Halting the rising incidence of—and global death toll from—tuberculosis

Noted Belgian scientist Paul Janssen, MD, used to say, “No time to lose ... the patients are waiting.” With that sense of dedication, he established Janssen Pharmaceuticals in 1956 and today, 50 years later, the company, now a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson, remains steadfast in its fight against global health threats, including multi-drug-resistant TB (MDR-TB).

Its drug, bedaquiline, leverages a novel mechanism of action, and is the first new drug in four decades to be approved to fight TB. Now Janssen Pharmaceuticals is going one step further, giving $3.4 million—among its largest gifts to date—to Harvard Medical School to improve access to TB treatment in some of the world’s most vulnerable communities.

“We are particularly impressed with the strength and breadth of the international network Harvard has built to advance the fight against TB,” says Jami Taylor, senior director of global access policy at Janssen. “This new collaboration envisions an even broader network of partners and supporters around the world, leveraging new tools like social media to help generate greater public awareness of drug-resistant TB and greater political will to combat it.”

Saving Lives
TB is an infectious disease that typically affects the lungs and is spread from person to person through the air. According to the World Health Organization, patients in India, China, the Russian Federation, and South Africa represent nearly 60 percent of the world’s MDR-TB diagnoses, which were estimated at 300,000 in 2012.

Eastern European and Central Asian countries are hot spots for the disease, accounting for nearly one-third of new infections and two-thirds of previously treated TB infections. When left untreated or inadequately treated, the risk of spreading additional drug-resistant strains increases.

Salmaan Keshavjee, MD, ScM ’93, AM ’95, PhD ’98, director of the Program in Infectious Disease and Social Change and associate professor of medicine in the HMS Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, says this generous gift will help change the way the disease has been approached globally.

It will enable HMS to validate algorithms to identify children with TB, partner with grassroots organizations in affected communities, assist emerging economies in developing their own global initiatives to address this and other diseases within their borders, and jump-start a roadmap for achieving zero TB deaths through active case finding, treatment of latent disease, and family-centered care.

“Just as we need to translate from the bench to the bedside, we also have to get medicines from the bedside within hospital systems to the global communities where patients live,” says Keshavjee. “Janssen sees this and, in supporting our work, is looking for solutions to this last-mile problem: taking the fruits of modern science and ensuring that people who need it most can actually benefit from it.”

Learn more from Salmaan Keshavjee about HMS’s global efforts to fight TB at hms.harvard.edu/videos/science-matters-salmaan-keshavjee
Dear Friends,

In this issue of The Benefactor, we celebrate the generosity of our alumni, friends, faculty, staff, foundations, corporations, and leadership volunteers whose record gifts totaling more than $170 million in fiscal year 2014 have advanced Harvard Medical School’s mission of alleviating human suffering caused by disease. Their investments in the School’s priorities are having a tangible impact on groundbreaking research on the Quad, in clinics and hospitals across the U.S., and for patients and families around the globe.

In the area of education, W. Reid Pitts Jr., MD ’67, is supporting the Scholars in Medicine Program, while gifts from Claude P. Ghez, MD ’64, Sheldon M. Levin, MD ’50, and James Aisenberg, AB ’81, MD ’87, along with his sister and their families, are supporting financial aid to ensure the best and brightest medical students can continue to come to HMS, regardless of their ability to afford the rising cost of medical education. The Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine—one of the largest medical libraries in the world—has received more than $670,000 from the estate of Harry G. Burnett, AB ’23.

In the area of discovery, three donors are advancing research into Alzheimer’s disease. Through their foundation, Nancy and Richard Moskovitz, AB ’69, MD ’73, are giving a significant additional gift to extend and expand their existing research fund to include a longitudinal biomarker program. And a current-use gift of $100,000 from Daniel Freudenberger, AB ’67, provides urgent, flexible funding to researchers in the Harvard NeuroDiscovery Center. Additionally, Richard Merkin, MD, has made a substantial gift to establish the Personal Genomes and Conversion of Stem Cells to Neurons Research Fund under the direction of George Church, PhD ’84.

Our service initiatives are being amplified thanks to a $3.4 million gift from Janssen Pharmaceuticals to improve access to tuberculosis treatment in some of the world’s most vulnerable communities. Three $100,000 charitable gift annuities from Mavis C. Campbell, PhD, and as a gift from an anonymous donor, are also advancing work in the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, while grants totaling nearly $650,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are propelling innovative work in the Department of Health Care Policy.

Finally, in the area of leadership, HMS Board of Fellows member Lynn B. Thoman, MBA ’79, has given her second $100,000 gift to provide unrestricted, flexible support to advance the priorities of Dean Jeffrey S. Flier, MD, and to fuel scientific curiosity and courage in their many forms at HMS.

I hope you are inspired by the stories in this issue that highlight the breadth and depth of work here at HMS—work that would not have been possible without the support of our generous philanthropic community.

Sincerely,

Susan Rappele, EdM ’89
Dean for Resource Development

WEISSLEDER NAMED THRALL FAMILY PROFESSOR OF RADIOLOGY

Ralph Weissleder, MD, PhD, director of the Center for Molecular Imaging Research and attending clinician in interventional radiology at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), has been named the inaugural incumbent of the Thrall Family Professorship in Radiology at Harvard Medical School, punctuating more than 25 years as a skilled clinician and researcher at HMS.

Weissleder’s interests include the development of novel molecular imaging techniques, tools for early disease detection, and the development of nanomaterials for sensing and systems analysis. He is respected for his prolific research and innovative clinical practices and has received numerous awards for his work, including the J. Taylor International Prize in Medicine and the Millennium Pharmaceutical Innovator Award. Established in honor of James H. Thrall, MD, chairman emeritus of the Department of Radiology at MGH and Juan M. Taveras Distinguished Professor of Radiology at HMS, the professorship is made possible through the personal contributions of Thrall’s family, friends, and colleagues, as well as the generosity of MGH’s Department of Radiology. The professorship honors Thrall’s 26-year tenure at HMS and his enduring legacy at MGH. Upon his retirement, the professorship will be renamed the James H. Thrall Professorship in Radiology.

Below (left to right): James Brink, MD, radiologist-in-chief at MGH and Juan M. Taveras Professor of Radiology at HMS, and Nancy Tarbell, MD, dean for academic and clinical affairs at HMS, celebrate the distinguished honor of Thrall and Weissleder.
Moskovitzes move needle toward a cure for Alzheimer’s

Alzheimer’s disease research is entering a promising and exciting phase, in which the hard-won knowledge about its molecular basis is finally being translated into therapeutics. However, recent clinical trials have highlighted a need for earlier and more accurate diagnoses of participants, as well as the development of biomarkers to monitor responses to therapy.

Researchers in the Harvard NeuroDiscovery Center (HNDC) are working to address these challenges head-on. They are optimistic about the progress they’re making on a number of fronts, from deepening our understanding of the disease and developing biomarkers to accelerating the development and testing of new treatments.

This work was amplified last year with a gift from Victoria Falls, Zambia, Nancy and Richard Moskovitz, AB ’69, MD ’73, in enabled HMS scientists to generate millions of patient-specific neurons and to use them to develop and test new drug candidates for the disease.

Impressed with the progress being made, the Moskovitzes have given a significant additional gift to extend and expand this critical work to include Deep Phenotyping: A Longitudinal Alzheimer’s Biomarker Program. And they intend to provide additional support as key milestones are met in the near future.

“Foundations may be the least visible or exotic parts of a building, but nothing of value can rise without a sturdy base,” says Richard Moskovitz, AB ’69, MD ’73. “The more tools we have to define the fingerprints of a disease, the better our chance of fitting effective treatments to each of its variants. Funding scrupulous work at this level seemed like the best chance for a finite sum to move the needle toward a cure.”

Biomarker Development

Funding from the Moskovitzes will enable the HNDC team to develop a range of biomarkers, or indicators, that will help identify those at greatest risk for developing the disease, accurately diagnose the disease at pre-symptomatic stages, understand how the disease in an individual patient will progress, and determine how individual patients are likely to respond to specific drugs and drug combinations.

“To achieve this, we plan to further develop a suite of tools and techniques that will collectively provide a deep phenotypic and genetic description of some of our patients,” says Adrian Ivinson, PhD, director of translational research at the HNDC and joint head of the new program along with renowned Alzheimer’s expert Dennis Selkoe, MD, the Vincent and Stella Coates Professor of Neurologic Diseases in the Department of Neurology at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. “We will monitor these patients very closely over the course of several years using some of the most advanced imaging, biochemical, and stem cell tools available.”

According to HNDC Executive Director Lynn Wood Harwell, JD ’04, MBA ’04, private funding like that from the Moskovitzes is critical to help solve the intricate puzzle of Alzheimer’s disease, especially since these types of research projects are often overlooked by public and government funders. “A friend, a family member, and the world will feel the impact and benefit from the Moskovitzes’ support for this Alzheimer’s project,” she says.

The Moskovitzes share this optimism: “We hope that the Deep Phenotyping Program will clarify the spectrum of conditions that comprise Alzheimer’s disease, identify people at risk long before the onset of symptoms, and enable the development of preventive strategies that will vastly reduce its prevalence for generations to come,” says Richard Moskovitz.

HARVARD MAHONEY NEUROSCIENCE INSTITUTE HONORS ALBERT AND MCKHANN

The Harvard Mahoney Neuroscience Institute (HMNI), which was founded in 1990 by the late David Mahoney and his wife, Hildegarde “Hillie,” maintains an ongoing effort to increase public awareness of the importance and promising future of neuroscience research.

This spring’s symposium, entitled “Memory and Aging,” was moderated by Edward F. Rover, JD ’64, chairman and president of The Dana Foundation, and featured a discussion with renowned neurobiologists Marilyn Albert, PhD, professor of neurology and director of the Division of Cognitive Neuroscience at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine (JHSM), and Guy McKhann, MD, professor of neurology and neuroscience at JHSM.

Following the symposium, a reception and dinner were held in honor of the award recipients and featured Bob Datta, MD ’04, PhD ’04, associate professor of neurobiology at HMS, as the keynote speaker.

This year’s HMNI fellows—Till S. Hartmann, PhD, Baptiste Jean Xavier Lacoste, PhD, and Caroline A. Runyan, PhD—were also recognized.

Right (clockwise from top): Rover and Mahoney congratulate McKhann and Albert on receiving the 2014 David Mahoney Prize, which was established in 1995 to recognize individuals who have helped to increase public awareness about brain science and disorders of the nervous system.
Funds raised by the Annual Giving program are essential to supporting Harvard Medical School and its mission to provide faculty, researchers, and students—the next generation of health care leaders—the resources they need to alleviate human suffering caused by disease. During an era of profound change in health care, these critical funds enable HMS to excel in defining the frontiers of science and medicine.

Throughout fiscal year 2014, thousands of alumni and friends made personal commitments to support HMS’s top priorities. Gifts of all sizes from 3,762 alumni and friends provided $4.53 million to the School’s annual fund, ultimately fueling education, discovery, service, and leadership initiatives on a global scale. The Dean’s Council, HMS’s leadership annual giving society, was 724 members strong this year, representing 90 percent of all annual gifts to the School.

The Annual Giving program is made up of several principal initiatives, including Alumni Giving, Friends of Harvard Medicine, the Board of Fellows Annual Fund, Advisory Council Opportunity Funds, and the Joseph B. Martin Conference Center Amphitheater Chairs Program. All together, these initiatives play a powerful role in helping to advance the School.

Beth Karlan, AB ’78, MD ’82, chair of the Alumni Fund, who serves as the spokesperson for continuing the long tradition of alumni giving.

Nearly 80 percent of medical students received scholarships in fiscal year 2014, thanks to the generosity of alumni and friends.

Gilbert S. Omenn, MD ’65, who celebrated his passion for HMS during Alumni Week in May.

Advancing Educational Initiatives

The Alumni Fund raised more than $2.78 million through gifts from 2,661 alumni, including the Reunion classes (see story on page 9). These funds support four areas of great financial need at HMS: student scholarships, student research, educational facilities, and unrestricted funding to be used at the Dean’s discretion.

“Each one of Harvard Medical School’s graduates represents the future of medicine, and alumni giving continues to impact this future by helping to reduce the student debt burden. Annual gifts will not only make a tangible difference for our students, but for patients who are the ultimate beneficiaries of our work,” says Beth Karlan, AB ’78, MD ’82, chair of the Alumni Fund.

Inspiring the Next Generation

A generous gift from alumnus Gilbert S. Omenn, MD ’65, launched an exciting Recent Graduate Challenge that engaged nearly 200 young alumni.

Omenn sponsored this challenge by donating a $10,000 chair in the Joseph B. Martin Conference Center Amphitheater to the class from the last 10 years that had the highest participation rate. The Class of 2006 stepped up and won the challenge.

“Through this challenge, I am delighted that I am able to honor my friend, Joe Martin, for whom the amphitheater is named, and to join the most recent classes of HMS graduates in encouraging generosity as I approach my milestone 50th Reunion,” says Omenn, who also chairs the HMS Visiting Committee.

Advisors and Philanthropists

As leaders, counselors, and stewards of HMS, members of the Board of Fellows and the Dean’s Advisory Councils play a powerful role in helping advance the fields of science and medicine. By contributing $570,000 to support the Dean’s strategic priorities, the board helped to ensure that HMS remains on the cutting edge. The advisory council members gave more than $450,000 with the goal of seeding innovation in key focus areas, from medical education, health care policy, and global health to neuroscience, therapeutics, and systems biology.

It is through this wide network of generous alumni and friends that HMS is able to have a transformative impact across the globe. “With each gift, the School gets one step closer to helping people live longer, healthier lives,” says Dean Jeffrey S. Flier, MD.
Somerville, Mass., native propels library innovations

The late Harry G. Burnett, AB ’29, a lifelong resident of Somerville, Mass., named the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine—one of the largest medical libraries in the world—as a beneficiary of more than $670,000 from his estate. Situated on the Harvard Medical School campus, the library serves HMS, Harvard School of Public Health, Harvard School of Dental Medicine, Boston Medical Library, and the Massachusetts Medical Society.

Following his graduation from Harvard College, Burnett attended the graduate schools of business administration at Harvard and Boston University. During the 1930s, Burnett worked in investment banking and civil service before finding his calling in 1941 as an advertising executive with CBS Electronics—originally Hytron Corp.—a manufacturer of radio tubes headquartered in Salem, Mass. Burnett would eventually become director of advertising and sales promotion, leading advertising, sales promotion, publicity, and technical publications. He retired in 1961 after 20 years with the company.

Burnett’s personal affiliations further demonstrated his passions for radio and information-sharing. He was an amateur radio operator and an active member of the American Radio Relay League, the largest association of amateur radio enthusiasts in the U.S. Burnett’s personal affiliations further demonstrated his passions for radio and information-sharing. He was an amateur radio operator and an active member of the American Radio Relay League, the largest association of amateur radio enthusiasts in the U.S.

Propelling the Information Era

Burnett’s generosity will allow the Countway Library to continue to foster the advancement of education, research, scholarship, and professional practice in medicine, biological sciences, public health, and dentistry. The library’s collection—featuring the world’s most revolutionary biomedical literature—provides the foundation to fuel innovation and knowledge creation by faculty, students, and researchers alike.

“This support from the estate of Harry G. Burnett comes at a time of extraordinary opportunities and unprecedented fiscal pressures,” says Isaac Kohane, MD, PhD, co-director of the Center for Biomedical Informatics at HMS and director of the Countway Library.

“The Countway staff and leadership are together reimagining how to best serve the informational needs of clinical care providers and biomedical researchers. It is through donor support that we can afford to develop these new library practices in the information era,” Kohane adds.

GARNICK APPOINTED TO GORMAN BROTHERS PROFESSORSHIP IN MEDICINE

Marc B. Garnick, MD, clinical professor of medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) and Harvard Medical School, and director of community cancer services at BIDMC’s Cancer Center, has been appointed the first incumbent of the Gorman Brothers Professorship in Medicine at HMS.

An internationally renowned expert in medical oncology and urologic cancer, Garnick has been a member of the HMS faculty for 35 years, dedicating his career to the development of new therapies for the treatment of prostate cancer.

The professorship has been established through the generosity of James and Maureen Gorman, Shawn Gorman, and Tony Cipollone, EDD ’90, president and CEO of the John T. Gorman Foundation, gather to celebrate Garnick’s achievement.

The professorship will continue to advance the field of medical oncology. Garnick’s achievement.

A lifetime of loyalty

At age 92, Sheldon M. Levin, MD ’50, still teaches medical students one day a week and sees patients another. Quite often, he reflects on his time at Harvard Medical School, a period he describes as life-changing.

Levin initially planned on pursuing a career in biophysics research. On his first medical rotation, he observed sick patients interacting with their physicians. It made such an impression that he knew he wanted to become a clinical doctor.

On a surgical rotation the following month, he observed an operation that saved a patient’s life, when one stitch controlled massive bleeding. It was a magical moment—one he wanted to emulate by becoming a surgeon. His professor was Oliver Cope, AB ’23, MD ’28, who became a role model to Levin and inspired his surgical career.

“HMS was the key that opened a door to the finest surgical training. I owe everything to the example of Dr. Cope and other professors. I maintain their passion and idealism to this day,” Levin says.

As a way to repay what he was given, Levin has established an endowed financial aid fund to help HMS students meet their financial obligations.

“Generous gifts from alumni such as Dr. Levin are vital in our efforts to reduce student indebtedness, maintain student diversity, and bring the most gifted candidates to the Medical School, regardless of their financial capacity,” says Robert Coughlin, director of financial aid at HMS.

Hear Sheldon Levin’s story at hms.harvard.edu/alumni/videos
Two congruent missions, one shared vision

For more than 40 years, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) has worked to improve the health and health care of all Americans by providing grants to support projects that advance the understanding of a range of health-related issues, including access to care, childhood obesity, training for doctors and nurses, and social and economic factors that can impact health. Under the leadership of HMS alumna Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD ’79, MBA, the foundation has researched, evaluated, and implemented transformative programs tackling the nation’s most pressing health issues.

Several faculty members at Harvard Medical School have received grants from RWJF over the years and, most recently, three members of the Department of Health Care Policy have been awarded nearly $650,000 collectively for their innovative projects. Richard G. Frank, PhD, Margaret T. Morris Professor of Health Economics, is investigating whether improving the presentation of Medicare coverage options—by better highlighting out-of-pocket costs or simplifying presentation of plan options, for example—can improve plan selection.

“Dr. Frank’s research will help us understand ways to better present information about Medicare plan options and prevent the paralysis induced by choice overload. By making it easier for individuals to make sound choices about their health care, we can help build a national culture of health,” says Deborah Bae, MPA, MBA, senior program officer at RWJF.

Focusing his research on market concentration, physician-hospital integration, and accountable care organizations (ACOs), J. Michael McWilliams, MD ’03, PhD ’08, associate professor of health care policy, hopes to understand their impact on prices paid for physician services. “We hope that the findings will be able to inform regulatory and other decisions in ways that push for higher-value care,” adds Andrea Ducas, MPH, program officer at RWJF.

Michael E. Chernew, PhD, Leonard D. Schaeffer Professor of Health Care Policy, is evaluating the implementation, perceived outcomes, and challenges of the Arkansas Payment Improvement Initiative, a new model of delivering and financing health care aimed to create payment incentives that motivate and reward patient-centered management of outcomes and reductions in total cost of care.

“Funding such as the grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is instrumental to our work and allows us to continuously fine-tune our focus depending upon the external environment and associated policy needs,” says Chernew.

Symonds celebrates the power of planned giving

Pringle Hart Symonds, AB ’56, understands the power of a charitable gift annuity (CGA) and hopes to educate others about the opportunity. A graduate of Radcliffe, she has established three CGAs across the Harvard community, the most recent at Harvard Medical School with a gift of $100,000.

As a young girl, Symonds and her family moved frequently as a result of her father’s career in the Navy—in fact, she attended 17 different schools prior to attending Radcliffe. After graduating from Radcliffe and the Library School at Simmons College, she joined the Harvard staff at Widener Library.

Symonds’ career later brought her to Washington, D.C., and the Library of Congress. It was there, while attending a tea dance with co-workers, that Symonds met her husband, John, an Englishman working for DuPont in Baltimore, Md. The couple was married for 30 years until his passing in 1993.

Following his death, and on the recommendation of her brother, Symonds decided to explore the many benefits of a CGA. This gift vehicle allows her to achieve her philanthropic goals while also generating fixed income for life and a charitable tax deduction.

“My CGAs have provided me with steady, solid income, and they have been invaluable for someone like me, who does not fall into the category of having a lot of money,” adds Symonds, who is a member of the Ezekiel Hersey Council in recognition of her generous vision.

“Funding such as the grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is instrumental to our work and allows us to continuously fine-tune our focus depending upon the external environment and associated policy needs.”

—Michael E. Chernew, PhD
Merkin invests in the path less traveled

Richard Merkin, MD, never shies away from a challenge. As founder, president, and CEO of Heritage Provider Network, named one of Fast Company’s “10 Most Innovative Health Care Companies,” he develops pioneering programs and services to deliver affordable, quality care to its members. He also created and sponsored the $3 million Heritage Health Prize—the largest predictive modeling prize in the world—to respond to the U.S. health care crises and save more than $30 billion in avoidable hospitalizations.

When Merkin thinks of scientific innovators, George Church, PhD ’84, immediately comes to mind. “Dr. Church embraces change and is not trapped by antiquated ways of thinking. He innovates and takes a less-traveled path. He understands that medicine is becoming an information science, and he is a game-changer,” says Merkin (at right).

Now he has made a substantial gift to establish the Personal Genomes and Conversion of Stem Cells to Neurons Research Fund at Harvard Medical School, under Church’s direction. This funding will allow Church and his lab team to further investigate the pathogenesis of lower motor neuron diseases, specifically spinal stenosis, which is a narrowing of the spinal canal, and cauda equina syndrome, a rare disorder affecting the bundle of nerve roots at the lower end of the spinal cord.

“A breakthrough today was just a crazy idea yesterday,” says Church, the Robert Winthrop Professor of Genetics at HMS and director of PersonalGenomes.org. “I appreciate Richard Merkin’s out-of-the-box thinking and innovative approach to funding, which gives researchers like me the freedom to take risks and share our findings openly with the broader scientific community, for the greater good.”

For Merkin, it’s all about changing people’s lives. “Anytime we can improve the quality of life for individuals whose lives have been significantly impacted by disease, we have an opportunity,” he says. “This is about real people—mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, and sons and daughters. That is what medicine, to which I have devoted my life’s work, is ultimately about.”

Nutrition as a foundation of health and learning

Born in Jamaica, Mavis C. Campbell, PhD, received her degrees from the London School of Economics and Political Science at the University of London. A widely published author, she taught at Hunter College before spending more than 30 years at Amherst College, and she is now emerita professor of history. During this time she received invitations to visit academic institutions around the world, including the University of Sierra Leone in West Africa, University of Guyana in South America, and the University of Edinburgh and Wolfson College, Cambridge in Great Britain.

Campbell’s educational background plus her extensive travels—most significantly, her stint at the United Nations in New York—gave her a unique view of the problems facing underserved and resource-poor regions. It seemed obvious to her that education was fundamental to the solution, yet she also realized that without good health and proper nutrition its effectiveness was limited. “Disease-stricken and persistently hungry children cannot be expected to learn. Nutrition is not only a foundation of health but also of learning, with all the attendant benefits that flow from it,” Campbell says.

To help address this, she established the Mavis C. Campbell, PhD Endowed Teaching and Research Fund in Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School with an initial $100,000 charitable gift annuity. Since the fund’s creation in 2012, Campbell has set up two additional $100,000 annuities for its benefit, while also generating fixed income for life.

Campbell searched for the right institution that could accommodate her ideas and says it was not difficult to choose HMS because of its outstanding teaching and research teams, coupled with its commitment to medical service around the world.

“The great importance of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine lies in its innovative, multidisciplinary, collaborative approach that allows practitioners to contextualize medical problems in poor countries not in isolation but as part of a wider set of grave social and economic issues, such as poverty, malnutrition, and lack of education, all of which must be addressed in tandem and must be followed through aggressively before development can be sustainable in these areas,” she says.

According to Campbell, the innovative work being done here will lead to interventions that will promote better health equity, better medical care and delivery, and more education in its widest sense.

“When basic nutritional needs are met, we can often break the cycle of poverty and disease. Proper nutrition is central to effective clinical medicine. We are grateful for Professor Campbell’s commitment to advancing global health research and education at HMS,” says Paul Farmer, MD ’90, PhD ’90, Kokekotrones University Professor and chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at HMS.
**XAVIER INSTALLED AS ISSELBACHER PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE**

Ramnik Xavier, MD, PhD, chief of the Gastrointestinal Unit at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and director of the Center for the Study of Inflammatory Bowel Disease, has been installed as the first incumbent of the Kurt J. Isselbacher Professorship in Medicine in the Field of Gastroenterology at Harvard Medical School.

The namesake of the professorship, Kurt Isselbacher, AB ’46, MD ’50, Mallinckrodt Distinguished Professor of Medicine and director emeritus of the MGH Cancer Center, has been a dedicated member of the HMS faculty for nearly six decades. He is a trustee of the Foundation for Research in Cell Biology and Cancer, which made the professorship possible.

Xavier, an exceptional researcher and skilled clinician, focuses his research on applying innovative genomic, genetic, and chemical biology approaches to better understand the function of genetic variants underlying common inflammatory disease. Clinically, Xavier’s interests focus on caring for patients with Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis.

Below: Isselbacher (right) became head of the Gastroenterology Unit at MGH in 1957 and helped it become one of the country’s leading centers for training, research, and treatment of gastrointestinal diseases, which Xavier (left) leads today.

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**Alzheimer’s research tops Freudenberger family’s priority list**

Halting Alzheimer’s disease is personal for Daniel Freudenberger, AB ’67, and his family. His father was 75 when he developed the insidious disease, like his parents before him. Since Joseph Freudenberger’s diagnosis in 1983, Daniel Freudenberger and his mother have made annual gifts to Harvard Medical School to help advance research and treatment.

“Basic science research, advanced imaging, drug development, biomarker studies, and clinical trials of new therapies—we need all of them if we’re going to beat back this disease,” says Daniel Freudenberger, who is a member of the HMS Board of Fellows and Neuroscience Advisory Council, which he chaired in the 1990s. Recently he has amplified his support with a current-use gift of $100,000 to provide urgent, flexible funding to researchers in the Harvard NeuroDiscovery Center (HNDC).

According to Lynn Wood Harwell, JD ’04, MBA ’04, executive director of HNDC, this support allows the center to be nimble and to expeditiously identify bottlenecks and address unanswered questions.

As allies and philanthropic supporters, Dan Freudenberger and his family have been longtime partners fighting for a cure for Alzheimer’s disease. This new, current-use gift incites deliberative action. It allows us to focus our efforts and uniquely positions us to create direct resources and new programs. We are so thankful to Dan, who understands personally that Alzheimer’s research must be constant motion with no stoppages that may derail promising research,” says Harwell.

Now 69, Freudenberger says he’s hopeful about HMS’s work—and about inheriting his mother’s genes, since she lived to 97 and was as lucid as she was when she was 20.

“If working with HMS researchers for 31 years has convinced me of anything, it is that Harvard will not give up until we understand Alzheimer’s. The toll the disease takes on patients and caretakers is too great. We need an E-ZPass. Our family has always believed Harvard Medical School is the place that can provide it,” says Freudenberger.

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**Aisenberg family honors inspirational patriarch**

The late Alan C. Aisenberg, BS ’46, MD ’50, PhD, spent the majority of his professional career at Harvard Medical School—more than 60 years of dedication and passion for the School and medical education.

Now his son, James Aisenberg, AB ’81, MD ’87, his daughter, Margaret Kate Aisenberg, and their families have established the Alan C. Aisenberg, MD ’50, PhD, Financial Aid Fund at HMS with a generous gift of $100,000 to honor their father’s legacy. The Aisenberg Fund makes it possible for HMS to attract and accept outstanding young clinicians and researchers in achieving their dreams as his father did.

“My father felt extremely privileged to be part of the HMS community. He developed cherished relationships with the faculty, staff, and students at the School and its affiliated hospitals.”

Alan served as a professor of medicine at HMS and as an attending physician in the Center for Hematology/Oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital before retiring in 2010.

A remarkable mentor and friend to many, Alan’s memory will live on at HMS through his family’s profound bond with the School and their dedication to making a tangible impact on students and their future careers in health care.

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Daniel Freudenberger, AB ’67 (left), a screenwriter, director, and playwright whose family has supported Alzheimer’s disease research at HMS for more than three decades
Whether it had been five years or 50 since their last visit to the Quad, the level of excitement among the nearly 600 alumni and friends returning to campus for Reunion and Alumni Week in May was undeniable.

Reunion committees, representing more than 100 alumni volunteers spanning six decades, put the special touch on this year’s programming and encouraged graduates from classes ending in “4” and “9” to not only come back, but to give back—raising more than $1.9 million.

Amidst the hugs and laughter, attendees rediscovered the School during scientific symposia, tours, and other presentations. There was also ample opportunity to reconnect with classmates during an elegant gala at the Four Seasons Hotel Boston and more than 35 class activities over the weekend, ranging from museum tours to a family picnic along the Charles River.

This year’s Faculty Symposium focused on immunity and inflammation in disease and therapy, featuring a panel of experts who enlightened the audience on its role in obesity, bowel disease, and cancer while exploring the unexpected targets and triggers of tissue inflammation.

In tribute of their second year show of the same name, “Doc of Ages,” speakers from the Class of 1989 delivered talks on varied topics during the day-long 25th Reunion Symposium, including public health in the 21st century, modern-day challenges in health care delivery, and making innovative therapies available across the globe.

Friday was also Alumni Day, when all alumni were invited to return to the Quad to participate in the Annual Meeting of the Alumni Association, Alumni Day Symposium celebrating the impact of the first Surgeon General’s Report on Smoking and Health issued 50 years ago, and the annual Dean’s State of the School address.

A member of the 50th Reunion class, Claude Ghez, MD ’64, stepped up generously to sponsor the Race for Reunion Challenge, giving $100,000 and spurring this year’s Reunion classes to collectively raise an additional $100,000 in current-use support for HMS (see story on page 8). Alumni rose to the challenge and ultimately secured $200,000 to support the next generation of leaders in science and medicine. Additionally, Alan Yeung, MD ’84, issued a special 30th Reunion Challenge and made a gift of $50,000 as a match to his classmates’ contributions to the Class of 1984 Fellowship Fund.

View symposia videos and photos at hms.harvard.edu/reunion

MILESTONE REUNION LEADS TO MOTIVATIONAL “CHALLENGE”

It was the intention to study brain function that initially brought Claude P. Ghez, MD ’64, to Harvard Medical School, but it was the joy of reconnecting with his classmates that brought him back to the Quad for his 50th Reunion in May.

Currently a professor of neuroscience and neurology at Columbia University, Ghez may split his time between Geneva, Switzerland, and New York, but Boston holds a special place in his heart. Ghez credits his successful research career to his studies at HMS and the extraordinary people he met as a student. Last year, when his role on the Harvard Neuroscience Advisory Council provided him with the opportunity to meet current medical students, he was impressed by the quality and enthusiasm of the future scientists. Much as had been the case for Ghez, each of them had come to HMS after unusual academic paths.

When it was time for him to celebrate his milestone Reunion, Ghez seized the opportunity to give back by sponsoring the Race for Reunion Challenge—asking the 2014 Reunion classes to collectively give $100,000, which he would match dollar-for-dollar, ultimately raising $200,000 to support the next generation of leaders in science and medicine.

“I feel indebted to the School, and this was an opportunity for me to foster inquiry among students. The high cost of medical education can distort goals, and I hope this helps ease the burden and motivates them to pursue a career in research,” Ghez says.
The following grants directly support Harvard Medical School faculty members in their work to alleviate human suffering caused by disease.

Michael Greenberg, PhD, Nathan Marsh Pusey Professor and chair of the Department of Neurobiology, has been awarded $1.2 million from the Rett Syndrome Research Trust. The gift furthers the work of the MECP2 Consortium, which includes Harvard Medical School, the University of Edinburgh, and Oregon Health & Science University, to define the function of the gene MECP2 as a step toward the development of therapeutics for treating Rett Syndrome, a rare neurodevelopmental disorder that occurs almost exclusively in girls.

Diane Mathis, PhD, Morten Grove-Rasmussen Professor of Immunohematology, has received a $1 million grant from the JPB Foundation to investigate the inflammatory aspects of diabetes.

Gordon Strewler, MD ’71, has received a $600,000 grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) to support medical student research as part of its Research Training Fellowships Program. The 2014–2015 HHMI Medical Research Fellows at HMS include: Tru-Khang Dinh, David Fischer, Allison Hamilos, George Huang, Raja Mehta, Daniel Oh, Ryan Park, Avanthi Raghavan, and Qing Yu Weng.

The Simons Foundation, through its Autism Research Initiative, has given more than $550,000 in Explorer Award funding to HMS neuroscientists Chris Harvey, PhD (pictured), who is investigating the optical measurement of circuit dynamics in virtual reality, and Bob Datta, MD ’04, PhD ’04, who is deep-phenotyping the spectrum disorder in mice.

The Aetna Foundation, Inc., has given nearly $350,000 to further support the Aetna Research Collaboration, which was established in 2011 under the direction of Isaac Kohane, MD, PhD, co-director of the HMS Center for Biomedical Informatics. The collaboration is focused on analyzing health care data in new ways to further clinical research and improve the quality and affordability of health care.

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Terrie Inder, MBchB, MD, chair of the Department of Pediatric Newborn Medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital (BWH), has been named the inaugural incumbent of the Mary Ellen Avery Professorship in Pediatrics in the Field of Newborn Medicine at Harvard Medical School.

The transition of BWH’s Division of Newborn Medicine into the Department of Pediatric Newborn Medicine was initiated by Elizabeth G. Nabel, MD, president of BWH and professor of medicine at HMS. Last year, Nabel recruited Inder from Washington University School of Medicine, where Inder served as professor of pediatrics, neurology, and radiology, and was director of the Washington University Neonatal Development Research team.

The professorship pays tribute to former HMS faculty member Mary Ellen Avery, MD, Thomas Gordon Strewler, MD ’71, has received a $600,000 grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) to support medical student research as part of its Research Training Fellowships Program. The 2014–2015 HHMI Medical Research Fellows at HMS include: Tru-Khang Dinh, David Fischer, Allison Hamilos, George Huang, Raja Mehta, Daniel Oh, Ryan Park, Avanthi Raghavan, and Qing Yu Weng.

INDER NAMED MARY ELLEN AVERY PROFESSOR OF PEDIATRICS

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Scientific discovery and innovative approaches inspire support

Nearly a decade ago, when former Harvard University President Lawrence Summers, PhD ’82, called on Lynn B. Thoman, MBA ’79, to serve on the Harvard University Science and Engineering Committee, she jumped at the chance to participate in a group focused on fostering collaborative, interdisciplinary, and interschool science.

As time went on, Thoman found herself gravitating toward the discoveries coming out of Harvard Medical School. To fuel scientific courage in its many forms, Thoman has made her second unrestricted gift of $100,000 to the School to provide flexible funding to Dean Jeffrey S. Flier, MD.

According to Thoman, HMS has a unique ability to frame important research questions and bring together a vast reservoir of talent to generate better solutions. For instance, Harvard Catalyst, a university-wide, clinical science center situated at HMS, used a two-week crowdsourcing challenge to draw submissions from 69 countries, ultimately producing a DNA sequencing algorithm 976 times faster than ever before. And work in the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine has led to world-class care in resource-poor settings, generating lessons that can be applied to the U.S. delivery systems.

“I believe in Dean Flier as a leader, and I applaud his focus on research and innovative approaches in science and health care delivery,” says Thoman.

Alumni Council election results

This past spring, Harvard Medical School graduates cast their votes during the annual Alumni Council election. Barbara McNeil, MD ’66, PhD ’72, AMP ’86 (left), Ridley Watts Professor and founding head of the Department of Health Care Policy at HMS and professor of radiology at HMS and Brigham and Women’s Hospital, begins her one-year term as president, alongside two new officers and four new councilors.

Newly elected officers include President-Elect James J. O’Connell III, MD ’82, president of Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program and assistant professor of medicine at MGH, and Secretary Andrea E. Reid, MD ’88, MPH ’01, program director of gastroenterology training at the VA Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

Newly elected councilors, representing the Eighth, Seventh, Fourth, and First Pentads, respectively, are S. Jean H. Emans, AB ’66, MD ’70, professor of pediatrics at HMS and chief of the Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine, Robert Masland Jr. Chair in Adolescent Medicine, and director of the Office of Faculty at Boston Children’s Hospital; Richard Payne, MD ’77, Esther Colliflower Professor of Medicine and Divinity at Duke University and John B. Francis Chair in Bioethics at the Center for Practical Bioethics in Kansas City, Mo.; Emily Oken, MD ’95, MPH ’03, associate professor of population medicine at HMS and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute; and Carolyn Olsen Walsh, MD ’09, a pediatrician at East Boston Neighborhood Health Center.

WRIGHT INSTALLED AS MATHISEN FAMILY PROFESSOR OF SURGERY

Cameron D. Wright, MD, associate chief of the Division of Thoracic Surgery and chair of quality for surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), and a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, has been installed as the first incumbent of the Mathisen Family Professorship in Surgery in the Field of Thoracic Surgery at Harvard Medical School.

Established in honor of Douglas Mathisen, MD, chief of the Division of Thoracic Surgery at MGH and Hermes C. Grillo Professor of Surgery at HMS, the professorship recognizes Mathisen’s contributions to the thoracic surgery program at MGH and the advancements he has made in the field during his 30-year tenure at HMS.

Made possible through the philanthropic support of Sara and Charles Fabrikant, AB ’65, family and friends of Mathisen, and two anonymous donors, the endowed professorship is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon a member of the HMS faculty. Upon Mathisen’s retirement from HMS, the professorship will be renamed the Douglas Mathisen Professorship in Surgery in the Field of Thoracic Surgery.

Consistently recognized by Boston Magazine as one of Boston’s top thoracic surgeons, Wright’s clinical and research interests include pulmonary thromboendarterectomy for pulmonary hypertension due to chronic pulmonary thromboembolic disease, airway surgery, thymic tumor surgery, and minimally invasive lung cancer surgery.

Below: Mathisen (left) and Wright are lauded for their accomplishments and exceptional careers.
Arlene Sharpe, AB ’75, AM ’76, PhD ’81, MD ’82, George Fabyan Professor of Comparative Pathology, joins the Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women’s Hospital communities in March to celebrate the opening of the new Evergrande Center for Immunologic Disease, which she co-directs with Vijay Kuchroo, PhD, the Samuel L. Wasserstrom Professor of Neurology.

Paul Farmer, MD ’90, PhD ’90 (far right), Kolokotrones University Professor and chair of the HMS Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, gives a tour of the Rwinkwavu District Hospital and Health Center, located in Rwinkwavu, Rwanda, to HMS donors and leadership volunteers, including Senator William H. Frist, MD ’78 (second from right), who is chairman of the HMS Board of Fellows.

Karen Moberg (center), clerkship manager in the Department of Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital, receives the L. James Wicaz Jr. Award for Leadership, Excellence, and Innovation in Medical Education at the annual Daniel D. Federman Teaching Awards Celebration in May. The awards recognize the accomplishments of the School’s leading medical educators and reflect, in a small but tangible way, how much teachers are valued by their students and by HMS.

“Stand up for your values, and you can change not only your patients’ lives but also health care in this nation—and the world,” said Vivek Murthy, AB ’98, MD, HMS instructor in medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, founder of Doctors for America, and nominee for U.S. Surgeon General, who addressed the newest graduates of Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Dental Medicine at Commencement in May.

Dean for Students Nancy Croutil, MD ’79 (center), celebrates the graduation of Timothy Yiu, MD ’14 (left), and Kristina Williams, MD ’14, at Commencement in Harvard Yard.

At a recent Academic Innovations Collaborative (AIC) Learning Session hosted by the Center for Primary Care, Niurka Pitts speaks about her experience as a patient and why she is committed to partnering with the MGH Chelsea Pediatrics Clinic to improve care. The AIC is designed to foster innovation in education and care delivery at 20 Harvard-affiliated primary care teaching practices that care for nearly 275,000 patients.

At the 15th Giovanni Armenise-Harvard Foundation Symposium at Lake Garda, Italy, Cell Biology Research Fellow Yi-ying Chou, PhD, discusses her work with Sheref Mansy, PhD, one of the foundation’s Career Development Awardees from the Centre for Integrative Biology at the University of Trento in Italy.
Pitts invests in the next generation of seminal physician-scientists

W. Reid Pitts Jr., MD ’67, believes that there is no force more influential than a curious mind. Unfortunately, it is increasingly difficult for most medical schools to fund curiosity-based science. Pitts hopes to reverse this trend by contributing an additional $100,000 to the existing William R. Pitts, MD ’33, and W. Reid Pitts Jr., MD ’67, Research Scholars with Intelligent Curiosity Fund at Harvard Medical School.

The Pitts Fund supports the HMS Scholars in Medicine program, which was established in 2011 and requires medical students to complete a faculty-mentored, scholarly research project. This exploration of intelligent curiosity through research is precisely what inspires Pitts when conducting his own research. His current work focuses on the neurotoxic qualities of high fructose corn syrup and brain cells’ inability to metabolize it.

“The opportunities within the Harvard system are infinite, and no matter what questions students want to explore, they will find support from a member of HMS’s diverse faculty,” says Pitts. “HMS has all of the ingredients required to prepare the minds of the next generation of health care leaders.”

According to Pitts, it is through the willingness to embrace curiosity that he and his family came to have such a deep affinity for HMS. As the story goes, Pitts’s father, William, arrived at HMS in 1929, and during his second semester of study was called to the Office of the Dean of Students. Nervously, he arrived and was asked to point out on a North Carolina map the location of his small, rural hometown of Glen Alpine to a dean who was doubtful of its existence.

What followed was a unique bond between Pitts’s father and the dean of students that continued throughout his four years at HMS. His experience cultivated a passion—which was passed down to his son—for education and the Medical School, all hinging on the power of curiosity.

Paul Farmer inspires anonymous gift

Paul Farmer, MD ’90, PhD ’90, is synonymous with global health. As chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School—as well as the Kolokotrones University Professor at Harvard, chief of the Division of Global Health Equity at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, and co-founder of Partners In Health—he impacts the lives of countless men, women, and children in resource-poor settings through education and research. In the process, his leadership continues to inspire generations of people to not only act, but to want to follow in his footsteps.

Two such devotees have been so inspired by Farmer and his work, they have given $100,000 to the Chair’s Opportunity Fund in Global Health at HMS.

This support provides Farmer and his HMS team with the vital resources they need to conduct the most promising research, implement and evaluate new models of care delivery, nurture the development and mentoring of medical students and junior faculty who are the future global health leaders, and provide pilot funding to launch exciting new initiatives.

Farmer has said that expertise alone will not solve the problems faced by people living in desperate circumstances. “To help people, you must accompany them and walk beside them to understand what they really need. This gift helps make that possible,” says Farmer.

WALLS NAMED NESKEY FAMILY PROFESSOR OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE

Ron M. Walls, MD, chairman of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital (BWH) and professor of medicine in the Division of Emergency Medicine at Harvard Medical School, has been named the first incumbent of the Neskey Family Professorship in Emergency Medicine at HMS.

Funded by generous support from David and Sharon Neskey, the professorship will help advance the field of emergency medicine and ensure the continued high standard of care that patients have come to expect from BWH’s Emergency Department.

Walls’s outstanding leadership was spotlighted in 2013 when his commitment to train staff to prepare for the unthinkable equipped BWH to provide extraordinary care in the events that unfolded following the Boston Marathon bombing. Walls’s leadership is recognized not only by the survivors and families, but also by the medical community and all of the hospitals that look to BWH as an exemplar for emergency care.

Right (left to right): David Neskey; Elizabeth G. Nabel, MD, president of BWH; David Brown, MD, chief of the Department of Emergency Medicine at MGH; Walls; Nancy Tarbell, MD, HMS dean for academic and clinical affairs; and Sharon Neskey celebrate the professorship.
**September 29**

**Marshall J. Seidman Lecture**
Join us at 4:30 p.m. in the Carl W. Walter Amphitheater in the Tosteson Medical Education Center for this 14th annual lecture focused on health care policy. The featured speaker is Leemore Dafny, PhD, the Herman Smith Research Professor in Hospital and Health Services at Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. Contact the Department of Health Care Policy at 617-432-3333 for more information.

**October 2**

**Warren Alpert Foundation Prize & Symposium**
Celebrate the winners of the 2014 Warren Alpert Foundation Prize—Oleh Hornykiewicz, MD, of the Medical University of Vienna and the University of Toronto; Roger A. Nicoll, MD, of the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine; and Solomon H. Snyder, MD, of Johns Hopkins School of Medicine—for their pioneering research into neurotransmission and neurodegeneration. The 26th annual symposium begins at 2 p.m. in the New Research Building. Contact Caitlin Craig at 617-384-8467 or events@hms.harvard.edu to RSVP or for more information.

**November 8**

**Alumni Reception in Chicago**
Do you live in the Chicago area or are you planning to attend the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) annual conference there? Don’t miss the HMS alumni reception Saturday evening at the Hyatt Regency Chicago from 6:15–8:15 p.m. Formal invitations will follow. For more information, contact Alumni Relations at 617-384-8520 or email hmsalum@hms.harvard.edu.

**November 14**

**Harvard/MIT MD-PhD Reunion**
Save the date for the 40th anniversary celebration, which will feature panels, talks, reception and dinner for faculty, students, and staff. Contact Amy Cohen at 617-432-0724 or amy@hms.harvard.edu for more information.

**March 4**

**Hollis L. Albright, MD ’31 Symposium**
Join Dean Jeffrey S. Flier, MD, moderator George Q. Daley, AB ’82, PhD, MD ’91, and other renowned faculty members at 4:30 p.m. in the New Research Building for this 14th annual symposium highlighting new scientific initiatives underway at HMS. Contact Alexandra Chase at 617-384-8596 or email albright@hms.harvard.edu for more information.

**May 28–29**

**Reunion**
Save the date to return to campus to celebrate this year’s Reunion festivities, including a gala, class-specific events, symposia from fellow alumni and faculty, the Dean’s State of the School address, tours, and more! This year we celebrate classes ending in “0” and “5.” Visit hms.harvard.edu/reunion or contact Anne Koza at 617-384-8520 or hmsalum@hms.harvard.edu for more information or to volunteer for your class committee.

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