Ending global tuberculosis deaths once and for all

Cases of tuberculosis (TB) are virtually unheard of in the U.S. today. That’s because outbreaks of the airborne infectious disease, last reported in the late 1980s and early 1990s in New York City and fanned by HIV infection, are treated boldly and comprehensively, effectively stopping it in its tracks.

People living in other parts of the world, however, face a much different fate. Despite being a treatable and curable disease for decades, TB remains a death sentence for 1.8 million people living in low- and middle-income countries each year. 400,000 of whom have HIV. In fact, TB has now surpassed HIV as the leading infectious killer of adults globally.

How can this be? According to Kolokotrones University Professor Paul Farmer, MD ’90, PhD ’90, and Salmaan Keshavjee, MD, ScM ’93, AM ’95, PhD ’98, in Harvard Medical School’s Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, TB and multidrug-resistant forms of the disease (MDR-TB) run rampant in developing countries due to the lack of resources available and political will to combat them. Beyond these local limitations, Keshavjee says global policy-makers have not encouraged low- and middle-income countries to invest in tried and tested approaches to stop the epidemic.

As a result, the disease often is not properly detected and diagnosed, patients do not have access to the recommended four-drug combination treatment regimen. and health systems are not equipped to monitor patients to ensure they are responding to treatment. When medicines are not taken successively for their duration—ranging from six months for TB to more than a year for MDR-TB—the disease-causing bacteria live on and spread through the air in the communities where TB patients live and work.

Harvard Medical School is spearheading a program to address these fundamental gaps and help end TB and MDR-TB deaths once and for all. With generous support over the last two years from the Global Public Health team at Johnson & Johnson, University Professor Paul Farmer, MD ’90, PhD ’90, and Salmaan Keshavjee, MD, ScM ’93, AM ’95, PhD ’98, in Harvard Medical School’s Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, TB and multidrug-resistant forms of the disease (MDR-TB) run rampant in developing countries due to the lack of resources available and political will to combat them. Beyond these local limitations, Keshavjee says global policy-makers have not encouraged low- and middle-income countries to invest in tried and tested approaches to stop the epidemic.

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Dear Friends,

The future of science and health care has been on our minds a lot lately. As you well know, basic research enables us to explore fundamental questions about ourselves and all that surrounds us, leading to vital discoveries and unlocking important new areas of investigation. Academia plays a critical role in this equation, assuring that research is conducted independent of commercial motivation.

Since World War II, the federal government—through agencies like the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—has partnered with leading research universities, including Harvard, to conduct the majority of the nation’s basic biomedical research. In fact, 2016 marked the 22nd consecutive year that Boston received the most NIH funding of any U.S. city, reinforcing it as a powerhouse for medical research. Harvard Medical School was one of eight Boston organizations to receive more than $100 million in NIH funding in 2016, with five HMS-affiliated hospitals also included on the list.

This partnership has led to cutting-edge treatments and technologies at Harvard, from nuclear magnetic resonance and DNA sequencing to development of the pacemaker and the measles vaccine. In fact, more than half of the last 10 cancer drugs approved by the FDA have emerged from the HMS network. Our partnership with the NIH also fosters a fertile training ground for the next generation of innovators and leaders in science and medicine, which is among HMS’s chief priorities.

Over the last decade, federal support for research has been stagnant. And now it seems that we are on the precipice of swelling cuts, which will have a grave impact on our collective work and, ultimately, on the livelihood and quality of life of the patients we serve.

Now more than ever, we need to come together. We need to assert the importance of basic research. We need to embark on deeper collaborations with colleagues in our affiliated hospitals and our neighboring biotech and pharma communities to present a united front. And we need to build philanthropic partnerships with visionaries, like the ones featured in this issue of The Benefactor, who want to change the world through investments in health and medicine.

No one can deliver on that investment better than Harvard Medical School. We invite you to learn more at hms.harvard.edu/campaign.

Sincerely,

George Q. Daley, AB ’82, MD ’91, PhD
Dean of Harvard Medical School

Lisa J. Boudreau
Dean for Alumni Affairs and Development
Since its founding grant in 2008, the Lynch Foundation has enabled Harvard Medical School to increase the number of graduate students admitted to the prestigious Systems Biology PhD Program. Now, the second generous $1 million gift from the Lynch Foundation extends this program, enabling access to even more exceptional students.

Peter Lynch, who has an enduring history with HMS as a long-serving member of the Board of Fellows, helped launch the Department of Systems Biology in 2003 and is a co-chair of the School’s Discovery Council. He says his commitment to HMS was solidified in the late 1990s when Dean Daniel C. Tosteson, MD ’48, asked him to chair a Cell Biology Advisory Council consisting of non-scientists, primarily. Lynch described Tosteson’s move as a brave and pioneering approach to science.

It is the same out-of-the-box thinking that Lynch believes is needed to propel progress toward treating and curing the world’s most devastating conditions, including cancer; neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer’s; heart disease; diabetes; and stroke, among others. Specifically, Lynch says it is the systems biology approach, which fuses concepts across numerous disciplines—from biology, chemistry, computer science, and applied mathematics to physics and engineering—that will have the most impact on human health.

Mary Lynch Witkowski, AB ’96, MBA ’01, MD ’16, Lynch’s daughter and a trustee of the family’s foundation, couldn’t agree more. “The magic happens when you cross disciplines. Attacking problems from different directions is what will lead to progress, and it happens every day at HMS. That’s why it’s exciting to support the people there. The money you give is explosive in its impact,” she says.

Lynch adds, “I’ve always been impressed—and I’m a numbers guy—by the scale of Harvard. Dollars don’t impress me, it’s the number of people involved in research.” In fact, there are more than 800 PhD students at HMS, including the Systems Biology PhD Program, along with nearly 9,000 medical residents and postdoctoral fellows, and 150 tenured and tenure-track faculty members in basic and social science departments. Lynch believes these are the people who will build upon the critical research and discoveries that have been coming from HMS for generations in an effort to help people live longer, healthier lives.

According to Marc Kirschner, PhD, John Franklin Enders University Professor and chair of the Department of Systems Biology, the Lynch Foundation has recognized the importance of this crucial training period and the difficulty in obtaining adequate funds to support it. “The Lynch Foundation has made a special contribution to the careers of some outstanding young scientists by generously providing fellowships for them to attempt to unlock the basic mechanisms that underlie human disease,” he says.

To date, 36 PhD candidates have been named Lynch Fellows. They have studied important biological issues, such as understanding drug-induced liver toxicity; analyzing medical records with a goal of developing a system to predict future medical events, such as heart attack, stroke, and cancer; and understanding how bacteria evolve during infection.

Renewed funding from the Lynch Foundation will allow HMS to support two new PhD candidates per year. “These emerging scientists are an integral part of the lab. They are often underfunded and need help,” Lynch says.

“IT’S A VIRTUOUS CYCLE,” says Witkowski. “HMS is successful at getting funding because of the quality of the research conducted there, which in turn attracts the world’s best researchers who want to be a part of it.”

Lynch Foundation extends systems biology fellowship support

WARREN ALPERT PRIZE RECOGNIZES CRISPR PIONEERS

Each year, the Warren Alpert Foundation Prize is awarded to one or more scientists, physicians, or researchers whose achievements have led to the prevention, cure, or treatment of human diseases or disorders, or whose research constitutes a seminal scientific finding that holds great promise toward ultimately changing the understanding of disease or its treatment. This year’s five distinguished recipients were honored for their remarkable contributions to the understanding of the CRISPR bacterial defense system and the revolutionary discovery that it can be adapted for genome editing.

The honorees are Rodolphe Barrangou, MS, PhD, MBA, associate professor in the Department of Food, Bioprocessing, and Nutrition Sciences and the Todd R. Klisman Distinguished Scholar in Probiotics Research at North Carolina State University; Philippe Horvath, PhD, senior scientist at DuPont in Dangé-Saint-Romain, France; Jennifer Doudna, PhD ’89, the Li Ka Shing Chancellor’s Chair in Biomedical and Health Sciences and professor of molecular and cell biology and of chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley; Emmanuelle Charpentier, PhD, scientific member and director at the Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology in Berlin and professor at Umeå University in Sweden; and Virginijus Siksnys, PhD, professor, chief scientist, and department head at the Institute of Biotechnology at Vilniaus University in Lithuania.

Above: At the Oct. 6 event, the five honorees—(left to right) Barrangou, Doudna, Siksnys, Charpentier, and Horvath—received their awards from the late Herb Kaplan, president and chairman of the Warren Alpert Foundation and a member of the HMS Board of Fellows, and Bevin Kaplan, director and vice president of the Warren Alpert Foundation and a member of the HMS Board of Fellows.
Shining light on women in medicine

What is the claim to fame of Mary Ellen Avery (1927–2011), MD? A professor of pediatrics and the first woman to chair a clinical department at Harvard Medical School—and the first woman physician-in-chief at Boston Children’s Hospital—Avery is best known for her 1959 discovery of the cause of respiratory distress syndrome (RDS). Her discovery has helped to save hundreds of thousands of premature infants.

Avery is also among the extraordinary scientists whose manuscript collections are now part of the Archives for Women in Medicine at HMS. According to Scott Podolsky, AB ’93, MD ’97, director of the Center for the History of Medicine and professor in the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, the archives capture the behind-the-scenes efforts, relationships, successes, and struggles that comprise the recent and evolving history of women in medicine and biomedical sciences, particularly across the Harvard Medical community.

Now, the mission and work of the Archives are being advanced with a gift of $500,000 from Amalie Kass, a historian, author, and former teacher. “Somebody has to keep an eye on these women. I want to see the Archives grow. This will require new money to support all kinds of things we haven’t even thought of yet,” says Kass, whose book, “Midwifery and Medicine in Boston,” chronicles the life and work of Walter Channing (1786–1876), MD, a prominent Boston obstetrician who co-founded the Boston Lying-in Hospital, now known as Brigham and Women’s Hospital.

In fact, the first archival research project undertaken by Kass and Shore focused on Anne Pappenheimer Forbes (1911–1992), MD, a clinical professor at Massachusetts General Hospital who became a pioneer in endocrinology and mentored several HMS alumni. Their profile of Forbes was published in Harvard Medicine magazine in 2015, followed by a talk on her life, which was attended by all five of Forbes’ living children and their families.

“Over and over again, we have witnessed the impact and perpetuating nature of supportive mentorship. Amalie’s philanthropy empowers the history of medicine to inform and shape contemporary medicine and society,” says Podolsky.

To learn more about the Archives for Women in Medicine and access its collections, including oral history videos featuring Avery, Shore, and several others, visit countway.harvard.edu/awm

SEQUIST INSTALLED AS INAUGURAL LANDRY FAMILY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICAL ONCOLOGY

Lecia Sequist, MD ’99, MPH ’05, director of the Center for Innovation in Early Cancer Detection and a medical oncologist in the Center for Thoracic Cancers at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Cancer Center, has been named to the Landry Family Professorship in Medical Oncology. This professorship was made possible by the generosity of the Landry family, whose patriarch, Kevin Landry, AB ’66, passed away from lung cancer in 2013.

Sequist joined the MGH and HMS faculty in 2005. Over the past 10 years, she has focused her research on precision therapy for lung cancer, spearheading the development of several new therapeutics and pioneering research using both tumor biopsies and liquid biopsies to understand the development of drug resistance and the clonal evolution of cancer.

Above: Sequist (fourth from left) celebrates her installation with (left to right) Kimberly Gwinn-Landry, Nancy Tarbell, MD, dean for academic and clinical affairs and C.C. Wang Professor of Radiation Oncology at HMS; Barrie Landry; Jennifer Landry Le; and Daniel Haber, MD, PhD, director of the MGH Cancer Center and the Kurt Isselbacher Professor of Oncology at HMS.

“Over and over again, we have witnessed the impact and perpetuating nature of supportive mentorship. Amalie’s philanthropy empowers the history of medicine to inform and shape contemporary medicine and society.”

—Scott Podolsky, AB ’93, MD ’97
GE Foundation empowers local, global communities

It was Aristotle who first said the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Harvard Medical School and the GE Foundation embody this notion in spades. Now, these Boston-based organizations are working together in their backyards to strengthen health systems locally and globally, improving the lives of millions of men, women, and children.

Through a grant of nearly $400,000, the GE Foundation is supporting the HMS Center for Primary Care in its work to improve patient access to behavioral health services, including care for mental health conditions and substance use disorders. A shortage of primary care providers, limited transportation options, and affordability are all factors that impede the ability of both insured and uninsured individuals to access primary care and specialty care services.

According to Russell Phillips, MD, William Applebaum Professor of Medicine and director of the HMS Center for Primary Care, connecting primary care patients to behavioral health services—including mental health and substance use treatment—is often challenging due to disjointed processes and workflows. This is especially true for patients in community health centers (CHCs), which serve populations with limited access to health care.

Through its Advancing Teams in Community Health program, the Center for Primary Care is working to build leadership, teams, and improvement capacity at as many as 50 CHCs across Massachusetts over five years. CHCs select from one of three improvement areas, one of which is to expand access to behavioral health care, with the goal of integrating that care seamlessly into their primary care practices. The program provides care teams with the tools and resources needed to more quickly assess and treat patients’ behavioral health needs.

Jennifer Edwards, director of the GE Foundation’s U.S. Developing Health Program, says the benefits of integrating behavioral health into primary care are significant. “Patients struggling with mental health conditions or substance use disorder in most cases also have a co-occurring physical health condition, such as diabetes and heart disease. Expanding access to care for both conditions by a primary care provider who the patient knows and trusts increases patient engagement, treatment compliance, and holistic care, which can have a significant impact on the health outcome of that patient,” she explains.

Phillips says support from the GE Foundation enables HMS to spend an additional year working with CHCs focused on behavioral health integration. “Two years of shared work is so critical to achieving sustainable improvements,” he adds, noting that the original Advancing Teams program was 10 months long.

Safe Surgery

A second grant of more than $5 million from the GE Foundation advances work by HMS’s Program in Global Surgery and Social Change (PGSSC) to improve access to safe, affordable, and timely surgery and anesthesia care as part of the Safe Surgery 2020 initiative. More than 17 million people will die this year of surgically related conditions, surpassing the death toll from AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria combined.

Why? PGSSC Director John Meara, MD, DMD, MBA, and Research Director Mark Shrime, MD, MPH ’11, PhD ’15, explain that surgical conditions cut across all disease categories. In order to provide safe surgery, the entire health system must function properly.

“In other words, if countries make the investments to provide safe surgery and all that it entails, they simultaneously strengthen their overall health systems and make them more resilient,” says Meara, the Steven C. and Carmella R. Kletjian Professor of Global Surgery.

This is precisely why the GE Foundation launched the Safe Surgery 2020 Initiative, bringing unlike minds together from the academic, public, and private sectors to help alleviate the access issue for 5 billion people worldwide and reduce the global disease burden. “It aligns with how GE as a company thinks about innovation,” says Asha Varghese, director of the GE Foundation’s Global Health Program. “We feel that it is our obligation to take a leadership role and elevate ideas to some of the world’s toughest challenges.”

HMS leads the monitoring and evaluation arm of Safe Surgery 2020. Its work consists of assessing the surgical systems in place to address the health and financial burdens of surgical disease in target countries and training assessors identified by in-country partners to perform follow-up surveys.

Shrime says partnering with the GE Foundation on this work has been crucial. “The GE Foundation saw the vision early and has decided to fix this problem. With this funding, we hope to show that fixing the surgical infrastructure will have long-lasting effects on the health of a population,” he says.

Safe Surgery 2020 Director Erin Barringer says the goal is to define a new model of partnership among ministries of health, funders, and implementing partners to identify and address priorities to transform surgical care in countries.

“At an individual level, our hope is that Safe Surgery 2020 gives mothers in Ethiopia and Tanzania access to safe C-sections, allowing mothers and their babies to survive, become a family, and make valuable economic contributions to their countries. It allows a man involved in a traffic accident to access quick and safe surgery to repair his acute abdominal wound and return quickly to work and his family. And it convinces other individuals—specifically those with money and power—to give greater attention to surgery among other global health priorities,” says Barringer.
Professorship honors Chabner’s roots and legacy

Davi-Ellen Chabner, MA T ’65, and her husband, Bruce A. Chabner, MD’65, says his HMS education gave him the inspiration to conduct research, advance whatever field he chose, and improve outcomes for patients.

A court of last resort: This is how Davi-Ellen Chabner, MAT ’65, describes her husband, Bruce A. Chabner, MD ’65, director of clinical research at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Cancer Center and a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. “So many patients come to him when they are told there are no more treatment options, and he frequently finds options that extend their lives. Like his father before him, he is devoted to giving the best care,” she says.

Bruce A. Chabner is considered a trailblazer in the field of cancer therapeutics. Prior to coming to MGH, he spent 25 years at the National Cancer Institute, where he was director of the Division of Cancer Treatment and responsible for cancer and AIDS drug development for 14 years. There his team developed Taxol and platinum derivatives, as well as the first effective anti-AIDS compounds. As a clinical investigator, he instituted drug-level monitoring to allow safe use of high-dose chemotherapy and participated in the development of standard therapies for lymphomas, breast cancer, and ovarian cancer.

To help further the field of cancer therapeutics, to which Chabner has dedicated his career, the couple have given $1 million in the form of a charitable remainder unitrust (CRUT), together with other gifts from patients, friends, and MGH, to establish the Shelby Memorial Professorship in Medicine in the Field of Cancer Therapeutics at HMS. Following Chabner’s retirement, it will be renamed the Davi-Ellen and Bruce A. Chabner Professorship in Medicine in the Field of Cancer Therapeutics.

“When I arrived at MGH in 1995, there were no professorships in medical oncology. Now there are several but none specifically for cancer therapeutics, so I felt this was something we could do personally to help advance the field,” says Chabner. He said that the Harvard CRUT was an attractive way to fund the professorship because it gave the couple a higher rate of return than virtually any other investment.

Personal Ambitions

Shelbyville, Ill., is the birthplace of Chabner’s ambitions for cancer research. His sister was diagnosed with cancer at a young age, and though she was treated successfully, she later died of complications from radiation therapy.

As a high school student in Shelbyville, where he was born and raised, Chabner wrote a paper on the discovery and mechanism of action of aspirin, piquing his interest in drug development. And his father practiced medicine for the better part of three decades at Shelby Memorial Hospital, the town’s rural community hospital.

“ ‘My father talked a lot about how new drugs, antibiotics, and steroids changed the practice of medicine. I was impressed by that and set my sights on bringing new drugs to patients,’ he says. ‘When I finished my internal medicine training, cancer was an obvious place to start. Davi and I thought that naming the professorship for this important place would be a nice way of remembering my dad and his colleagues in Shelbyville.’

Chabner says he has never regretted his decision to pursue cancer therapeutics. “The field has evolved in ways that never would have been imagined, such as tailoring therapies to mutations in the tumor, but it is still a challenge every day.”

ALBRIGHT SYMPOSIUM: THE POWER AND PROMISE OF HARVARD MEDICINE

For more than 60 years, Hollis L. Albright, MD ’31, dedicated his life to surgery, patient care, and the students he mentored. In recognition of his lifelong achievements and to foster the values he cherished, his children—Tenley E. Albright, MD ’61, and Nile L. Albright, AB ’61, MD—established an endowed symposium at Harvard Medical School in his honor.

This spring, the 16th annual Albright Symposium explored the power and promise of Harvard Medicine, with presentations by David M. Altshuler, MD ’90, PhD ’90, executive vice president of global research and chief scientific officer at Vertex Pharmaceuticals, and Laurie H. Glimcher, AB ’72, MD ’76, president and CEO of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Richard and Susan Smith Professor of Medicine at HMS. Tenley Albright served as moderator. HMS Dean George Q. Daley, AB ’82, MD ’91, PhD, spoke about what’s new at HMS. Irene Y. Zhang, MD ’17, received the 2017 Albright Scholar Award. Her interests in surgery and cancer research have spurred her to pursue a career in surgical oncology, with a focus on research aimed at improving care for cancer patients.

At right (left to right): Altshuler, Nile Albright, Zhang, Daley, and Tenley Albright celebrate the occasion.
Alumnus propels progress

Medical school was transformative for Neal Baer, EdM ’79, AM ’82, MD ’96, now a pediatrician and television writer and producer. However, he says it would not have been possible for him to complete his MD training without the financial assistance he received.

In an effort to pay it forward, Baer has given HMS $250,000 to establish an endowed scholarship fund to support an MD student who is interested in LGBTQ issues.

Baer says that when he was a student, there were only two openly gay students in his class. Fast forward to an on-campus event in early 2016, and there were 25 students who identified as LGBTQ attending his talk. Baer hopes his gift will propel progress by training future health care leaders who represent all people and, in turn, improve health care equity.

“Medical students need to learn with—and from—students who are different from themselves in order to be able to empathize with all patients,” says Baer, who is a member of the HMS Board of Fellows, Campaign Steering Committee, and Advisory Council on Education. “I’m impressed by HMS’s commitment to social justice, and I’m confident that these students will help address these disparities.”

Dean for Students Fidencio Saldaña, MD ’01, MPH ’05, couldn’t agree more. “Without financial support, our student body would be less robust and less diverse, leaving our students less prepared to take care of their patients,” he says.

Visit hms.harvard.edu/dreams to listen to Baer’s remarks from the Spotlight on Medical Education event and hear from other alumni and students about the impact of financial aid on their ability to come to HMS and make a difference in people’s lives.

SPOTLIGHT ON MEDICAL EDUCATION

Carlos Estrada Alamo, MD ’18, MBA ’18, came to the U.S. from Mexico as a young boy with simple aspirations of a better life and inclusion in his new country. He discovered an interest in medicine while working in a lab during college and set his life’s trajectory toward medical school, unsure how he would manage to pay for it.

On Oct. 27, at an annual event hosted by the Harvard Medical School Board of Fellows that highlighted how investments in teaching, learning, and financial aid are upholding excellence and access at the School, Alamo told the audience he was able to achieve his dream thanks to the generosity of financial aid donors.

“I saw it as an opportunity to be there in the moment caring for my patients, instead of worrying about the crushing weight of financial debt. Thank you for opening the doors of opportunity to all of us,” said Alamo (pictured with HMS Board of Fellows and Advisory Council on Education (ACE) members Christiana G. Bardon, MD ’98, MBA ’03, and Larry Paul, AB ’86, MD ’90).

Through video and speeches, several other students and alumni shared their stories about the impact of financial aid on their ability to attend HMS and on their futures during this memorable event attended by donors, volunteers, and leaders of the HMS community.

The evening included tours of the newly renovated learning spaces and a keynote speech by visionary public health advocate and pediatrician Neal Baer, EdM ’79, AM ’82, MD ’96, who is an executive producer at 20th Century Fox Television, as well as a member of the HMS Board of Fellows, ACE, and the Campaign Steering Committee.

If you are interested in the future of medicine and health care, you won’t want to miss these Meet the Dean events featuring the 22nd dean of Harvard Medical School, George Q. Daley, AB ’82, MD ’91, PhD. Connect with fellow alumni and friends of HMS and hear from Dean Daley about his vision for HMS, its reach, and our collective impact.
In brief

The following grants of $250,000 or more support Harvard Medical School faculty members in their work to alleviate human suffering caused by disease.

Joan Brugge, PhD, Louise Foote Pfeffer Professor of Cell Biology at HMS and co-director of the Ludwig Center at Harvard, has received $400,000 from Susan G. Komen to support her research focused on targeting antioxidants that may contribute to tumor growth and drug resistance in breast cancer cells.

The Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson Medical Research Foundation is extending its support of Brugge with a $384,575 grant to support the contributions of basal ganglia dysfunction to the symptoms of autism spectrum disorders.

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation is also supporting Brugge’s research through a $250,000 grant aimed at defining variation in drug sensitivity and developing more effective therapies to treat triple-negative breast cancer.

Bernardo Sabatini, MD ‘95, PhD ‘99, Alice and Rodman W. Moorhead III Professor of Neurobiology, is receiving $400,000 from the Nancy Lurie Marks Family Foundation to continue studies on the causal contributions of basal ganglia dysfunction to the symptoms of autism spectrum disorders.

The Commonwealth Fund has provided grants totaling more than $400,000 to two faculty members in the HMS Department of Health Care Policy. Ateev Mehrotra, MD, MPH, SM ’06, associate professor of health care policy and medicine, received support for an evaluation of Maryland’s Hospital Global Budget Program and its effects on Medicare patients. Michael Chernew, PhD (pictured below), Leonard D. Schaeffer Professor of Health Care Policy and director of the Health Care Markets and Regulation Lab at HMS, received support to study health care delivery systems in low-income communities.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute has awarded a total of $2.4 million in support of three HMS faculty members. Chenghua Gu, PhD (pictured), associate professor of neurobiology, and Stephen Liberles, PhD, assistant professor of cell biology, have been named HHMI Faculty Scholars, while Thomas Bernhardt, PhD, professor of microbiology and immunobiology, has been named an HHMI-Simons Faculty Scholar.

Andrew Kruse, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Neurobiology, is one of four people nationwide to receive a Young Investigator Award from the Berth L. and N. Kuggie Vallee Foundation. This $250,000 award supports Kruse’s work investigating the mechanisms of sigma-1 receptor function, which is linked to neurodegenerative diseases.

Nicole Maestas, PhD, associate professor of health care policy, has received a $355,436 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to support her research into sustainable work conditions and employment for aging populations.

Ateev Mehrotra, MD, MPH, SM ’06, associate professor of health care policy and medicine, has received support for an evaluation of Maryland’s Hospital Global Budget Program and its effects on Medicare patients. Michael Chernew, PhD (pictured below), Leonard D. Schaeffer Professor of Health Care Policy and director of the Health Care Markets and Regulation Lab at HMS, received support to study health care delivery systems in low-income communities.

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Jan Drugowitch, PhD, assistant professor of neurobiology, has received $600,000 from the James S. McDonnell Foundation to advance his research on understanding how the brain integrates new information rapidly with past experiences to form decisions in real time.

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund (BWF) has given Alexander Spetzor, MD, PhD, instructor in radiation oncology, a $700,000 Career Award for Medical Scientists to help him transition to becoming a faculty member and independent investigator. Additionally, through its Postdoctoral Enrichment Program, the BWF has bestowed three awards of $60,000 each to Edwin Reyes, PhD, research fellow in microbiology and immunobiology; Simmie Lorene Foster, MD, PhD, instructor in psychiatry; and Jihan Khara Osborne, PhD, research fellow in biological chemistry and molecular pharmacology.

Postdoctoral fellows Elizabeth Pollina, PhD, in the Department of Neurobiology, and Hoong Chuan Lim, PhD, in the Department of Microbiology and Immunobiology, are the recipients of three-year fellowships, each in the amount of $180,000, from the Life Sciences Research Foundation.

ZIMETBAUM NAMED FIRST RICHARD A. AND SUSAN F. SMITH PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE

Peter Zimetbaum, MD, associate chief of the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine and director of clinical cardiology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC), has been named the inaugural incumbent of the Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Professorship in Medicine in the Field of Cardiovascular Medicine at Harvard Medical School. This professorship was made possible by Richard Smith and his late wife, Susan Smith, who have been longtime supporters of Harvard and its affiliated hospitals. Susan was a passionate philanthropist and leader in advancing biomedical research and clinical care.

Zimetbaum completed his residency and fellowship at BIDMC, becoming a member of the HMS faculty in 1997. Clinically he has focused on the development of programs designed to reduce costs and improve quality of care. He established BIDMC’s cardiology urgent care program, led the effort to develop the Cardiac-Direct Access Unit, and helped create the Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Center for Outcomes Research in Cardiology. Zimetbaum’s research focuses on the management of atrial fibrillation, about which he has authored more than 130 publications. He is the national principal investigator on two trials that seek to outline a significant shift in how strokes can be prevented in patients with atrial fibrillation.

At right: Richard A. Smith (left) and Peter Zimetbaum, MD, celebrate the establishment of the professorship and Zimetbaum’s appointment.
Alumnus pays it forward to commemorate 60th Reunion

Donald Dickerson, MD ’57, says he has many reasons for being a loyal supporter of Harvard Medical School since his graduation 60 years ago. Not only did his degree open doors professionally, but he also met his wife, Tamra, while completing medical school.

Dickerson transferred to HMS for his final two years of medical school and says being a student on the Quad was thrilling for a boy from the Midwest. “The student body was much more diverse than where I came from. I studied beside a PhD in astrophysics and an expert in Renaissance art,” he recalls fondly. “I know it was hard for my parents to financially send me to Harvard. And the price of a medical education has become prohibitive for many,” says Dickerson.

“Support from alumni and others is critical to upholding our twin values of need-blind admissions and need-based aid,” says Dean for Medical Education Edward M. Hundert, MD ’84. “Gifts to financial aid assure that the world’s most promising students of all backgrounds have the opportunity to attend Harvard Medical School, regardless of their financial means.”

Together they have established a $100,000 charitable gift annuity (CGA) to support student scholarships. Donald Dickerson says that a CGA made sense for them, adding that it’s a nice way to make a gift and get income and a tax deduction.

“It’s important to both my wife and me to support the educational institutions that allow others to have the careers that they want.”

HMSLXX: 70 YEARS OF WOMEN AT HMS

On Oct. 21, members of the Harvard Medical School community gathered on campus to celebrate and recognize important milestones for women at HMS over the past 70 years, including the admittance of women students, creation of the Archives for Women in Medicine, and appointment of the 250th woman as a full professor.

The event featured three symposia led by prominent HMS alumnae and faculty leaders on topics relating to the progress of women in medicine and at the School, as well as the importance of research focused on women’s health.

The symposia were followed by networking and a dinner featuring keynote speaker Shirley Tilghman, PhD, president emerita of Princeton University and member of the Harvard Corporation. The event was co-chaired by Julia Haller Gottsch, MD ’80, ophthalmologist-in-chief at Wills Eye Hospital, and Eleanor Shore, AB ’51, MD ’55, MPH ’70, former dean for faculty affairs at HMS.

Below (left to right): Vivian Lee, AB ’86, MD ’92, PhD, MBA, dean of the University of Utah School of Medicine; Margaret Hamburg, AB ’77, MD ’83, former commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration; and Paula Johnson, AB ’80, MD ’84, MPH ’85, president of Wellesley College, answer questions from the audience about the progress and promise of women in leadership.

Visit hms.harvard.edu/hmslxx to see photos from the event and watch all three symposia and the keynote dinner conversation with Shirley Tilghman, PhD.

VEVES APPOINTED RONGXIANG XU, MD PROFESSOR OF SURGERY

Aristidis Veves, MD, DSc, has been named the inaugural incumbent of the Rongxiang Xu, MD Professorship in Surgery in the Field of Regenerative Therapeutics. The Xu family and the National Rongxiang Xu Foundation established this professorship at HMS and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) in honor of the late Rongxiang Xu, MD, an innovator of regenerative therapeutics who died in 2015.

Veves joined the HMS faculty as an instructor in medicine in 2000 and achieved the rank of full professor in 2012. His research focuses primarily on diabetes complications, including cardiovascular disease, neuropathy, and foot ulceration. His unique research methods in the study of diabetic lower extremity complications have resulted in the development of new products and techniques that are being used in clinical practice. Veves also serves as director of the Rongxiang Xu, MD Center for Regenerative Therapeutics at BIDMC, also established by the Xu family.

Below (left to right): Edward M. Hundert, MD ’84, dean for medical education and Daniel D. Federman, MD, Professor in Residence of Global Health and Social Medicine and Medical Education at HMS; Veves; and Kevin Xu, founder of the National Rongxiang Xu Foundation.
Paying tribute to a Renaissance man

When Cheryl Gorelick speaks of her late husband, Kenneth Gorelick, MD ’67, who died of brain cancer in 2009, she notes that he was a teacher first and foremost. That’s why, in honor of his upcoming 50th Reunion, she found it fitting to honor Harvard Medical School, his class, and his memory with a gift of more than $200,000 as an addition to her existing charitable remainder unitrust (CRUT).

Ultimately, this gift will create the Dr. Kenneth and Cheryl Gorelick Professorship in Medicine and Literary Arts. Her hope is that the eventual incumbent will incorporate the literary arts into the teaching of HMS students in an effort to enhance humanism in medicine, promote the therapeutic and instructive aspects of the arts in medicine, and help train compassionate physicians.

“Ken told me that he chose to pursue psychiatry as a specialty as a way to understand the invisible parts of life,” Gorelick says. “He was a Renaissance man—an essayist and poet—and was also a pioneer in the use of literature as therapy, co-founding the National Poetry Therapy Association and using literature in his own practice and in his teaching of medical students, residents, and therapists.”

Gorelick believes a professorship is a fitting tribute to Ken. She says that HMS has made it easy for her to work toward this goal by allowing her to make regular contributions to her CRUT, which offers her an opportunity to earn income at the same time.

“Ken valued the opportunities HMS provided to him. He believed his training opened the world of medicine and gave him the ability to think—and question—critically,” Gorelick says.

Cheryl Gorelick with her late husband, Kenneth Gorelick, MD ’67, who used his cancer diagnosis as a means to teach his students the power of empathy.

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KANG APPOINTED THORNHILL FAMILY PROFESSOR OF ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY

James Kang, MD, head of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at Brigham and Women’s Hospital (BWH), has been named the inaugural Thornhill Family Professor of Orthopedic Surgery. This professorship was made possible by the generosity of Thomas Thornhill, MD, chairman emeritus of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at BWH, the John B. and Buckminster Brown Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at Harvard Medical School, and member of the Harvard Faculty of Medicine for nearly four decades.

Kang joined the HMS community in 2015 from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, where he was executive vice chair of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and director of the Ferguson Laboratory for Orthopaedic and Spine Research. He is an internationally renowned leader in the basic science and clinical treatment of intervertebral disc degeneration and has been developing novel therapies using gene transfer and stem cell techniques to treat this condition. His clinical expertise is in the surgical treatment of spinal stenosis stemming from degenerative cervical, thoracic, and lumbar disorders.

Below: Thornhill (left) and Kang (second from right) celebrate the professorship with Barbara McNeil, MD ’66, PhD ’72, AMP ’86 (second from left), Ridley Watts Professor and founding head of the Department of Health Care Policy at HMS, and Elizabeth Nabel, MD, president of BWH and professor of medicine at HMS.
The power of planning ahead

Ask Paul Weiden, AB ’63, MD ’67, what stands out most about his Harvard Medical School education, and his response is quick and candid. “What I valued most was the opportunity to interact with leading faculty who were committed to and cared deeply about medicine, research, and medical education. I also treasured my fellow students, who were bright, dedicated, hard-working, and destined to become leaders in American and international health care,” says Weiden, who is clinical professor emeritus at the University of Washington.

This experience has inspired him to give back to HMS to support its strong reputation and the personal and professional growth of today’s students. In honor of his upcoming 50th Reunion, he has made a substantial gift this year to add to his existing charitable remainder unitrust (CRUT), which ultimately will fund a scholarship in his family’s name.

Weiden says his CRUT is part of a longstanding and slowly but steadily executed estate plan that both provides for his wife, Bev, using the no-fee services of Harvard Management Company, and allows him to support the School that provided his foundation in medicine and continues to do so for the most promising aspiring physicians.

“I am privileged to do what little I can to help alleviate the financial pressure often felt by college and professional graduates due to their massive educational debt to choose higher-paying careers and specialties instead of following their true passions,” says Weiden.

Richard G. Bachur, MD, chief of the Division of Emergency Medicine at Boston Children’s Hospital (BCH), has been appointed the inaugural incumbent of the Michael W. Shannon, MD, Professorship in Pediatrics in the Field of Emergency Medicine, the first Harvard Medical School endowed professorship at BCH in this field.

BCH and Children’s Hospital Pediatric Associates established this professorship in honor of the late Michael W. Shannon, MD, former chief of the Division of Emergency Medicine at BCH and the first African-American full professor of pediatrics in HMS’s history. Shannon died in 2009.

Bachur has been part of the Harvard Medicine community since beginning his internship in pediatrics at BCH in 1988. As division chief, he oversees trainees, faculty education, clinical programs, and the care of 100,000 children per year. Bachur’s research focuses on common clinical problems that influence the practice of emergency pediatrics. Most recently, he is concentrating on the development of clinical score and biomarkers to guide the care of children with possible appendicitis.

Above: Bachur (second from right) celebrated with members of Shannon’s family, including (left to right) his son Evan, wife Elaine, and daughter Delila.
Faces of HMS
Commitment to students lives on

William Fiske Whitney, AB 1871, MD 1875, a leader at Harvard Medical School during its formative years, has been honored by his late son, William E. Whitney, AB 1916. William E. Whitney established a trust that is providing resources for the School to build and maintain essential teaching and learning spaces on the Quad.

William Fiske Whitney was a devoted member of the Harvard Medicine community, serving as a pathologist at Massachusetts General Hospital for 28 years and as curator of the Warren Anatomical Museum for 42 years until his death in 1921. Whitney was a member of both the committee tasked with overseeing the building of the School on Boylston Street and the committee that ultimately brought the School to its present location in the Longwood Medical Area. He was secretary of the medical faculty at HMS for a decade and briefly held the title of acting dean.

William E. Whitney was an engineer with Comstock & Westcott Inc. and one of the basic patent holders for the invention of Technicolor. With this final distribution of $375,000 from his trust following the passing of his former wife, Mercy B. Moore, he has provided essential funding to honor his father’s commitment to planning for future generations of HMS students.

“Gifts like Mr. Whitney’s enable us to create and maintain state-of-the-art spaces that are critical to both student learning and faculty development, and vastly enhance the School’s ability to produce leading physicians and researchers,” says Jane Neill, associate dean for medical education planning and administration, who is spearheading renovations in the Tosteson Medical Education Center.

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David Brown, MD, head of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), has been appointed the inaugural incumbent of the MGH Trustees Professorship in Emergency Medicine. Made possible by the MGH Board of Trustees, this Harvard Medical School endowed professorship is the first in emergency medicine at MGH.

Brown became a member of the HMS faculty in 1992 after being appointed as an instructor in medicine. He achieved the rank of full professor in 2014. Over his tenure, Brown has made pointed and impactful enhancements to emergency department processes, which have improved the care and management of patients both at MGH and in the numerous hospitals that have emulated this system. Brown is a prolific author and lecturer on the topic of cardiovascular emergencies and has been recognized with numerous teaching and mentorship awards bestowed by both his residents and by national organizations.

Above (left to right): Richard Wolfe, MD, chief of emergency medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and associate professor of medicine at HMS; Nancy Tarbell, MD, dean for academic and clinical affairs and C.C. Wang Professor of Radiation Oncology at HMS; Brown; and Peter Slavin, AB ’79, MD ’84, MBA ’90, president of MGH and professor of health care policy at HMS, celebrate the establishment of the professorship.

DID YOU KNOW 80% OF HMS STUDENTS RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID?

Meet one of them:

“If my Harvard Medical School financial aid package had not been so generous, I would have felt pressured to accept an offer from another school even though in my heart I wanted to be here.”

— Elorm Avakame, MD ’18

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Contact Aisha Francis at 617-384-8503 or aisha_francis@hms.harvard.edu to learn how you can support the next generation of leaders in science and medicine.
“After four decades here as a student, scientist, and clinician, I’m assuming this new role as dean with the aspiration of working with you to make what is arguably the world’s greatest biomedical community even stronger.”

— George Q. Daley, AB ’82, MD ’91, PhD

June 1–2
Reunion and Alumni Week
Alumni from HMS classes ending in 2 and 7 and their guests are invited to rediscover the campus and reconnect with one another during the 2017 Reunion festivities, which include a gala, alumni and scientific symposia, class-specific events, and much more. All alumni are invited to attend Alumni Week, which also includes the dean’s state of the school address, HMAA annual meeting, tours, and more.
For additional information, visit hms.harvard.edu/reunion or hms.harvard.edu/alumni-week, call 617-384-8520, or email hmsalum@hms.harvard.edu.

July 29
Alumni NMA Reception in Philadelphia
Alumni, their guests, and friends are invited to join us from 5–6 p.m. for an alumni reception hosted by the HMS Office of Diversity Inclusion and Community Partnership and the Harvard Medical Alumni Association. Formal invitations will follow. For more information, contact Althea Roach Thomas at 617-343-0161 or althea_roachthomas@hms.harvard.edu.

Sept. 13: New York
Sept. 18: Washington, D.C.
Oct. 10: San Francisco
Oct. 11: Los Angeles
Nov. 1: Philadelphia
Meet the Dean Event Series
If you are interested in the future of medicine and health care, you won’t want to miss these Meet the Dean events featuring the 22nd dean of Harvard Medical School, George Q. Daley, AB ’82, MD ’91, PhD. Connect with alumni and friends of HMS and hear from Daley about his vision for HMS, its reach, and our collective impact.
Visit hms.harvard.edu/meet-the-dean for details and to RSVP.

October 5
Warren Alpert Foundation Prize & Symposium
Join us in the New Research Building as we celebrate the winners of the 2017 Warren Alpert Foundation Prize, which recognizes the world’s foremost scientists, physicians, and researchers for their breakthroughs in biomedicine.
Contact Caitlin Craig at 617-384-8467 or caitlin_craig@hms.harvard.edu for more information.

October 10
Primary Care Innovations Conference
Join the HMS Center for Primary Care for its annual conference beginning at 1 p.m. in the New Research Building. This year’s topic is Managing Complexity in Primary Care, featuring Paul Farmer, MD ’90, PhD ’90, as the keynote speaker.
For more information, visit primarycare.hms.harvard.edu or contact Danielle Lebedevitch at 617-343-3678.

October 26
George W. Gay Lecture
Join us from 4–6:30 p.m. in the Walter Amphitheater in TMEC for the annual George W. Gay Lecture, featuring Michael J. Sandel, Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of Government Theory at Harvard University. Quite possibly the oldest medical ethics lectureship in the U.S., it was established in 1917 by a gift from Dr. George Washington Gay, an 1868 graduate of HMS. Visit bioethics.hms.harvard.edu/gay-lecture for more information.

November 3
Alumni AAMC Reception in Boston
If you live in the Boston area or plan to attend the Association of American Medical Colleges’ (AAMC) annual meeting, join us for an HMS alumni and friends reception from 5–6:30 p.m., hosted by HMS Dean George Q. Daley, AB ’82, MD ’91, PhD.
Formal invitations with location will follow. Call 617-384-8520 or email hmsalum@hms.harvard.edu for more information.