



DMS Welcomes Class of 2005

DMS welcomed the entering class to the world of medicine in August. A wide range of faculty and student speakers offered sage advice and unique insight into what it means to become a medical student, but all voiced a common theme: the exceptional ability to forge close bonds with faculty and fellow students is the essence of what makes Dartmouth Medical School a special place.

Andy Welch, director of admissions, opened the DMS orientation activities in Moore Hall by welcoming the class of 2005 with an impressive list of the achievements and accolades that demonstrate what a remarkable group of new students has arrived. Among this class of 80 men and women are a Fulbright scholar, seven graduate degrees holders, a valedictorian, four All-American athletes, and four Academic All-Americans, as well as, a Marine Gulf War veteran, a fire chief, more than a dozen EMTs, an ordained priest, an Air Force captain, Americorps/Vista and Peace Corps volunteers, and a deputy sheriff.

John C. Baldwin, MD, dean, expressed a deep sense of humility and personal pride in the fact that they had all chosen Dartmouth. He described DMS as a "transformative place" unlike anything they have experienced or ever will experience and encouraged them to constantly learn and discover, advising them to, "have a good time, don't work too hard, and realize that there is a lot to learn."

David W. Nierenberg, MD, associate dean for medical education, reflected on his own medical training, saying that with the pace of change in medical knowledge, it will be even harder to learn everything you needed to know in just four years than it was when he was



Class of 2005 and family members gather at the Dartmouth Skiway for the Dean's Picnic.

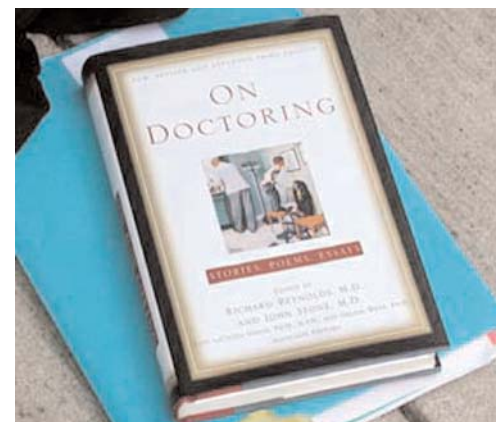
in medical school, but DMS, he told the new arrivals, "will prepare you to be lifelong students."

Lori Arviso Alvord, MD, associate dean for student and multicultural affairs, said the byword in medicine for the decades ahead will be "wellness." "Carry the torch of wellness," she advised as she challenged the entering class to, "live wellness in their own life: get enough sleep, exercise, eat right and develop the cultural competency necessary to become a great doctor."

Paul A. Testa, DMS III, president of DMS student government, offered a student perspective and some humorous but wise counsel, noting that, "Blitzmail can sometimes serve as a substitute for a social life when you've been studying nonstop for three days." Joseph F. O'Donnell, MD, senior advising dean, borrowed from the Aretha Franklin classic, "Respect," concluding the ceremonies with the thought that, "respect for yourself, your school, what you are learning, your classmates, the faculty, and most of all, the patients," is needed most in order to become a successful physician.

Entering Class

- 80 first-year openings
- 5,536 applicants
- 50:50 ratio of men to women
- 25% people of color and international students
- 12% belong to racial or ethnic groups under-represented in American medicine
- 91% are from out-of-state
- 26 states, 6 foreign countries, and 60 undergraduate institutions represented



Dean's Column


Words cannot express the shock and sadness we all experienced since the September 11 mind numbing events unfolded. Our

Dartmouth community has responded with prayers and support and continues to meet the needs of our fellow citizens in this time of national and personal tragedy.

More recently, with concerns about exposure to anthrax or other possible agents of bioterrorism, we take our responsibilities to protect the health and safety of our community very seriously. The medical school has nationally recognized infectious disease experts and public health readiness programs and both the medical center and the college are well prepared to recognize potential threats. We can go about our daily activities with vigilance but also with assurance that our community is on the alert.

In times like these, we are drawn together in our common respect for life. I know that some in the DMS Community have friends or family members who have been affected by this tragedy, and you have my deepest sympathy. The impact of this tragedy will become more evident and pervasive for a time. Dartmouth Medical School, through its faculty, students and staff, will continue to keep the community informed about measures to help restore our national spirit and global well being.

We may reflect on these words of the editor William Allen White written nearly 80 years ago: "Put fear out of your heart. This nation will survive, this state will prosper, the orderly business of life will go forward if only men can speak in whatever way given them to utter what their hearts hold – by voice, by posted card, by letter, or by press. Reason never has failed men. Only force and oppression have made the wrecks in the world."



John C. Baldwin, MD
Dean, Dartmouth Medical School
Vice President for Health Affairs, Dartmouth College

First in a series from the Dean to the DMS Community



Web and Curriculum Support Enhanced with Launch of New Homepage

Dartmouth Medical School has increased its commitment to information technology (IT) with two exciting and increasingly linked developments. The first involves the release of the new DMS web site; the second entails support of faculty use of IT in the medical school curriculum.

The DMS web site has been redesigned. The effort was led by Bill Garrity, director of biomedical libraries, and Paul Gennaro, web information architect and associate director of the C. Everett Koop Institute, with technical expertise from Steve McAllister, director of information technology, and the guidance of a web committee.

A key part of the new site is a Faculty Expertise Search facility for users to learn about DMS faculty and their research. Users can access the search engine by clicking on the link under "Search" and at various other places in the web site. Students, faculty and staff, as well as prospective candidates, and members of the public, journalists or governmental officials can explore information about DMS faculty and their research interests or identify faculty experts in a particular area and

readily obtain contact information.

In the new database, faculty members or staff maintain their own profile. They retrieve their full record, and click on "Edit Entry" to revise the information.

Use of information technology in the DMS curriculum is the second aspect of IT development. Steve McAllister, who heads that project, has added support staff to promote IT in the curriculum. DMS faculty have access to web-based course management software (provided by Blackboard, Inc.) to hold course content and support materials. This software will be jointly supported by DMS Computing and by Academic Computing staff in the new Baker/Berry Library facility.

Please contact Paul Gennaro or Bill Garrity with suggestions or questions, particularly to have web site information updated or a department site upgraded, or for assistance on maintaining a faculty profile record. Teaching faculty who would like to use information technology in a course should contact Steve McAllister.

The DMS web site can be viewed at <http://www.dartmouth.edu/dms/>.

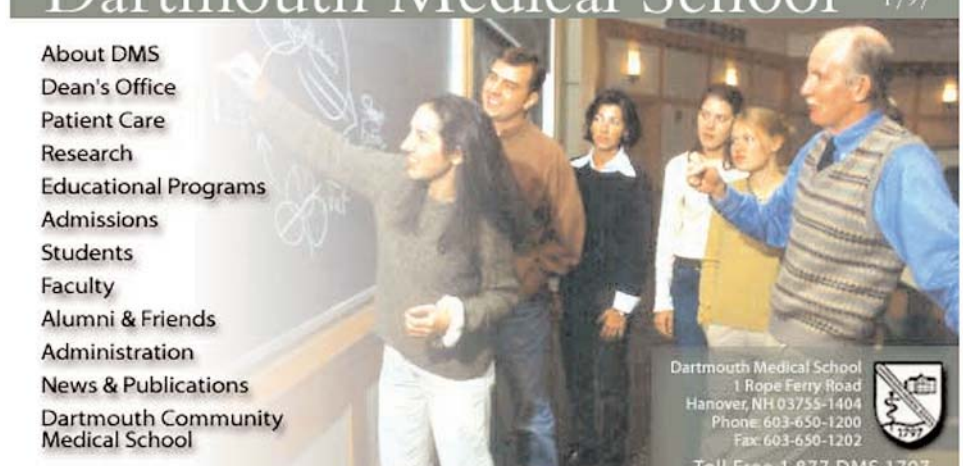
—Bill Garrity

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Accomplished Cancer Researcher/Clinician Joins Dartmouth

Internationally distinguished cancer physician and scientist Mark A. Israel, MD, has joined Dartmouth as director of the Norris Cotton Cancer Center at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and professor at Dartmouth Medical School. Israel, formerly of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the University of California San Francisco (UCSF), will be a professor of pediatrics and of genetics, pending confirmation by the Dartmouth Trustees at their November meeting.

Trained as a pediatric oncologist, Israel has gained promising knowledge from his laboratory studies on nervous system tumors to benefit children and young adults with cancer. His ground-breaking research on how tumor cells develop has helped pave the way for innovative therapeutic approaches to combat and cure brain tumors and other childhood cancers that once defied treatment.

Israel was the Kathleen M. Plant Distinguished Professor and director of the Preuss Laboratory of Molecular Neuro-oncology at UCSF. He succeeds E. Robert Greenberg, MD, Norris Cotton Cancer Center (NCCC) director since 1994, who stepped down to return to his cancer prevention research.

"We are delighted to have recruited a person of Mark Israel's stature to Dartmouth," said John C. Baldwin, MD, dean of DMS and vice president for health affairs of Dartmouth College. "As a world-renowned clinical scientist, he epitomizes the three interdependent core missions of our academic medical center: the discovery of knowledge; the promulgation of that knowledge – to the public, to patients and the medical profession; and the delivery of innovative, high-quality clinical care to our patients – our greatest privilege and responsibility."

Israel's own work is an example of research focus brought directly to bear on solving clinical cancer problems. Nervous system cancers are the second most common cancer in children, and the most frequent solid tumors in those under 15, according to the American Cancer Society.

Using these childhood tumors as models, Israel advanced understanding of the molecular pathways that regulate the finely tuned coordination of cell development, maturation and death. He has identified

genetic cues that go awry, causing cells to proliferate wildly to produce a tumor, and his research has helped improve survival for youngsters with aggressive cancers previously considered hopeless.

His discovery in 1985 of links between tumor differentiation agents affecting cellular oncogenes set the stage for successful therapy to treat neuroblastoma that occurs most commonly in infants and in young children. He was the first to show that histologically similar tumors can be genetically distinct, and harnessed these differences to target treatment against certain cancer types. Today, many young adults whose therapies were tailored based on Israel's discoveries are alive and leading productive lives, cured despite having been diagnosed with a highly malignant small round cell tumor.



"It's this type of leadership in clinical innovation that makes Dr. Israel's move here so exciting," said James Varnum, president of Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital and the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Alliance. "DHMC is committed to this kind of research-driven clinical care, so that we provide the best care possible. We also have a children's hospital (CHaD), so Dr. Israel's experience is well suited to DHMC."

Israel's leadership coincides with a major expansion planned for the Barbara E. Rubin Building, which houses the cancer center at DHMC. The project will help sustain the trajectory of growth in research and patient programs that continue to provide cutting edge cancer care for the community and region.

Israel said, "The Norris Cotton Cancer Center is well poised to provide

an outstanding environment in which the recent advances in cancer research can be translated into clinical opportunities and where the amazing flurry of scientific insight that currently envelops us can be exploited as new initiatives for oncology are sought.

"There is growing anticipation that the next decade will yield significant breakthroughs in the prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. Meeting this expectation will require the integration of contributions from multiple disciplines, bringing basic scientists and clinicians into close collaboration. I am committed to fostering an integrated approach to improving medical care in which teaching, scientific discovery and clinical care are seamlessly interwoven, and I look forward to nurturing a spectrum of programs to facilitate and enhance cancer research and patient care."

Israel has developed unique laboratory models of human brain tumors to test novel therapies and has become a leader in studies of the Id (inhibitor of differentiation) genes that play key roles in abnormal growth and differentiation of human brain tumors. He also uses gene profiling to characterize difficult to distinguish tumors and is extending his discoveries on childhood tumors to common tumors of adults, where he says, "advances in oncology and preventive medicine can have a large community impact."

Author of more than 200 peer-reviewed papers, Israel received the Farber Award in 1998 for outstanding contributions to neuro-oncology. His professional recognition and service includes membership in the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the pre-eminent organization for physician-researchers, and the Board of Scientific Counselors of NCI. Israel graduated from Hamilton College in 1968 and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in 1973. Following training in pediatrics at the Children's Hospital Medical Center in Boston, he was recruited to the National Institutes of Health, where he rose to head the Molecular Biology Section (formerly molecular genetics) in the Pediatric Branch of NCI. In 1990 he joined UCSF, serving as the Plant distinguished professor since 1997.

DMS Notes

Direct-to-Consumer Drug Advertising Ambiguous

Pharmaceutical companies spent \$1.8 billion on direct-to-consumer advertisements for prescription drugs in 1999. Drs. Steven Woloshin, Lisa Schwartz and H. Gilbert Welch, all in the department of medicine, from DMS and the VA Medical Center, investigated what messages these advertisements communicated to the public. Their study, published in *The Lancet* (October 6), highlights how consumers can be ill informed.



Study Reveals More Realistic Surgery Survival Estimates

For older patients, the risk of death associated with elective surgery is far greater than previously estimated, and frequently higher than 10%, according to a new Dartmouth study. Drs.



John Birkmeyer, surgery, and Emily Finlayson, research fellow at the VA Medical Center, found that operative mortality for major surgery not only varies by procedure and patient age, but is considerably higher than that typically reported in case series and trials of operative mortality. Their findings, reported in *Effective Clinical Practice* (July/August), can help patients and physicians make better informed decisions about surgery.

DMS Receives Grant from Pfizer to Develop Sexual Health Curriculum

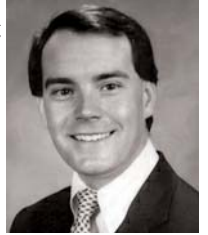
Dartmouth Medical School has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from Pfizer Inc to develop and implement an innovative multidisciplinary curriculum in sexual health medicine. Drs. William Young, obstetrics and gynecology, Nancy Cochran, medicine, and Patricia Carney, community and family medicine, are leading the curriculum development project. Young says, "fun and informative computer-assisted learning with PowerPoint® tutorials and computer cases, plus simulated patient interviewing exercises are planned for students." Grand round speakers on sexual health, and objective structured teaching exercises will be scheduled for faculty. The grant program is designed to improve the training of medical students in the field of sexual health.

\$3.6 Million NCI Grant to Study Adolescent Smoking Awarded

Dr. James D. Sargent, pediatrics and community and family medicine, and DMS colleagues, Madeline A. Dalton and Todd F. Heatherton, have been awarded a comprehensive four-year grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to further elucidate the association between exposure to movies and adolescent smoking and the role of parents in restricting this exposure. The goals of this newly funded study are to establish mechanisms for media effects on adolescent smoking and to design family and community interventions for reducing smoking among U.S. adolescents.

Benefits Outweigh Burden of Chemotherapy

The benefits of adjuvant chemotherapy for breast cancer outweigh its side-effects, especially for younger women, concludes a Dartmouth Medical School study led by Dr. Bernard Cole, community and family medicine, in *The Lancet* (July 28). Overall, the chemotherapy-treated women studied gained an average of 10.3 months of relapse-free survival and 5.4 months of overall survival within 10 years compared with a no-chemotherapy group.



Uneven Landscape of Newborn Intensive Care Services Documented

A team of Dartmouth Medical School researchers led by Dr. David C. Goodman, pediatrics, has completed the first study of the neonatal workforce since 1983 to determine the geographic distribution of neonatologists in the United States. Their results, reported in *Effective Clinical Practice* (July/August), lay the groundwork for understanding whether neonatal intensive care resources are located in accordance with risk and whether more resources improve newborn outcomes.



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