management & Systems Society, a not-for-profit organization focused on providing global leadership for the optimal use of health IT.

MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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SAVE THE DATE

2020 VISION
MAKING P&S EVEN GREATER

The 2012 State of the School Presentation with Lee Goldman, MD

June 21, 2012
5:00 PM
P&S Alumni Auditorium
PHILANTHROPIC GIFTS
(Gifts received February 28 – March 28, 2012)

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

The Irving Institute for Clinical and Translational Research received a $5 million gift to support the development of a metabolomic program, providing novel analytic tools for scientists across the region.

A bequest totaling $2,517,974 will advance research in the field of Alzheimer’s disease.

Another bequest of $2.5 million was committed to establish a professorship in cancer biology.

The Carmel Hill Fund gave $1.5 million in support of the Columbia University TeenScreen Center in the Department of Psychiatry.

A $1 million gift was given to advance research conducted under the direction of Dr. Gerald Appel at the Center for Glomerular Diseases.

An anonymous gift of $1 million was given to the new Medical and Graduate Education Building.

A second anonymous gift of $1 million was committed to establish an endowed scholarship for medical students.

The Taub Institute for Research on Alzheimer’s Disease and the Aging Brain received a $500,000 donation to advance Alzheimer’s disease research.

The Columbia Brain-Gut Initiative received a gift of $400,000.

The Abraham and Mildred Goldstein Professorship in Women’s Cancer Research received an additional gift of $400,000.

A gift of $400,000 was given by the Jewish Communal Fund in support of research in the Division of Cardiology.

Hope & Heroes Children’s Cancer Fund raised $375,000 in support of pediatric oncology at Columbia.

An anonymous donor gave $300,000 to advance biomedical research at the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

A gift of $250,000 was given to the Department of Medicine to fund an echocardiography machine.
PHILANTHROPIC GIFTS
(Gifts received February 28 – March 28, 2012)

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS (continued)
An additional $200,000 gift was made to the Department of Medicine in support of the Rudin Cardiology Fellowship.

The Winifred Mercer Pitkin, MD Professorship Fund received an additional $150,000 payment.

MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
The Breast Cancer Research Foundation made a payment of $112,500 toward a grant of $225,000 to support epigenetics and DNA repair in breast cancer risk.

COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE
An estate gift of $166,000 will support postgraduate periodontics in the College of Dental Medicine.

Coming up in the spring issue of ColumbiaMedicine magazine...

• A profile of our newest Institute of Medicine member, Carol Mason
• Tim Wang’s approach to the study of cancer
• News of an exciting expansion of our ColumbiaDoctors practice in Midtown Manhattan
• An update on the new scholarly projects, an important milestone in our revitalized curriculum
• The transition of the first class of Columbia-Bassett students to Cooperstown

Add to this a profile of Paul Marks, a 1949 P&S graduate and CUMC Board of Visitors member, and his son, Andrew Marks, our current chair of physiology & cellular biophysics.

Check your mailbox in mid-May for your copy of ColumbiaMedicine magazine.
Surgery for Epilepsy Gains Urgency in Trial – March 20, 2012
Surgery for epilepsy is usually seen as a last resort for patients when medications do not work. Now a randomized, controlled trial suggests that surgery as soon as possible after the failure of two antiepileptic drugs is a better approach than continued medical care. “The statistical difference was marked, even with a small number of patients, which tells you that the magnitude of the effect is huge,” said Dr. Derek J. Chong, an assistant professor of neurology at Columbia University Medical Center, who was not involved in the study.

At 82, the Nobel Prize-winning neuroscientist Dr. Eric R. Kandel is still constantly coming up with new ideas for research. Last year he collaborated, for the first time, with Denise B. Kandel — his fellow Columbia University research scientist and wife of 55 years — investigating the biological links between cigarette and cocaine addiction. And this month his newest book, “The Age of Insight: The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind and Brain, From Vienna 1900 to the Present,” is to be released by Random House.

March 25, 2012 – UMC researchers Gregg W. Stone (lead author), Akiko Maehara, Jose M. Dizon, and Helen Parise were among the 19 authors of a study published in the March 25 issue of JAMA. The paper is titled, “Intracoronary Abciximab and Aspiration Thrombectomy in Patients With Large Anterior Myocardial Infarction.”

March 11, 2012 – Researchers Chutima Talchai, Shouhong Xuan, and Domenico Accili (lead author) were among the five authors of a study titled, “Generation of Functional Insulin-producing Cells in the Gut by Foxo1 Ablation,” which was published in the March 11 issue of the journal Nature Genetics.

Soldier’s Alleged Kandahar Killing Spree: Were Warning Signs Missed? – March 12, 2012
Whether it was a psychotic break or underlying mental illness that led a United States Army soldier to allegedly massacre 16 Afghan civilians is still unclear. “This could have been signaled by erratic and changed behavior in the soldier including strange or unusual behavior, insomnia, weight loss, talking nonsensically or incoherently, making threatening statements and using drugs,” said Dr. Jeffrey Lieberman, chairman of psychiatry at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and director of the New York State Psychiatric Institute.
CUMC IN THE NEWS - MARCH 2012
Click on blue hyperlinks to view article.

CBS NEWS

The United States Preventive Services Task Force released new cervical cancer screening guidelines today that recommend women ages 21 to 65 get a Pap smear test every 3 years. For women under the age of 21, the task force does not recommend testing at all, even if they are sexually active. “To blanketly say in these low risks patients 5 years is appropriate might be a stretch too far,” Dr. Sharyn Lewin, an OB/GYN at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/ Columbia University Medical Center, told CBS News.

Bloomberg

Obama Health Law “Huge Step,” Mundinger Says – March 26
Mary Mundinger, dean emeritus at Columbia University’s School of Nursing, talks about the Obama administration’s health-care overhaul being considered by the U.S. Supreme Court. She speaks with Mark Crumpton on Bloomberg Television’s “Bottom Line.”

Science Translational Medicine

March 14, 2012– Researchers Hannes Kalscheuer, Nichole Danzl, Robert Winchester, Robin Goland, Ellen Greenberg, David G. Savage, Hiroyuki Tahara, Goda Choi, Yong-Guang Yang, and Megan Sykes (lead author) were among the authors of a study titled, “A Model for Personalized in Vivo Analysis of Human Immune Responsiveness” in the March 14 issue of the journal Science Translational Medicine.

The Atlantic

The Robots of Medicine: Do the Benefits Outweigh the Costs? – March 6, 2012
Robotics has gained some momentum in recent years, but there are still a lot of unanswered questions about its efficacy when pitted against conventional surgery. A related benefit is that robotic extensions can be extremely tiny, so they can go where human hands simply won’t fit: Some incisions through which robotic “arms” can operate are as small as eight millimeters, according to Dr. Michael Argenziano, who directs the Minimally Invasive and Robotic Cardiac Surgery department at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center.

Scientific American

Japan’s Post-Fukushima Earthquake Health Woes Go Beyond Radiation Effects – March 2, 2012
A year out, public health experts agree that the radiation fears were overblown. And some, including Richard Garfield, a professor of Clinical International Nursing at Columbia University, go a step further. “In terms of the health impact, the radiation is negligible,” he says.