CUMC CELEBRATES is a monthly publication that acknowledges faculty, staff, and students at Columbia University Medical Center who receive major research grants, who receive prestigious awards, who are elected to honorary societies, or who take leadership positions in professional organizations. Celebrates also gratefully acknowledges the gifts made by donors and friends of the Medical Center and highlights faculty who have appeared in the news recently.

If you have an award or honor that you would like to have listed in Celebrates, please fill out this online form. Please note: all federal grants are automatically included based on institutional data. For more information, send an email to the Celebrates editor.

RESEARCH GRANTS
(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

Asa Abeliovich, MD, PhD, Pathology & Neurology, has received $2.99 million over five years from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for “Generation and Integration of New CNS Neurons by in vivo Directed Conversion.”

Roy Alcalay, MD, MS, Neurology, has received $1.01 million over five years from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for “The Role of Glucocerebrosidase in Parkinson’s Disease.”

Ziad Ali, MD, DPhil, Medicine, has received $733,728 through May 2015 from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for “The Role of the Orphan Receptor Tyrosine Kinase Rost1 in Vascular Disease.”
RESEARCH GRANTS

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS (continued)

Ottavio Arancio, MD, PhD, Taub Institute, has received $800,000 through September 2014 from the Department of the Army, Army Medical Research and Material Command, for “The Role of PP2A Methylation in Susceptibility and Resistance to TBI and AD-induced Neurodegeneration.”

Adam Brickman, PhD, Taub Institute, has received $320,000 through August 2014 from the National Institute on Aging for “Integrating Neuroimaging with Studies of Cognitive Aging in the Dominican Republic.”

Jeffrey Bruce, MD, FACS, Neurosurgery, has received $2.95 million over five years from the National Cancer Institute for “Chronic Convection-enhanced Delivery (CED) of Topotecan for Glioblastoma.”

Mark Churchland, PhD, Neuroscience, has received $2.4 million over five years from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for “A Dynamical Systems Approach to Fundamental Questions in Neuroscience.”

Jeanine Marie D’Armiento, MD, PhD, Medicine, has received $1.17 million through June 2015 from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for “Imaging RAGE Pro-inflammatory Signaling and Cellular Apoptosis in Emphysema.”

Karina Davidson, PhD, Medicine, has received $1.35 million through August 2015 from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for “Ecological Link of Psychosocial Stress to Exercise: Personalized Pathways.”

Andrew Jay Dwork, MD, Psychiatry, has received $2.26 million over five years from the National Institute of Mental Health for “Building Schizophrenia Research in Macedonia.”

Noemie Elhadad, PhD, Biomedical Informatics, has received $284,982 over four years from Ohio State University for “An Information Fusion Approach to Longitudinal Health Records.”
RESEARCH GRANTS

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS (continued)

Ali Gharavi, MD, Medicine, has received $2.6 million over five years from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease for “Discovery and Fine Mapping of Susceptibility Loci for IgA Nephropathy.”

Victor Grann, MD, MPH, Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center, has received $2.38 million through May 2015 from the National Cancer Institute for “Columbia University Medical Center Minority-based Community Clinical Oncology Program (MB-CCOP).”

Eric Greene, PhD, Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics, has received $1.2 million through April 2016 from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences for “Elucidating the Mechanisms of DNA Recombination.”

Iva Greenwald, PhD, Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics, has received $948,854 over five years from the Ellison Medical Foundation for “Regulation of B-Raf Signaling by the Ubiquitin Ligase Fbw7: Implications for Aging, Protein Homeostasis, and Cancer.”

Wei Gu, PhD, MPH, Institute for Cancer Genetics, has received $1.51 million over five years from the National Cancer Institute for “Regulation of Mdmx Stability and Subcellular Localization by Ubiquitination,” and a grant of $1.66 million over five years from the National Cancer Institute for “Mechanisms of Novel Cancer Targets in ARF-mediated Tumor Suppression.” Dr. Gu has also received $1.65 million over five years from the National Institutes of Health for “Role of p53-mediated Unconventional Functions in Tumor Suppression.”

Christopher Henderson, PhD, Pathology, Neuroscience and Rehab & Regenerative Medicine, has received $320,000 through June 2013 from Johns Hopkins University for “Generation and Characterization of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.”

James Jarvis, MD, Pediatrics, has received $2 million over five years from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases for “Microarray-Based Biomarkers in Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis.”

Donald Landry, MD, PhD, Medicine, has received $800,000 through July 2014 from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for “Development of Amodiaquine and Its Analogs as Reactivators of Organophosphate-inhibited-inh.”
Francis Lee, MD, PhD, Orthopaedic Surgery, has received $1.44 million through April 2016, in a competitive renewal, from the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering for “Mechanobiological Mechanism for Inflammatory Bone Loss.”

Frances Levin, MD, Psychiatry, has received $387,780 through May 2016 from the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene for “Quetiapine Treatment for Cannabis Dependence.”

Tom Maniatis, PhD, Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics, has received $552,820 through September 2013 from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for “Protocadherin Gene Expression and Function.” He also has received $300,000 through September 2013 from the Simons Foundation for “Investigation of a Possible Role of the Protocadherin Gene Cluster in Autism.”

Richard Mann, PhD, Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics, has received $882,000 over four years from the Ellison Medical Foundation for “AG-SS-2945-12 The Decline of Motor Coordinating During Aging.”

Claude Ann Mellins, PhD, Psychiatry, has received $1.17 million over five years for “The Vuka Family Program: Supporting the Health and Behavior of South African HIV+ Youth.”

Mojgan Naghavi, PhD, Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics, has received $1.5 million over five years from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences for “Characterization of the Antiviral and Nuclear Regulatory Functions of FEZ1 & NEK1.”

Azra Raza, MD, Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center, has received $1 million from the Partnership for Cures for “Exome and Next Generation Sequencing to Identify RARS-specific Targetable Defects.”

Gorazd Rosoklija, MD, PhD, Psychiatry, has received $268,904 through June 2013 from the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene for “Neurodevelopmental Profiling of the Epigenome in Human Rhesus.”
Helen Simpson, MD, PhD, Psychiatry, received $252,864 through April 2015 from the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene for “1/2-Novel Medication Strategies Targeting Brain Mechanisms in Pediatric OCD.”

Peter Sims, PhD, Joint Center for Systems Biology, has received $419,000 through August 2014 from the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering for “Multiplexed, Single Molecule Protein Identification for Single Cell Proteomics.” He also has received $863,194 over five years from the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering for “A Microfluidic System for Image-Guided RNA-Seq of Single Cells in Glioblastoma.”

Hans-Willem Snoeck, MD, PhD, Medicine, has received $1.98 million over five years from the National Institute on Aging for “Hematopoietic Stems Cells and Longevity.”

Milan Stojanovic, PhD, Medicine, has received $5.43 million over five years from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences for “Theranostic Nano-objects: Basic Principles and Initial Applications.”

David Sulzer, PhD, Neurology, has received $2.1 million over three years, in a competitive renewal, from the JPB Foundation for “Mechanisms of Substantia Nigra Neuronal Death in Parkinson’s Disease.”

Byron Thomashow, MD, Medicine, has received $391,360 through March 2015 from the University of Michigan for “Design and Testing of Practical Tools to ID Individuals at High Risk for COPD.”

Richard Vallee, PhD, Pathology, has received $1.7 million through May 2016 from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences for “Mechanism of Action of Dynactin.”

Timothy Cragin Wang, MD, Medicine, has received $330,074 through August 2013 from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease for “Quiescent Dclk1+ Stem Cells in the Mouse Intestine.”
Ping Wu, PhD, Psychiatry, received $302,613 over five years from the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene for “Substance Use/Abuse & HIV/STI Risk Behaviors in Puerto Rican Youth Growing Up.”

Myrna Weissman, PhD, Psychiatry, has received $729,460 through April 2013 from the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene for “Seratonergic Modulation of Brain Development: Genetic and Pharmacologic Influences on Structure, Function, and Behavior.”

Wai Haung Yu, PhD, Taub Institute, has received $300,000 through June 2015 from the American Health Assistance Foundation for “Tau Homeostasis Via Proteasomal & Autophagic Activity.”

Elaine Abrams, MD, ICAP, has received $2.16 million through September 2012 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for “Supporting Local Organizations to Implement and Expand Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care, and Treatment in the Republic of Cote d’Ivoire under the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) – NY.” She also has received $2.73 million over three years from the U.S. Agency for International Development for “Situkulwane Lesiphephele - Safe Generations: Swaziland (NY).” Dr. Abrams also has received $883,329 over two years from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development for “Mother and Infant Retention for Health (MIR4Health)-NY.”

Ying Kuen Cheung, PhD, Biostatistics, has received $1.44 million through April 2016 from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for “Physical Activity Patterns via New Dimension-Informative Cluster Models.”

Lynn Freedman, JD, MPH, Heilbrunn Department of Population & Family Health, has received $406,418 over four years from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for “Evaluation of the Safe and Clean Delivery Training Program for Health Extension Workers in Ethiopia.”
**RESEARCH GRANTS**

**MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH (continued)**

**David Frost**, PhD, Heilbrunn Department of Population & Family Health, has received $274,754 over five years from San Francisco State University for “Minority Stress and Mental Health among Same-Sex Couples.”

**Sandro Galea**, MD, MPH, DrPH, Epidemiology, has received $1.66 million through September 2013 from Merck & Co. for “Saving Mothers Giving Life External Evaluation.”

**Mark Hatzenbuehler**, PhD, Sociomedical Sciences, has received $878,709 over five years from the National Institute on Drug Abuse for “Social Stress and Substance Use Disparities in Sexual Minority Youth.”

**Constance Nathanson**, PhD, has received $528,239 through August 2015 from the William T. Grant Foundation for “Healthy Start: Children as Targets for Preventing Disease in Adult Life.”

**Carmen Rodriguez**, PhD, Heilbrunn Department of Population & Family Health, has received $2.68 million through August 2013, in a competitive renewal, from the Administration for Children and Families for “Early Head Start.”

**Sheila Smith**, PhD, National Center for Children in Poverty, has received $275,000 through August 2013, in a competitive renewal, from the Birth to Five Policy Alliance for “Improving the Odds for Young Children.”
AWARDS & HONORS

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGONS

Laura Flink, MD, Medicine, has received the Young Investigator Award from the American College of Cardiology, New York Chapter, for a poster titled “Cardiovascular Risk and Low Cardiovascular Disease Knowledge Among Women May Cause Vulnerability,” a product of research with Dr. Elsa-Grace Giardina.

Tom K. Hei, PhD, Radiation Oncology/Center for Radiological Research, has been elected president of the Radiation Research Society.

Alice Medalia, PhD, Psychiatry, has received the 2012 Productive Lives Award from the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation in recognition of her work to help people with mental illness improve their thinking skills in such areas as attention, memory, processing speed, and problem solving.

COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE

Allan J. Formicola, DDS, MS, has received an Outstanding Service Award from the American College of Dentists in recognition of specific efforts that embody the service ideal, emphasize compassion, beneficence, and have a significant impact on the profession, the community, or humanity.

Marc W. Michalowicz, DDS, MSc, Hospital Dentistry, was honored as a mentor, educator, and scholar by the International College of Dentists.

Panos N. Papapanou, DDS, PhD, Oral and Diagnostic Sciences, has received a Special Citation Award from the American Academy of Periodontology in recognition of his contributions to the Academy and to periodontics.

Brendan O’Rourke (CDM ’14) received the Jack Klatell Award.

Chelsea Townes (CDM ’15) is the recipient of the Howard E. Willie Scholarship.
AWARDS & HONORS

The Virginia Apgar Academy of Medical Educators is an active community of educators at P&S dedicated to promoting, rewarding, and supporting outstanding education for medical students, residents, fellows, and faculty. Membership in the Academy represents not only recognition of excellence as an educator, but also a commitment to contributing to the educational life of the medical community. Click here for more information about the academy. 2012 inductees of The Virginia Apgar Academy of Medical Educators include:

Anne Armstrong-Coben, MD  
*Pediatrics*

Danielle Ludwin, MD  
*Anesthesia*

Beth Sharon Brodsky, PhD  
*Psychiatry*

John Markowitz, MD  
*Psychiatry*

Mitchell Elkind, MD  
*Neurology (P&S)*  
*Epidemiology (Mailman)*

Lisa Mellman, MD  
*Psychiatry*

Dennis Fowler, MD  
*Surgery (P&S)*  
*Health, Policy and Management (Mailman)*

Sumit Mohan, MD, MPH  
*Medicine*

Rachel Gordon, MD  
*Medicine and Epidemiology*

James Noble, MD, MS  
*Neurology*

M. Christine Krause, MD  
*Pediatrics*

Donald Quest, MD  
*Neurosurgery*
PHILANTHROPIC GIFTS
(Gifts received September 26 – November 27, 2012)

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

A donor made a contribution of $2.5 million to endow a professorship in the Department of Ophthalmology.

A contribution of nearly $1 million was made toward a professorship in Pediatric Neuropsychiatry.

A gift of $1 million was made toward a $20 million commitment to support construction of the new Medical and Graduate Education Building.

A donor made a gift of more than $500,000 toward a professorship in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology to advance research in women’s health.

A foundation made a contribution of $500,000 toward a $2 million commitment to support a fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry.

A foundation made a contribution of $450,000 toward a $1.8 million commitment to advance research in the Department of Psychiatry on the biological processes of mother-infant nurture.

A grant of $283,500 was made to support the Summer Medical and Dental Education Program at P&S.

A contribution of $253,122 was made toward a $500,000 commitment to advance research in the Department of Medicine in lymphoid malignancies.

A foundation made a contribution of $225,000 to support the Department of Psychiatry’s Developmental Psychobiology Parent-Infant Project.

A grant of $150,000 was made to advance research on the regulation of gene expression in the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics.

A donor made a $126,000 gift to advance neuroscience research into the causes of depression and to advance treatment methods within the Department of Psychiatry.

A donor made a commitment of $100,000 to support construction of the new Medical and Graduate Education building.

A contribution of $100,000 was made to advance brain cancer research at the Institute for Cancer Genetics.
A foundation made a contribution of $104,677 toward a $1,256,132 grant to advance autism research in the Department of Psychiatry.

A contribution of $100,000 from a foundation will advance research in the Department of Surgery.

A grant of $100,000 was made to support research in the Department of Neuroscience.

A foundation made a $3 million commitment to support construction of the new Medical and Graduate Education Building.

A commitment of $1.2 million was made to advance alopecia areata research in the Department of Dermatology.

A donor made a gift of $1 million toward a professorship in the Department of Surgery.

A donor made a commitment of $200,000 toward a professorship in the Department of Surgery.

A foundation made grants totaling $481,500 to advance research on aging in the Center for Human Genetics.

A grant of $312,500 was made to advance leukemia and lymphoma research in the Institute for Cancer Genetics.

A grant of $200,000 was made to advance prostate cancer research at the Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center.

A foundation made a contribution of $150,000 toward a $3,150,000 commitment to the Department of Medicine to advance research on malignant mesothelioma.

A foundation made a contribution of $110,000 toward a $550,000 commitment to support junior faculty recruitment in the Department of Ophthalmology.

A foundation made a contribution of $100,000 to advance clinical care on the west side of Manhattan and enhance the low vision rehabilitation program of the Department of Ophthalmology.

A contribution of $100,000 was made toward a $1 million grant to advance research in the Department of Biomedical Informatics.
A foundation made a contribution of $100,000 toward a $500,000 grant to support research in the Center for Neurobiology and Behavior.

A donor made a commitment of $100,000 to advance research on essential tremors within the Gertrude H. Sergievsky Center.

The National Center on Children and Poverty at the Mailman School of Public Health received an anonymous grant of $300,000 to support its core activities.

A pledge payment of $250,490 from an anonymous donor was received to support the Allan Rosenfield Scholars in Sexual and Reproductive Health Scholarship.

A grant payment of $406,400 was made to the Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health to support policy changes and research for emergency obstetric and newborn care.
CUMC IN THE NEWS – OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2012
Click on blue hyperlinks to view article.

Lead Found in Eggs Laid by Chickens in New York City Gardens – October 11, 2012
The discovery of lead in some city-raised eggs is ruffling feathers among public health experts. “There’s virtually no level at which we can assume lead is not dangerous,” said Dr. David Rosner, a professor of sociomedical sciences at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health. Rosner, who co-authored the 2002 book “Deceit and Denial: The Deadly Politics of Industrial Pollution,” said lead levels in urban neighborhoods have been “a contentious issue for a very long time.”

The Basics of Post-Sandy Asbestos Exposure – November 16, 2012
Since the storm, the United States Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration has tasked 60 ground personnel with the job of teaching workers and residents how to protect themselves against what it terms major environmental toxins, among them asbestos, according to a Department of Labor spokesperson. “Most homes and public buildings constructed before the mid 70s are likely to contain asbestos to varying degrees, mainly in insulation and floor tiles. As such, we shouldn’t be surprised that we find asbestos-containing materials among the damaged homes and debris,” says Tom Hei, PhD, a professor of Environmental Health Sciences and associate director of the Center for Radiological Research at Columbia University Medical Center.

An Arthritis Treatment Worthy of the Pope and Kobe – October 15, 2012
The likes of Kobe Bryant, Alex Rodriguez, Vijay Singh, and Pope John Paul II are among a growing number who have sought a novel form of anti-inflammatory arthritis/tendinitis treatment that, until recently, was only available in Germany. If you haven’t already heard about it, it’s called Regenokine, and it’s among a trend moving orthopedics away from operating rooms and into the realm of the molecular -- from mining titanium to mining the anti-inflammatory molecules coursing through our veins. The premise is that the critical problem in arthritis is inflammation, not the mechanical consequences that we see on X-rays (like worn-down bone, spurs, or a slipped disc). … Lloyd Sederer, M.D., is medical director of the New York State Office of Mental Health and adjunct professor at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health.

Life-Saving DNA Test Overlooked in Rise of Colon Cancer – October 24, 2012
Genetic testing is becoming cheaper and more widespread, promising to usher in a revolution in cancer treatment. Yet, long-standing DNA tests are often overlooked for reasons including doctors’ ignorance and financial incentives, discouraging companies from marketing them. Fifty years ago, Henry T. Lynch, then a medical resident in Nebraska, started tracking families with a high incidence of colon cancer and other tumors. While some were skeptical when he suggested the risks were inherited, geneticists proved him right in the mid-1990s by finding the genes that caused the condition. Lynch syndrome may account for about 3 percent of all colon cancer, or more than 4,000 cases a year in the U.S., said Heather Hampel, an Ohio State University genetic counselor. … “Lynch syndrome has been around for so many years, and we’re still not prepared to tackle it,” Fay Kastrinos, director of the hereditary gastrointestinal cancer program at Columbia University Medical Center in New York, said in a telephone interview.

U.S. Scientists Share Chemistry Nobel for Cell Receptors – October 10, 2012
Two U.S. scientists won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for discovering the receptors that transmit signals such as light, taste or smell to cells, providing a key to the efficacy of half of all medicines. Robert J. Lefkowitz, 69, of Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina, and Brian K. Kobilka, 57, of Stanford University School of Medicine in Palo Alto, California, will share the 8 million-krona ($1.2 million) award. … Lefkowitz holds a bachelor’s degree from Columbia College and an M.D. from Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons.
Why Some of Us Lose Our Cool Over Little Things – October 22, 2012
We've all seen that person who loses his or her temper over something very small or petty, but why does it happen and how can we avoid it ourselves? Dr. Jeffrey Lieberman, chief of psychiatry at NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center, talked about it with Anthony Mason and Rebecca Jarvis.

Did You Wash Your Hands? – October 24, 2012
Washing your hands after using the bathroom — not to mention after touching any number of public surfaces, from doorknobs to subway handrails — is a basic rule of hygiene. Yet we don't always do it properly, if at all, which is particularly ill-advised behavior during flu season, when germy hands are common gateways to infection. … “The big mistake people make is that they just rub their palms together and they don't get to the dirtiest parts of the hands” — under and around the fingernails,” said Elaine Larson, associate dean for research at Columbia University School of Nursing.

Is the Future of Farming Looking Up? – October 18, 2012
What do you do with an overcrowded city? The answer seems obvious. Upwards you go. Cities worldwide are reaching for the stratosphere as office space and apartments skim the skyline. … Dr. Dickson Despommier, a microbiologist, ecologist and Professor of Public Health and Environmental Health Sciences at Columbia University, has spent thirty years developing the idea and told CNBC’s “Closing Bell” the idea is simpler than you think: “Imagine a high tech greenhouse and then stack them on top of each other and you've got a vertical farm.”

Making it Through the Storm – November 10, 2012
Sandy is the latest catastrophic event to test the readiness of the world's leading firms to cope with disaster. Most firms have improved “business continuity” preparations over the years. … Firms should make lobbying government to invest heavily in upgrading that infrastructure a core part of their risk-management strategy, argues Irwin Redlener of the National Centre for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University.

What Your Genes Can Tell You About Your Memory – October 5, 2012
Researchers at Columbia University Medical Center have found that the mechanisms of regulation of gene expression involves the processes of epigenetics, and that's been a very exciting field that has studied how DNA and how the proteins that DNA wraps around the histones are modified to regulate the expression of genes.
CUMC IN THE NEWS – OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2012

CUMC CELEBRATES

CUMC IN THE NEWS – OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2012
Click on blue hyperlinks to view article.

The 2013 Louisa Gross Horwitz Prize for Biology or Biochemistry – October 31, 2012
Each year since its inception in 1967, the Louisa Gross Horwitz Prize has been awarded by Columbia University for outstanding basic research in the fields of biology or biochemistry. … Dr. Richard Losick, Harvard University, Dr. Joe Lutkenhaus, University of Kansas Medical Center, and Dr. Lucy Shapiro, Stanford University School of Medicine, were the 2012 awardees.

Free Birth Control Cuts Abortion Rate Dramatically, Study Finds – October 4, 2012
A dramatic new study finds that offering women free birth control can reduce unplanned pregnancies — and send the abortion rate spiraling downward. … “What the study suggests to me,” said John Santelli, professor at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health, “is that it’s totally supportive of the president’s provisions on reproductive care and preventive services for women in the Affordable Care Act.”

Occupy Sandy’s Street Medics Go Door-to-Door in Coney Island – November 6, 2012
Many New Yorkers affected by the storm have complained about the uneven response from the city, FEMA, and Red Cross. Veterans of the Occupy movement, with experience in New Orleans at the Common Ground Clinic after Katrina, and in Zuccotti Park last year, have stepped in to fill the gap… The Occupy crew in Coney Island also included some of Lederman's fellow nurses from Columbia University, who had been working in shelters and on the Occupy mission to Far Rockaway; a Russian and Spanish translator, who had answered the call on Facebook; Shawn Westfahl, one of the first medics at the Occupy encampment in Zuccotti Park; and Roger Benham and Jeff “Fidget” (his Occupy name), who worked together doing disaster relief in New Orleans and in Haiti after the earthquake.

A Regular Checkup Is Good for the Mind as Well as the Body – November 16, 2012
Everyone is familiar with the concept of a periodic medical checkup — some sort of scheduled doctor’s visit to check your blood pressure, weight and other physical benchmarks. The notion of a regular mental health checkup is less established, perhaps because of the historical stigma about mental illness. But taking periodic stock of your emotional well-being can help identify warning signs of common ailments like depression or anxiety. … The P.H.Q.-9, which asks nine questions, was developed by researchers at Columbia University and Indiana University, with help from a grant from Pfizer Inc.
Scientists Hope Obama Continues Support for Basic Research – November 13, 2012
Martin Chalfie was one of 68 Nobel laureates who endorsed President Obama during the 2012 presidential election. And now that Mr. Obama has been re-elected, “I’m elated,” said Dr. Chalfie, a professor of biological sciences at Columbia who shared the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2008. “I was particularly happy that in his victory speech, he again emphasized the importance of science and education.”

Weighing Dangers of Cold Classrooms Against Risks of Missing Class – November 10, 2012
About three dozen schools in areas that suffered flooding opened to students this week without heat. By Friday, that number was down to about 20. … Health officials say schools are safe to open without heat, even at these temperatures, if students are properly clothed. But according to Irwin Redlener, the director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health, it may have been tough for students to focus inside some schools.

A Collective Effort to Save Decades of Research as the Water Rose – November 5, 2012
As hurricane-driven waters surged into New York University research buildings in Kips Bay, on the East Side of Manhattan, investigators in New York and around the world jumped on the phone to offer assistance — executing a reverse Noah’s ark operation, to rescue lab animals and other assets from a flooding vessel. …Danny Reinberg, a professor of biochemistry at NYU’s medical school, said he lost all of his mice: nine strains, including more than 1,000 animals that died in the storm surge. But he managed to save all of the cell extracts by moving some containers into freezers at NYU labs that weren’t affected and others to the Rockefeller, Columbia and Cornell medical centers, each of which cleared space, he said.

Easing the Trauma After the Storm – November 2, 2012
For almost three decades now, health care experts have been studying the psychological effects of natural disasters and have found that disasters as varied as the 1994 earthquake in Northridge, Calif., and Hurricanes Katrina (2005), Andrew (1992) and Hugo (1989) left significant, disabling and lasting psychological scars in their wake. In New Orleans a month after Hurricane Katrina, for example, 17 percent of residents reported symptoms consistent with serious mental illness, compared with 10 percent of those who lived in surrounding areas and only 1 to 3 percent in the general population… “There’s no question that the best thing the federal, state and municipal governments can do to protect against psychopathology in these kinds of situations is to restore the day-to-day functioning that keeps everyone healthy,” said Dr. Sandro Galea, lead author of the study and chairman of epidemiology at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health.

As Sales Fall, Allergan Seeks a Buyer for Lap-Band – October 30, 2012
Allergan said Tuesday that it was looking to divest itself of its Lap-Band, the once-popular weight-loss device that has experienced several years of falling sales, loss of market share and controversies about its safety and effectiveness. … Dr. Marc Bessler, director of the center for metabolic and weight loss surgery at Columbia University, said that Lap-Band had lost some luster among bariatric surgeons because studies suggested it was not effective in the long run for one-third to two-thirds of patients.

Redefining Medicine With Apps and iPads – October 8, 2012
The history of medicine is defined by advances born of bioscience. But never before has it been driven to this degree by digital technology. The proliferation of gadgets, apps and Web-based information has given clinicians … a black bag of new tools: new ways to diagnose symptoms and treat patients, to obtain and share information, to think about what it means to be both a doctor and a patient. … The son of an electrical engineer from Mauritius, Alvin Rajkomar grew up in Silicon Valley and taught himself to program at age 12. … In 2009, in his third year of medical school at Columbia, he was among the first in the hospital to use an iPhone as a clinical tool.
Another Use for Rapid Home H.I.V. Test: Screening Sexual Partners – October 5, 2012

The first rapid home-testing kit for H.I.V. has just gone on sale for $40, marketed as a way for people to find out privately if they have the virus that causes AIDS. But some experts and advocates say that another use, unadvertised, for the OraQuick test — to screen potential sexual partners — may become equally popular and even help slow an epidemic stuck at 50,000 new infections each year in the United States… “If it becomes a community norm, people may start testing their partners,” said Alex Carballo-Díéguez, the lead author of the study, who is a psychology professor at Columbia University and the associate director of the H.I.V. Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies at the New York State Psychiatric Institute. … In a large 2007 survey led by Dr. Robert Klitzman, also of Columbia University and the New York State Psychiatric Institute, nearly 20 percent of infected gay men admitted to having had unprotected sex with at least one partner without revealing their status.

High Stress Can Make Insulin Cells Regress – October 2, 2012

For years, researchers have investigated how the body loses the ability to produce enough insulin, a hallmark of diabetes. … The body can become resistant to insulin, and the beta cells of the pancreas, which produce the hormone, must work harder to compensate. Eventually, the thinking goes, they lose the ability to keep up. … In mice with Type 2 diabetes, the researchers showed that beta cells that had lost function were not dead at all. Most remained alive, but in a changed form. They reverted to an earlier developmental, “progenitor,” state. It’s as if these cells are “stepping back in time to a point where they look like they might have looked during their development,” said Dr. Domenico Accili, director of the Columbia University Diabetes and Endocrinology Research Center, who led the new work. … In the new work, published in September in the journal Cell, Dr. Accili, Chutima Talchai, then a postdoctoral fellow in his laboratory, and their colleagues genetically engineered mice that lacked FOXO1 in beta cells.


A month before, she read a news story about the crash of a tour helicopter in Nevada. Five people died, including a couple celebrating their 25th anniversary. “It made me sad and angry,” she recalled. “Such senseless deaths!” So [Susan P.] Baker, an epidemiologist, did what she’s been doing for more than four decades. She decided to find out why people were dying and what could be done to stop it. … Along with Guohua Li, a former student who is now a Columbia University professor, she recently edited a 700-page book, “Injury Research: Theories, Methods and Approaches.” It’s the first textbook that comprehensively presents the theories and methods of injury research — from the way ergonomics can reduce injuries to the effect of trauma-center systems on an injured person’s chances of survival.

Superstorm Sandy May Have Long-Term Public Health Impacts – November 6, 2012

Though the darkened Manhattan skyline may be the hurricane’s most obvious consequence, the storm’s health impacts may be the more significant and longest-lasting… Patrick Kinney, a professor at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University and director of the school’s climate and health program, agreed that health risks might yet emerge. “This particular storm, I think we’re still learning what the health impacts specifically were,” he said.
Psychiatrist Contends the Field Is ‘Committing Professional Suicide’ – October 6, 2012

British psychiatrist and Big Pharma gadfly David Healy is so controversial amongst his colleagues that some have tried to have his medical license revoked — but there he was on Thursday, speaking at the American Psychiatric Association’s second largest annual meeting at a well-attended session on conflicts of interest. … By their third year of medical school, 94% of psychiatrists in training have already accepted a “small non-educational gift or lunch” from a drug company, according to Dr. Paul Appelbaum, a past president of the APA and director of Columbia’s Division of Law, Ethics and Psychiatry, who spoke on the panel with Healy.

The True Cost of Sleeplessness – November 16, 2012

Sleep disruptions are very common throughout the population, but may be a particular problem for older folks, experts say. For one, older people don’t fall into as deep sleep as younger people do, and thus are more prone to waking up during sleep, says Dr. Carl Bazil, the director of the epilepsy and sleep division of the Department of Neurology at Columbia Doctors in New York City.

Columbia Launches Center For Cerebral Palsy Patients – October 29, 2012

When Debby and Peter Weinberg’s son, Henry, was diagnosed with a rare form of Cerebral Palsy when he was 3 months old, the family was lucky to able to turn to the doctors at Columbia University Medical Center for care. But, as Henry approaches adulthood, he has far fewer options for care. … That is the reason the Weinbergs, along with friends and many family members, have donated $7 million to help establish the Weinberg Family Cerebral Palsy Center at CUMC. … In addition to providing treatment for patients of all ages, the center, led by Dr. David P. Roye Jr., the St. Giles professor of pediatric orthopedic surgery at CUMC, will also help coordinate care for CP patients, educate their families and caregivers and conduct research.

Fresh Lead Emerges In AIDS-Vaccine Hunt – October 22, 2012

A team of researchers has identified one way the human body can develop powerful antibodies to protect it against the AIDS virus, offering a new lead in the quest for a vaccine. The findings … are significant because scientists were able to establish a link between a change in the virus after infection and the formulation of the antibodies that fight it. … “We were able to go back to our freezers and pull out specimens,” said Salim Abdool Karim, a prominent AIDS researcher [at Columbia’s Mailman School of Public Health] and director of the consortium that did the study.


Among the studies showing correlations between a child’s early home environment and later brain development that were presented this week at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscientists, one stood out as particularly startling. It was the analysis that showed a correlation between a parent’s income and education level to development in specific areas of the brain essential to learning, memory and stress processing. The study was led by Kimberly Noble, an assistant professor of pediatrics at Columbia University, in conjunction with Elizabeth Sowell, a professor of pediatrics at the University of Southern California.